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THE CENTURY BIBLE  
ST. MARK

OXFORD

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DISTRICT OF  
**GALILEE**

English Miles

The figures indicate the height in  
feet above the Mediterranean Sea.  
Modern names in italics.



# The Century Bible

GENERAL EDITOR: PROF. W. F. ADENEY, D.D.

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## St. Mark

INTRODUCTION

AUTHORIZED VERSION

REVISED VERSION WITH NOTES

INDEX AND MAP

EDITED BY

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## CONTENTS

	PAGE
EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION . . . . .	I
TEXT OF THE AUTHORIZED VERSION . . . . .	50
TEXT OF THE REVISED VERSION WITH ANNOTATIONS . . . . .	105
INDEX . . . . .	373

## MAP

OROGRAPHICAL MAP OF GALILEE . . . . .	<i>Facing Title</i>
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# **THE GOSPEL OF ST. MARK**

## **INTRODUCTION**

# THE GOSPEL OF ST. MARK

## INTRODUCTION

'A SUCCESSION of pictures in which a painter represents a complete history.' This description of the first three Gospels very fairly expresses what they are, and how they differ from the Fourth Gospel with its greater unity and more finished plan. They tell their story by pictures, and they are themselves a series of portraits exhibiting their great subject in so many different aspects. In this series the one that occupies the second place in the canonical order to which we are accustomed was, in all probability, the first in the actual order of production. That Mark's Gospel is the ground-sketch of the evangelical narratives is the opinion now generally entertained by scholars, and this means that it is looked at now from a new point of view. The change of sentiment which has taken place on the subject of the Second Gospel is indeed one of the most notable facts in the history of New Testament studies in our own day. In ancient times little was made of this Gospel in comparison with the others. Its genius was not sufficiently understood. Its value was not adequately recognized. Even the great Augustine could speak of Mark as only the 'follower and abbreviator of Matthew,' and while many pious and learned minds occupied themselves with the preparation of careful expositions of the other three, few seem to have done a similar service to this shortest of the Gospels. It was never held in anything else than honour indeed, but until recent times it was dealt with as if of subordinate importance.

Now, however, it is better appreciated. It is seen to have a very distinct character, and to stand in a remarkable relation to the other Gospels: its simplicity, the plain objective view which it gives of events, the vivid way in which it tells its story, the things in it which bespeak for it a very early date, make it a narrative, it is perceived, of singular interest and very special worth. Much depends upon the estimate we form of it and the way in which we use it. Everything relating to it—its age and its authorship, its sources and its plan, the place where it was written, the readers for whom it was intended, its peculiar qualities, the points of contact which it has with the other Gospels, the particulars in which it differs from them—has a claim upon our attention. Unless we begin with this Gospel according to Mark and study well its goodly words, we shall not be in the right position for looking into the face of him who is the central figure in the holy quaternion of the Gospels.

### I. ITS PLACE IN THE ANCIENT CHURCH.

We have a chain of witnesses connecting this Gospel with the earliest times, and speaking to the position which it had in the ancient Church. There is historical testimony sufficient to entitle us to say that it was in circulation by the middle of the second century, and that by the last quarter of that century it had an established place. It is found in the oldest of our Greek manuscripts, and the state of the readings indicates that the text must have been in existence for a length of time before it was transcribed in these manuscripts. It appears in the most ancient versions of the New Testament—Old Latin, Syriac, and Egyptian, and in the early lists of canonical books which have come down to us from both sides of the Church, Eastern and Western. There is little evidence of its existence, it is true, in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers. For the most part these are silent on the subject

or are of uncertain import. All that can be said of them, then, is that it is possible Mark's Gospel may be referred to in some free quotations in Clement of Rome, the *Epistle of Barnabas*, and Polycarp's *Letter to the Philippians*; and that it is probably recognized in the *Shepherd of Hermas* (perhaps about 130 A. D.) and the writings of Justin Martyr (140-160 A. D.). In *Hermas*, e.g. we find words which recall the sentence peculiar to Mark, 'guilty of an eternal sin' (iii. 29). Justin, again, speaks of James and John as 'Boanerges, which is, Sons of thunder,' and of Christ as 'the carpenter,' as only Mark does (iii. 17, vi. 3).

When we come to Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, however, we have a witness not only comparatively early (115-190 A. D.), but copious and unambiguous. He has much to say both of the writer and of the book. He gives a number of passages in the exact terms of the Gospel, and quotes the opening verse as Mark's. We have similar testimonies, more or less definite, in Athenagoras, the Muratorian Canon, Hippolytus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius the Church Historian, &c., extending from the latter part of the second century to the early part of the fourth. From various sources we gather also that the Second Gospel was known to the Gnostic and other early heretical schools. It is further to be noticed that this Gospel has always a place in the list of the four Gospels when such are mentioned. The description of the Gospel as 'the fourfold Gospel' takes us back to Irenæus, and in all probability to a still earlier period; while the idea of harmonizing the various narratives, and the formation of extended harmonies of the Gospels, come into clear view at least by the time of Tatian the Assyrian (a contemporary of Justin), and have probably to be recognized as of older date still. In all these connexions Mark's Gospel makes one of the four. Nor is there any reason to suppose that when it is referred to or used any other writing is intended than the one that

has come down to us. Some indeed have imagined that our canonical Mark is not the original Mark, but a second form constructed on the basis of a still more primitive record. But there is no mention of any such archetype or primary edition in ancient literature, nor do the facts presented by the Gospel, as we have it, require us to regard it as a secondary version of a simpler narrative.

## 2. THE QUESTION OF AUTHORSHIP.

This Gospel is anonymous. It says nothing of its origin. It gives little or no indication, direct or indirect, of the hand that composed it. In determining its authorship we have to depend on tradition, and that connects it with two names—Mark and Peter.

Not a few of the testimonies which speak of the circulation of this writing also speak of its author as *Mark*. Who then is this *Mark*? The disciple, it is replied, who appears under that name in the New Testament as well as in early Christian literature. The person in view, however, is not called uniformly by that name in the New Testament, neither are the statements regarding him outside that limit all of one piece. In the New Testament itself, too, he appears in relation both to Peter and to Paul, as is the case also with the later writings. And there is the further peculiarity that in the New Testament his connexion is mostly with Paul, and his relation to Peter is subsidiary; while in tradition he is associated chiefly with Peter, and his relation to Paul passes into the background. Hence some have thought that we have to reckon with three different Marks, while others have contended for the existence of at least two—one who was the special companion of Paul, and another who was the particular associate of Peter. But it is the general view that the various references, however different in terms, are to one and the same person. The conditions of the case, especially when it is seen that in Barnabas we have

the link of connexion between the two apostles in the story of Mark, do not require us to assume the existence of more than one of that name.

On this supposition we know something, though not much, of the reputed author of this Gospel. He is the person who is sometimes called simply Mark or Marcus (Acts xv. 39; Col. iv. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 11; Philem. 24; 1 Pet. v. 13), sometimes John (Acts xiii. 5, 13), sometimes 'John whose surname was Mark' (Acts xii. 25) or 'John, who was called Mark' (Acts xv. 37). In the Gospel itself there is, as we have said, no explicit reference to him, some indeed have imagined him to be the 'man bearing a pitcher of water' who is mentioned in connexion with the preparation for the passover (ch. xiv. 13), and others have identified him with the young man who followed Jesus on the night of the betrayal 'having a linen cloth cast about him, over *his naked body*' (ch. xiv. 51, 52). There is some plausibility in the latter supposition, for the episode is chronicled only in this Gospel, and if it concerns only some person unknown it is not easy to see why it should have been brought in. But if the writer of the Gospel is himself the young man in view, we can understand why the incident should have got a place in the narrative. For he must have remembered it with a vivid personal interest which would make it natural for him to record it.

Be it as it may, however, with these uncertain speculations regarding certain words of the Gospel, we get some reliable information from the Book of Acts and the Epistles. In Acts Mark comes before us first in connexion with the story of Peter's deliverance (ch. xii. 12). We see that he was the son of a certain Mary, a believer, a lady of some means and station, as we judge, who had a house in Jerusalem to which Christians gathered for prayer and to which the Apostle at once turned. He is next mentioned as having been taken by Barnabas and Saul on their return to Antioch, after their visit to Jerusalem

with the relief sent by the disciples to the distressed brethren in Judaea (ch. xii. 25). Then we see him accompanying Barnabas and Paul as 'their attendant' on their first missionary journey, but breaking off from them at Perga in Pamphylia and returning to Jerusalem, while they went on to the Pisidian Antioch (ch. xiii. 3, 13, 14). We are not told why he took this step. Hence some have regarded his departure at this point as a culpable defection due to timidity or lukewarmness, while others have found an excuse for it in concern for his mother, or in a change in the programme of the journey originally contemplated and agreed to by him. In any case it so offended Paul, or shook his confidence in his former 'attendant,' that, though Barnabas wished to take Mark with them again when it was proposed to revisit the churches, he refused to have him, and a 'sharp contention' arose which separated the friends. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed to Cyprus, while Paul chose Silas as his companion and went through Syria and Cilicia (ch. xv. 36-41). This estrangement, however, was afterwards healed, and Mark reappears in a different aspect in the story of Paul's later career. He is with Paul at the time of his first Roman imprisonment (Col. iv. 10; Philem. 24); and in his second imprisonment the Apostle, left alone but for Luke, asks Timothy to bring Mark with him as one 'useful to him for ministering' (2 Tim. iv. 11). From other references to him in the New Testament we gather that he was a Jew by birth, cousin (not 'sister's son') of Barnabas (Col. iv. 10); and that he stood in a peculiarly close relation to Peter, the latter speaking of him as his 'son' in the sense of spiritual convert, it may be, or at least in that of dear friend (1 Pet. v. 13).

This brief account of the author of the Second Gospel receives a great enlargement outside the New Testament. There he is described as an evangelist, as Peter's companion in Rome, as sent by Peter on a mission into Egypt, as the founder of the Alexandrian Church and

its first bishop; and in the later forms of the tradition he is represented as suffering cruel martyrdom at Alexandria. The place where he was supposed to be buried became a favourite shrine, visited by multitudes of pilgrims for centuries. Early in the ninth century his reputed remains were removed by some merchants to Venice. There the great cathedral church was built in his honour. He became the patron saint of Venice, and the emblem of the lion, which had been mistakenly assigned to him by Christian art, was taken as the armorial ensign of the Venetian Senate.

### 3. RELATION OF THE WRITER TO PETER.

Ancient tradition, however, which speaks of Mark as author, also associates him with Peter in the composition of the Gospel. The tradition is very old, and in the main points remarkably consistent. It goes back to Papias, and is continued by Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Hippolytus, Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius, Epiphanius, Jerome, &c. It appears in different forms, at first simple, and then more definite and more complex. In Papias the Presbyter John is reported as speaking of Mark as Peter's *hermeneut*—a term of uncertain meaning, taken by some in the sense of *interpreter* or *dragoman*, by others rather in the sense of *amanuensis*. In the former case Mark's function would be that of rendering the Apostle's vernacular Aramaic into Greek; in the latter, that of committing to writing, with more or less freedom, oral communications made by Peter. On the same authority we are told that he wrote down the things that he remembered, both those said and those done by Christ, 'accurately, not however in order'; that he was not himself a hearer of the Lord, but owed his matter to Peter's instructions, which were not intended to give a connected account of the Lord's words; and that he was careful 'neither to omit anything he had heard nor to set down anything false' (Euseb.

*Ch. Hist.* iii. 39). Irenæus also says of Mark that he 'committed to writing the things preached by Peter,' although he seems to represent this as done after the death of Peter and Paul. Clement enlarges this, stating that when Peter had preached in Rome many urged Mark to write down what had been thus spoken, and that Peter 'neither forbade nor encouraged it.' Eusebius himself, who reports these traditions in his *History of the Church*, goes farther, and speaks of the Apostle as *confirming* or *authorizing* the writing at the request of the churches. Finally, Jerome describes Mark as being Peter's interpreter as Titus was Paul's, and refers to the Gospel as composed by Peter *narrating* and Mark *writing*. The tradition, therefore, varies, and in course of time becomes more circumstantial and precise. But the general view which it gives of the Gospel is that of a composition written by Mark on the basis of notes of Peter's discourses, and giving a faithful report of the Apostle's recollections of the words and deeds of the Lord.

The facts presented by the Gospel correspond very fairly with this. It is true that this has been disputed. It has been argued that the writing as we now have it does not answer to Papias's description; that Mark's work must have been something different from the composition which now bears his name, something less orderly; and that behind the present Mark we must suppose a more primitive record. But there is little either in ancient testimony or in the book itself to bear out these suppositions. Our Gospel has not the appearance of being a remodelled literary production, and it is hard to understand how an earlier work really by Mark himself should have vanished so completely, while this supposed secondary form has survived. Nor can it be said that the existing Mark contradicts Papias's description of the writing as 'not in order.' For while our Gospel has a certain arrangement, it does not amount to a record of events in their exact historical succession. There is

much in it, on the other hand, that fits in with the view given of it by tradition. The general character of its narrative, so lifelike, so definite and assured in its statements, in the case even of small things, points an eye-witness as directly or indirectly its author. There are many touches in it that indicate first-hand knowledge, and such first-hand knowledge as Peter would have. It alone tells us that 'Simon and they that were with him followed after' Jesus when he withdrew to a solitary place at the beginning of his ministry (ch. i. 36); that it was Peter who called the Lord's attention to the withered fig-tree (ch. xi. 21); that it was he also, with his brother and the sons of Zebedee, who asked him on the Mount of Olives about the destruction of the temple (ch. xiii. 3). Many of the things which it records are things immediately concerning Peter, and such as would be personally known to him. Things in which Peter had a personal interest mark important stages in Christ's ministry, e.g. his call, his confession, the message sent him by the Risen Lord. There are omissions of things specially honourable to Peter, such as the great declaration that the Church was to be built upon him, the Rock (Matt. xvi. 18), which are explained perhaps by his relation to the composition of the Gospel. Narratives like those of the raising of the daughter of Jairus, the Transfiguration, and the Agony, have details and peculiarities as given by Mark which suggest a more immediate knowledge of the circumstances, and such a knowledge as Peter, an actor in all these scenes, might have had. There are certain resemblances also between the style of this Gospel and that of Peter as seen in his discourses in the Acts and in his Epistles. These things indeed, however interesting in themselves, might come far short of proving the Gospel to have such an origin. But they suit very well the account of it which has been transmitted to us from the second century.

## 4. SOURCES OF THE GOSPEL.

The matter of this Gospel, therefore, is taken mainly from those discourses of Peter, of which early Christian writers say so much, which embodied his recollections of his master's words and deeds, and were spoken by him with a view to the needs of those about him. But though these are the chief sources of the Gospel they do not account for all that is in it. There are some things which in all probability are Mark's own, such as the explanatory sentences about the Jewish washings (ch. vii. 3, 4); the statement, also in the form of an explanation, '*This he said*, making all meats clean' (vii. 19); and the episode of the young man already referred to. There are some paragraphs which seem to come from another source, perhaps a written source. These include the narrative of Herod in ch. vi, and the long discourse about the end in ch. xiii and the beginning of ch. xiv. It is difficult to say how much, if anything, is due to the hand of an editor, and still more difficult to say whether the *Logia* of Matthew—that collection of the sayings of Jesus which is supposed to be one of the two main foundations of the Gospels as we have them—must be reckoned among the sources. In a few passages, especially in ch. xiii, it is possible that Mark's Gospel is indebted to the *Logia*. But at most it can only be to a very small extent that Mark is dependent on that collection. His Gospel, more particularly in the parts occupied with the Galilean ministry, has all the appearance of a simple record of such recollections of the words and deeds of Christ as Peter might have had and which he might repeat in his discourses.

## 5. COMPASS AND CONTENTS OF THE GOSPEL.

This Gospel keeps within the limits of apostolic preaching given by Peter in his discourse before Cornelius (Acts x. 37-41). It begins with the Baptist's mission and

ends with the Resurrection of Jesus. It has a brief preliminary section dealing with John's ministry, and with the preparation of Jesus for his official work by his Baptism and his Temptation (ch. i. 1-13); a central section of narrative forming the body of the composition (chs. i. 14—xv. 47); a conclusion reporting the Resurrection (ch. xv. 1-8); and an additional paragraph recording certain details of the Resurrection, and the circumstances of the Ascension (ch. xvi. 9-20). The central section itself falls into two great blocks, one given to the Galilean ministry, (chs. i. 14—ix. 50), the other to the last week in Jerusalem (chs. xi. 1—xvi. 8). The story of the intermediate events, covering the journeys into Peræa and Judæa, the words of Christ on divorce, reward, and his Coming, and such incidents as the blessing of the children, the rich man's question, the request of James and John, and the case of Bartimæus, is more briefly told.

The narrative, too, follows a particular order. It is arranged in certain more or less clearly defined sections. It gives us, first, the Galilean ministry in the eastern parts (chs. i. 14—vii. 23) and in the northern (chs. vii. 24—ix. 50), then the Peræan ministry (x. 1-31), and finally the journey to Jerusalem and the last events (chs. x. 32—xv. 47). The story of the ministry in Eastern Galilee falls itself, again, into three parts. Of these, the first is occupied with the announcement of the kingdom, the call of the first disciples, and the beginnings of opposition (chs. i. 14—iii. 12); the second, with the call of the apostles, and the events following that decisive act on to the rejection at Nazareth (chs. iii. 13—vi. 6); and the third, with the mission of the Twelve, and the subsequent events on to the retirement to the borders of Tyre and Sidon (chs. vi. 7—vii. 24). The story of the ministry in Northern Galilee in like manner is told in two sections—the one embracing all that happened on to Christ's withdrawal in the direction of Cæsarea Philippi (chs. vii. 24—viii. 27), and the other all that occurred from Peter's confession on to the words on self-denial (chs. viii.

27—ix. 50). The events of Passion Week are related with particular fullness and continuity, almost in the style of a diary filled in day by day and hour by hour.

#### 6. PLAN OF THE GOSPEL.

We can discover, therefore, in Mark's Gospel a certain plan, but a simple one. It does not attempt much literary form, neither does it give events by any means in their strict chronological succession. Nor, again, does it follow to any large extent the method of grouping things which we see more clearly in Matthew. There are some instances of this, especially in the second and third chapters, but not many. There is, however, a certain orderly setting of the things that are recorded. They are arranged so as to shew us how in his teaching our Lord followed a certain method ; how he began with the call to repentance, the announcement of the kingdom, and the enforcement of the great moral requirements, all in a simple way and as occasion offered, and proceeded in due time to the deeper things of his kingdom as a spiritual order, and the mysteries of his own Person, his Death and his Resurrection ; how he delivered his message first in direct and obvious terms, and afterwards in the form of parabolic discourse ; how he took for the scene of his first preaching the towns in the vicinity of the Sea of Galilee and the synagogues in those parts, and then went further afield, addressing his word to audiences of a different kind. What it gives is not a complete biography, far less a history, but rather an outline of a history for a particular purpose. And that is not a theoretical or ecclesiastical purpose but the plain, practical purpose of placing on record for edification the main events in the public life of Jesus, with a selection of his words and especially of his deeds. It takes his official ministry for its primary subject. It passes by, therefore, the preliminary history on to the period of most immediate preparation for that ministry. It omits the longer discourses, with the exception of certain parables and the

great declaration on the End. It leaves even the Sermon on the Mount without report. It gives few parables—only four of the parables proper, together with three of the minor or germ parables. It deals with the acts of Jesus rather than his words. It has many more miracles than parables—no less than eighteen. Most of these are miracles of healing, and most belong to the period before the Transfiguration.

#### 7. RELATION OF MARK TO MATTHEW AND LUKE IN RESPECT OF MATTER.

The three Synoptical Gospels have much in common as regards both the things recorded and the order in which they are given. But each has also its own peculiarities. Mark omits much that is found in Matthew and Luke, or in one or other of them: such sections of the former, e. g. as chs. i, ii, v. 7, and of the latter, such paragraphs as chs. i, ii, ix. 51—xviii. 14. On the other hand, Mark has some passages which the others have not. He has one parable peculiar to himself, that of the *Fruit-bearing Earth* (ch. iv. 26–29), and two miracles, those of the deaf mute (ch. vii. 31–37) and the blind man of Bethsaida (ch. viii. 22–26). He gives also certain things which are not reported by the others—the questions regarding the dullness of the disciples and their disputings (ch. viii. 17, 18, ix. 33), the incident of the young man (ch. xiv. 51, 52), the smiting of Jesus by the servants (ch. xiv. 65), Pilate's wonder, &c. (ch. xv. 44). Further, Mark has a certain proportion of matter which appears in Matthew but not in Luke, or in Luke but not in Matthew; and in narratives which are common to the three, or to Mark and one of the others, he adds in not a few cases considerably to our knowledge by his richer detail. This will appear if one compares his accounts of the *paralytic*, the *demoniac boy*, the *purgation of the Temple*, &c. with those of the others. In the matter of arrangement, too, he has a way of his

own. In the case of the Galilean ministry, e. g. he differs considerably from Matthew's order on to the story of Herod (ch. vi. 13), after which there is more agreement. In the later chapters (x-xvi) Mark's order is very much the same as that of the others. The amount of divergence from Luke all through is less than from Matthew; but the blasphemy of the scribes, the parable of the Mustard Seed, and some other things are not given in the same connexion by Mark as by Luke.

#### 8. RELATION OF MARK TO MATTHEW AND LUKE IN RESPECT OF TIME.

There are considerable differences, therefore, between Mark and the other Synoptical Gospels; but there is also considerable agreement. Nor is this agreement confined to the general selection and arrangement of matter: it extends to the minuter circumstances of word and phrase. There is often a remarkable verbal correspondence between Mark and the other Synoptists. In order to understand the nature and measure of these coincidences, one should carefully compare such passages in Mark as ch. iv. 3-9, viii. 27—ix. 9 with their equivalents in Matt. xiii. 3-9, xvi. 13-28, xvii. 1-10; or such passages as Mark i. 40-44 with Luke v. 12-16; Mark ii. 12-22 with Luke v. 27-39. The question therefore arises—How are these peculiarities to be explained? Is Mark dependent on Matthew and Luke, or is the opposite the case? Augustine, as we have seen, took Mark to be later than Matthew and dependent on it. Clement of Alexandria gave it as a fact, ‘derived from the oldest presbyters,’ that the Gospels which contain the genealogies of our Lord were the first written (Eusebius, *Church History*, vi. 14), and many in modern times have accepted in one form or other this ancient, traditional view of Mark as the latest of the three, or at least not the earliest, and as dependent on one of them or on both.

Elaborate schemes have also been constructed with the object of shewing how Mark's Gospel must have been put together by abridgement and combination of Matthew and Luke, or was composed with one of these, if not both, before its writer's eye. In ancient times this was argued for the most part on general considerations—on the ground of the improbability, e.g. that a Gospel containing comparatively so little of our Lord's discourses should have been the earliest, or that a Roman Gospel should have preceded a Palestinian. In modern times the argument has been based on a minute analysis of the contents.

But in neither case has the position been made good. The explanations which Mark gives from time to time of matters of history, geography, or custom are to be accounted for in a better way than by taking them for evidences of the secondary character of the writing. There are some things which are referred to as indicating that the author did not write independently. But they are not sufficient for the purpose, and many of them are used in an arbitrary way. It is true, for example, that in describing the restored demoniac Mark speaks of him as now 'clothed' (ch. v. 15), while Luke says of him that in his possessed condition 'he wore no clothes' (ch. viii. 27). But it surely does not follow that Mark must have had Luke's picture of the man before him when he wrote his account of him. On the other hand, the peculiarly lifelike character of Mark's narrative, the precision of his statements, the circumstantiality of his references to matters of geography, history, custom and the like, are not consistent with the way in which a secondary writer or a copyist goes to work.

In other directions, too, Mark must have chosen a very strange method of making up his Gospel if he was indeed a compiler or epitomist. For one thing we should have expected him in that case to have studied brevity. But it is not so. In many cases he is fuller than the others

in his descriptions. Often in reporting incidents which are also given by Matthew or by Luke he enlarges the report by particulars of his own ; and there are instances in which, on the supposition in question, he must be understood to have selected the fuller account of Luke in preference to the shorter account of Matthew. Besides, it is not easy to see why, when there were two Gospels, both of them comparatively short, already in existence, another Evangelist should have constructed another Gospel, still shorter, but following mostly the same plan and not giving any very large proportion of new matter. For some fifty verses will comprise the whole amount of matter that is peculiar to Mark. Hence opinion has now gone largely against the theory that this Gospel is the product of any process of curtailment and compilation. It is held by most that this is the earliest of the three Synoptical Gospels, and that it is one of the chief sources of the others.

#### 9. LANGUAGE AND STYLE.

The Second Gospel contains some Latin words in Greek form. One or two manuscripts speak of it as written in the Roman tongue. There are also certain subscriptions and marginal notes in some of the ancient versions which refer to it in similar terms. Hence it has been thought by some that, though we have it now in Greek, it was written originally in Latin. This opinion used to prevail in particular among Roman Catholic theologians, and some men of great eminence committed themselves to it. It was even imagined that a part of the original copy in Latin was deposited in the Library of St. Mark's in Venice. But this opinion is now given up, and it has little indeed to support it. The manuscripts supposed to bear it out are of very late date. The late references in certain copies of the versions are of no importance. The supposed Venetian treasure

proved to be only a portion of the Vulgate Version. If the Gospel, too, was meant specially for Roman readers, colloquial Greek would still have been the most natural language in which to write. Paul's Epistle to the Romans is written not in Latin, but in Greek.

More recently it has been taken to have been written originally in Aramaic, the vernacular of the Holy Land in the times of our Lord and his apostles. This opinion is based mostly on arguments drawn from the condition of the text and certain peculiarities in the contents. But these are precarious reasonings. Some of them may suggest that the writer availed himself to some extent of Aramaic sources. They do not prove that he wrote in Aramaic. The theory also fails to do justice to those very distinct qualities of the Gospel, as we now have it, which make it difficult to regard it as a translation or a secondary composition. Hence it is the almost universal opinion now that Mark's Gospel was written originally in the language in which it has come down to us, namely, Greek. With this the references to the Gospel in the early Christian writers entirely agree. The testimony of antiquity has nothing to say of an Aramaic or of a Latin original.

With this, too, the style best agrees. It is not the style of a translator. It is simple and direct, and at the same time free, unconstrained, forcible, and full of life. The sentences have no elaborated literary form, but are connected for the most part by the simplest terms, *and*, *now*, and the like. They are usually terse and pointed. Yet, when it is necessary for the purposes of clear, vigorous, vivid narration, Mark can use a more copious style. We see this in such instances of the adding of phrase to phrase as these—‘He went out, and began to publish it much, and to spread abroad the matter’ (ch. i. 45); ‘I neither know, nor understand what thou sayest’ (ch. xiv. 68).

## 10. PLACE OF COMPOSITION OR PUBLICATION.

The Gospel itself neither states nor indicates where it was written or where it was first given to the Church. Opinion, therefore, has varied on this question, and some very uncertain conjectures have been put forth. It has been supposed by an English scholar that the Second Gospel was written at Caesarea, 'with a reference,' as he understands it, 'not only to Jewish believers, but to Gentile Roman converts, who would have multiplied there in seven or eight years from the conversion of Cornelius' (Birks, *Horæ Evangelicæ*, p. 238). A German scholar of older date, Professor G. C. Storr, of Tübingen, argued on behalf of Antioch as the place of publication. He pointed to the statement in Acts (ch. xi. 19, 20) that those who 'were scattered abroad upon the tribulation that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phœnicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word to none save only to Jews,' with the explanation that some of them, 'men of Cyprus and Cyrene,' 'when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus.' He connected this with what is said of Simon a *Cyrenian*, 'the father of Alexander and Rufus,' in the Gospel itself (ch. xv. 21), and thought it probable that Alexander and Rufus were among the men who went to Antioch, and that this was the reason why Mark introduced them into the paragraph about their father. This is all very ingenious, but also far from convincing.

Ancient testimony, so far as it bears on the question, is almost wholly on the side of Rome. Jerome, e.g., at the close of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century, speaks of Mark, 'the disciple and interpreter of Peter,' as having written 'a brief Gospel at the request of the brethren in Rome, in accordance with what he had heard related by Peter.' Epiphanius, a little earlier, says that 'immediately after Matthew, Mark, having become an attendant of the holy Peter in Rome, had committed to him

the task of setting forth the Gospel,' and that 'having completed his work, he was sent by the holy Peter into the country of the Egyptians.' Eusebius, the Church historian, who flourished about the end of the third century and the beginning of the fourth, makes this statement among others about Mark's Gospel—'When Peter had proclaimed the word publicly at Rome and declared the Gospel under the influence of the Spirit, as there was a great number present, they requested Mark, who had followed him from long time, and remembered well what he had said, to reduce these things to writing, and after composing the Gospel he gave it to those who requested it of him.' Origen, in the early part of the third century, refers to Mark as having composed his Gospel 'under the guidance of Peter,' and quotes in that connexion the words in 1 Pet. v. 13 rendered by our Revisers, 'She that is in Babylon, elect together with *you*, saluteth you, and *so doth* Mark my son.' If Babylon there stands for Rome, the quotation supplies another indication of ancient opinion on the question of place. Earlier still, Clement of Alexandria explains the occasion for writing the Gospel thus—'That after Peter had publicly preached the word in Rome, and declared the Gospel by the Spirit, many who were present entreated Mark, as one who had for long attended the Apostle, and who knew by heart what he had said, to reduce to writing what had been spoken to them; and that Mark, having composed the Gospel, made it over to those who asked him.' And Irenæus of Lyons, in the latter half of the second century, says that 'Peter and Paul went westward, and preached and founded the Church in Rome,' and adds that 'after the departure of these, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, even he, delivered to us in writing the things which were preached by Peter.'

These testimonies are not quite direct and definite, neither are they entirely consistent at all points. But they speak for Rome as the place of composition or of

publication, and this is accepted by most scholars as the most probable conclusion. Confirmation of this has been sought in other directions. In the colophons of some of our later manuscripts of the text it is expressly stated that this Gospel was written in Rome. ‘Here ends the Holy Gospel, the announcement of Mark,’ it is said, e.g. in the colophon of the Peshito Syriac Version; ‘which he spoke and preached at Rome in the Roman language.’ But notes of this kind on the manuscripts are not of much weight. The passage in Paul’s Epistle to the Romans—‘Salute Rufus the chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine’ (ch. xvi. 13) is also appealed to. This Rufus, residing then, as it would appear, in Rome, is supposed to be the brother of the Alexander and the son of the Simon introduced in the passage of the Gospel already referred to (ch. xv. 21), and further to have been a person so well known in Rome that Mark might naturally make some mention of him and of his brother with him when writing in the metropolis. But this is all too uncertain an argument, however ingenious it may be.

There is, however, another place for which something is thought to be said in ancient tradition. That is Alexandria. Chrysostom observes that ‘Mark is said to have composed his Gospel in Egypt at the solicitation of his disciples there,’ and, as we have seen, tradition connects Mark the Evangelist and his ministry in particular with the Egyptian city Alexandria. But the statement made by Chrysostom is entirely without support elsewhere. Some, nevertheless, have suggested that the Gospel may have been published both in Rome and in Alexandria. And there are one or two passages in the writings of the Fathers, Eusebius and Jerome in particular, which have been taken to favour this idea. But these passages when looked into are seen to have no distinct statement to the effect that this Gospel was either composed in Alexandria or given to the Church of that city. So far, therefore, as the facts at our disposal go, the probabilities

remain all on the side of Rome. The New Testament itself, too, shews that Mark was in Rome when Paul was a prisoner there (Col. iv. 10; Philem. 24). It also indicates that he was in Rome with Peter himself, if the *Babylon* in 1 Pet. v. 13 can be taken in the figurative sense it has in the Apocalypse.

## II. DESTINATION OF THE GOSPEL.

The Gospel is not addressed to any definite locality or any particular circle of readers, nor does it state for whom it was specially intended. Tradition, however, gives some indication of its destination. The terms in which Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Jerome, and others refer to it, point at least to Gentile readers as those more immediately in view. And this is what might be inferred from what is found in the Gospel itself. It is in the habit, for example, of interpreting the Aramaic terms which it occasionally introduces. So it is with the words *Boanerges*, *Talitha Cumi*, *Corban*, *Ephphatha*, *Abba* (iii. 17, v. 41, vii. 11, vii. 34, xiv. 30), with the cry from the Cross, *Eloi*, *Eloi*, *lama sabachthani?* (xv. 34), and with the name *Bartimæus* (x. 46). Such reproductions of the vernacular might not be understood by Gentiles. So, too, it is accustomed to explain Jewish customs, seasons, localities, and the like. This is the case with what it says of the 'defiled' hands, the peculiar Jewish washings, the first day of unleavened bread, the two mites, the position of the Mount of Olives, the 'Preparation' or 'the day before the Sabbath,' &c. (vii. 32, vii. 3, 4, xii. 42, xiii. 3, xv. 42). To explain such things to Jewish readers would have been superfluous.

The way in which the Old Testament is treated has also its significance. It has a much smaller place in Mark than it has in the other Evangelists. In Matthew the references to it are so numerous that the whole Gospel has a Hebraic aspect. In Mark there are in all some twenty-three quotations of one kind or other. Most of these follow the text of the Greek Septuagint Version.

These also belong almost entirely to the reports of our Lord's sayings, or those of others given in the narrative, and not to the Evangelist himself. The quotation in ch. xv. 28 which is given in the A. V. is omitted by the R. V., and there remains, therefore, the solitary case of ch. i. 2, 3 as a quotation made by Mark himself. In like manner the Jewish Law is strange to Mark's Gospel. While it appears some eight times in Matthew, nine times in Luke, and eighteen times in John, it does not occur at all in Mark. This Gospel speaks, indeed, of the 'Commandment' repeatedly (vii. 8, x. 19, &c.), but not of the 'Law.'

It has been thought that we can be more specific, and conclude that this Gospel was addressed to *Roman* readers in particular. But there is not enough to bear this out. It is true that some of the early Christian writers, such as Clement of Alexandria and Jerome, connect Rome with the request which they record to have been made to Mark to commit his recollections to writing, and that this might suggest that the destination of the Gospel was Rome. But the historical testimony is scarcely adequate. It is supposed, indeed, to be strengthened by things that are found in the writing itself. But neither are these sufficiently clear and decisive. It has been thought, for example, that the Latinisms which occur in Mark are witnesses in point. It is true that this Gospel adopts certain Latin idioms, and that it uses a number of Latin words—*legion*, *centurion*, *census*, and others, of which some are found in it alone. But such Latinisms occur, though in smaller proportion, in the other Gospels also, and in Jewish writings of both older and later date. Other hints of a Roman circle of readers have been discovered in the way in which Pilate is introduced, which is supposed to mean that he was known to those addressed; in the fact that the 'two mites' are explained by a Roman coin (xii. 42), and in a few incidental occurrences of a similar

kind. But these are precarious indications, and it cannot be said that we have facts enough to connect this Gospel specifically with a Roman destination.

#### 12. DATE OF THE GOSPEL.

The question of the date of composition or of publication is left in an indeterminate position by the Gospel itself, nor does ancient historical testimony speak with any precision on the subject. With considerable probability the date may be placed within a certain term of years, but the facts at our disposal are not sufficient to take us much beyond that. There has been much conjecture, however, and opinion has gone from one extreme to another. Some scholars have contended for a very early date, even as early as 42 or 43 A.D., or at least somewhere between these years and 57 or 58 A.D.; and in support of this they have pointed to the fact that the colophons of some of our ancient manuscripts speak of the book as published ten or twelve years after our Lord's Ascension. Those who argue for Antioch or for Cæsarea as the place of composition or publication are also of opinion that the reasons which point to that conclusion hold in like manner for the very early date.

Others have sought to carry it far into the second century. This is the case with those, like Baur and his most consistent followers, who do not look upon this Gospel as a plain historical narrative, but think it is more a work of art composed with the special object of harmonizing two antagonistic parties in the Church, a strict Petrine party, and a free Pauline party, the one taking a legalistic, Judaic view of the Gospel, and the other a more liberal and catholic view of the same. Those, too, who suppose that this Gospel as we have it is not the original Mark, but that it has a more primitive version of the Evangelist's narrative behind it, as also those who are of opinion that Mark's Gospel came after

those of Matthew and Luke, or at least after that of Matthew, naturally argue for a somewhat later date. This conclusion is thought to be favoured by certain general considerations as well as by some particular points in the Gospel itself. It is urged, for example, that it is very unlikely that anything like a finished, formal Gospel history should have been given to the Church before the fall of Jerusalem. It is also argued that Mark's references to the Coming of the Son of Man and the tribulation of the last times (chs. ix. 1, xiii. 24) differ somewhat from those in Matthew, and seem to contemplate these events as further in the future, as when Mark, e.g. uses the more general phrase, 'in those days,' where Matthew gives the more definite, 'immediately.' But these are slender foundations on which to build a theory.

How does the case stand, then, in the matter of ancient historical testimony? That testimony cannot be said to be either much in amount or very certain in its import. Eusebius in his *Chronicle* connects Mark's Gospel with the third year of the Emperor Claudius (A.D. 43). Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Epiphanius, and Jerome speak of it as written when Peter was yet alive, and as it would seem, after he had come to Rome. Irenæus, in the third book of his treatise *Against Heresies*, puts it somewhat differently. He speaks of Matthew as having gone 'eastward to those of Hebrew descent'; while he says, as we have seen, that 'Peter and Paul went westward, and preached, and founded the Church, in Rome,' stating further that 'after the departure of these,' Mark 'delivered to us in writing the things which were preached by Peter.' As the words 'after the departure of these' are usually understood, the composition of the Gospel, according to Irenæus, did not take place till after the decease of Peter and Paul. There is this amount of difference between Irenæus on the one hand, and Clement and those mentioned along

with him on the other. It is not sufficient, however, to invalidate the testimony of the former, which otherwise seems to be of importance, nor does it affect the question by more than a few years. The death of Peter took place, in all probability, somewhere within the seventh decade of the Christian era, and both sets of testimony may be said, therefore, to point to that as the period within which the date of the Gospel is to be placed.

Whether we can be more precise depends on the interpretation we put on a few things on the writing itself. Of these the most important are the declarations made on the things of the end in ch. xiii, especially those in vers. 13, 14, 24, 30, 33. These are understood most naturally to contemplate the end as yet in the future, though it may be the near future. There is, indeed, nothing in this Gospel that can be said to point distinctly to the destruction of Jerusalem as a thing in the past, and it is difficult to imagine that an event of such moment as the overthrow of the Jewish state and its religious centre, if it had recently occurred, could have had no place, or only an obscure and ambiguous place, in a narrative like this. The date suggested by the statement of Irenæus would be 63 A.D. or a little later, and the date of our Gospel, therefore, may be placed within these limits—before 70 A.D., but probably not much before it.

### 13. OBJECT AND AIM OF THE GOSPEL.

Both the third Gospel and the fourth declare the object with which they were written (Luke i. 1-5; John xx. 31). The second Gospel, on the other hand, proceeds with its narrative without giving any explanation of its design. Advantage has been taken, therefore, of the field thus left open to conjecture, and some elaborate theories have been constructed as to what the writer had in view. It has been supposed, for example, that he wrote with particular reference to the expectation of Christ's Second Coming,

and was moved especially by consideration of the effect which the delay of that event might have on those who had looked for the speedy fulfilment of the promise. He saw that hope might die out, and that faith and courage might decline. He felt that it was necessary to do something to meet such a state of mind, and he wrote this Gospel, it is supposed, with the view of shewing the Christians of his time and circle that, whatever difficulty there might be with the date of their Lord's promised return, there was ample witness otherwise to the reality of his Messianic claims and mission.

A much more important theory, worked out with remarkable ingenuity, and involving more serious issues, is the one associated with the name of Baur and the Tübingen School of critics in Germany. According to them, this Gospel is not a simple, historical narrative, but a composition of a somewhat elaborate order, a tendency-writing undertaken with a definite dogmatic or ecclesiastical object, and involving a skilful selection and manipulation of materials with that in view. The author's intention was to bring together two sharply contrasted parties in the Church, one holding by Peter and the more Jewish conception of Christianity, and the other adhering to Paul and the freer Gentile ideas. He constructed his Gospel, therefore, in the spirit of conciliation, choosing and shaping his matter so as to offend neither the one side nor the other. Some who have not been able to accept this theory as a whole, have taken this Gospel to be an essentially Pauline writing, intended to be in some manner an answer in behalf of Pauline Christianity to the claims understood to be made in the Book of Revelation and elsewhere in the interest of the original apostles.

But these theories of definite doctrinal or ecclesiastical objects ruling this Gospel, determining the use which the writer made of the materials at his disposal, and implying that he took great liberties with these materials are

at variance with the simple, unstudied, matter-of-fact character of the writing, and give it an elaborate and artificial aspect that is alien to it. This Gospel bears witness, no doubt, in its own way, as the others do in theirs, to Jesus as the true Messiah. But it is to push matters too far when it is pronounced to be dominated by the idea of counteracting the unhappy effects produced by the delay of Christ's return. The theory of Baur rests on the supposition of a radical difference of principle between two sections of the primitive Church which is not made historically good. And the peculiar Pauline character asserted for the Gospel is not sustained by any sufficient body of facts. It is founded on precarious inferences drawn from the prominence given in Mark to certain shortcomings on the part of the original disciples, their dullness in spiritual discernment, their lack of power on certain occasions, and things of that kind which are frankly recorded (cf. ch. ix. 10-12, 18, 19, 32, 38, &c.). There is nothing in such doubtful and overdriven methods of construing this Gospel to lead us to think of it as anything else than what it appears *prima facie* to be, or to attribute to its author any other object than to give a plain reliable account of things as he knew them to have occurred—such a record in short of the deeds and words of the Lord Jesus and the events of his life as he had received in the main from Peter, and had been asked, according to tradition, to prepare for the edification of the Church, when the living testimony of the apostles was no more available.

#### 14. THE INTEGRITY OF THE GOSPEL.

We have ample reason for accepting this Gospel in the form in which we have it as in all essential points a trustworthy representation of the original text. The documentary evidence makes this clear. There are a good many passages in which our authorities, manuscripts,

versions, and quotations in early Christian literature, shew variations of reading. But none of these are of serious moment, though some of them are of great interest. Instances of the latter will be found in the following, among other readings and renderings accepted by the R. V. in preference to those of the A. V.—‘in Isaiah the prophet,’ instead of ‘in the prophets’ (i. 2); ‘guilty of an eternal sin,’ instead of ‘in danger of eternal damnation’ (iii. 29); ‘not heeding the word spoken,’ instead of ‘heard the word that was spoken’ (v. 36); ‘he was much perplexed,’ instead of ‘he did many things’ (vi. 20); ‘*This he said*, making all meats clean,’ instead of ‘purg-  
ing all meats’ (vii. 19); ‘by nothing, save by prayer,’ in place of ‘by nothing, but by prayer and fasting’ (ix. 29). The only question, however, that affects the right of any considerable section to be received as part of the original text is in connexion with the closing paragraph (xvi. 9–20). This question is raised by the circumstance that in ancient documents the conclusion appears in three different forms. There is the longer form which is represented in our A. V. There is the shorter form, ending with the words ‘for they were afraid’ (xvi. 8), to which, as shewn in the R. V., the following verses are an appendix. There is also an intermediate form, which runs somewhat as follows—‘But they reported briefly the things that were given in charge to Peter and those with him; and after these things Jesus himself also appeared to them, and from the East and even to the West he sent forth through them the holy and incorruptible message of the eternal salvation.’

This intermediate conclusion may at once be set aside. It is not given by any of the Fathers. It is otherwise insufficiently attested, and we have nothing to shew that it was ever very widely current. On the other hand there is a large body of evidence for each of the other forms. The conclusion as it stands in the A. V. is sup-

ported by a large majority of manuscripts and versions, including some of very ancient date and acknowledged importance, as well as by many of the Fathers. It has also in its favour, it is urged, that it brings the narrative to a natural and intelligible close. On the other hand, the conclusion preferred by the R. V. has on its side the voice of the two oldest and most important manuscripts; and the testimony of other documents, both manuscripts and versions, which are of weight, though fewer in number than the longer conclusion can claim. It is supported also by some notable statements in early Christian literature. Eusebius, e.g., speaks of vers. 9-20 as not found 'in all the copies,' or 'in the accurate copies.' It is a remarkable fact, too, that in many of the Fathers, in whom some reference to these verses might have been expected, they are left unnoticed. There are also certain things in the paragraph itself which point to the action of a different hand. The style is less vivid, and the connexion of the sentences is less simple. Mary Magdalene is mentioned with the particular note of identification 'from whom he had cast out seven devils,' although she has been introduced already by name in the opening verse. Jesus is reported to have risen 'early,' although it has been already stated that it was 'very early' when the women came to the empty tomb. There is also a considerable difference in the choice of terms. The phrase 'the Lord' is introduced twice, which is not used elsewhere by Mark; and words are selected to express *going, following, hurting, working together, confirming, &c.*, which are not found in the body of the Gospel. For these and other reasons, therefore, the shorter ending, notwithstanding its abruptness, is preferred by the majority of scholars, and it is accepted by the American Revisers as well as by the English.

The paragraph in question, however, does not lose its value. Though it may not have belonged to the original form of the Gospel, it must have been added to it at

a very early date, by the original hand, or by some other competent witness—some informed companion or disciple of Mark. It has been supposed, indeed, that a clue to the authorship is furnished by an old Armenian manuscript discovered a few years ago, which speaks of the section as being ‘Of the presbyter Ariston.’ This Ariston may be, it is thought, the Aristion who is mentioned by Papias as one of the disciples of the Lord. Be this as it may, the paragraph remains an independent and historically credible account of the events of the Forty Days, of very ancient date, and of primitive authority. It may have been added in order to complete the original draft of the Gospel, or to make good a loss which the original conclusion somehow had sustained.

#### 15. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GOSPEL.

No careful reader can fail to be conscious of a certain note of difference between Mark and the companion Gospels. This Gospel has qualities which distinguish it very clearly from the others. These qualities are of great interest. They give the book a genius which is quite its own, and make it full of charm. Among the most noticeable is the *plain, direct, business-like* character of its narrative. There is little of the writer’s own notions of things in it, little of the imprint of his own mind. In this respect it differs greatly from the Fourth Gospel, in which the narrative bears so much the stamp of the author’s own ways of thought and forms of speech. What Mark gives us is a simple, objective report of things as he saw them himself or heard them from others. It is not the product of art, nor is it the work of reflection. It is a record of facts as they literally and really were.

But while all is simple, and there is in it nothing of the laboured effort of the stylist or the theorist, the Gospel has a natural *vividness*, a sharpness and colour in its description, which might challenge comparison with

the best achievements of the art that conceals art. The peculiarly graphic, life-like quality of its narrative at once arrests attention. It makes us see things as if they were beneath our own eye in all their sharpness. Thus it is that it chooses so often the direct form of speech—‘Peace, be still’ (iv. 39); ‘Come forth, thou unclean spirit, out of the man’ (v. 8); ‘Send us into the swine’ (v. 12); ‘Come ye yourselves apart’ (vi. 31); ‘Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I command thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him’ (ix. 25).

Thus it is, too, that in many cases a single word or phrase contains a picture in itself, and makes a scene peculiarly real to us. Look, for example, at the descriptions of the Baptist ‘stooping down’ like a slave to unloose the shoe-latchet of Jesus (i. 7); of the heavens in the act of ‘rending asunder’ (i. 10); of the *mooring* of the boat to the Gennesaret shore (vi. 53); of the maid coming on Peter warming himself (xiv. 66). And so it is that the longer narratives are brightened by a series of vivid touches, one here and another there, and always in the right place, which illumine them and bring them home to the imagination. We see this in the story of the paralytic, with its pictures of the crowd about the door, the sick man borne of four, the breaking up of the roof, the sufferer arising straightway, taking up his bed, and going forth in sight of all cured (ii. 1-12). We see it in the description of the storm on the lake—the winds roaring, the waves dashing upon the small vessel and beginning to fill it, the Master on the pillow in the deep sleep of utter weariness, the terror of the disciples, the waking of the Lord, the authoritative word, the instant peace (iv. 35-41). The same is the case with the narratives of the Gadarene demoniac (v. 1-20); the feeding of the five thousand, with the characteristic mention of the fresh greenness of the grass on which the hungry people were made to sit down by companies and in ranks (vi. 39-40); the healing of the blind man

(viii. 22-26); the description of the dumb spirit *crying out* and *tearing* the child, and so *coming out* of him (ix. 26). Nor should we omit Mark's version of the story of the Transfiguration, with its characteristic representations of the dazzling, lucent robes and the scenes of tumult and anguish beneath. 'As you gaze,' says Dean Farrar, 'on Raffaelle's immortal picture of the Transfiguration, you will see at once that it is from the narrative of St. Mark that it derives most of its intensity, its movement, its colouring, its contrast, and its power.'

This Gospel is remarkable also for a certain quality which, for lack of a better term, may be called its *realism*. Its statements of events are not merely descriptive, but realistic. Things are given as if the eye of the writer were upon the objects and his pen followed his eye. His narrative has a circumstantial character which shews itself not merely in its large effects, but in a multitude of minute touches. It is reproduction rather than representation. There is a constant, careful regard for those smaller points which help to make a scene definite and distinct. It is the Gospel of minuteness and detail. It gives the particulars of persons, times, numbers, positions, and the like. It speaks of Simon of Cyrene as 'the father of Alexander and Rufus' (xv. 21); of Joseph of Arimathæa as 'a councillor of honourable estate, who also himself was looking for the kingdom of God' (xv. 43); of Peter as 'warming himself' at the fire, and going out 'into the porch' immediately before the cock crew (xiv. 67, 68). It shews us the swine rushing 'down the steep into the sea' and tells us they were 'about two thousand' in number (v. 13). It notices how the healed demoniac preached 'in Decapolis' (v. 20); how the disciples were sent forth 'two and two' (vi. 7); how the centurion 'stood by over against Jesus' (xv. 39); how the young man was seen 'sitting on the right side' in the tomb (xvi. 5). It describes how, on the occasion of the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand, the people were made to sit

down 'in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties' (vi. 40). It gives precise indications of the times of most solemn moment in our Lord's life—how he went to pray, rising up 'a great while before day' (i. 35); how it was 'the third hour when they crucified him' (xv. 25); how it was 'very early on the first day of the week,' . . . 'when the sun was risen,' that the women came to his sepulchre (xvi. 2). It is not less exact in its statements of the places he frequented and the situations in which he appeared. It tells us how he withdrew 'to the sea' (iii. 7); how he 'sat in the sea' (iv. 1); how he was 'in the stern, asleep on the cushion' (iv. 38); how he 'sat down over against the treasury' (xii. 41); how he 'sat on the mount of Olives, over against the temple' (xiii. 3).

Nor is it only the incidents themselves that Mark's Gospel reproduces in this distinct and circumstantial way; it does the same in many cases with the effects produced by the events. It makes us sensible of the impressions left upon the spectators and hearers. It depicts the *wonder* and *awe* with which Christ's words were listened to and his mighty deeds witnessed. It shews us the *fear*, the *astonishment*, the *sore amazement* of the disciples (iv. 41, vi. 51, x. 24, 26). It shews us, too, the *eagerness*, the *impetuosity*, the unrestrained *insistence* of the people as they *thronged* and *pressed* him till they left him and those with him *scarce room to stand, or sit down, or even to eat* (ii. 2, iii. 10, 20, 32, iv. 1, v. 21, 31, vi. 31, 33, viii. 1).

Its narrative has also the qualities of movement and activity. Though it does not confine itself entirely to the works of Jesus, but retains a certain place for his words, its chief concern, nevertheless, is with what he did and what he experienced. It is the Gospel primarily of his acts, and in reporting these acts it proceeds from one to another in a rapid and direct way. It has little in the form of episode. The one large example of that is

the explanatory account which is given of Herod and his relations with John the Baptist (vi. 17-29). It has little or nothing in the way of reflection. It makes very little attempt to shew the connexions of things, or to link one part of its narrative to another by any device of the literary craftsman's art. It begins its recital with little in the way of preface, and takes up at once its proper subject—the public ministry of Christ. And its report of the events in that ministry is always straight and swift. It takes us from one thing to another by transitions which seem at times abrupt. One of its most characteristic terms is the word 'immediately.' For one occurrence of that word in Luke we have five in Mark.

This Gospel also gives a special view of him who is the subject of all the Gospels. Each of the four Gospels makes its characteristic contribution to the great picture of the Saviour of Israel and the world. Each has its own way of setting forth his personality and his life, and Mark has his. It is the simplest and the most objective. He does not dwell, as Matthew does, on the Messianic relations of Jesus and the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy in his life and ministry. Neither does he make it his primary object, as Luke does, to keep before us those aspects of the life of Jesus and his intercourse with different types of humanity which shew him to be a Redeemer suited to all kinds of sinners, a friend meant for men of all ranks, nationalities, and characters. Far less does he exhibit him in the eternal antecedents of his life and the higher mysteries of his person, as John does. All these things are in his Gospel, but they are not there in the proportions which they have in the others. He is content to set Jesus before us just as he had been seen moving about in Galilee and Judæa, a man among men, mixing freely with the different classes of Jewish people to be found in these parts, doing good continually, performing mighty deeds, and speaking words of grace which impressed them with the sense

that he was a prophet, nay more than a prophet—the Son of God.

The story of this sacred life, as it is told in the Second Gospel, has certain features which are less prominent in the others. It has a special interest, for example, in our Lord's periods of retirement. It notices, one after another, a series of retreats which took place at important points in his public ministry. It tells us how he withdrew to 'a desert place' after the first deeds of healing (i. 35); to 'desert places' after the cleansing of the leper (i. 45); to the lake after the restoration of the man with the withered hand (iii. 7-13); to the villages after his rejection at Nazareth (vi. 6); to 'a desert place' after the murder of the Baptist (vi. 30-32); to 'the borders of Tyre and Sidon' after the opposition of the party of the Pharisees (vii. 24); to the neighbourhood of Cæsarea Philippi after the restoration of sight to the blind man (viii. 27); to the range of Hermon after the first open announcement of his coming Passion (ix. 2); and to Bethany after his triumphal entry into the Holy City (xi. 11), and after the purging of the Temple (xi. 19).

It preserves for us also more of the words of Jesus in the original vernacular than we have in any of the other Gospels. The list includes these—*Boanerges* (iii. 17), *Talitha cumi* (v. 41), *Corban* (vii. 11), *Ephphatha* (vii. 34), *Bartimæus* (x. 46), *Abba* (xiv. 36), *Golgotha* (xv. 22), *Eloi! Eloi! lama sabachthani?* (xv. 34). And further, it has a peculiar fondness for noticing how our Lord acted, looked, and comported himself. On not a few occasions it carefully records his attitudes, gestures, and movements. It brings him before us as he 'looked round about' on the people in the synagogue (iii. 5); as he 'turned him about in the crowd' (v. 30); and again as he was 'turning about, and seeing his disciples' (viii. 33); and yet again as he 'looked round about upon all things' in the profaned temple (xi. 11). It tells us, too, how he 'sat down, and called the Twelve' (ix. 35); how he 'looked up to heaven' when he took the

loaves and the fishes on the occasion of the miracle of the five thousand (vi. 41), and again when he healed the deaf man who had the impediment in his speech (vii. 34). When it relates the incident of the rich young ruler, it tells us how Jesus 'looking upon him loved him,' and 'looked round about' when he spoke to his disciples (x. 21, 23). And when it speaks of the Lord's regard for children it tells us how on one occasion he 'took a little child' and set him before the disputing disciples, and 'taking him in his arms,' spoke to them (ix. 36); and how on another occasion he took the little children who had been brought to him that he might touch them 'in his arms, and blessed them, laying his hands upon them' (x. 16).

This Gospel, therefore, presents Jesus in the reality of his proper and complete *humanity*. It exhibits him as the bearer of a nature identical with our own, as seen in the sense of hunger (xi. 12), the need of rest (iv. 38), the recoil from death (xiv. 36); and not in these things only, but also in the feelings which he had in common with us—his compassion (vi. 34, viii. 2), his love (x. 21), his serene composure in danger and in trial (iv. 37-40, xv. 5), his longing for solitude (i. 35, vi. 30-32), his wonder (vi. 6), his grief (iii. 5), his sighing (vii. 34, viii. 12), his anger and displeasure (iii. 5, x. 14).

But it also presents him in his *superhuman power*. It gives a large place to his deeds of might. It sets him before us as one endowed with the gift of miracle. It shews us how he exercised that gift on suitable occasion; what an impression was produced by it both upon the people and upon his disciples (i. 27, ii. 12, vii. 37); how the multitudes recognized it, and believed in it, and were eager to avail themselves of it, bringing their sick and distressed ones to him, not doubting that he was able to relieve and heal; how they were so certain indeed of this that they thought it enough if they could but get him to notice them, or could even touch his garments (i. 32, iii. 10, v. 28, vi. 56).

It does not do this at the cost of other facts which appear in the course of his ministry. It frankly records things which speak rather of infirmity and a limitation of power. It reports how in the beginning of his work the unclean spirits resisted him (i. 24). It tells us that in Nazareth he could 'do no mighty work' (vi. 5). But it brings into clear relief the *reality* and the *energy* of a power resident in him which was of more than man's measure. If Matthew presents him as the son of David and the son of Abraham, in whom all Israel's hopes are made good ; if Luke gives us to see in him the son of Adam, the perfect Man, the Redeemer for all mankind ; and if John reveals to us in him the Eternal Word in whom is the fullness of the Godhead, this Second Gospel presents him as the 'man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs, which God did by him' of whom Peter spoke (Acts ii. 22), 'the Son of God with power' whom Paul declared to be the subject of his gospel and the promise of the prophets (Rom. i. 1-4).

#### 16. ANCIENT TESTIMONIES TO MARK'S GOSPEL.

Reference has been made in the above to the statements which have come down to us from early Christian literature on the subject of Mark and his Gospel. It will be of advantage to the English reader to have the more important of these before him in their fullness. We give them in their historical order.

1. *Papias*. Bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia, very early in the second century. From his five books which had the title of *Expositions of Oracles of the Lord*. The sentences are preserved for us in the *Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius*, iii. 39. They run as follows :—

'Papias also gives in his own work other accounts of the words of the Lord on the authority of Aristion who has been mentioned above, and traditions of the Elder John. To these we refer the curious, and for our present purpose we shall merely add to his words, which have been quoted

above, a tradition which has been set forth through these sources concerning Mark who wrote the Gospel:—

“And the Elder said this also: Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately everything that he remembered, without however recording in order what was either said or done by Christ. For neither did he hear the Lord, nor did he follow him; but afterwards, as I said, [attended] Peter, who adapted his instructions to the needs [of his hearers], but had no design of giving a connected account of the Lord’s oracles. So then Mark made no mistake, while he thus wrote down some things as he remembered them; for he made it his own care not to omit anything that he heard, or to set down any false statement therein.” Such then is the account given by Papias concerning Mark’ (see Gwatkin’s *Selections from Early Christian Writers*, pp. 42, 43).

**2. Justin Martyr.** First half of the second century. From his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*. He refers to the fact that our Lord gave the name *Peter* to one of his Apostles, and the name *Boanerges* to two others, namely, James and John; of which two facts the latter is mentioned by Mark alone. In doing this he proceeds as follows:—

‘And when it is said that he imposed on one of the Apostles the name *Peter*, and when this is recorded in his “Memoirs,” with this other fact that he named the two sons of Zebedee *Boanerges*, which means Sons of Thunder, this is a sign that it was he by whom Jacob was called Israel and Auses, Jesus (Oshea, Joshua).’ As Justin elsewhere speaks of the ‘Memoirs of the Apostles,’ the expression ‘his Memoirs’ in the above statement is taken to mean ‘*Peter’s Memoirs*.’

**3. Irenæus.** Bishop of Lyons. The latter half of the second century. From the third book of his treatise *Against Heresies*, Chapter I.

He says of the Apostles, that, when they had been clothed with the power of the Holy Spirit and fully

furnished for the work of evangelization everywhere, they 'went out to the ends of the earth, preaching the Gospel.' He then mentions how 'Matthew went eastward to those of Hebrew descent, and preached to them in their own tongue, in which he also published a writing of the Gospel,' and how Peter and Paul 'went westward and preached, and founded the church in Rome.' He then proceeds thus:—

'But after the departure of these, Mark the disciple and interpreter of Peter, even he, delivered to us in writing the things which were preached by Peter.'

4. *Clement of Alexandria.* End of the second century and beginning of the third. From his book entitled *Hypotyposes or Outlines*. The passage is preserved by Eusebius, *Eccles. Hist.* vi. 14. It is in these terms:—

'The occasion for writing the Gospel according to Mark was as follows: That after Peter had publicly preached the word in Rome, and declared the Gospel by the Spirit, many who were present entreated Mark, as one who had followed the Apostle for long time and remembered what had been spoken, to commit to writing the things said; and that he, having composed the Gospel, made it over to those who asked him; and that Peter, when he came to know this, did nothing in the way of exhortation either to prevent or to encourage it.'

5. *Tertullian.* Of Carthage. About the same time as Clement. From his book *Against Marcion*, iv. 5; published about 207 or 208 A.D.

He mentions the four Gospels, and refers to two of them as being from 'apostles' and two from 'apostolical men.' Then, having affirmed the authority of Luke's Gospel, he continues thus:—

'The same authority of the Apostolic Churches will likewise endorse the other Gospels which we have in the same manner by their means and according to them—I mean those of John and Matthew—while that which Mark published may be affirmed to be Peter's, whose

interpreter Mark was. For even Luke's form of the Gospel men usually ascribe to Paul. And it may well seem that the works which disciples publish belong to their masters.'

6. *Origen.* Of Alexandria. The early part of the third century. From his *Commentary on the Gospel according to Matthew*.

He speaks of four unchallenged and unchallengeable Gospels as received throughout the Church, and with reference to the one in question he expresses himself thus:—

'The second of them is that according to Mark, who composed it under the guidance of Peter, who, therefore, in his Catholic Epistle acknowledged the evangelist as his son, saying, *The co-elect in Babylon saluteth you, and Mark my son.*'

7. *Eusebius.* The Church historian of Cæsarea. About the close of the third century and the beginning of the fourth. From his *Evangelical Demonstration*, iii. 5.

He says that though the Apostle Peter, 'by reason of excess of modesty, did not undertake to write a Gospel, it had yet all along been currently reported that Mark, who had become his familiar acquaintance and attendant, made memoirs of his discourses concerning the doings of Jesus.' Then, referring to the fact that Mark's Gospel gives a detailed and exact account of Peter's denial of his Lord, he proceeds thus:—

'It is Mark indeed who writes these things. But it is Peter who testifies them concerning himself; for all the contents of Mark's Gospel are regarded as memoirs of Peter's discourses.'

In his *Ecclesiastical History*, Book II. ch. xv, the same writer makes this statement:—

'So greatly, however, did the splendour of piety enlighten the minds of Peter's hearers that it was not sufficient to hear but once, nor to receive the unwritten doctrine of the Gospel of God, but they persevered in every variety

of entreaties to solicit Mark, as the companion of Peter, and whose Gospel we have, that he should leave them a monument of the doctrine thus orally communicated in writing. Nor did they cease their solicitations until they had prevailed with the man, and thus become the means of that history which is called the Gospel according to Mark. They say also that the Apostle (Peter), having ascertained what was done by the revelation of the Spirit, was delighted with the zealous ardour expressed by these men, and that the history obtained his authority for the purpose of being read in the churches. This account is given by Clement in the sixth book of his *Institutions*, whose teaching is corroborated also by that of Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis. But Peter makes mention of Mark in his first Epistle, which he is also said to have composed at the same city of Rome, and that he shews this fact by calling the city by an unusual trope, Babylon; thus: "The Church at Babylon elected together with you, saluteth you, as also my son Marcus" (Bohn's Tr.).

And in the sixteenth chapter of the same book of his *History* Eusebius expresses himself further as follows:—

"The same Mark, they also say, being the first that was sent to Egypt, proclaimed the Gospel there which he had written, and first established churches at the city of Alexandria. And so great a multitude of believers, both of men and women, were collected there at the very outset, that in consequence of their extreme philosophical discipline and austerity, Philo has considered their pursuits, their assemblies, and entertainments, and in short their whole manner of life, as deserving a place in his descriptions."

8. *Epiphanius.* Bishop of Constantia, the ancient Salamis of Cyprus, an opponent of Origen. Born early in the fourth century, died early in the fifth. From his *Panarion* or *Drugchest*, a work in which he described and refuted a multitude of heresies. His testimony is this:—

'But immediately after Matthew, Mark, having become

an attendant of the holy Peter in Rome, had committed to him the task of setting forth the Gospel. Having completed his work, he was sent by the holy Peter into the country of the Egyptians' (see Morrison's *Practical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Mark*, p. 20).

9. *Jerome.* Born at Stridon on the border between Dalmatia and Pannonia, about 340-342 A.D.; died at Bethlehem 420 A.D. From his *Catalogue of Illustrious Men* and his *Letter to Hedibia*.

In the latter he says that Paul had 'Titus as interpreter, as also the blessed Peter had Mark, whose Gospel was composed, Peter narrating and he writing.' In the former he speaks to this effect:—

'Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, wrote a brief Gospel, at the request of the brethren in Rome, in accordance with what he had heard related by Peter. This Gospel, when it was read over to Peter, was approved of and published by his authority, to be read in the churches.'

10. *Augustine.* Bishop of Hippo. Born at Tagaste in Numidia 353 A.D.; died at Hippo in North Africa 430 A.D. From his treatise on *The Harmony of the Evangelists*.

In the second chapter of the first book of the treatise he discusses the order of the Evangelists and the principles on which they wrote. Having spoken of Matthew he proceeds thus:—

'Mark follows him closely, and looks like his attendant and epitomizer. For in his narrative he gives nothing in concert with John apart from the others; by himself separately, he has little to record; in conjunction with Luke, as distinguished from the rest, he has still less; but in concord with Matthew, he has a very large number of passages. Much, too, he narrates in words almost numerically and identically the same as those used by Matthew, where the agreement is either with that evangelist alone, or with him in conjunction with the rest.'

## 17. LITERATURE.

In addition to the well-known works on New Testament Introduction, Articles in the Bible Dictionaries, &c., the following books may be recommended as useful for English readers. Those entirely in English are marked with an asterisk.

- MEYER,** *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Gospels of Mark and Luke.* T. & T. Clark's translation.
- ALFORD,** *Greek Testament,* vol. i.
- \***RIDDLE,** *The Gospel of Mark.* (Schaff's *Popular Commentary on the New Testament.*)
- The Expositor's Greek Testament.* Vol. i, The Synoptic Gospels, by Professor **BRUCE.**
- \***MORRISON,** *A Practical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Mark.*
- \***PLUMPTRE,** *The Gospel according to St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke.* (Ellicott's *New Testament for English Readers,* vol. i.)
- SWETE,** *The Gospel according to St. Mark.*
- GOULD,** *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Mark.* (International Critical Commentary.)
- \***CLARKE,** *Commentary on the Gospel of Mark.* (American Baptist Publication Society.)
- \***LYMAN ABBOTT,** *The New Testament with Notes and Comments.* Vol. i, Matthew and Mark.
- \***MACLEAR,** *Gospel according to St. Mark.* (The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges.)
- \***LINDSAY,** *The Gospel according to St. Mark.* (T. & T. Clark, Handbooks for Bible Classes.)
- \***SOLLY,** *The Gospel according to Mark.* (Carpenter's Bible Manuals.)
- ALLAN MENZIES,** *The Earliest Gospel.*

## CONTENTS AND ANALYSIS

### I. i. 1. Title.

### II. i. 2-13. Immediate Antecedents of the Public Ministry of Jesus.

The Mission of John. The Baptism of Jesus. The Descent of the Spirit. The Heavenly attestation. The Temptation of Jesus.

### III. i. 14—vii. 23. Ministry in Galilee, Eastern and North-Eastern.

First preaching. Call of disciples. A Sabbath in Capernaum. Cure of a demoniac, restoration of Peter's mother-in-law, divers healings. Prayer in a solitary place. Preaching in Galilean synagogues. Cure of leper. Cure and forgiveness of paralytic. Call of Levi and feast in his house. Words on fasting. Plucking ears of corn, and statement of Sabbath Law. Healing of man with withered hand in the synagogue on the Sabbath. Growing acceptance with the people. Appointment of the Twelve. Interference of friends. Accusations of Scribes of Jerusalem. Words on the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. The kinsfolk of Jesus, natural and spiritual. Teaching by Parables—The Sower, the Lamp, the Measure, the Fruit-bearing Earth, the Mustard Seed. The Stilling of the Storm. The Gerasenes and the demoniac named Legion. The healing of the woman with the issue of blood, and the raising of the daughter of Jairus. The unbelief of those of his own country. His village-teaching. Mission of the Twelve. The story of Herod, and the murder of John the Baptist. Retirement of the Apostles for rest. Feeding of the Five Thousand. Dispatch of the disciples to Bethsaida. Jesus in prayer on the mountain. His walking on the Sea. Works of healing in the district of Gennesaret. Entangling questions of the Scribes and Pharisees on washings. Refutation by Jesus. The things that defile.

## CONTENTS OF THE GOSPEL

47

### **IV. vii. 24—viii. 26. Detour into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and Return.**

Healing of the Syrophenician woman's daughter. Return to the Sea of Galilee. Cure of a deaf man having an impediment of speech. Feeding of the Four Thousand. Demand of the Pharisees for a sign. Warnings against the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod. Cure of the blind man at Bethsaida.

### **V. viii. 27—ix. 50. Withdrawal to the parts about Cæsarea Philippi, and Return to North-Eastern Galilee.**

Cæsarea Philippi and Peter's confession. Jesus speaks of his sufferings, death, and resurrection. Peter rebuking and being rebuked. Words on denial of self and saving of the soul. The Transfiguration. Descent from the Mount, and words on the coming of Elijah. Cure of a boy possessed of a dumb spirit. Further announcement by Jesus of his death and resurrection. The Twelve and the little child in Capernaum. Rebuke of John. Warnings against causes of stumbling.

### **VI. x. 1-52. Withdrawal into Perea, and Journey into Judea.**

Jesus in the parts beyond Jordan. Words on marriage and divorce. Rebuke of the disciples, and the blessing of little children. The rich young ruler. Words on riches and the Kingdom, and on sacrifice and reward. Jesus on the way to Jerusalem. More particular intimations of his passion and resurrection. Ambitious request of the sons of Zebedee, and indignation of the disciples. The glory of service. At Jericho. Healing of blind Bartimæus.

### **VII. xi. 1—xiii. 37. Ministry in Jerusalem.**

Jesus at the Mount of Olives. Dispatch of two disciples to fetch a colt. The triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Cursing of the barren fig-tree. Purging of the Temple. Words on the might of faith. Conflict with the Jewish leaders. Challenge of his authority in the Temple. Parable of the Vineyard. Entangling questions regarding tribute and the resurrection. The Scribe's question as to the first of all the Commandments. The question of Jesus concerning David's son. Warning against the Scribes. The widow's mites. Prophetic discourse regarding the fate of the Temple and the City. The things of the end and the coming of the Son of Man. Exhortations to watchfulness.

**VIII. xiv. 1—xv. 47. Events of Passion Week.**

Plot of the Chief Priests and Scribes. The anointing in the house of Simon the Leper. The bargain between Judas and the Chief Priests. The preparation for the Passover. Intimation of his betrayal. The Lord's Supper. Prediction of Peter's faithlessness. The agony in Gethsemane. The Betrayal. The incident of the young man. Jesus before the High Priest. Peter's denials. Jesus before Pilate. Jesus and Barabbas. The purple robe and the crown of thorns. Simon the Cyrenian. Golgotha and the Crucifixion. The darkness over the land, and the death of Jesus. Joseph of Arimathea and the burial.

**IX. xvi. 1-8. The Resurrection.**

The women at the tomb. Christ risen. The message to the disciples and Peter.

**X. xvi. 9-20. APPENDIX : The appearances of the risen Lord.**

Appearance to Mary. Appearance to two disciples on the way. Appearance to the Eleven at meat. The Ascension.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO  
ST. MARK

AUTHORIZED VERSION

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARK

- 1 THE beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, Chap. 1  
2 the Son of God ; as it is written in the prophets, Ministry  
of John.  
Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,  
3 which shall prepare thy way before thee. The  
voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye  
the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.  
4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach  
the baptism of repentance for the remission of  
5 sins. And there went out unto him all the land  
of Judæa, and they of Jerusalem, and were all  
baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing  
6 their sins. And John was clothed with camel's  
hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins ;  
7 and he did eat locusts and wild honey ; and  
preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than  
I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not  
8 worthy to stoop down and unloose. I indeed  
have baptized you with water : but he shall baptize  
you with the Holy Ghost.  
9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus Baptism  
of Jesus.  
came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized  
10 of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up  
out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and  
11 the Spirit like a dove descending upon him : and

**Chap. I** there came a voice from heaven, *saying*, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

**Temptation of Jesus.** And immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness. And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

**Beginning of Ministry of Jesus.** Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

**Call of disciples.** Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him. And when he had gone a little farther thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets. And straightway he called them—and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

**Cure of a demoniac.** And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes. And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked

- him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.
- 26 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and  
27 cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.
- 28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.
- 29 And forthwith, when they were come out of the <sup>Peter's</sup>  
synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon <sup>mother-in-law.</sup>
- 30 and Andrew, with James and John. But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they  
31 tell him of her. And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.
- 32 And at even, when the sun did set, they brought <sup>Divers</sup>  
unto him all that were diseased, and them that  
33 were possessed with devils. And all the city was  
34 gathered together at the door. And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.
- 35 And in the morning, rising up a great while <sup>With-</sup>  
before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary <sup>drawal to</sup>  
36 place, and there prayed. And Simon and they <sup>a solitary</sup>  
37 that were with him followed after him. And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men  
38 seek for thee. And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also:  
39 for therefore came I forth. And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.

**Chap. 1** And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, <sup>40</sup>  
**Healing of** and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him,  
**a leper.** If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And <sup>41</sup>  
 Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand,  
 and touched him, and saith unto him, I will ; be  
 thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, <sup>42</sup>  
 immediately the leprosy departed from him, and  
 he was cleansed. And he straitly charged him, <sup>43</sup>  
 and forthwith sent him away ; and saith unto him, <sup>44</sup>  
 See thou say nothing to any man : but go thy way,  
 shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing  
 those things which Moses commanded, for a  
 testimony unto them. But he went out, and began <sup>45</sup>  
 to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter,  
 insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter  
 into the city, but was without in desert places :  
 and they came to him from every quarter.

**Cure of a** And again he entered into Capernaum after <sup>2</sup>  
**paralytic.** some days ; and it was noised that he was in the  
 house. And straightway many were gathered <sup>2</sup>  
 together, insomuch that there was no room to  
 receive *them*, no, not so much as about the door :  
 and he preached the word unto them. And they <sup>3</sup>  
 come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy,  
 which was borne of four. And when they could <sup>4</sup>  
 not come nigh unto him for the press, they  
 uncovered the roof where he was : and when they  
 had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein  
 the sick of the palsy lay. When Jesus saw their <sup>5</sup>  
 faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy  
 sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of <sup>6</sup>  
 the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their  
 hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies ? <sup>7</sup>

8 who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your 9 hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, 10 Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of 11 the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up 12 thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

13 And he went forth again by the sea side; and <sup>Call of Levi.</sup>

14 all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them. And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphæus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and 15 followed him. And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed 16 him. And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and 17 drinketh with publicans and sinners? When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

18 And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees <sup>Question of fasting</sup>

**Chap. 2**

used to fast: and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said <sup>19</sup> unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come, when the <sup>20</sup> bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days. No man also <sup>21</sup> seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse. And <sup>22</sup> no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles.

**Question  
of the Sab-  
bath law.**

AND it came to pass, that he went through the <sup>23</sup> corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why <sup>24</sup> do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful? And he said unto them, Have ye never <sup>25</sup> read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him? How he went into the house of God in the days <sup>26</sup> of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? And he said unto them, The sabbath was <sup>27</sup> made for man, and not man for the sabbath: therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the <sup>28</sup> sabbath.

**Man with  
withered  
hand.**

And he entered again into the synagogue; and <sup>3</sup>

there was a man there which had a withered hand.  
2 And they watched him, whether he would heal  
him on the sabbath day ; that they might accuse  
3 him. And he saith unto the man which had the  
4 withered hand, Stand forth. And he saith unto  
them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days,  
or to do evil ? to save life, or to kill ? But they  
5 held their peace. And when he had looked round  
about on them with anger, being grieved for the  
hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man,  
Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it*  
out : and his hand was restored whole as the  
6 other. And the Pharisees went forth, and straight-  
way took counsel with the Herodians against him,  
how they might destroy him.

7 But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples Extending  
fame of  
Jesus.  
to the sea : and a great multitude from Galilee  
8 followed him, and from Judæa, and from Jerusalem,  
and from Idumæa, and from beyond Jordan ; and  
they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude,  
when they had heard what great things he did,  
9 came unto him. And he spake to his disciples,  
that a small ship should wait on him because of  
10 the multitude, lest they should throng him. For  
he had healed many ; insomuch that they pressed  
upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues.  
11 And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down  
before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son  
12 of God. And he straitly charged them that they  
should not make him known.  
13 And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth  
unto him whom he would : and they came unto  
14 him. And he ordained twelve, that they should Choice  
of the  
Twelve.

**Chap. 3**

be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, 15 and to cast out devils: and Simon he surnamed 16 Peter; and James *the son* of Zebedee, and John 17 the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder: and 18 Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James *the son* of Alphæus, and Thaddæus, and Simon the Canaanite, and Judas 19 Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into an house.

Fears of  
friends  
and oppo-  
sition of  
Scribes.

And the multitude cometh together again, so 20 that they could not so much as eat bread. And 21 when his friends heard *of it*, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself. And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem 22 said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils. And he called them 23 unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan? And if a kingdom be 24 divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house 25 cannot stand. And if Satan rise up against himself, 26 and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. No man can enter into a strong man's house, and 27 spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house. Verily I 28 say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but he that shall blaspheme 29 against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: because they 30 said, He hath an unclean spirit.

31 There came then his brethren and his mother, Chap. 3  
and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him.

32 And the multitude sat about him, and they said Question  
of kin-  
ship to  
Jesus.  
unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren

33 without seek for thee. And he answered them,

34 saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? And  
he looked round about on them which sat about  
him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

35 For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same  
is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

4 And he began again to teach by the sea side : Parable of  
Sower.

and there was gathered unto him a great multitude,  
so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea ;  
and the whole multitude was by the sea on the

2 land. And he taught them many things by parables,

3 and said unto them in his doctrine, Hearken ;

4 Behold, there went out a sower to sow : and it  
came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way  
side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured

5 it up. And some fell on stony ground, where it  
had not much earth ; and immediately it sprang

6 up, because it had no depth of earth : but when  
the sun was up, it was scorched ; and because it

7 had no root, it withered away. And some fell  
among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked

8 it, and it yielded no fruit. And other fell on good  
ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and  
increased ; and brought forth, some thirty, and

9 some sixty, and some an hundred. And he said  
unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him  
hear.

10 And when he was alone, they that were about  
him with the twelve asked of him the parable.

Explain-  
ation of  
Parable  
of Sower.

**Chap. 4** And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to 11 know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and 12 not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them. And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? 13 and how then will ye know all parables? The 14 sower soweth the word. And these are they by 15 the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts. And these are they likewise which are sown on 16 stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and 17 have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended. And these are they which are sown 18 among thorns; such as hear the word, and the 19 cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. And these 20 are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

The lamp  
and the  
measure.

And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to 21 be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick? For there is nothing 22 hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad. If any man have ears to hear, let him 23

<sup>24</sup> hear. And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall <sup>25</sup> more be given. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.

<sup>26</sup> And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if <sup>27</sup> a man should cast seed into the ground; and <sup>of fruit-bearing earth.</sup> should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not <sup>28</sup> how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn <sup>29</sup> in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

<sup>30</sup> And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the <sup>31</sup> kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than <sup>32</sup> all the seeds that be in the earth: but when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.

<sup>33</sup> And with many such parables spake he the <sup>Use of</sup> word unto them, as they were able to hear it. <sup>parables.</sup>

<sup>34</sup> But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

<sup>35</sup> And the same day, when the even was come, <sup>36</sup> he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in

**Chap. 4** the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. And there arose a great storm of <sup>37</sup> wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of <sup>38</sup> the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and <sup>39</sup> said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said <sup>40</sup> unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? And they feared exceedingly, <sup>41</sup> and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

**Case of  
the Gera-  
sene de-  
moniac.**

AND they came over unto the other side of <sup>5</sup> the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. And <sup>2</sup> when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an <sup>3</sup> unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: because that he had been often bound <sup>4</sup> with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. And <sup>5</sup> always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran <sup>6</sup> and worshipped him, and cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou <sup>7</sup> Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit. And <sup>8</sup> he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many. <sup>9</sup>

10 And he besought him much that he would not  
11 send them away out of the country. Now there  
was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd  
12 of swine feeding. And all the devils besought  
him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may  
13 enter into them. And forthwith Jesus gave them  
leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and  
entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently  
down a steep place into the sea, (they were about  
14 two thousand;) and were choked in the sea. And  
they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city,  
and in the country. And they went out to see  
15 what it was that was done. And they come to  
Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the  
devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed,  
and in his right mind: and they were afraid.  
16 And they that saw it told them how it befell to  
him that was possessed with the devil, and also  
17 concerning the swine. And they began to pray  
18 him to depart out of their coasts. And when he  
was come into the ship, he that had been possessed  
with the devil prayed him that he might be with  
19 him. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith  
unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them  
how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and  
20 hath had compassion on thee. And he departed,  
and began to publish in Decapolis how great things  
Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.  
21 And when Jesus was passed over again by ship  
unto the other side, much people gathered unto  
22 him: and he was nigh unto the sea. And, behold,  
there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue,  
Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at

Appeal  
of Jairus.

**Chap. 5** his feet, and besought him greatly, saying, My 23 little daughter lieth at the point of death: *I pray thee*, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live. And Jesus went 24 with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him.

**Woman with issue of blood.**

And a certain woman, which had an issue of 25 blood twelve years, and had suffered many things 26 of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, when she had heard of Jesus, came in the 27 press behind, and touched his garment. For she 28 said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood 29 was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. And Jesus, immediately 30 knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto 31 him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And he looked 32 round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing 33 what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. And he said 34 unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

**Raising of daughter of Jairus.**

While he yet spake, there came from the ruler 35 of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? As soon as Jesus heard the word 36 that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe. And he 37

suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and  
38 James, and John the brother of James. And he  
cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue,  
and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and  
39 wailed greatly. And when he was come in, he  
saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and  
weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.  
40 And they laughed him to scorn. But when he  
had put them all out, he taketh the father and  
the mother of the damsel, and them that were  
with him, and entereth in where the damsel was  
41 lying. And he took the damsel by the hand,  
and said unto her, *Talitha cumi*; which is, being  
42 interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. And  
straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she  
was of the age of twelve years. And they were  
43 astonished with a great astonishment. And he  
charged them straitly that no man should know  
it; and commanded that something should be  
given her to eat.

6 And he went out from thence, and came into <sup>Rejection</sup> <sub>in his own country.</sub> his own country; and his disciples follow him.  
2 And when the sabbath day was come, he began  
to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing  
him were astonished, saying, From whence hath  
this man these things? and what wisdom *is* this  
which is given unto him, that even such mighty  
3 works are wrought by his hands? Is not this the  
carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James,  
and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not  
his sisters here with us? And they were offended  
4 at him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is  
not without honour, but in his own country, and

**Chap. 6** among his own kin, and in his own house. And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching.

Mission  
of the  
Twelve.

And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits; and commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse: but be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats. And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city. And they went out, and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.

**Herod and the murder of the Baptist.** And king Herod heard *of him*; (for his name was spread abroad;) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him. Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets. But when Herod heard *thereof*, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead. For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias'

sake, his brother Philip's wife : for he had married  
18 her. For John had said unto Herod, It is not  
19 lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. There-  
fore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and  
20 would have killed him ; but she could not : for  
Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just  
man and an holy, and observed him ; and when  
he heard him, he did many things, and heard  
21 him gladly. And when a convenient day was  
come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper  
to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of  
22 Galilee ; and when the daughter of the said  
Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased  
Herod and them that sat with him, the king said  
unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt,  
23 and I will give it thee. And he sware unto her,  
Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it  
24 thee, unto the half of my kingdom. And she  
went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall  
I ask ? And she said, The head of John the  
25 Baptist. And she came in straightway with haste  
unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou  
give me by and by in a charger the head of John  
26 the Baptist. And the king was exceeding sorry ;  
yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which  
27 sat with him, he would not reject her. And  
immediately the king sent an executioner, and  
commanded his head to be brought : and he went  
28 and beheaded him in the prison, and brought his  
head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel :  
29 and the damsel gave it to her mother. And  
when his disciples heard *of it*, they came and  
took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

**Chap. 6** And the apostles gathered themselves together <sup>30</sup>  
Feeding of unto Jesus; and told him all things, both what  
the 5,000. they had done, and what they had taught. And <sup>31</sup>  
he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there  
were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they departed <sup>32</sup>  
into a desert place by ship privately. And the <sup>33</sup> people saw them departing, and many knew him,  
and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him. And Jesus, <sup>34</sup>  
when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things. And when <sup>35</sup>  
the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed: send them away, that they <sup>36</sup>  
may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat. He answered and said unto <sup>37</sup> them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat? He saith unto <sup>38</sup> them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes. And he commanded them to make all <sup>39</sup> sit down by companies upon the green grass. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and <sup>40</sup> by fisties. And when he had taken the five <sup>41</sup> loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two

<sup>42</sup> fishes divided he among them all. And they <sup>Chap. 6</sup>  
<sup>43</sup> did all eat, and were filled. And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the  
<sup>44</sup> fishes. And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.

<sup>45</sup> And straightway he constrained his disciples to <sup>Walking</sup>  
 get into the ship, and to go to the other side <sup>on the sea.</sup> before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the  
<sup>46</sup> people. And when he had sent them away, he  
<sup>47</sup> departed into a mountain to pray. And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the  
<sup>48</sup> sea, and he alone on the land. And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and  
<sup>49</sup> would have passed by them. But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed  
<sup>50</sup> it had been a spirit, and cried out: for they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of  
<sup>51</sup> good cheer: it is I; be not afraid. And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond  
<sup>52</sup> measure, and wondered. For they considered not the *miracle* of the loaves: for their heart was hardened.

<sup>53</sup> And when they had passed over, they came <sup>Works of</sup>  
<sup>healing in</sup>  
<sup>Genne-</sup>  
<sup>saret.</sup> into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore. And when they were come out of the ship,  
<sup>54</sup> straightway they knew him, and ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they  
<sup>55</sup> heard he was. And whithersoever he entered,

**Chap. 6** into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole.

**Questions  
of wash-  
ings.**

Then came together unto him the Pharisees, 7 and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem. And when they saw some of his 2 disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault. For 3 the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, 4 except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, 5 as the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables. Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? He answered and said unto 6 them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching 7 for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold 8 the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the 9 commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy 10 father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: but ye 11

say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free.*

<sup>12</sup> And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye. And when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand: there is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.

<sup>18</sup> And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

<sup>24</sup> And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know it: but he could not be hid. For a certain woman, whose

Syro-  
phœnician  
woman's  
daughter.

**Chap. 7** young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet: the woman <sup>26</sup> was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter. But Jesus said unto her, <sup>27</sup> Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* unto the dogs. And she answered and said unto him, <sup>28</sup> Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs. And he said unto her, <sup>29</sup> For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter. And when she was come to <sup>30</sup> her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

**Healing  
of deaf  
and  
dumbman.**

And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre <sup>31</sup> and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis. And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and <sup>32</sup> had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him. And <sup>33</sup> he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue; and looking up to heaven, he sighed, <sup>34</sup> and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And straightway his ears were opened, and the <sup>35</sup> string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain. And he charged them that they should <sup>36</sup> tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published *it*; and were beyond measure astonished, saying, He <sup>37</sup> hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

**Feeding  
of the  
4,000.**

In those days the multitude being very great, <sup>8</sup>

and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples  
2 unto him, and saith unto them, I have compassion  
on the multitude, because they have now been  
with me three days, and have nothing to eat:  
3 and if I send them away fasting to their own  
houses, they will faint by the way: for divers  
4 of them came from far. And his disciples answered  
him, From whence can a man satisfy these men  
5 with bread here in the wilderness? And he asked  
them, How many loaves have ye? And they said,  
6 Seven. And he commanded the people to sit  
down on the ground: and he took the seven  
loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to  
his disciples to set before them; and they did  
7 set them before the people. And they had a few  
small fishes: and he blessed, and commanded to  
8 set them also before them. So they did eat, and  
were filled: and they took up of the broken *meat*  
9 that was left seven baskets. And they that had  
eaten were about four thousand: and he sent  
10 them away. And straightway he entered into  
a ship with his disciples, and came into the  
parts of Dalmanutha.

11 And the Pharisees came forth, and began to <sup>Question of signs.</sup>  
question with him, seeking of him a sign from  
12 heaven, tempting him. And he sighed deeply  
in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation  
seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There  
13 shall no sign be given unto this generation. And  
he left them, and entering into the ship again  
departed to the other side.

14 Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, <sup>The evil</sup>  
neither had they in the ship with them more than <sup>leaven.</sup>

**Chap. 8** one loaf. And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* because we have no bread. And when Jesus knew *it*, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened? having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember? When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven. And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand?

**Healing of blind man at Bethsaida.** And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him. And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly. And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell *it* to any in the town.

**Peter's confession.** And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Cæsarea Philippi: and by the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am? And they answered, John the Baptist: but some say, Elias; and others,

- 29 One of the prophets. And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth  
 30 and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ. And he charged them that they should tell no man of him.  
 31 And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and  
 32 be killed, and after three days rise again. And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took  
 33 him, and began to rebuke him. But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be  
 34 of God, but the things that be of men. And when he had called the people unto him with his  
 35 his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall  
 36 save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own  
 37 soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for  
 38 his soul? Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and  
 39 sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory  
 40 of his Father with the holy angels. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.  
 41 And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter,<sup>The transfiguration</sup>

**Chap. 9** and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid. And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

**Questions regarding the resurrection.**

And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead. And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean. And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that Elias must first come? And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoresth all things; and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought. But I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.

**Healing of a demoniac boy.**

And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them. And straightway all the

people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed,  
16 and running to him saluted him. And he asked  
17 the scribes, What question ye with them? And  
one of the multitude answered and said, Master,  
I have brought unto thee my son, which hath  
18 a dumb spirit; and wheresoever he taketh him,  
he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth  
with his teeth, and pineth away: and I speake  
to thy disciples that they should cast him out;  
19 and they could not. He answereth him, and  
saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I  
be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring  
20 him unto me. And they brought him unto him:  
and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare  
him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed  
21 foaming. And he asked his father, How long <sup>The</sup> father's  
is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, <sup>appeal.</sup>  
22 Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into  
the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if  
thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us,  
23 and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst  
believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.  
24 And straightway the father of the child cried out,  
and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou  
25 mine unbelief. When Jesus saw that the people  
came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit,  
saying unto him, *Thou* dumb and deaf spirit, I  
charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more  
26 into him. And the *spirit* cried, and rent him sore,  
and came out of him: and he was as one dead;  
27 insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus  
took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and  
28 he arose. And when he was come into the house,

**Chap. 9** his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

**Further announcement of his death and resurrection.**

And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know it. For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day. But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him.

**Rebuke of the ambition of the disciples.**

And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who *should be* the greatest. And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all. And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

**Questions of discipleship and offences.**

And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbade him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part. For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my

name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say  
 42 unto you, he shall not lose his reward. And whosoever shall offend one of *these* little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast  
 43 into the sea. And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire  
 44 that never shall be quenched: where their worm  
 45 dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be  
 46 quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the  
 47 fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having  
 48 two eyes to be cast into hell fire: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.  
 49 For every one shall be salted with fire, and every  
 50 sacrifice shall be salted with salt. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltiness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

10 And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judæa by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was  
 Questions  
of mar-  
riage and  
divorce.  
 2 wont, he taught them again. And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a  
 3 man to put away his wife? tempting him. And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses  
 4 command you? And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorce, and to put her away.

**Chap. 10** And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife ; and they twain shall be one flesh : so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter. And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

**Blessing little children.**

And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them : and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw *it*, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not : for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

**The rich young ruler.**

And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life ? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good ? there is none good but one, *that is*, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother. And he

answered and said unto him, Master, all these **Chap. 10**  
 21 have I observed from my youth. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take  
 22 up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

23 And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have **Law of entrance into the kingdom.**  
 24 riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to  
 25 enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.  
 26 And they were astonished out of measure, saying  
 27 among themselves, Who then can be saved? And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men *it is* impossible, but not with God: for with God all  
 28 things are possible. Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed  
 29 thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother,  
 30 or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last first.

**Chap. 10** And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem ; 31  
**Announce-  
ment of  
death and  
resurrec-  
tion.** and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him, saying, 32 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem ; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes ; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles : and they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him : and the third day he shall rise again.

**Rebuke of  
sons of  
Zebedee.** And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, 33 come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire. And he said unto them, What would 34 ye that I should do for you ? They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know 35 not what ye ask : can ye drink of the cup that I drink of ? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with ? And they said unto 36 him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of ; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized : but to sit on my right 40 hand and on my left hand is not mine to give ; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared. And when the ten heard it, they began 41 to be much displeased with James and John. But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto 42 them, Ye know that they which are accounted

to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

46 And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimæus, the son of Timæus, sat by the highway side begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me. And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

11 AND when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith

Triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.

**Chap. 11** unto them, Go your way into the village over against you : and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat ; loose him, and bring him. And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this ? say ye that the Lord hath need of him ; and straightway he will send him hither. And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without in a place where two ways met ; and they loose him. And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt ? And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded : and they let them go. And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him ; and he sat upon him. And many spread their garments in the way : and others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed them in the way. And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, *Hosanna* ; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord : Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord : *Hosanna* in the highest. And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple : and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

**Cursing  
of the  
barren  
fig tree.**

AND on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry : and seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon : and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves ; for the time of figs was not *yet*. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard *it*.

15 And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went Chap. 11  
Cleansing  
of the  
temple.  
 into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of  
 16 them that sold doves; and would not suffer that any man should carry *any* vessel through the  
 17 temple. And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den  
 18 of thieves. And the scribes and chief priests heard *it*, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was  
 19 astonished at his doctrine. And when even was come, he went out of the city.

20 AND in the morning, as they passed by, they Counsels  
on faith,  
prayer,  
and for-  
giveness.  
 21 saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst  
 22 is withered away. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to  
 24 pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and  
 25 ye shall have *them*. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you  
 26 your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

**Chap. 11** And they come again to Jerusalem: and as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders, and say unto him, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? answer me. And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed. And they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

**Parable  
of the  
vineyard.** And he began to speak unto them by parables. A certain man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about it, and digged a place for the winefat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country. And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard. And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty. And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully handled. And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some. Having yet therefore one son, his wellbeloved, he sent him

also last unto them, saying, They will reverence Chap. 12  
 7 my son. But those husbandmen said among  
 themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill  
 8 him, and the inheritance shall be our's. And  
 they took him, and killed him, and cast him out  
 9 of the vineyard. What shall therefore the lord  
 of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy  
 10 the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto  
 others. And have ye not read this scripture; The  
 stone which the builders rejected is become the  
 11 head of the corner: this was the Lord's doing,  
 12 and it is marvellous in our eyes? And they sought  
 to lay hold on him, but feared the people: for  
 they knew that he had spoken the parable against  
 them: and they left him, and went their way.

13 And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees Questions  
of tribute.  
 and of the Herodians, to catch him in his words.

14 And when they were come, they say unto him,  
 Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for  
 no man: for thou regardest not the person of men,  
 but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful  
 15 to give tribute to Cæsar, or not? Shall we give,  
 or shall we not give? But he, knowing their  
 hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me?  
 16 bring me a penny, that I may see it. And they  
 brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this  
 image and superscription? And they said unto  
 17 him, Cæsar's. And Jesus answering said unto them,  
 Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's,  
 and to God the things that are God's. And they  
 marvelled at him.

18 Then come unto him the Sadducees, which say Questions  
of the  
resurrec-  
tion.  
 there is no resurrection; and they asked him,

**Chap. 12** saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave his wife behind him, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed. And the second took her, and died, neither left he any seed: and the third likewise. And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also. In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife. And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God? For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven. And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.

**Question  
of the  
great  
command-  
ment.**

And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none

32 other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none  
 33 other but he: and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *his* neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt  
 34 offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him *any question.*

35 And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is  
 36 the Son of David? For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy  
 37 footstool. David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he then his son? And the common people heard him gladly.

38 And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing,  
 39 and *love* salutations in the marketplaces, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost  
 40 rooms at feasts: which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.

41 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: The widow's offering.  
 42 and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two  
 43 mites, which make a farthing. And he called *unto* him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in,

Chap. 12

Question concerning David's Son.

Warning against the scribes.

Chap. 12

than all they which have cast into the treasury : for all they did cast in of their abundance ; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, *even* all her living.

Destruc-  
tion  
of the  
temple  
foretold.

AND as he went out of the temple, one of his 13 disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings *are here !* And Jesus 2 answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings ? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

Announce-  
ment of  
beginnings  
of travail.

And as he sat upon the mount of Olives over 3 against the temple, Peter and James and John and 4 Andrew asked him privately, Tell us, when shall 5 these things be ? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled ? And Jesus answer- 6 ing them began to say, Take heed lest any *man* deceive you : for many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ* ; and shall deceive many. And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of 8 wars, be ye not troubled : for such things must needs be ; but the end *shall not be* yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom : and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles : these are the beginnings of sorrows.

Announce-  
ment of  
persecu-  
tions.

But take heed to yourselves : for they shall 9 deliver you up to councils ; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten : and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them. And the gospel must first be pub- 10 lished among all nations. But when they shall 11 lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye

1 premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that  
12 speak, but the Holy Ghost. Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.  
13 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14 But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judæa flee 15 to the mountains: and let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter *therein*, to take any thing out of his house: 16 and let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment. But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give 18 suck in those days! And pray ye that your flight 19 be not in the winter. For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, 20 neither shall be. And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, 21 he hath shortened the days. And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, 22 lo, *he is* there; believe him not: for false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even 23 the elect. But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things

Days of suffering.

**Chap. 13** But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun <sup>24</sup>  
**Coming of** shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give  
**the Son of** her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall, and <sup>25</sup>  
**man.** the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.

And then shall they see the Son of man coming <sup>26</sup>  
 in the clouds with great power and glory. And <sup>27</sup>  
 then shall he send his angels, and shall gather  
 together his elect from the four winds, from the  
 uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part  
 of heaven.

**Need of  
watchful-  
ness.**

Now learn a parable of the fig tree ; When her <sup>28</sup>  
 branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye  
 know that summer is near : so ye in like manner, <sup>29</sup>  
 when ye shall see these things come to pass, know  
 that it is nigh, even at the doors. Verily I say <sup>30</sup>  
 unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till  
 all these things be done. Heaven and earth shall <sup>31</sup>  
 pass away : but my words shall not pass away.  
 But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, <sup>32</sup>  
 no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither  
 the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch <sup>33</sup>  
 and pray : for ye know not when the time is. *For* <sup>34</sup>  
*the Son of man is* as a man taking a far journey, who  
 left his house, and gave authority to his servants,  
 and to every man his work, and commanded the  
 porter to watch. Watch ye therefore : for ye <sup>35</sup>  
 know not when the master of the house cometh,  
 at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing,  
 or in the morning : lest coming suddenly he find <sup>36</sup>  
 you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say <sup>37</sup>  
 unto all, Watch.

**Council of  
chief  
priests**

AFTER two days was *the feast of the passover*, <sup>14</sup>  
 and of unleavened bread : and the chief priests

and the scribes sought how they might take him by Chap. 14  
 2 craft, and put him to death. But they said, Not on and  
 the feast day, lest there be an uproar of the people. scribes.

3 And being in Bethany in the house of Simon The  
anointing  
in Simon's  
house.  
 the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious ; and she brake the box, and poured 4 *it* on his head. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was 5 this waste of the ointment made ? for it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And 6 they murmured against her. And Jesus said, Let her alone ; why trouble ye her ? she hath wrought 7 a good work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whosoever ye will ye may do 8 them good : but me ye have not always. She hath done what she could : she is come beforehand to 9 anoint my body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, *this* also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

10 AND Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto Treachery  
of Judas.  
 11 the chief priests, to betray him unto them. And when they heard *it*, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

12 And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou Prepara-  
tion for  
the Pass-  
over.

13 mayest eat the passover ? And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man

**Chap. 14** bearing a pitcher of water: follow him. And 14 wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? And he will shew you a large 15 upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for us. And his disciples went forth, and 16 came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

**Indication  
of the  
traitor.** AND in the evening he cometh with the twelve. 17 And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say 18 unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me. And they began to be sorrowful, and 19 to say unto him one by one, Is it I? and another said, Is it I? And he answered and said unto them, 20 It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish. The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is 21 written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born.

**The Lord's  
Supper.** And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and 22 blessed, and brake *it*, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, 23 and when he had given thanks, he gave *it* to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, 24 This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will 25 drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out 26 into the mount of Olives.

**Prediction  
of Peter's  
fall.** And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offend- 27 ed because of me this night: for it is written, I will

smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.

28 But after that I am risen, I will go before you into  
29 Galilee. But Peter said unto him, Although all  
30 shall be offended, yet *will* not I. And Jesus saith  
unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day,  
even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou  
31 shalt deny me thrice. But he spake the more  
vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not  
deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.

32 And they came to a place which was named The agony  
in Geth-  
semane. Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye  
33 here, while I shall pray. And he taketh with him  
Peter and James and John, and began to be sore  
34 amazed, and to be very heavy; and saith unto  
them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death:  
35 tarry ye here, and watch. And he went forward a  
little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it  
36 were possible, the hour might pass from him. And  
he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto  
thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless  
37 not what I will, but what thou wilt. And he  
cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto  
Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou  
38 watch one hour? Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter  
into temptation. The spirit truly *is* ready, but the  
39 flesh is weak. And again he went away, and  
40 prayed, and spake the same words. And when  
he returned, he found them asleep again, (for  
their eyes were heavy,) neither wist they what  
41 to answer him. And he cometh the third time,  
and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your  
rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the  
Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

**chap. 14** Rise up, let us go ; lo, he that betrayeth me is at <sup>42</sup> hand.

**The betrayal and arrest.** And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh <sup>43</sup> Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. And he <sup>44</sup> that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead him away safely. And as soon as <sup>45</sup> he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, master; and kissed him. And they <sup>46</sup> laid their hands on him, and took him. And one <sup>47</sup> of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye <sup>48</sup> come out, as against a thief, with swords and with staves to take me? I was daily with you in the <sup>49</sup> temple teaching, and ye took me not: but the scriptures must be fulfilled. And they all forsook <sup>50</sup> him, and fled.

**Incident of the young man.**

And there followed him a certain young man, <sup>51</sup> having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him: and he left <sup>52</sup> the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.

**Jesus before the Jewish Council.**

And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and <sup>53</sup> with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. And Peter followed <sup>54</sup> him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire. And the chief priests and all <sup>55</sup> the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none. For many bare <sup>56</sup> false witness against him, but their witness agreed

57 not together. And there arose certain, and bare  
 58 false witness against him, saying, We heard him  
     say, I will destroy this temple that is made with  
     hands, and within three days I will build another  
 59 made without hands. But neither so did their  
 60 witness agree together. And the high priest stood  
     up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest  
     thou nothing? what *is it which* these witness against  
 61 thee? But he held his peace, and answered nothing.  
     Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him,  
 62 Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And  
     Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man  
     sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in  
 63 the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent  
     his clothes, and saith, What need we any further  
 64 witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what  
     think ye? And they all condemned him to be  
 65 guilty of death. And some began to spit on him,  
     and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to  
     say unto him, Prophesy: and the servants did  
     strike him with the palms of their hands.

66 And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there Peter's  
 67 cometh one of the maids of the high priest: and denials.  
     when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked  
     upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus  
 68 of Nazareth. But he denied, saying, I know not,  
     neither understand I what thou sayest. And he  
 69 went out into the porch; and the cock crew. And  
     a maid saw him again, and began to say to them  
 70 that stood by, This is one of them. And he denied  
     it again. And a little after, they that stood by  
     said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them:  
     for thou art a Galilæan, and thy speech agreeth

**Chap. 14** *thereto.* But he began to curse and to swear, <sup>71</sup> saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak. And the second time the cock crew. And Peter <sup>72</sup> called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.

**Jesus  
before  
Pilate.**

And straightway in the morning the chief priests <sup>15</sup> held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate. And Pilate <sup>2</sup> asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it. And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing. And Pilate asked him again, <sup>3</sup> saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee. But Jesus yet <sup>4</sup> answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.

**Release of  
Barabbas.**

Now at that feast he released unto them one <sup>6</sup> prisoner, whomsoever they desired. And there was one named Barabbas, which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection. And the multitude crying aloud began to desire *him to do* as he had ever done unto them. But Pilate <sup>7</sup> answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews? For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy. But <sup>8</sup> the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them. And Pilate <sup>9</sup> answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews? And they cried out again, <sup>10</sup> Crucify him. Then Pilate said unto them, Why, <sup>11</sup>

what evil hath he done? And they cried out the Chap. 15  
 15 more exceedingly, Crucify him. And so Pilate,  
 willing to content the people, released Barabbas  
 unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had  
 scourged him, to be crucified.

16 And the soldiers led him away into the hall, Jesus  
mocked  
and  
scourged.  
 called Prætorium; and they call together the whole  
 17 band. And they clothed him with purple, and  
 platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his  
 18 head, and began to salute him, Hail, King of the  
 19 Jews! And they smote him on the head with  
 a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their  
 20 knees worshipped him. And when they had mocked  
 him, they took off the purple from him, and put his  
 own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.

21 And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who  
 passed by, coming out of the country, the father of The cruci-  
fixion  
between  
two rob-  
bers.  
 22 Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross. And they  
 bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being  
 23 interpreted, The place of a skull. And they gave  
 him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he  
 24 received it not. And when they had crucified him,  
 they parted his garments, casting lots upon them,  
 25 what every man should take. And it was the third  
 26 hour, and they crucified him. And the superscrip-  
 tion of his accusation was written over, THE  
 27 KING OF THE JEWS. And with him they  
 crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand,  
 28 and the other on his left. And the scripture was  
 fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with  
 29 the transgressors. And they that passed by railed  
 on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou  
 that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three

**Chap. 15** days, save thyself, and come down from the cross. 30  
 Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among 31  
 themselves with the scribes, He saved others ; him-  
 self he cannot save. Let Christ the King of Israel 32  
 descend now from the cross, that we may see and  
 believe. And they that were crucified with him  
 reviled him.

The dark-  
ness, and  
the death  
of Jesus.

And when the sixth hour was come, there was 33  
 darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.  
 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud 34  
 voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which  
 is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast  
 thou forsaken me? And some of them that stood 35  
 by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth  
 Elias. And one ran and filled a spunge full of 36  
 vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to  
 drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias  
 will come to take him down. And Jesus cried 37  
 with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And 38  
 the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the  
 top to the bottom.

The cen-  
turion  
and the  
women.

And when the centurion, which stood over 39  
 against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave  
 up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son  
 of God. There were also women looking on afar 40  
 off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary  
 the mother of James the less and of Joses, and  
 Salome; (who also, when he was in Galilee, followed 41  
 him, and ministered unto him;) and many other  
 women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.

The burial  
of Jesus.

And now when the even was come, because it 42  
 was the preparation, that is, the day before the  
 sabbath, Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable 43

counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom Chap. 15  
of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate,  
44 and craved the body of Jesus. And Pilate mar-  
velled if he were already dead: and calling unto  
him the centurion, he asked him whether he had  
45 been any while dead. And when he knew *it* of  
46 the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. And  
he bought fine linen, and took him down, and  
wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a  
sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and  
rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.  
47 And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of  
Joses beheld where he was laid.

16 AND when the sabbath was past, Mary Magda- The  
women  
and the  
empty  
tomb.  
lene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome,  
had bought sweet spices, that they might come  
2 and anoint him. And very early in the morning  
the first day of the week, they came unto the  
3 sepulchre at the rising of the sun. And they  
said among themselves, Who shall roll us away  
4 the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And  
when they looked, they saw that the stone was  
5 rolled away: for it was very great. And entering  
into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting  
on the right side, clothed in a long white garment;  
6 and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them,  
Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth,  
which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here:  
7 behold the place where they laid him. But go  
your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he ~~goeth~~  
before you into Galilee: there shall ye ~~see him~~, as  
8 he said unto you. And they went out quickly,  
and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled

**Chap. 16** and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid.

**The risen Christ seen of Mary.**

Now when *Jesus* was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

**Seen of two disciples.**

After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country. And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them.

**Seen of the Eleven.**

Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

**The Ascension; the preaching of the disciples.**

So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO  
ST. MARK

REVISED VERSION WITH ANNOTATIONS

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARK

THE beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son **1** of God.

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*Title.* The title which this book bears in ancient documents appears in different forms. In the oldest of our Greek MSS. it is simply ‘According to Mark’; in those a little later it is ‘The Gospel according to Mark’; in others later still it is ‘The Holy Gospel according to Mark.’ We do not know when the records of Christ’s life first came to have the distinctive name of ‘Gospels.’ It may have been at a very early period, not very long indeed after they got into circulation; as may be gathered perhaps from the way in which they are spoken of in ancient lists of the N. T. books, and by writers like Irenæus of Lyons, Tertullian of Carthage, and Clement of Alexandria, belonging to the end of the second century or the beginning of the third. We have no reason to suppose that it was given them by their authors; nor can we say that it was believed by early Christian writers to have been so given. One of the best of the Greek Fathers, Chrysostom of Antioch, declares that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John did not ‘write their names.’ The designation was attached to the books by the scribes to whom we owe the MSS.; and it expresses their belief, or the traditional belief, regarding the authorship of these records. In the present case it means not that the book was composed after Mark’s manner merely, or on the basis of matter furnished by Mark, but that Mark himself was the author of the Gospel in this particular written form.

i. 1-8. *Introduction.* The second Gospel is the Gospel of *action*, and it has that character from its first statement. It opens in a way remarkable for its brevity, simplicity, and directness. It takes the shortest course to the heart of its subject—the good news of the actual advent of Messiah. It dispenses with all but the briefest and most obvious introduction. In the eight verses which serve that purpose it gives the historical event in which

the fulfilment of the Divine promise began to declare itself, and in which the writer finds the point of issue for his narrative.

There is a difference therefore, which at once catches the eye, between this Gospel and the other three in the way in which their common theme is approached. Matthew starts with our Lord's genealogy, birth, and infancy. Luke likewise takes in hand the question of his descent, and reports both the circumstances of his birth and the incidents of his childhood and youth. John begins with his pre-existence, and carries us back to the eternal antecedents of his mission in the flesh. Mark, on the other hand, does not take us behind the appearance of the Forerunner.

In what he says of this Forerunner, too, he follows his own course. Matthew gives with some circumstance not only the burden, but also the effects of John's preaching. With considerable detail Luke reports the incidents of the Baptist's birth. In like manner John sets the career of the second Elias in the front of his version of the Gospel, expounding both the purpose for which he was sent by God and the testimony which he bore to Jesus. But Mark passes by most of these things, as he passes by the story of our Lord's earliest years, and fixes at once on the Baptist's preaching. Having it in view to give an account of Christ's public ministry and official work, he seeks no other starting-point than the immediately antecedent event, viz. his baptism at the hands of John. It is as a preparation for this that he gives his picture in small compass of the man, his mission, and his doings in the wilderness of Judea.

**1.** The opening verse stands by itself. It forms the heading for the narrative as a whole, or, it may be, for the paragraph occupied with the Forerunner. It announces the subject with which the book is to be engaged, and the point at which it has its historical commencement. The subject is ‘the gospel of Jesus Christ,’ that is, the good news concerning Jesus Christ, the Messiah, long looked for, but now come and seen of men in the fulfilment of his Divine vocation. When John made his appearance, proclaiming one mightier than himself who came after him, the glad tidings of the realization of God’s promise and Israel’s hope began to be made good.

**gospel.** This familiar word, with all its dear associations, comes to us from the Anglo-Saxon ‘Godspell,’ which means *God-story*. It represents a Greek word which signifies in the oldest literature a *present* or *reward* given for good news, later a *sacrifice* or *thank-offering* for the same, and later still the *good news* itself. In the Greek translation of the O. T. it is applied generally to any kind of ‘good news’ (e. g. 2 Sam. iv. 10; 2 Kings vii. 9), and specifically to the prophetic announcement of the coming of the Messianic kingdom (e. g. Isa. lxi. 1-2). In

the N.T. it is closely related to the great idea of the *kingdom of God*, and means definitely 'the good news of Messiah's kingdom' (Matt. iv. 23, ix. 35, xxiv. 14, &c.). The present passage is the only one in the four evangelic narratives in which the particular phrase 'the gospel of Jesus Christ' is found. Elsewhere in these records it is simply 'the gospel,' or 'the gospel of God' (Mark i. 14, R.V.), or 'the gospel of the kingdom.' In the Gospels themselves the prevailing idea of the phrase 'the gospel' is that of the good news *proclaimed* or *brought in* by Christ. In the Epistles it is that of the good news *about* Christ. But even in the Gospels the term is at times connected in a significant way with the person of Christ, as e.g. in the words 'for my sake and the gospel's' (Mark viii. 35; cf. x. 29); and in this opening verse of Mark we see the transition from 'the good news brought by Christ' to 'the good news regarding Christ.' The word is used by Paul more frequently and with greater variety of application than by any other N.T. writer. It occurs but once in Peter (1 Pet. iv. 17), once in the Apocalypse (xiv. 6), twice in Acts (xv. 7, xx. 24), four times in Matthew, eight times in Mark, never in James, never in Luke's Gospel, never in John's Gospel or Epistles, never in Hebrews, but some fifty-eight times in the Epistles ascribed to Paul.

**of Jesus Christ.** The person whose ministry is to be the subject of Mark's narrative is designated at the outset with some fullness. He has first the *personal name* 'Jesus'—a name common enough among the Jews, identical with the O.T. Jehoshua (Num. xiii. 16 A. V.), Joshua (Exod. xxiv. 13, &c.), or Jeshua, the form which it had after the Exile (Neh. vii. 7), which means probably 'Jehovah-salvation.' This is followed by the *official name* 'Christ,' the N.T. representative of the Hebrew word for 'Anointed One,' 'Messiah.' Those who held office in Israel were anointed to it, e.g. the priest (Lev. iv. 3, v. 16, vi. 15; Ps. cv. 15). But in the O.T. the *king* is specially spoken of as *anointed* (1 Sam. xxiv. 7, 11; Ps. ii. 2; Isa. xliv. 1, &c.), and in Daniel (ix. 25) Messiah is described as 'prince.' So the term 'Messiah' or 'Christ' became a theocratic name, expressing the idea that he who was to come to restore Israel was to come in the character of a king, and one of David's line. In the *Book of Enoch*, perhaps about the close of the second century B.C., and in the later non-canonical literature of Judaism, it is used of the Messianic king. This official sense, however, gradually fell away, and the term 'Christ' became a personal or proper name like *Jesus*. As such it is used for the most part in Acts and the Epistles. In the Gospels, except in a few passages, especially in the beginnings, it still retains its technical sense, and is best rendered '*the Christ*'.

**Son of God.** To the personal and official names is added

## 2 Even as it is written in Isaiah the prophet,

a third designation, not 'Son of David' or 'Son of Abraham' as in the opening of Matthew's Gospel, but 'Son of God.' This is omitted indeed in some very ancient MSS., but the testimony in its favour is strong enough to entitle us to regard it as a part of the genuine text. It is an important title. It occurs (not to speak of equivalent forms, 'the Son,' 'the only begotten Son,' 'my beloved Son,' &c.) some nine times in Matthew, four times in Mark, six times in Luke, and ten times in John. It is used of Christ both by others and by himself. In the first three Gospels there is but one case in which the definite phrase 'the Son of God' is applied by him directly to himself (Matt. xxvii. 43); but there are various instances in which it is applied indirectly, or in terms of similar meaning. It expresses his peculiar relation to God, a relation of oneness, yet with a difference; just as the title 'the Son of man' expresses his peculiar relation to man. These two names, as used in the N. T., have their roots in the O. T., the one in the figure of the 'Son of man' in Daniel, the other in the son of Jehovah addressed in the second Psalm. Both occur also in the non-canonical writings, and are to be interpreted in their light.

In this opening statement the evangelist gives his own view of the great subject of his narrative. Here, therefore, the title designates that subject as the Messiah, but (as Meyer rightly puts it) 'in the believing consciousness of the *metaphysical* sonship of God.' To Mark, writing after the ministry, the death, and the resurrection, the person whose life he records is the Messiah, but also one related to God by nature, having his being from God as a son has his being from his father.

2-4. How are these verses to be connected with each other and with the first verse? Some take the first three verses together as forming the title to the book or to its first section, and suppose the narrative proper to begin with verse 4. But this gives a cumbrous superscription. Others link verses 1 and 4 together, and deal with verses 2, 3 as a parenthesis. In that case the form of the statement would be—'The beginning of the gospel (and all in accordance with ancient prophecy as seen in Malachi and Isaiah) took place when John came baptizing and preaching.' This arrangement is even more awkward than the former. Others solve the difficulty by inserting a 'was' for which there is no warrant, as if the paragraph ran thus—'The beginning of the gospel *was* as it is written in prophecy.' But the verses run in orderly succession, and are to be arranged as in the R. V., not as in the A. V. The first verse stands by itself as title. The narrative then begins at once with verse 2, and

Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,  
 Who shall prepare thy way;  
 The voice of one crying in the wilderness,  
 Make ye ready the way of the Lord,

proceeds connectedly and continuously thus—‘Just as it is written in ancient prophecy that one should come before the Messiah to prepare the way for him, so did John appear baptizing and preaching.’

**2. in Isaiah the prophet.** Unlike Matthew, Mark seldom introduces the word of prophecy. Here, however, he departs from his usual practice, and brings in two quotations. This he does with the view of shewing that the events in which he recognizes ‘the beginning of the gospel’ took place in accordance with the voice of prophecy, and formed part of the Divine plan. The true reading here, as the testimony of ancient documents decisively proves, is not ‘in the prophets,’ as the A. V. has it, but ‘in the prophet Isaiah,’ as the R. V. puts it. While Mark gives two distinct quotations, one from Malachi and another from Isaiah, he names only the latter prophet as authority or source. So in Matt. xxi. 4, 5 we find a quotation referred to ‘the prophet,’ which combines words of Zechariah with words of Isaiah (Zech. ix. 9; Isa. lxii. 11).

**Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, Who shall prepare thy way.** Omit with the R. V. the words ‘before thee’ in the A. V. The first quotation is from Mal. iii. 1. In adapting it to his purpose here the evangelist makes certain changes in it. The ‘before me’ of Malachi becomes ‘before thy face,’ and is transferred from the second clause to the first. Thus the ‘messenger’ who, according to the prophet, is sent before Jehovah, is said here to be sent before the *Messiah*. What is spoken in Malachi by Jehovah regarding himself, is spoken here by the Lord concerning His anointed. The work ascribed to the ‘messenger’ in the prophecy is a work of preparation for the sudden coming of Jehovah in judgement to His temple. The work ascribed to the Forerunner in the Gospel is that of religious preparation for the advent of the object of Israel’s hope. In the words ‘who shall prepare thy way’ we have a figure taken from the custom, necessary in days when roads were few and ill kept, of sending on an official to make the ways passable, when a monarch was to go on a journey or to make a royal progress. As officers of state made roads ready for the visits of kings, so the ‘messenger’ was to make spiritual preparation for the coming of the Lord’s anointed.

**3. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready**

**Make his paths straight;**

**4 John came, who baptized in the wilderness and preached**

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**the way of the Lord, Make his paths straight.** The second quotation is from Isa. xl. 3. It gives the same idea as the former, but with greater fullness, and again with some modification of the original. The definition of locality, which in the prophecy describes the scene of the preparation of the Lord's ways, is omitted here. In the prophecy the voice is that of a herald of Jehovah; in the Gospel it is the voice of John with reference to Christ. The passage in Isaiah has the return from Babylon in view. It proclaims the glorious news of that deliverance, and gives the call to have all things ready for Jehovah when He brings His people out of exile through the desert to their land. The kingdom of God in Israel was to have its completer realization in the Messianic kingdom, and events in the history of Israel became typical or representative of events in the history of Christ and his kingdom. So the great national deliverance was taken to point forward to the greater Messianic deliverance, and the incident of the call to a material preparation in the former case is interpreted here as typical or representative of the Forerunner's summons of the Jews to a spiritual preparation in the latter.

**4.** The best reading here is that which is represented neither by the 'John did baptize . . . and preach' of the A. V., nor by the R. V. as above, but by this—'John who baptized (John the baptizer) came upon the scene in the wilderness preaching.' This, which is on the whole the best accredited reading, is most in harmony with the fact that the quotations have nothing to say of a baptism. It also puts the preaching and the baptizing in their proper relations; whereas 'baptized and preached' puts that first which was second. Thus the sentence designates John by the thing which distinguished him from others, viz. his *baptizing*, and proceeds to state how he performed the part of forerunner, viz. by *preaching*.

**John:** the Hebrew *Johanan*, which means probably 'Jehovah, grace,' 'the Lord is gracious.' John was kinsman to Jesus and older by some six months.

**came:** the word so poorly rendered '*did baptize*' in the A. V. means 'appeared,' 'came upon the scene.' Till now John had lived in seclusion 'in the deserts' (Luke i. 80). At last he comes forth, 'the time of his shewing unto Israel' having arrived, and his emergence marks a great stage in the history of the kingdom of God.

**in the wilderness.** Thus simply is the scene of John's ministry described. It was well enough known to need no more precise definition. In Matthew it is 'the wilderness of Judæa'

the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins. And 5 there went out unto him all the country of Judæa, and

(iii. 1). In the O. T. it is 'the wilderness' (Joshua xv. 61), or 'the wilderness of Judah' (Judges i. 16), its eastern side along the Dead Sea being also called *Jeshimon*, the 'desolation,' the 'horror,' the 'devastation' (1 Sam. xxiii. 19, 24). The name seems to have been given to the stretch of territory extending from Tekoa to the Dead Sea, having the Jordan on its outskirts—a tract of country not utterly bare and profitless, but useful in parts as pasture-ground and suitable for the nomad, yet generally broken, barren, rugged, treeless, and waterless save for a well here and there, and in parts dreary, savage, and forbidding.

**preached:** the word means literally *proclaimed*, announced like a herald, and it may have this sense in verse 7.

**the baptism of repentance**, that is, the baptism *characterized by or implying* repentance. 'Repentance' was the great word on John's lips, and what he pressed on men was not baptism generally or for its own sake, but the kind of baptism which befitted the approach of the Messianic kingdom and prepared men for the Messiah himself (cf. Matt. iii. 7-10). In the belief of the more spiritual Jews, the sin of the people was the cause of the delay of Messiah's advent; and John's baptism was a baptism that involved the sense and confession of sin and carried with it the obligation to repent. The 'repentance' here in view is expressed by a different word from that used in a few passages elsewhere, viz. Matt. xxi. 29, 32, xxvii. 3; 2 Cor. vii. 10, &c.; Heb. vii. 21. In these the word (*metameleia*) means sorrow for sin. Here the term (*metanoia*) means much more than that—neither on the one hand mere grief or regret for sin, nor on the other only a change of life which need be no more than outward reformation, but a change of mind, a change of one's views of himself and God and all things, carrying with it a change of life. It is one of the many words which received a new, deeper, more spiritual significance in Christianity.

**unto remission of sins:** John's baptism, therefore, was not administered for its own sake, but with a view to forgiveness. Nor again is it said that it effected forgiveness by some virtue in itself, but that it looked to remission of sins as its end. It is to be observed, too, that John's idea of repentance was essentially the O. T. idea, not yet the Christian—a repentance which meant a change in harmony with the moral requirements of the law, not the spiritual renewal connected with *faith* as faith is explained in the N. T.

**5. And there went out unto him all the country of Judæa, and all they of Jerusalem.** Mark's picture of the man and his work

all they of Jerusalem ; and they were baptized of him

is less complete than Matthew's or Luke's. But it is very graphic, and it has some points of its own. It fixes attention on the *success* of John's ministry by enlarging on the crowds attracted by it. It speaks as if the whole population—and not only the country-folk from all parts of the Judæan territory, but even the people of Jerusalem—had come to him *collectively* (the 'all' belongs to this sentence, as in the R. V., not to the 'were baptized,' as in the A. V.), meaning by that strong statement that the mass of the people had done so. We see by Matthew and Luke with what intrepid faithfulness he spoke to their consciences.

**and they were baptized of him in the river Jordan.** Matthew says simply 'in Jordan'; Mark, writing for those not familiar with the Holy Land, is more precise. In most cases the name is '*the Jordan*', and it is usually taken etymologically to mean '*the descender*.' Other explanations, however, are given. In ancient times some thought it meant '*the river Dan*', or '*the river of two sources, Jor and Dan*', and some now understand it to mean '*watering-place*.' Earth's surface can shew few rivers to match this one, either in historical associations or in peculiarity of physical features. The Jordan has been connected with the greatest events in the story of Israel—with memorable passages in the careers of Gideon, Elijah, Elisha, David and others, and with the crowning consecration of the baptism of our Lord. It flows through one of the most singular depressions—"a rift more than 160 miles long, and from 2 to 15 broad, which falls from the sea-level to as deep as 1,292 feet below it at the coast of the Dead Sea, while the bottom of the latter is 1,300 feet deeper still" (G. A. Smith, *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, p. 468). Its course is so sinuous that it travels at least 200 miles in a direct line of sixty-five miles. It is thus described by one who made his adventurous way along it by boat. 'The river . . . curved and twisted north, south, east, and west, turning in the short space of half an hour to every quarter of the compass, seeming as if desirous to prolong its luxuriant meanderings in the calm and silent valley, and reluctant to pour its sweet and sacred waters into the accursed waters of the bitter sea' (Lynch, *Narrative*, p. 211).

**baptized.** The term was a familiar one in ancient Greek, and was used in a variety of applications. It means literally to *dip in* or *under* water, to *immerse*, but also to *lave*, *wash*, &c. The usual form of baptism in ancient times and in these Eastern countries was by immersion. In some cases something short of total immersion may have been employed, as perhaps in the instance of the 3,000 on the day of Pentecost. At an early period in the history of the Church, as we gather from the interesting writing known as the *Didaché* or *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*,

in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. And John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leathern girdle about his loins, and did eat locusts and wild honey.

it was allowable to *pour* water upon the head when facilities for immersion failed; and at an early period *pouring*, *affusion*, or *aspersion* was practised in the case of the sick. This became the established custom for all in the Western Church after the thirteenth century. But in the Eastern Church immersion has been the general practice from the first on to our own day. In that vast communion generally, and in the orthodox churches of Russia in particular, *triple* immersion is the order, that is, three distinct acts of dipping, in the names severally of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. To these churches baptism by a *single* immersion, whether in the case of modern Baptist, Roman Catholic, or any other, is no baptism.

**confessing their sins.** The verb is a strong one, expressing perhaps the freedom and the openness of the act. It was not a private confession to John himself.

**6. And John was clothed with camel's hair.** Everything about John was in keeping with his ascetic character; his likeness to Elijah, and the seriousness of the call to repentance which he addressed to stiff-necked Jews. His attire consisted of a short, coarse tunic made of a rough cloth woven of camel's hair (not of camel's skin), such as is still used in the East for raiment and for the covering of tents. It was the sort of garment that was worn by the prophets of old (Zech. xiii. 4), and by Elijah in particular (2 Kings i. 8).

**and had a leathern girdle about his loins.** The girdle was needed to keep the loose robe right for purposes of toil or rapid movement. It was a part of their attire on which men laid much store. It was often made of costly material, silk, cotton, fine linen, and ornamented with silver or gold. In John's case the girdle corresponded with the coat. It was of skin, like the girdle of rough, untanned leather which is still worn by the Bedouin, the poor labourer, and the dervish.

**and did eat locusts.** His food was only what the desert could provide. These locusts have been mistakenly supposed to be the luscious pods of the locust-bean, called by the monks of Palestine 'St. John's bread.' They are the creatures well known for their destructive work on all kinds of herbage and leafage. The species of locust allowed by the law to be eaten are given in Lev. xi. 22. They are still eaten by the Bedouin Arabs and the poorer classes, whose habit is to tear off the wings and legs and eat the body, roasted or boiled, with a sprinkling of salt.

**and wild honey.** It is a question whether the honey here

**7** And he preached, saying, There cometh after me he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. I baptized you

in view is the tree-honey or the bee-honey. The phrase used in the Greek is one applied to a sweet gum that exudes from certain trees, like the palm and the fig, and for this reason some of our best scholars think the tree-honey must be meant here. But most take it to be the wild honey, which is said to be produced in great quantities in the rugged district in question. ‘The innumerable fissures and clefts of the limestone rocks which everywhere flank the valleys,’ says Dr. Tristram, ‘afford in their recesses secure shelter for any number of swarms of wild bees; and many of the Bedouin, particularly about the wilderness of Judæa, obtain their subsistence by bee-hunting, bringing into Jerusalem jars of that wild honey on which John the Baptist fed in the wilderness’ (*The Land of Israel*, p. 88). In the O. T. it is described as found in the hollows of rocks (Deut. xxxii. 13), or in trees, as in the pathetic case of Jonathan (1 Sam. xiv. 25–27). It was not permitted to be used in any offering to God, as being liable to ferment (Lev. ii. 11).

**7. And he preached, saying, There cometh after me he that is mightier than I.** It is again the *preaching*, not the baptizing, that Mark signalizes in John; and the essence of the preaching that made the Baptist’s real function is the announcement of another greater than John himself, the One who had been definitely in view as destined to come after him. It is not explained here in what the greater might of this One consists, but the context suggests that it was in the superiority of the baptism with which he was to baptize. The verb implies, too, that the announcement recorded here was not one that John made on a single occasion, but one that he continued to make as he preached.

**the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy** (or, qualified) **to stoop down and unloose.** The sandal, which covered only the sole, was fastened by a thong or strap. It was the duty of slaves of the lowest rank to carry, fetch, and remove the master’s sandals. To untie the thong was, if possible, a still more servile duty. Notice the graphic turn given to Mark’s simple statement by the introduction of the act of *stooping* in order to do the untying: so little was the preacher in comparison with his Subject. He held himself inferior in power and dignity, unfit even to do the most menial service to that greater One.

**8. I baptized you with water; but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.** With whatever awe it was regarded by the Jews, and whatever significance belonged to it, his baptism, John was eager to declare, was as inferior to that which was to succeed

with water ; but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

it as he was himself less than that Other. The one baptism worked by water, speaking of the need of repentance and serving as the sign of an inward change ; the other was the reality effecting that change. The latter was this because it was a baptism 'with (or *in*) the Holy Ghost,' one that worked by the instrument, or moved within the sphere, of the Spirit, and so could reach the inner life, and apply influences there to touch the springs of thought and action with purification and renewal. Speaking from the O. T. standpoint, John could not mean by 'the Holy Ghost' all that we understand by that great term. In the O. T. the Holy Ghost is only on the way to be the personal Agent who is made known to us in the N. T. The 'spirit of God,' the 'spirit of the Lord,' the 'spirit of holiness' there is the power or energy of God that appears as the life-giving principle of the world, the source of the gifts of soldier, king, artificer, prophet ; presented also in higher aspects, especially in the poetical and prophetic books, and with a nearer approach to personal qualities, as the guide and helper of men, the inspiration of their life, and the endowment of Messiah (cf. Gen. i. 2; Exod. xxxi. 3; Judges iii. 10; Job xxvi. 13, xxxiii. 4; Ps. civ. 30; Isa. xi. 2, xlvi. 1, lxx. 21, lxvi. 1, lxviii. 10, Mic. iii. 8). Prophecy spoke of an effusion of the Spirit upon all flesh as one of the features of the Messianic age (Isa. xliv. 3; Ezek. xxxvi. 25; Joel ii. 28).

The precise nature and affinities of John's baptism have been much discussed. Ceremonial ablutions have been common to many religions. The Jews had their own particular ablutions and purifications by water, as in the consecration of priests (Exod. xxix. 4), the cleansing of lepers, &c. (Lev. xiv. 8, &c.). They had also a special application of the rite of ablution in the case of proselytes, these being received on the footing of circumcision, the offering of a sacrifice, and the cleansing which preceded the presentation of the oblation. It is still an unsettled question, however, whether this third point in the ceremonial had a place before the destruction of Jerusalem ; and the washing in question was also one that was performed by the offerer on himself. Further, in the words of the great prophets and also in some of the Psalms, the terms in which these ceremonial ablutions were expressed had become figures of moral processes and results (Isa. i. 16; Ezek. xxxv. 25; Zech. xiii. 1; Ps. li. 4). The course of development which issued in John's baptism lay along these lines. It differed from previous baptisms or ablutions in its requirement of the deep, inward change meant by *repentance*, in the open confession of sin which went with it, in its having all sins in view, and not merely certain special offences, in its being applicable to Jews as well as Gentiles, and in its function as a preparation for the kingdom of God. It differed

9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in

from the Christian baptism which followed it in the specific connexion of the latter with faith in Jesus Christ and with the gift of the Spirit.

9-11. *The Baptism*: cf. Mark iii. 13-17; Luke iii. 21, 22. This paragraph deals with the baptism of Jesus. That meant his ordination to his public ministry. In that act the ministry of John had its culmination. It was an event of such moment that all the evangelists report it, John in part and indirectly (John i. 29-34), Matthew at most length. Mark's account of it is brief, but vivid and circumstantial, giving time, place, and result.

**9. in those days:** i. e. the time when John was announcing the advent of the Messiah and baptizing the people. Luke (iii. 23) tells us that Jesus 'when he began *to teach*, was about thirty years of age.' That was the age appointed under the Levitical law for the beginning of the service of every Levite who 'came to do the work of service, and the work of bearing burdens in the tent of meeting' (Num. iv. 43, 47).

**Nazareth of Galilee** is named as the place from which Jesus now came, and in which he had hitherto been residing in seclusion and meek obedience. Mark's plan does not require him to introduce Bethlehem and the days of the infancy. Nazareth, now known among the Arabs as *en-Nasira*, seems never to have risen to any importance, and it is not mentioned either in the O. T. or in Josephus. It was planted on one of the limestone hills of the Lebanon, some 1,600 feet high, where the range dips down into the Plain of Esdraelon. It occupied a secluded position, hidden in a basin of the hills, off the main lines of traffic, yet at no great distance from Jerusalem, Capernaum, Tiberias, and other places of note. It was not so remote as to cut its inhabitants off from the strong, active, varied life of Northern Palestine. Travellers tell us of the superb panorama that opens out to the eye from the heights about it and above it. It is reported to be now a somewhat thriving town.

**baptized . . . in Jordan**: *lit. 'into Jordan'*, a phrase never used again in the N. T., pointing probably to immersion as the mode. The precise locality of the baptism of Jesus is much debated. The traditions of the Latin and Greek churches agree in placing it not far from Jericho, but they differ otherwise, the tradition of the Greek church connecting it with a site two or three miles below that to which the Latin tradition points. John speaks of the Baptist baptizing in 'Bethabara (or Bethany) beyond Jordan,' and again 'in *Ænon*, near to Salim' (i. 28, iii. 23). Hence some would put it at a day's journey from Nazareth, north-east of

the Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens rent asunder, and the Spirit

Jacob's Well—at the ancient ford near Succoth, or at a more southern ford not far from Jericho. Col. Conder places the *Bethabara* of John i. 28 at the ford Abarah, just north of Beisan, and thinks that the better reading *Bethany* points to the idea that the scene of the baptism was near Bashan. But this is little more than conjecture. And as to *Ænon* and Salim, though Eusebius and Jerome speak of the latter as eight Roman miles south of Scythopolis, we do not know the real position either of the one or of the other.

Christ's submission to John's baptism has been affirmed by some to negative his sinlessness. How could one, it has been asked, who had no consciousness of sin seek 'the baptism of repentance'? How could one, who had no confession of sin to make, approach with any propriety an ordinance which required open confession of sin, and looked to remission of sin? It might be difficult to answer that question if John's baptism related only to confession and forgiveness of sin. But its scope was wider. Its largest relation was to the kingdom of God, and its ultimate significance lay in the preparation for that. Christ came to establish that kingdom among men, and this ordinance was the definite dedication of himself to the service of that kingdom. His baptism was the act by which he separated himself from the position of a private Jew and from his previous life, and took up the Messianic office as the vocation to which all else had to be subordinate. Further, as he subjected himself to the common law of growth in his physical, intellectual, and ethical being, he was to advance from one stage of holy perfection to another in the fulfilment of that vocation. And this ordinance meant the consecration of himself to a moral task implying an ever-deepening obedience, an ever-expanding spiritual achievement, an ever-enlarging victory over all that could compete with his Father's will or compromise the interests of His kingdom.

**10. And straightway.** Mark uses here one of his favourite words, variously rendered, as e. g. 'straightway,' 'immediately,' 'forthwith.' The act of baptism was followed by two events which made it memorable and significant—the illapse of the Spirit and the Divine attestation of the Sonship of Jesus.

**Coming up out of the water.** The connexion implies that at once on being baptized, Jesus came out of the stream and had the experiences here recorded.

**He saw the heavens rent asunder:** or better, 'in the act of rending.' The expression is a striking one, better given as 'rending' than as 'opened' (A. V.). The verb is the one that is used of the sharp *dividing* of a multitude (Acts xiv. 4, xxiii. 7), and

11 as a dove descending upon him: and a voice came out

of the *rending* or *tearing* of a piece of old cloth (Luke v. 36), the *breaking* of a net (John xxi. 11), the *rending* of the veil of the temple, and the *rending* of the rocks (Matt. xxvii. 51). Compare the opening of the heavens in the case of Stephen (Acts vii. 56), and in that of Peter's vision (Acts x. 11).

**and the Spirit as a dove descending upon him.** Luke expresses it so—"and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily form, as a dove, upon him." It may not mean perhaps that the Spirit took the actual form of a dove, but that something was seen which had a dove-like appearance. So on the occasion of the Pentecostal effusion there was a visible form which had the appearance of cloven tongues of fire. The words imply that there was some real outward phenomenon, and not merely a subjective vision. But the appearance may not have seemed extraordinary, or have conveyed the impression of something out of course to any but John and Jesus; just as the voice heard at a later period was understood indeed by Jesus, but seemed like thunder to the bystanders (John xii. 29). It was the objective sign to the Forerunner that he whom he baptized was indeed the Messiah. It was also a sign to our Lord himself, as a comparison of the Synoptical Gospels suggests, that the hour for taking up his official ministry was come. The dove has a place in the familiar imagery of the O. T. (Ps. lxviii. 13; Song of Sol. ii. 12). It was, as it still is, a symbol of such qualities as innocence, gentleness, tenderness. The dove-like form, therefore, of the descent may point to these as the qualities of the gift bestowed on the Messiah for his work.

Did this descent of the Spirit, however, really communicate anything to Jesus? Some would say that it meant the entrance of the *Logos*, the Eternal Word, into the man Jesus; which is certainly to say too much. Others, going to the opposite extreme, would say that as Christ had the Divine nature he could need no new impartation of the Spirit beyond what he already had. But the words, especially in view of John iii. 34, indicate a real communication of the Spirit, one that had special relation to his Messianic work, and one that was to be permanent (John i. 33). It was indeed by the Spirit in him that he grew in wisdom and in favour with God and with man. It was by the Spirit in him that in perfect righteousness he fulfilled the conditions of his preparation in the long years of his privacy. It was by the Spirit in him that he became conscious more and more of his true relation to God, and of the mission appointed him by his Father. But he stood now at the age of his maturity, and the time of his entrance on the actual discharge of his mission. For his special vocation he received a special anointing of the Holy Ghost, an endowment by the Spirit with the powers needed for his work.

of the heavens, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.

And straightway the Spirit driveth him forth into the

**11. and a voice came out of the heavens, Thou art my beloved Son.** With the descent of the Spirit came an uttered testimony to the Sonship of Jesus. The term 'beloved' (cf. Gen. xxii. 2; Isa. xlvi. 1), which in the Epistles is used of the Christian man, appears to be limited in the Gospels to Christ, as God's Son in a peculiar sense. Even in the parables, where it seems to be applied to men, it is used with reference to Christ (Mark xii. 6; Luke xx. 13). It is not found in John's Gospel, but is equivalent to the 'only-begotten' which is the phrase there. It occurs as a title of Messiah in the non-canonical Jewish books, such as the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, the *Ascension of Isaiah*, &c. Here the address 'my beloved Son' designates Jesus as the Messiah, yet not in respect of office only, but with the further idea of his peculiar relation to God.

**in thee I am well pleased:** or, 'on thee I set my favour.' A term of grace, the equivalent of an O. T. phrase expressing the perfection of the Divine satisfaction and complacency. Cf. Isa. xlii. 1, lxii. 4.

It is Jesus himself, not John, that is said here, as also in Matthew and Luke, to have seen the great sight of the heavens rending, and the Spirit descending in dove-like form. From the Fourth Gospel (i. 32) we learn that the Baptist also saw these sights. There is nothing to indicate that they were seen by others as these two saw them. So it was to Jesus himself that the voice was addressed. Not even in the Fourth Gospel is it said to have been heard by John or any other. It was a witness to Jesus himself, bringing to his human consciousness the assurance of his relation to God. He had at a much earlier date the sense that God was his Father, and that it belonged to him to be concerned with his Father's business or house (Luke ii. 49). This is the first of three voices addressed to Jesus at great turning-points in his mission, the others being at the Transfiguration (Mark ix. 7) and on the occasion of the coming of the Greeks (John xii. 28).

These events took place immediately on his baptism. One thing is added by Luke, which is of the deepest interest. He is the evangelist who tarries most on the prayers of our Lord, and he tells us that it was when Jesus was praying (iii. 21) that he saw the sights here reported. Solemn prayer also had its place in the choice of the Twelve (Luke vi. 12), the Transfiguration (Luke ix. 29), and the Agony in Gethsemane (Matt. xxvi. 39).

**12. And straightway the Spirit driveth him forth.** The inauguration of Jesus by baptism, the descent of the Spirit, and the

13 wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days

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endorsement of the heavenly voice, are followed by the Temptation. This mysterious passage in the course of discipline under which the Son of God put himself for our sake is recorded with extreme brevity by Mark. To him it is only introductory to his proper subject—the public ministry. It is omitted by John. It is given at some length by Matthew and Luke, and with some differences; of which the most important is in the order of the successive temptations. But if Mark's account is brief, it has a character of its own. He alone gives the graphic touch about the wild beasts, and it is remarkable how many points he crowds into his short summary—the date, the occasion, the impelling influence, the scene, the duration, the agent, the circumstances of terror and of support.

The *time* of the event is given even more precisely than by Matthew and Luke. By the use of his favourite term 'straight-way' Mark indicates how close upon the inaugural glories came the onset of temptation. The *occasion* is stated to have been an influence of the Spirit. God, who tempts no man as He himself cannot be tempted of evil, nevertheless leads us at times into temptation, and Christ is here declared to have been brought into the strange and painful circumstances of temptation by the same Spirit who had just descended upon him with his special gifts and still abode with him. The other evangelists speak of him as being 'led' (Luke iv. 1) or 'led up' (Matt. iv. 1) by the Spirit. Mark selects a stronger word, 'driveth forth.' Looking to such references to the Spirit as those in 1 Kings xviii. 12 (the Spirit carrying Elijah whither Obadiah knew not), Ezek. viii. 3 (the Spirit lifting the prophet up between earth and heaven), Acts viii. 39 (Philip caught away by the Spirit of the Lord), 1 Cor. xiv. 2 (speaking mysteries in the Spirit in an unknown tongue), Rev. i. 10 (John being in the Spirit on the Lord's day), some conclude that Mark's words indicate that Jesus was in a condition of ecstasy in which the ordinary movements of sense and mind were in abeyance, while others take them to mean that he was transported by a rapid translation from one place to another in the way affirmed of certain prophets and evangelists. The former supposition is probable in itself, though it does not lie in the words; the latter goes even further beyond the scope of the statement. What is meant is that Jesus was impelled by a constraining influence which he recognized to be of the Spirit—that he was borne on not by his own will, but by a Divine impulse.

**into the wilderness.** All three Synoptists give the *scene* simply as 'the wilderness,' without further specification. It is

tempted of Satan ; and he was with the wild beasts ; and the angels ministered unto him.

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natural, therefore, to understand by it just the wilderness already spoken of. Yet the narrative suggests a movement from the locality in which John was baptizing to another—to a different 'desert' or to a different part, a remoter and lonelier part, of the same wilderness of Judæa. The latter is the more probable supposition. Some, however, think the great Arabian desert is in view—the stern district east of Jordan, associated with the activities and experiences of Moses and Elijah. But this is unlikely, both by reason of the distance from the scene of the Baptism and because there are no such defining terms as we should expect in such case. Tradition has connected the scene with a hill *Jebel Kuruntul*, called *Mons Quarantania* (with reference to the forty days), which has been compared to the Rock of Gibraltar, and is described as rising like a 'perpendicular wall of rock, 1,200 or 1,500 feet above the plain,' that is, the plain of the Jordan, somewhat west of Jericho. The district in which this hill stands is wild enough to suit the circumstances. But the tradition does not seem to be older than the time of the Crusades. The most that can be said is that the place of the Temptation was probably not far distant from that of the Baptism, and that it was somewhere, therefore, on the western side of the Dead Sea. 'Those denuded rocks,' says Pressensé, 'that reddened soil scorched by a burning sun, that sulphurous sea stretching like a shroud over the accursed cities, all this land of death, mute and motionless as the grave, formed a fitting scene for the decisive conflict for the Man of Sorrows.'

**13. And he was in the wilderness forty days.** Mark's words would naturally imply that he was tempted all the space of time that he spent in the wilderness. In this Mark agrees with Luke (iv. 2). But Matthew speaks of the temptations which he records as if they came upon Jesus only at the end of this period. The probable conclusion is that he was tempted all through the period of the fasting, and that at its close, when he was worn and exhausted, he was met by three special and concentrated forms of temptation. It may be that during the fast of forty days temptation came to him in the form of uncertainty as to his vocation, doubts regarding the dove-like form, and the reality of the heavenly voice attesting his Sonship.

**tempted of Satan.** The three evangelists agree in pointing to an objective agent in the temptation, distinct from the tempted One's own mind. Matthew and Luke speak of this agent as 'the devil,' i. e. the *accuser* (cf. Rev. xii. 10) or *slanderer*, also named *Abaddon* in Hebrew, and *Apollyon* (=destroyer) in Greek. Mark uses the Hebrew name, *Satan*, the 'adversary' (Job ii. 1). By

these names Scripture designates a personal spirit of evil, who is represented as the enemy of God and Christ, the prince of demons, the author of temptation, working by persecution, deceit, and guile for the estrangement of men from God. Much of the popular idea of the Tempter is due not to Scripture, but to mediæval theology, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Yet much is said of him in the Bible, and more by far in the N.T. than in the O. T.

**and he was with the wild beasts.** Mark alone mentions this. Travellers speak of the number of wild beasts—cheetahs, boars, jackals, wolves, hyænas, &c., still to be met in the deserts of the Holy Land, especially in the neighbourhood of convenient wadies (see Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 240). Fanciful meanings have been devised for this companionship. Some have suggested an analogy with Daniel in the lion's den; others have imagined the statement to be introduced in order to suggest a parallel between Jesus and the First Adam in Paradise. It may be intended to sharpen the picture of the desolateness of his position. It may simply be meant to express the fact that he suffered from another danger besides Satanic temptation—that of ravenous, encompassing beasts. It may suggest that ‘their presence, their yell of hunger, their ravening fierceness, their wild glaring eyes, had left as it were an ineffable and ineffaceable impression of horror in addition to the terror and loneliness of the wilderness as such’ (Plumptre).

**and the angels ministered unto him.** This is not noticed by Luke, who tells us simply that the devil ‘departed from him for a season’ (iv. 13). Matthew records that, when the devil left him, ‘angels came and ministered unto him’ (iv. 11). According to him, therefore, these ministrations took place at the end of the temptations. Mark does not say explicitly at what point they came in. But his change in the tenses *came* (past) . . . *were ministering* (imperfect) indicates that they were repeated, or that they went on during the course of temptation. What form these ministrations took—whether that of support for his exhausted physical nature, or spiritual help, or, as Meyer thinks, protection against Satan and the wild beasts—is not stated. It is possible that the point of the whole statement is in the contrast with the appeal of the Tempter to the assurance given in the O. T. (Ps. xcii. 11) of angelic care and protection.

Mark says nothing of the fasting during the forty days, nor does he give the three forms of temptation recorded in Matthew and Luke. Neither does he indicate in what the temptation consisted. It may have had its occasion, as Keim suggests, in the weight of reflection pressing on the mind of Jesus when he first gave himself of purpose to his Messianic vocation. It lay, we may reverently suppose, in the conflict of thoughts regarding that vocation, in the

Now after that John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, The

competition between different ways of accomplishing it. In Matthew and Luke the essence of each of the three specific forms of Satanic assault appears to be placed in the inducement to get to the end of his mission by a short and secular course, by power and display, by the preference of the ways of the world and the devil to those of his Father.

i. 14, 15. *Official preaching of Jesus in Galilee.* Mark appears to overleap a considerable space of time, amounting probably to a good many months, and to omit a number of events—the return of the Baptist, the call of the first disciples, the marriage at Cana, the visit to Capernaum, the cleansing of the Temple, and others, for the knowledge of which we are indebted to the Fourth Gospel (John i. 29—iii. 30). He omits the early ministry in Judæa, and the visit to Galilee recorded in John ii, and proceeds at once to the visit to Galilee which was signalized by his first public preaching. This may be the same as that which took him through Samaria as reported by John (chap. iv). The relation of the events recorded in the Gospels at this stage, however, is not certain. But it is clear that the imprisonment of the Baptist made a crisis in events, according to Mark, and formed the occasion for the commencement of Christ's public ministry. The work begun by the Baptist could not be suffered to come to nought.

**14. Now after that John was delivered up:** that is, to prison. The imprisonment of John receives only incidental mention in the Fourth Gospel (John iii. 24). Luke notices the circumstances shortly before he reports the Temptation (iii. 19, 20). Matthew and Mark report them at greater length (Mark being fuller and more graphic than Matthew), but at a later stage in their narratives (Matt. xiv. 3-5; Mark vi. 17-20).

**Jesus came into Galilee.** Matthew's word is *departed* (A. V.), or, better, *withdrew* (R. V.), suggesting that he saw that it was no longer safe to remain near the scene of John's labours. In Galilee indeed he was under the jurisdiction of Herod Antipas, the man who put the Baptist to death; but he was nearer the territory of Herod Philip, and farther removed from the suspicions and hostilities of the official classes in Jerusalem.

**preaching the gospel of God.** From John iv. 1, 2 we may infer that the earlier ministry of Jesus had been more like the Baptist's. Now he takes up the definite work of evangelical preaching, and it is to be observed that all the evangelists represent him as beginning his official ministry not with miracle, but with preaching. The *manner* of his preaching is not described by Mark, but in Luke (iv. 17-21) we get a vivid picture of it. Mark

time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand : repent ye, and believe in the gospel.

gives us, however, a pregnant summary of its matter. His subject was ‘the gospel of God’ (not ‘the gospel of the kingdom of God’ as in A. V.), that is, the good news received from God; It was a message of pure mercy which God commissioned him to declare.

**15. and saying, The time is fulfilled.** In putting these glad tidings before men he had a great *announcement* to deliver and an urgent *call* to make. The first point in the statement was that ‘the time,’ the definite period which in the purpose of God was to elapse before the entrance of the Messianic kingdom, was now completed, so that nothing in the counsel of God, the training of Israel, or the condition of the nations, stood in the way of that great event. This is stated neither by Matthew nor by Luke. It is a link of connexion between Mark and Paul (Gal. iv. 4 ; Eph. i. 16).

**and the kingdom of God is at hand.** The second point in the evangelical announcement. It is given also by Matthew, but is omitted by Luke. Here we meet one of the characteristic terms of the N. T.—‘the kingdom,’ ‘the kingdom of heaven’ (or ‘of the heavens’) as usually in Matthew and as only in him, ‘the kingdom of God’ as in Mark and Luke and Paul, the ‘heavenly kingdom’ (2 Tim. iv. 18), ‘the kingdom of Christ.’ The idea of a kingdom, which is thus described in respect of its heavenly origin and spiritual character, has its root in passages like Dan. ii. 44, and in the whole O. T. conception of a Divine rule, a reign of Jehovah and His Messiah, which was to make the blessedness of Israel and of earth. The term expresses something different from the organized body called the church visible, and even from the church invisible. It expresses the perfected theocracy, the realization of the prophetic idea of the rule of God on earth, purged of the political notions, the national limitations, and the fantastic millenarian conceits with which the O. T. note had become encrusted in Judaism.

**repent ye.** The first article in the call founded on the announcement. Jesus took up John’s word when the latter was silenced, and began with the note of repentance, though he had more to give.

**and believe in the gospel.** The second article in the call, and one recorded only by Mark. The phrase ‘believe in the gospel’ is peculiar. The ‘gospel’ is to be taken here in the general sense. The words mean, therefore, ‘believe in the good news announcing that the kingdom of God is really at hand.’ The belief or *faith* to which the N. T. gives so essential a place is usually belief in a Person, trust in Christ himself. The ‘belief’ in view here is the initial belief in a testimony, in something said of an

And passing along by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon <sup>16</sup>

object or a person. It was not till a later stage that Jesus began to preach himself as the object of faith. Yet the difference between John's message and Christ's begins to open here. In the latter it is not repentance only, but repentance and faith. So Paul's gospel was one in which he taught, 'testifying both to Jews and to Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ' (Acts xx. 21).

The land of Galilee, in which Jesus was now delivering his message, and which has so large a place in the Gospel story, is mentioned only six or seven times in the O.T. There it is '*the Galilee*', i. e. the *Circle*, once more specifically the '*Galilee of the nations*' (Isa. ix. 1). In it our Lord had his home, to it most of his early followers belonged by birth or by residence, and with it so many of the most memorable scenes in the Gospel story were connected that it has been justly termed '*the birthplace of Christianity*'. In our Lord's time it was the most northerly of the three provinces into which Palestine west of Jordan was divided. During the entire course of our Lord's life it was under the jurisdiction of Herod Antipas. After his removal it was placed under the rule of the Herod Agrippa who is mentioned in Acts xii. Its area seems to have varied, but it covered very much the territories assigned to the tribes of Asher, Naphtali, Zebulun and Issachar, and it included many notable towns. Its people were a strong and independent race, with marked characteristics. It was a land of beautiful and diversified scenery, a land of hill and stream, of lakes and forest, of meadow and pasture, of orchard and grain field. Josephus dilates in glowing terms on its fertility. He speaks of the Plain of Gennesaret as '*that unparalleled Garden of God*' (*Jewish War*, III. iii. 2, 3, x. 8). When he refers to the populousness of the province he uses language that seems exaggerated. But it is certain that it was peopled more thickly than we can now well imagine, that it yielded vast quantities of oil and wheat and barley, and that it made great wealth by its extensive fisheries. '*It was to Roman Palestine what the manufacturing districts are to England, covered with busy towns, and teeming villages, and thriving fisheries*' (Maclean).

i. 16-20. *The call of four disciples, Simon and Andrew, James and John.* Compare the narratives in Matt. iv. 18-22; Luke v. 1-11. This meeting, though recorded at this point by Mark, may not have been the first meeting between Jesus and these men. The Fourth Gospel (chap. i. 35-42) gives another account of a call of disciples, from which we learn that Andrew and Simon had been followers of the Baptist, that Andrew met Jesus the day after John's testimony to him as the Lamb of God, and that he was the means also of bringing Simon to Jesus..

and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net in the

**16. And passing along by the sea of Galilee.** The scene of the call was by the beautiful sheet of water on the shores of which so many of Christ's words were spoken and so many of his deeds done. Its O. T. name is 'the sea of Chinneroth' or 'the sea of Chinnereth' (Num. xxxiv. 11; Joshua xi. 2; 1 Kings xv. 20). In 1 Macc. (xi. 67) and in Josephus it is Gennesar (*Jewish War*, III. x. 7, &c.). In the N. T. it has more than one form—in Matthew and Mark 'the sea,' 'the sea of Galilee'; in Luke usually 'the lake,' once 'the lake of Gennesaret' (v. 1); in John 'the sea of Tiberias' (xxi. 1), 'the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias' (vi. 1). This last name connects it specially with the city called Tiberias, which was built by Herod Agripa and called after the Emperor Tiberius. From Joshua xix. 35 we gather that there was a fenced city of the name of Chinnereth, in the tribe of Naphtali, of which, however, no trace remains. The name Gennesaret is supposed by some to be taken from a Hebrew word meaning 'harp,' with reference to the shape of the lake. But more probably it is an original Canaanitish word adopted by the Hebrews. The lake is about  $12\frac{1}{2}$  miles long and 8 miles wide at its broadest part. It is about 150 feet deep, and lies (according to Sir Charles Warren) some 600 feet beneath the level of the sea. The river Jordan enters it at the north and passes out of it at the south end. The lake is of rare beauty, like a smaller Loch Lomond or Lake of Lucerne. Canon Tristram speaks of the first view one gets of it as like that of the Lake of Geneva from the crest of the Jura range.

**he saw Simon and Andrew.** To this pair of brothers, sons of a Jonas (Matt. xvi. 17) or John (John i. 42, xxi. 15-17) belonging to Bethsaida (John i. 44), but having their home then in Capernaum (Mark i. 29), Christ's call came first. They had no doubt been so far prepared for it by their connexion with the Baptist, probably also by previous intercourse with Jesus, and by their religious disposition. Can we doubt that they were of the select class of devout and expectant Israelites who looked in faith and wistfulness for the fulfilment of O. T. promise and prophecy? 'Simon' is the Greek form of the Hebrew name, which is also given more literally as 'Symeon' (Acts xv. 14; 2 Pet. i. 1, R. V. margin). In the synoptical Gospels it is the name usually given to this disciple on to the time of the choosing of the Apostles, when it is superseded by 'Peter.' 'Andrew' is a Greek name, but one used also by Hebrews.

**casting a net in the sea: for they were fishers.** The phrase as it is put by Mark is simply 'casting about'—a simple and forcible description of what they were doing at the time. The hand-net is in view here, as distinguished from the 'draw-net'

sea : for they were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, <sup>17</sup>  
 Come ye after me, and I will make you to become  
 fishers of men. And straightway they left the nets, and <sup>18</sup>  
 followed him. And going on a little further, he saw <sup>19</sup>  
 James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, who  
 also were in the boat mending the nets. And straight- <sup>20</sup>

or 'drag-net,' which was used for fish swimming in shoals (Matt. xxii. 47) and was trailed along the bottom of the deep. The 'hand-net' was used in the way of throwing it about, dipping it down, now here and now there, on one side of the boat and on the other. These men were called then just as they were engaged in their ordinary, lawful employments.

**17. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me.** The phrase, 'Hither after me,' expresses a call to become followers in the sense of disciples.

**and I will make you to become fishers of men.** They were summoned to a new kind of work—analogous to their present work, but of a higher order. For this higher service the experience which they had of the fisherman's work no doubt was also in some measure a preparation—in respect of the qualities of patience, alertness, activity, watchfulness, keenness of eye, promptitude in seizing the occasion.

**18. And straightway.** Their response was instant and complete. There was that in the call and in the caller himself that checked all questioning and won unhesitating obedience.

**they left the nets, and followed him.** 'Left' is better than the 'forsook' of the A. V. The effect of the call was such that they left the nets just as they were, without giving them a thought, and went straight to him.

**19. And going on a little further:** or, 'going forward a little.'

**he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother.** A second pair of brothers for the second call. In the synoptical Gospels, where these two are named together, James (the *Jacob* of the O. T.) is named first (except in Luke ix. 1, where there is a special reason for the change)—an order which, particularly when coupled with the explanation that John was 'his brother,' suggests that James was the elder brother or the more important person.

**who also were in the boat:** that is, in their own boat. 'Boat' is better than the 'ship' of the A. V. The call came to them just a little after it was addressed to Simon and Andrew; and it reached them, too, just as they were busy with their ordinary work.

way he called them : and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after him.

**21** And they go into Capernaum ; and straightway on

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**mending the nets.** Not actually fishing as was the case with the other two, but making the nets all right for the work.

**20. And straightway he called them.** No pause was given them to think what Simon and Andrew were doing, and there was no delay on their part.

**and they left their father Zebedee in the boat.** In their case the obedience, therefore, was, if possible, even more striking. Their father was with them (no mention is made of Salome, the mother), but they left work, property, and parent.

**with the hired servants, and went after him.** It is precarious to infer, from the mention of 'hired servants' in this case, that there was any difference in social position between the two pairs of brothers. But it implies that Zebedee did not belong to the wholly poor.

**i. 21-28. Jesus in the Synagogue.** With this paragraph compare the account in Luke iv. 31-37. We have here Mark's statement of the first impression made by Christ's teaching, his first reference to the scribes, and his first report of a miracle.

**21. And they go.** Better than 'they went' of the A. V. The original pictures Jesus and his newly-found disciples making their way at once from the scene of his call and of their former work. Matthew (iv. 12) tells us that on leaving Nazareth Jesus came and dwelt in Capernaum, and Luke that he came down to Capernaum after the Sabbath on which he expounded Isaiah in the synagogue at Nazareth. Mark connects the visit to Capernaum with the call by the sea. But this does not necessarily mean that there had been no previous visit.

**into Capernaum.** From Mark i. 29; John i. 44 it appears that this was Simon and Andrew's present place of abode. It was natural for them, therefore, to go there. But this was to go where two of them at least, and probably all four, would be among those who knew them best, and where the change that had occurred with them would at once attract notice. Capernaum, in its more proper form Capharnaum, is not mentioned in the O. T. It came to be spoken of as Christ's 'own city' by reason of the close connexion he had with it during his ministry. He predicted its total overthrow on account of its unbelief (Matt. xi. 23). So completely was it 'brought to the dust' that after the investigations of many years and many hands its very site

the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue and taught. And they were astonished at his teaching: 22 for he taught them as having authority, and not as the

remains still uncertain. Some place it at Tell Hûm, at the north-west corner of the lake, some three miles south of the point where the Jordan enters. Remains of a city of some importance are found there. Others locate it at Khan Minyeh, some three miles south of Tell Hûm, near the sea and not far from where the great Damascus road passed; others still put it further to the west and south, near the fountain *Mudawarah* or *Mudawerah*, where (and indeed only there) are found remains of the coracine or cat-fish, of which Josephus says it 'was produced in the fountain called Capharnaum which waters the plain of Gennesar.'

**and straightway on the sabbath day.** This is the first sabbath after the call and the first exercise of the ministry of Jesus after it.

**he entered into the synagogue:** he made his way at once to the synagogue. It was the natural place to turn to. It gave the opportunity of speaking to the people in a simple and recognized way. The chief purpose of the synagogue was instruction in the law, and this was not left in the hands of officials only. Freedom of speech, under certain reasonable conditions, was allowed, and any one, especially a rabbi, might be called on by the 'ruler of the synagogue' to expound. As an institution it belongs probably to the period of the Exile. It fulfilled certain objects which were not otherwise provided for. It acted as a 'counterpoise to the absolute officialism of the sacerdotal service' (Morrison). Its services were very different from those of the Temple, consisting of prayer, the reading of the O. T., and exposition. Mark speaks of '*the synagogue*' (so also Luke vii. 5), either because it was the only one (and Capernaum though large enough to be called a *city*, might yet not be very large), or because it was the one specially associated with Jesus. Luke (vii. 5) tells us that the centurion whose servant Jesus was asked to heal built a synagogue which the Jews of Capernaum speak of as '*our synagogue*'. Much of our Lord's early work took the form of synagogue-teaching. Mark makes no mention of such teaching after the occasion when those in '*his own country*' took offence at the wisdom of his teaching in the synagogue (vi. 1-6).

**22. And they were astonished.** A strong word expressing an amazement that carried them out of themselves.

**at his teaching.** A better rendering than 'doctrine,' the thing in view being the manner rather than the matter of his exposition.

**for he taught them as having authority.** What amazed

**23** scribes. And straightway there was in their synagogue  
**24** a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, saying,  
 What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth?

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them was not so much the things said as the way in which they were said. Their professional teachers, when they opened up the Law or the Prophets, spoke as those do who have no clear fountain of knowledge in themselves and no inward witness to the truth of what they asserted. They spoke with frequent appeal to external authority, to the words of some great rabbi, to tradition, dogmatically but not convincingly. But Christ spoke with the tone of certitude, with the note of an inherent authority, as one who had knowledge in himself and a message direct from God. His words left the hearers in no doubt, and made themselves felt at once as true. This was a new thing indeed to these Jews.

**and not as the scribes:** the 'scribes,' called also 'lawyers,' 'doctors of the law' (Luke v. 17), were the powerful body to whom the Jews looked up as their recognized teachers, and with whom our Lord consequently came into constant and deadly conflict. They were the class who had built up, and who also continued to expound and apply, that vast system of traditional law which Jesus said 'made void' the word of God, and which gave to the external and mechanical the place which belonged to the spiritual. No doubt there were different kinds of scribes. Among them there may have been men with better insight into religion and the Divine law. But as a class they had become in Christ's time pedantic, hair-splitting, dictatorial.

**23. And straightway there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit.** Mark proceeds to relate the mighty work done in the place, and it is perhaps on account of this work that he introduces what he says of the teaching in the synagogue. A representative place is given by Mark to the healing of the possessed. Luke describes this man as having 'a spirit of an unclean devil.' Mark speaks of him as being '*in*' (so the word literally is) an unclean spirit'—a phrase recalling those terms of grace 'in Christ,' 'in the Spirit,' 'in the Holy Ghost.' But the demon is also spoken of as in the man, and as coming out of him. The words express the completeness of the hold which the malady had of its victim. It was as if man and demon had become one, the one absorbed in the other. In the N. T. 'unclean spirit' and 'demon' are interchangeable terms.

**and he cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth?** The spirit is represented as sensible at once of the incongruity of Christ's presence. What is there, he asks, in common to us and thee, so that thou shouldst come here and have aught to do with us?

art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, 25 saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And 26 the unclean spirit, tearing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. And they were all amazed, 27 insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What is this? a new teaching! with authority he

**art thou come to destroy us?** The sense of incongruity is also the sense of hostility; to 'destroy the works of the devil' was the purpose of the sending of Messiah (1 John iii. 8).

**I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.** Once again, and only once again, is this particular title given to Jesus in the N. T., viz. in John vi. 69 (according to the best text and the R. V.). But cf. also 1 John ii. 20; Rev. iii. 7, and in the O. T. such a passage as Ps. cvi. 16 (of Aaron). Here it may have the force of a Messianic title. It does not appear that Jesus had as yet either done or said aught affecting the case or disturbing the spirit. His presence is enough; it is at once recognized to be a power inimical, before which evil can have no place. The term 'holy' here probably expresses not precisely his absolute personal sinlessness, but the broader idea of one who is consecrated wholly to God.

**25. And Jesus rebuked him.** The word is translated 'threatened' by Wycliffe, following the Vulgate. In the N. T. it occurs only in the Synoptists (with the exception of 2 Tim. v. 2; Jude 9), and has the sense of *chiding, rating, charging sharply*.

**saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.** The word rendered 'hold thy peace' means literally 'be muzzled,' as it is used in 1 Cor. ix. 9; 1 Tim. v. 18. It is a strong figure of enforced silence. The rebuke is directed against two things—the outcry (with all that it meant) and 'the invasion of the man's spirit by an alien power' (Swete).

**26. And the unclean spirit, tearing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him.** The charge was instantly obeyed, yet not without hurt. The spirit *tore*, or rather *convulsed* the sufferer. The word means to tear in a literal sense, to lacerate, but also to throw into convulsions.

**27. And they were all amazed.** The effect on the people is expressed here by a verb which is used in the N. T. only by Mark, and which conveys the idea of astonishment passing into awe.

**insomuch that they questioned among themselves.** They could not take the matter in, but turned to each other with perplexed and agitated words.

**saying, What is this? a new teaching!** A picture of

commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey  
28 him. And the report of him went out straightway  
everywhere into all the region of Galilee round about.

29 And straightway, when they were come out of the  
synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and

amazement breaking into excited exclamation—far better given by  
the R. V. than by the A. V. It is the unwonted style of teaching  
that first astonishes them.

**with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits.**  
But they have a second reason for their amazement—the authority  
of his word. This, too, was something new. The practice of the  
exorcist was not unknown among the Jews of these times (cf.  
Acts xix. 13). But he worked painfully by magical incantations  
or laboured formulae. Here was one who used no such arts, but  
simply spoke, and it was done.

**and they obey him.** ‘Yes, and they obey him!’ Here was  
the wonder—the instant response.

**28. into all the region of Galilee.** The fame of this great  
work spread like wildfire far beyond the immediate scene. How  
far? The words may mean either ‘into all the surrounding district  
of Galilee’ (Wycliffe, the Vulgate, &c.), or ‘into all the country  
bordering on Galilee’ (Tyndale, Meyer, &c.). The latter is more  
in accordance with usage and also with Matthew’s statement that  
'the report of him went forth into all Syria' (iv. 24). Luke gives  
'into every place of the region round about' (iv. 37).

The problem presented by cases like this of the man in the  
synagogue is yet unsolved. Lunacy and epilepsy were common  
diseases in the East, and the phenomena described here and in  
similar instances resemble those exhibited by known diseases  
of a mental or physical kind. Hence it is argued that what we  
have here is simply an example of the Eastern way of attributing  
abnormal experiences and extraordinary disorders to supernatural  
causes, and that nothing more is meant than what we should call  
fits of epilepsy or onsets of fierce lunacy. Modern inquiry,  
however, tends to see greater mysteries than before in certain  
forms of psychical ailment, and in some of the cases recorded in  
the gospels there is the peculiar feature of the recognition of Jesus  
as the Messiah.

i. 29-31. *The healing of Peter's mother-in-law*; cf. Matt. viii. 14,  
15; Luke iv. 38, 39.

**29. And straightway.** Miracle follows upon miracle, without  
pause and without the loss of any opportunity.

**the house of Simon and Andrew.** From the synagogue the

Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever; and straightway they tell him of her: and he came and took her by the hand, 31 and raised her up; and the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto 32 him all that were sick, and them that were possessed

company returned to the house from which they had gone forth. Matthew and Luke speak of it as the house only of Simon or Peter. Mark calls it 'the house of Simon and Andrew.' As Simon was a married man, the house may have been his, while his brother dwelt with him. With these are named also James and John, so that there were *four* witnesses of the scene.

**30. Now Simon's wife's mother.** The first of the miracles, therefore, that followed the great representative deed in the synagogue was one wrought on a sufferer closely connected with one of the first disciples.

**lay sick of a fever.** She was prostrate with this ailment when they returned. Luke gives a more professional description of it—'holden with a great fever' (R. V.). Malarial fever, travellers tell us, is rife even in the present day in the plain in which Capernaum was situated.

**and straightway they tell him of her.** They had waited for his return, it seems, and at once appeal to him when he appears.

**31. and he came and took her by the hand, and raised her up:** so prompt was his response, and so simple his act.

**and the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.** The cure was complete. There was nothing of the lassitude and incapacity of ordinary convalescence. The patient was able at once to go about her ordinary domestic duties. She spread her board, probably the usual sabbath meal, and the company partook. We read of her as at a later period accompanying Peter on his apostolic journeys (1 Cor. ix. 5).

i. 32-34. *A cluster of miracles of healing*; cf. Matt. viii. 16, 17; Luke iv. 40, 41.

**32. And at even, when the sun did set.** The people have been keeping themselves in check till all risk of infringing the sabbath law is past. The setting sun makes them certain that the sabbath is ended. Throwing off all restraint they now crowd about him with their sick of many kinds.

**and them that were possessed with devils.** Rather 'with demons.' The word 'demon' represents the Greek *daimon*—

33 with devils. And all the city was gathered together at  
 34 the door. And he healed many that were sick with  
 divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and he  
 suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.  
 35 And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose  
 up and went out, and departed into a desert place, and

a term with an interesting history. In the Homeric poems it usually means a *god*. Very early, however, a distinction was drawn between gods and demons, the latter being understood (as in the poems of Hesiod) to be beings between gods and men, 'invisible tenants of earth,' the souls of men of the happy golden age. Other Greek writers applied the term to the ghosts of the men of the silver age—a race contemptuous of the gods. Thus it came to have a sinister meaning. It was when it had this idea of an *evil* being contrasting with the gods that it was taken over by the Greek-speaking Jews. So in the N. T., in the diminutive form *daimonion*, it means in most cases an evil spirit, the agent of the devil.

**33. And all the city was gathered together at the door.** A picture of 'the flocking up to the door which preceded, and the surging, moving mass before it' (Swete).

**34. And he healed many that were sick with divers diseases, and cast out many devils (demons).** As Mark puts it, he healed *many* of both classes of sufferers. Matthew (and Luke also in effect) speaks of *all* the sick and *many* of the possessed. The idea probably is that he patiently healed all who were brought to him of whatever class.

**and he suffered not the devils (demons) to speak, because they knew him.** Some of the best manuscripts add 'to be the Christ'; cf. Luke iv. 41. The Evangelist sees the supernatural, therefore, in the case. It is the recognition of the *Messiahship* of Jesus, not necessarily of more. Jesus put the ban upon their utterance. He would not have his cause hastened or influenced by such testimony.

i. 35-39. *Retirement, followed by his first circuit in Galilee*; cf. Luke iv. 40-42, also Matt. iv. 23-25. The healer who had met the appeals of multitudes is himself seen now in the attitude of a suppliant. In solitary communion with his Father he seeks what he needs after the exertions and excitement of the first two days of his ministry.

**35. And in the morning, a great while before day.** So early that it was yet quite dark.

**into a desert place.** Not merely a *solitary* place (A. V.),

there prayed. And Simon and they that were with him followed after him; and they found him, and say unto him, All are seeking thee. And he saith unto them, Let us go elsewhere into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for to this end came I forth. And he went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out devils.

but a *desert* place, ‘probably one of those bare and barren spots stretching away north and west of Capernaum’ (Morrison).

**and there prayed.** This was the reason of his withdrawal, and no doubt also of his choice of such a place. He required rest for his soul, opportunity for reflection on his mission, preparation for the work now before him, which might be next day and the next as it had been these two days.

**36. And Simon and they that were with him followed after him.** They were filled with anxiety when they found him gone they knew not whither. Could he have left them for others, or have preferred some other place as the scene of his ministry? They shewed their anxiety by the haste with which they *followed* after him. The word is a strong one—‘they *pursued* after him.’

**37. and say unto him, All are seeking thee.** The anxiety was not confined to the disciples. It was shared by all who were on the spot from Capernaum or elsewhere. Luke says explicitly that ‘the people,’ the *mob*, sought him. If he left them it was not that they did not need him or that he had no opportunity among them.

**38. Let us go elsewhere.** In his reply to their appeal and expostulation he says nothing of his own need of rest or communion with God. He speaks only of his mission, and of that as one not limited to one place, even were it Capernaum.

**into the next towns:** *lit.* ‘village-towns,’ probably small country towns, whether walled or not, intermediate between villages and cities. Josephus speaks of the thickly planted towns and the multitude of populous villages in Galilee (*Jewish War*, III. iii. 2).

**came I forth.** This wider preaching, he says, was the object of his *coming forth*. This may refer simply to his having left Capernaum and its immediate vicinity. Interpreted, however, in the light of John’s use of the term (cf. viii. 42, xiii. 3), it will point rather to his mission from the Father.

**39. And he went into their synagogues . . . casting out devils (demons).** His words had their effect on Simon and the others. Thus did he begin his first circuit of Galilee, still making his ministry, however, a synagogue-ministry.

40 And there cometh to him a leper, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If 41 thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And being

i. 40-45. *The case of a leper.* Cf. Matt. viii. 2-4; Luke v. 12-16. Leprosy appears to have been a somewhat common disease among the Jews (Luke iv. 27). In the O. T. it is mentioned first in connexion with the signs by which Moses was to establish his Divine commission (Exod. iv. 6); then in the cases of Miriam, Naaman, Gehazi, Uzziah, the lepers of Samaria (2 Kings vii. 3), and others. It was the subject of minute regulations in the Levitical law (Lev. xiii), in which perhaps seven distinct varieties of the disease are recognized. In the N. T. three cases are reported—the man healed here by the touch and will of Jesus, the ten lepers at the village (Luke xviii. 12), and Simon the leper (Matt. xxvi. 7; Mark xiv. 3). These, however, are only selected instances; cf. Matt. x. 8, xi. 5; Luke vii. 22. What this leprosy exactly was, however, is difficult to determine. The disposition is to distinguish between the leprosy of which we read in the Bible and the disease known by the same name in ancient and also in modern times. The latter, which at least in one of its forms may be identified with elephantiasis, is one of the most terrible maladies of which flesh is heir—a very old disease, known in India at least as far back as 1400 B.C., and in Egypt since 1550 B.C., which got into England before the times of the Crusades and lingers still in considerable parts of Europe as well as in the far East. The former is supposed to have been a skin-disease sufficiently loathsome but less terrible than the other. The name *leprosy* may have been given, as appears probable, to a whole class of diseases with which *uncleanness* was associated. So its removal is described in the N. T. as a *cleansing*. The ailment in view in most, if not all, of the biblical passages, may perhaps have been a skin-disease known as *psoriasis*, which was offensive and distressing, but not by any means incurable.

**40. And there cometh to him a leper.** This case is selected for record either because it was the first of its class, or because of the impression it made and the change it occasioned in our Lord's method (cf. i. 45). Luke brings it in after the Draught of Fishes, Matthew after the Sermon on the Mount. Luke speaks of the man as 'full of leprosy'—one in whom the disease reigned from head to foot.

**beseeching him, and kneeling down to him.** Matthew tells us that he 'worshipped him'; Luke that he 'fell on his face.' Neither Matthew nor Mark mentions whence he came. Luke says 'out of one of the cities.' The man's faith in the power of Jesus is the notable thing.

**If thou wilt.** He had no doubt of his ability. He was not

moved with compassion, he stretched forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will ; be thou made clean. And straightway the leprosy departed from <sup>42</sup> him, and he was made clean. And he strictly charged <sup>43</sup> him, and straightway sent him out, and saith unto him, <sup>44</sup> See thou say nothing to any man : but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing the things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto

so sure that it came within the range of his purpose or mission to concern himself with the outcast class of lepers. His doubt was speedily and mercifully removed.

**41. moved with compassion.** Leprosy provoked feelings of repulsion, not of sympathy. The man had come near, in spite of the Levitical restrictions, near enough to be reached ; and Jesus, disregarding the physical loathsomeness and the ceremonial uncleanness, **stretched forth his hand, and touched him.** The **touch** was what was needed to assure the man in his great faith. Jesus, therefore, first touched him and then spoke the healing word. And the result was the instantaneous departure of the leprosy.

**43, 44. strictly charged him.** The expression is a very strong and picturesque one, used of the 'muttering of chafed and fretted animals,' and conveying here a certain note of severity.

**and straightway sent him out, and saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man.** Why this immediate dismissal, with so strong an injunction to silence ? Because, if the man were demonstrative, he might be the occasion of creating a dangerous popular enthusiasm among the people, and of increasing the kind of fame which Jesus saw himself to be acquiring—a fame which had more regard to the physical side of his work than to the spiritual, and which might prejudice his proper course.

**shew thyself to the priest.** The cure was not perfectly complete till the ceremonial disability and the social ban were removed. This was done by the priest, to whom it belonged to pronounce one clean or unclean. See Lev. xiii, xiv.

**offer for thy cleansing the things which Moses commanded.** The man was not to disregard the Hebrew law, but to seek the ceremonial purification in the way which it prescribed (Lev. xiv. 1-32).

**for a testimony unto them.** To whom ? To the people generally ? Hardly so, for it was not his object that they should then know all about it. To the priests ? Probably, for the work

45 them. But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to spread abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into a city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.

- 2 And when he entered again into Capernaum after some days, it was noised that he was in the house.
- 2 And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room *for them*, no, not even about the door:

would be a witness to them that a Prophet, perhaps Messiah himself, was among them.

**and began to publish it much.** The man obeyed the injunction only so far. He 'went out' indeed, but was loquacious and demonstrative instead of silent. The result was that the Healer's work was interfered with; he could no more preach in towns, but had to betake himself to 'desert places.' Even there the people kept coming to him.

ii. 1-12. *The incident of the Paralytic:* Cf. Mark ix. 1-8; Luke v. 17-26. The event recorded in this paragraph has an important position in the narrative. It marks the point at which Jesus began to encounter opposition. So far his deeds and words had won a quick response from the people. His popularity was great, but it did not rest on a true recognition of what he was, and it came in the way of his intended course. From this time he has to face a series of collisions.

1. **And when he entered again into Capernaum.** The heady enthusiasm of the restored leper makes it necessary for him to change his plan. He has to bring the brief circuit among the Galilean synagogues to an end, and comes back to Capernaum. Luke agrees with Mark in introducing this narrative immediately after that of the leper. Matthew speaks of Jesus as coming to Capernaum from the other side of the lake.

**it was noised that he was in the house:** or better, *indoors, at home.* It is not said where, but probably it was in Simon's house.

2. **no longer room for them, no, not even about the door.** Mark's description of the eagerness of the people, still under the spell of his person and work, is very graphic. He lets us see the excited crowds hurrying to the house at the news, pressing in with the freedom which is allowed only in the East, filling the room in a trice, and hanging outside about the door (which no

and he spake the word unto them. And they come, 3 bringing unto him a man sick of the palsy, borne of four. And when they could not come nigh unto him 4 for the crowd, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed whereon the sick of the palsy lay. And Jesus seeing 5 their faith saith unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins

doubt opened direct upon the street) with neck outstretched and ear intent.

**spake the word:** a better rendering than 'preached the word.' Jesus was in a private room, not in the synagogue, and was speaking simply and informally.

**3. And they come, bringing unto him a man sick of the palsy:** or a *paralytic*. Here is a fresh excitement, creating the expectation of further wonders.

**borne of four:** that is, on a light pallet or mattress carried by two pairs of bearers. The number of bearers is given only by Mark.

**4. they uncovered the roof:** *lit.* 'they unroofed the roof.' The roof of a house in Palestine was easily reached by an outer staircase or ladder.

**and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed.** How is this to be understood? Some think that there was an awning over the open court, which had only to be lifted, others that there was a gallery or verandah running along the second story, a part of which was removed. But the phrase 'broken it up' is a strong one meaning 'dug it out,' which suggests something different, and in all probability the house was one of the modest, single-storied cottages suitable for humble folk. The roof of a Jewish house of this kind might consist of beams covered with poles and brushwood and overlaid with earth and gravel. It might be possible, therefore, to break it up, and let the man down through it.

**5. And Jesus seeing their faith.** It was the faith of the paralytic's friends (nothing is said of the sufferer's own faith) that attracted the notice of Jesus—a faith so ardent, persevering, expectant.

**saith unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins are forgiven.** 'Son,' 'child,' a term used of a disciple, and a word of encouragement to the sufferer. Not '*be* forgiven,' as in the A. V., but '*are* forgiven.' Jesus speaks first of forgiveness, and of that as a thing accomplished, and only after that performs the cure. What is the point of this? Not that he meant by the forgiveness

6 are forgiven. But there were certain of the scribes  
 7 sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth  
 this man thus speak? he blasphemeth: who can forgive  
 8 sins but one, *even* God? And straightway Jesus, per-  
 ceiving in his spirit that they so reasoned within them-  
 selves, saith unto them, Why reason ye these things in  
 9 your hearts? Whether is easier, to say to the sick of  
 the palsy, Thy sins are forgiven; or to say, Arise, and

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only the cure itself, the relief of the man from the physical conse-  
 quences of 'some sin affecting the nervous organization' (Gould).  
 That fails to do justice to the force of the word used here, which  
 expresses the removal of guilt. Or is it that Jesus saw more than  
 the faith of the friends—the sense of sin in the heart of the  
 sufferer himself, deeper there than even his sense of the physical  
 malady? The simpler explanation may be that Jesus acts in  
 accordance with Jewish ideas of forgiveness and restoration.  
 'There is no sick man healed of his sickness,' said the Rabbis,  
 'until all his sins have been forgiven him' (Schöttgen, cited  
 by Swete).

**6. certain of the scribes sitting there:** no doubt in the  
 place of honour. The scribes of these parts had been joined by  
 others from the south (cf. Luke v. 17). This is the first encounter  
 with this powerful class.

**reasoning in their hearts.** They said nothing, but sat in  
 suspicious watchfulness, ready to catch at any word.

**7. Why doth... thus speak? he blasphemeth.** The A.V. misses  
 the point here. What stimulated their evil thoughts now as on  
 later occasions was the claims he made. Here it was his claim  
 to forgive sin. He had not indeed *asserted* that in so many words.  
 He had simply said—'Thy sins are forgiven thee.' But they read  
 that declaration as a claim for himself and held it to be blasphemy,  
 that is to say, a kind of speech hurtful to the honour of God.

**8. perceivings in his spirit.** The word 'perceiving' here  
 denotes complete, certain knowledge (cf. 1 Cor. xiii. 12), but  
 a knowledge 'in his spirit,' not gained by the senses. This  
 power of reading men's thoughts intuitively is recognized on other  
 occasions: see e.g. John ii. 24, 25, xxi. 17.

**9. Whether is easier, to say... or to say.** He places two  
 declarations over against each other, not the acts themselves, but  
 the authoritative words, and asks them which is easier. The  
 word of healing might seem the harder, as it had to deal with  
 visible effects, the failure of which would convict him.

take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know 10 that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy), I say unto thee, Arise, 11 take up thy bed, and go unto thy house. And he arose, 12 and straightway took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the 13 multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them. And 14 as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphæus sitting

**10. But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins.** ‘Power’ means *authority* here; and ‘on earth’ (as in contrast with the authority of God in heaven) defines it as an authority *committed* to the Son of man. The question was about *forgiveness*, a moral act implying *authority*. They challenged his right to forgive sins. He brings the matter at once to a test which they could understand, by asserting his possession of another power. If open, unmistakable results proved him to have that power, they could the less doubt his authority in a region where claims could not be attested by visible effects.

**11. I say unto thee, Arise.** He knew that, if he failed in this, he would be discredited. Yet he falters not—sublime, calm certitude!

**12. arose, and straightway took up the bed.** The event justified the assurance. The cure was immediate, thorough, and open to every eye. The man went forth ‘before them all,’ and all were moved profoundly, confessing the hand of God in the event. In this the healed man himself led the way, as we gather from Luke v. 25.

Here we have the first occurrence of the title ‘the Son of man’ in Mark’s Gospel. From this point we meet it often. As to its import see under chap. ix. 12.

ii. 13-14. *The call of Levi*: cf. Matt. ix. 9-13; Luke v. 27-32. An event of importance as regarded both our Lord’s ministry and the causes of offence with him.

**13. taught them.** Jesus now leaves Capernaum and betakes himself again to the sea-side. There he resumes his teaching, which had been interrupted. The interest of the people is as great as ever.

**14. Levi the son of Alphæus.** Who is this Levi? Some

at the place of toll, and he saith unto him, Follow me.  
 15 And he arose and followed him. And it came to pass, that he was sitting at meat in his house, and many publicans and sinners sat down with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him.  
 16 And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that

have taken him to be a different person from Matthew, while it has also been conjectured that he may have been the supervisor, and Matthew an officer under him. But it is most unlikely that there should have been two men, solemnly called in the same way and in the same place by Jesus, one becoming an apostle and the other remaining quite unknown. Most are of opinion, therefore, that Levi and Matthew are names of one and the same person. *Matthew*, not Levi, is the name that occurs in the lists of the Apostles. The mention of *Alphaeus* has led some to regard him as the brother of 'James the less.' But he is not coupled with that James in the lists of the Apostles, as Peter is with Andrew and John with James.

**sitting at the place of toll.** The Romans farmed out the taxes to rich citizens, who employed agents to do the work of collection. Levi was one of these subordinate, provincial custom-house officers. Such agents were usually natives. Their task was an odious one, and it lent itself readily to rapacity and oppression. They had an evil reputation in all the provinces, most of all perhaps in Palestine where the Roman yoke was so hateful. Capernaum was an important custom-house station. It is only in Matthew's list of the Apostles (chap. x. 3), that Matthew is called 'the publican.'

**14. followed him.** For a man in Levi's place it meant more to answer Christ's call than it did to Simon and his comrades. They had an occupation which they could easily resume; he was in a less favourable position.

ii. 15-17. *The feast in Levi's house*; cf. Matt. x. 10-13; Luke v. 29-32. Luke describes it as 'a great feast'—a reception, to which Levi had invited many members of his own class. Jesus, no doubt, was the most honoured guest.

**15. in his house.** Whose house? Levi's surely. Some say the house of Jesus. But this would conflict with Luke's account, and there is no reference elsewhere to our Lord having a house of his own.

**16. the scribes of the Pharisees.** So in Acts xxiii. 9 we read of 'scribes of the Pharisees' part,' i. e. those belonging to that religious party.

he was eating with the sinners and publicans, said unto his disciples, He eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners. And when Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, 17 They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.

And John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting: 18 and they come and say unto him, Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said unto them, Can 19

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**with publicans and sinners.** The word 'publican,' which means properly the renter or farmer of the taxes, is used in the N. T. of the subordinate collectors. 'Sinners' in this connexion may not mean more than men not recognized by the official religionists. That Jesus should associate with the class held outcast by the strict Jews, and should even receive one of these despised men into the circle of his intimate friends, was a second cause of offence. Notice the first occurrence here of the name 'disciples' of Jesus.

**17. not to call the righteous, but sinners.** 'The philosophy, in a nutshell, of all home and foreign missionary operations' (Morrison). Jesus came to do a physician's part. If there were any whole, they required him not; if there were any really righteous, they had no need of his call.

ii. 18-22. *Questions of fasting, raised by observance of the fact that the disciples of Jesus did not act as John's disciples and the Pharisees did; cf. Matt. ix. 14-17; Luke v. 33-39.*

**18. John's disciples.** The Baptist's followers, therefore, remained a distinct party, with their own religious practice.

**were fasting.** Not 'used to fast' (A. V.), but were so engaged *then*. Fasting had come to have a great importance attached to it. In the law its observance was prescribed on the great Day of Atonement. But the traditional law had added much to the written law, and zealous Jews are said to have made the second and fifth days of each week days of fasting.

**they come.** Who? Some say the scribes, and the form of the question favours this. But Matthew says, 'the disciples of John,' and gives the question in terms including them with the Pharisees.

**thy disciples fast not.** The suggestion is that either John's disciples and the Pharisees did too much, or that Jesus did too little in allowing his disciples to disregard fasting.

the sons of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with **20** them, they cannot fast. But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then **21** will they fast in that day. No man seweth a piece of undressed cloth on an old garment: else that which should fill it up taketh from it, the new from the old, **22** and a worse rent is made. And no man putteth new wine into old wine-skins: else the wine will burst the skins, and the wine perisheth, and the skins: but *they put* new wine into fresh wine-skins.

**19. sons of the bridechamber:** the bridegroom's particular friends, who attended to matters belonging to the marriage ceremony.

**cannot fast.** It would not be in character for them to do so. In later Judaism waiting on the bridegroom brought exemption, it is said, from certain prescriptions of the traditional law.

**20. the bridegroom.** Thus Jesus indirectly applies to himself the great figure by which O. T. prophecy (e. g. Hos. ii. 21) sets forth Jehovah in His covenant relation to Israel. The same figure was used by the Baptist (John iii. 29).

**shall be taken away.** The word is a strong one, expressing violent removal. Preserved as it is by each of the three Synoptists, it can with reason be taken as the genuine utterance of our Lord, and it shews that already the thought of suffering and death was in his mind.

**then will they fast in that day.** Times, therefore, differ and observances with them. Fasting is not a necessary or constant part of religious duty; yet there may be occasions on which it will be appropriate and helpful.

**21. No man seweth . . . a worse rent is made.** A sentence more difficult in form than in sense. What is in view is the fact that new undressed cloth shrinks, and if used to mend old cloth, is apt to break away and increase the rent it is meant to cover.

**22. wine-skins.** A better rendering than the 'bottles' of the A. V. Wine-bottles in those days were skins. But skins wear out and become thin by age; and in that condition they are unable to bear the strain put upon them by the inpouring of the 'young wine,' the newly fermented wine of the season.

These homely comparisons, parables in germ, express how mistaken it is to think of mixing up things which differ. A religion of fasting is one thing; the religion of Christ is another. To patch

And it came to pass, that he was going on the sabbath 23 day through the cornfields ; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees 24 said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful ? And he said unto them, Did 25 ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungry, he, and they that were with him ? How 26

up the old religious system with the new, or to burden the new with the old, is a thing at once incongruous and injurious.

ii. 23-28. *The question of the Sabbath* ; cf. Matt. xii. 1-8 ; Luke vi. 1-5. Mark and Luke agree in the order in which they introduce this incident. Matthew proceeds from the questions about fasting to the case of the daughter of Jairus, and brings in the present paragraph only after the record of the gracious words of Jesus about his yoke and burden. Here Mark reports a fourth cause of offence found with Jesus. He has noticed his claim to forgive sin, his companying with publicans and sinners, his indifference to fasting. Now he instances the fault found with his disregard of the conventional sabbath law.

**23. the cornfields** : literally *sown lands* ; no doubt in the neighbourhood of Capernaum.

**began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn.** In strict grammatical usage the words would mean, as in the margin of the R. V., ‘began to make their way plucking.’ The idea thus would be that the corn had overgrown the path, and the disciples had to open a way by plucking the ears, and the offence then would be in the doing of a thing which it was not lawful to do on any day. But this would not be consistent with the express statement of Matthew, and it would take the point from what is afterwards said about the hunger and the eating. Hence most prefer the rendering of the A. V. and the R. V. texts. The offence lies thus in doing on the sabbath day a thing which was lawful in itself.

**24. on the sabbath day that which is not lawful.** The Deuteronomic law had some simple prescriptions bearing on the liberty to be taken with a neighbour’s corn (Deut. xxiii. 25). But the traditional law had gone far beyond these, and had made plucking the corn equivalent to reaping it. But reaping on the sabbath was forbidden (Exod. xxxiv. 21).

**25. Did ye never read ?** He refutes them out of their own Scriptures, shewing by the case of David and his hungry men, as recorded in 1 Sam. xxi. 1-6, how such restrictive regulations had to give place to the higher requirements of necessity and mercy.

he entered into the house of God when Abiathar was high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which it is not lawful to eat save for the priests, and gave also to them  
 27 that were with him? And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:  
 28 so that the Son of man is lord even of the sabbath.

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**26. the house of God:** i. e. the tent of meeting pitched at that period at Nob, a 'city of the priests' (1 Sam. xxii. 19), probably the place also referred to in Neh. xi. 32; Isa. x. 32, not far from Jerusalem, Anathoth, and Ramah.

**when Abiathar was high priest:** i. e. when he was actually in office. But according to the narrative in 1 Sam. xxii. 11 Ahimelech was priest at the time. There seems to be some confusion in the O. T. text. In 1 Sam. xxii. 20 Abiathar is 'one of the sons of Ahimelech, the son of Ahitub'; in 2 Sam. viii. 17 we have 'Ahimelech, the son of Abiathar'; in 1 Sam. xiv. 3 we have 'Ahijah, the son of Ahitub'; in 1 Chron. xviii. 16 we have 'Abimelech, the son of Abiathar.'

**the shewbread.** 'The bread of the setting-forth,' in the O. T. 'the bread of the face' or 'the presence' (Exod. xxv. 30, xxxv. 13, xxxix. 36), called also 'the continual bread' (Num. iv. 7), 'the holy bread' (1 Sam. xxi. 4-6). It consisted of twelve new-baked loaves, placed every sabbath day on a table, in two rows of six, sprinkled with incense, and left for the week. See its law in Lev. xxiv. 5-9. A solemn rite (cf. e. g. 2 Chron. xiii. 11), yet one the meaning of which is not explained in the O. T. itself. It is supposed by some to have been a symbol of a higher life than that of the senses, a life of fellowship with God, requiring a special spiritual nourishment. It may have been an acknowledgement rather of God as Israel's Provider, an offering by the people of a portion of their substance in token of their dependence on Jehovah, and as witness of their covenant relation and duty (Lev. xxiv. 9).

**27. The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath.** The refutation of these Pharisees is carried now beyond the witness of the O. T. narrative to the principle of the institution in question. The sabbath is an ordinance of grace, meant to bring man relief from toil and to be to him for good. It is his servant, not his taskmaster.

**lord even of the sabbath.** The sabbath being meant for man, and man not being intended to be its slave, the Representative Man, he in whom the Divine idea of man is embodied, is its lord, not its servant, and his disciples, acting as such, were free of blame. '*Even of the sabbath*',—that is, a lordship which extended over other things and did not stop short even of an

And he entered again into the synagogue ; and there 3 was a man there which had his hand withered. And 2 they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day ; that they might accuse him. And he 3 saith unto the man that had his hand withered, Stand

institution so sacred to the Jew as this. This lordship did not imply the claim to abolish, but the authority to adapt and fulfil. The real purpose of the sabbath law had been obscured and overlaid by a mass of exasperating prescriptions. It is relieved and reaffirmed.

iii. 1-6. *Healing of a man with his hand withered*; cf. Matt. xii. 9-14; Luke vi. 6-11. All three gospels place this incident in immediate connexion with that of the plucking of the ears of corn on the sabbath. It is probably introduced at this point in order to set forth how Jesus regarded the sabbath law and what liberty he asserted under it. This miracle is important as making the fifth cause of offence with Jesus, and as being one of the seven wrought on the sabbath. The others were in the cases of the demoniac at Capernaum (Mark i. 21), Simon's wife's mother (Mark i. 27), the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda (John v. 9) the woman with the spirit of infirmity (Luke xiii. 14), the dropsical man (Luke xiv. 1), the man born blind (John ix. 14).

**1. Into the synagogue.** Jesus is, therefore, once more in Capernaum, and in the place of worship. The time is not distinctly indicated. The narratives of Matthew and Mark suggest the sabbath immediately following the one on which the plucking of the ears of corn took place. But Luke says simply 'another sabbath.'

**his hand withered.** A better rendering than the 'having a withered hand' of the A. V. The phrase suggests that the man was not in this condition by birth, but had become so by injury or disease. Luke, the physician, notes that it was the *right* hand. It was a case of hand-paralysis or atrophy. Tradition spoke of the man as a bricklayer, who asked to be cured that he might be able to work for his support.

**2. watched him.** The word implies minute observation, here evidently with fell intent. The traditional law allowed the giving of relief only when life was in danger. In a case like the present there was no immediate danger, and it was a breach of the law, therefore, according to the scribes, to do anything for the cure of the sufferer until the sabbath was over. These jealous watchers seem to have expected Jesus to act.

**3. Stand forth.** 'Rise and come into the midst.' Jesus sets about his healing work in a peculiarly public and formal way.

4 forth. And he saith unto them, Is it lawful on the sabbath day to do good, or to do harm? to save a life, 5 or to kill? But they held their peace. And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their heart, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched it

He would have all men see it, as it was to be a test of his action and of his attitude to the sabbath.

**4. And he saith unto them.** From this we should infer that Jesus was himself the challenger. But according to Matthew the Pharisees took the initiative. Luke tells us that Jesus 'knew their thoughts,' and questioned them.

**to do good, or to do harm.** The words may mean simply 'to act rightly or to act wrongly' (cf. 1 Pet. ii. 15, 20). The point of the question then would be—'Would they say that it could ever be unlawful, on sabbath day any more than on week day, to act rightly?' The terms, however, may also mean 'to do one a service or to do one a wrong'; and this is the sense here, as appears from the explanatory words, 'to save a life or to kill.' Matthew introduces here Christ's words about the sheep fallen into a pit, in which he appeals to their own practice. The law did not prohibit beneficent work on the sabbath; even under the traditional law allowances were made, as their own acts shewed.

**5. held their peace.** Only Mark notices this.

**looked round about.** An expressive word used some half-dozen times by Mark (iii. 5, 34, v. 32, ix. 8, x. 23, xi. 11), and mostly of 'the quick searching glance round the circle of his friends or enemies, which Peter remembered as characteristic of the Lord' (Swete).

**with anger, being grieved.** Christ as true man had the normal feelings, emotions, and susceptibilities of man—wrath no less than grief. Anger, as righteous indignation against wrong, is an essential element in the moral nature of man. Plato gave it an integral place in man. Butler held it necessary as the balance of pity. The N. T. recognizes an anger that is legitimate, although in human nature as it is, wrath is all too apt to pass beyond the limits of the lawful (cf. Eph. iv. 26).

**at the hardening of their heart.** The word denotes the making of a *callus*, the substance that unites the ends of a fractured bone, and so the process of hardening into insensibility to truth. Here it is the hardening of mind rather than of feeling that seems particularly in view. The 'heart,' in Hebrew ideas, was the seat of the thoughts.

**Stretch forth thy hand:** On this occasion Jesus used no

forth : and his hand was restored. And the Pharisees 6 went out, and straightway with the Herodians took counsel against him, how they might destroy him.

And Jesus with his disciples withdrew to the sea : and 7 a great multitude from Galilee followed : and from Judæa,

means. He did not even touch the sufferer. The cure was effected in a way that had nothing of the appearance of a *work*.

**And he stretched it forth.** The courage that made the man stand forth was great. The faith that made him stretch forth his dead hand, and attempt the apparently impossible, was greater still. The cure followed at once ; compare the O. T. case of Jeroboam (1 Kings xiii. 4).

**6. went out, and straightway :** mad with the sense of defeat, to scheme revenge without delay.

**with the Herodians.** The word 'Herodians' occurs only in a few cases (Matt. xxii. 16; Mark iii. 6, xii. 13). They are referred to indirectly also in Matt. viii. 15. We have no statement about them in Josephus, or any writer of these times. They may have been partisans of Antipas, or rather adherents of Herod the Great ; in all probability a political rather than a religious party, favouring the Roman government and following a policy of compromise between strict Judaism and the new ideas.

**took counsel.** The word indicates something of a consultation, though an informal one. It points to something more than had yet been done, though not as yet to the deliberate action of an official body. Between Pharisees and Herodians there could be no natural sympathy. Opposition to this Disturber of the existing condition of things brings them together.

iii. 7-12. *Growing popularity in Galilee, despite the antagonism of the classes*; cf. Matt. xii. 15-21. The two narratives agree in reporting the withdrawal of Jesus, the numerous following, the works of healing, and the injunction to silence. Mark gives more detail, while Matthew adds the fulfilment of prophecy.

**7. withdrew to the sea:** with a view to safety. Matthew indicates that it was when he knew of the counsel taken against him that Jesus left Capernaum and turned again to the Sea of Galilee.

**a great multitude . . . followed.** Mark brings out not only the largeness of the following, but also (which Matthew does not give) the wide extent and variety of the territory represented. People were attracted not only from Galilee, but from Judæa and Jerusalem and Idumæa in the south, from Peraea in the east, and from the parts about Tyre and Sidon in the north-west.

8 and from Jerusalem, and from Idumæa, and beyond Jordan, and about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude,  
 9 hearing what great things he did, came unto him. And he spake to his disciples, that a little boat should wait  
 10 on him because of the crowd, lest they should throng  
 him : for he had healed many ; insomuch that as many  
 11 as had plagues pressed upon him that they might touch  
 him. And the unclean spirits, whosoever they beheld  
 12 him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art  
 the Son of God. And he charged them much that they  
 should not make him known.

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**8. Idumæa :** the Edom of the O. T., mentioned also by the name Idumæa in Isa. xxxiv. 5, 6 (A. V. : *Edom* in R. V.); Ezek. xxxv. 15, xxxvi. 5 (A. V. : *Edom* in R. V.). This is its only occurrence in the N. T. It denotes the territory occupied by the descendants of Esau, originally Mount Seir, but, after the Exile, part of Southern Palestine. By our Lord's time the people were practically included in the Jewish nation (Herod the Great was an Idumæan), and Idumæa made part of Judæa.

**from ... beyond Jordan :** that is, Peræa, the district to the east of the Jordan, lying mostly between the Arnon and the Jabbok.

**about Tyre and Sidon :** that is, the Phœnician sea-coast, the north-west territory termed *Phenice* in Acts (xi. 19, xv. 3, xxi. 2).

**9. a little boat should wait on him.** The boat was to be in constant attendance, and was to take the place which the synagogue had had hitherto as the chief scene of his teaching.

**10. plagues :** *lit.* ‘scourges,’ i. e. torturing maladies.

**pressed :** *lit.* ‘fell’ on him—a picture, in a word, of the eager, excited impetuosity of the people, which was like to crush him. They believed that if they but touched him they would experience the healing power.

**11. unclean spirits :** or ‘demons,’ that is, the sufferers possessed by such.

**whosoever :** ‘as often as,’ or it may be ‘so soon as.’

**fell down :** rather, ‘would fall down,’ that is in homage. The first recorded occasion of that.

**the Son of God.** Here probably as meaning the Messiah : a more definite title, however, than the previous ‘the Holy One of God’ (i. 23).

**12. he charged them much.** Why? Because, as Bengel puts it, ‘neither was this the time nor were these the preachers.’

And he goeth up into the mountain, and calleth unto <sup>13</sup> him whom he himself would: and they went unto him. And he appointed twelve, that they might be with him, <sup>14</sup> and that he might send them forth to preach, and to <sup>15</sup> have authority to cast out devils: and Simon he surnamed <sup>16</sup> Peter; and James the *son* of Zebedee, and John the <sup>17</sup>

iii. 13-19. *The choice of the Twelve.* An event that makes a great epoch in the ministry of Jesus. All the three Synoptists record it and attach the same importance to it, although they do not all introduce it in precisely the same connexion; cf. Matt. x. 2-4, Luke vi. 12-16. The work of Jesus was growing on his hand, the feeling of the common people was with him, there was much to do for them and among them, and at the same time the hostility of the classes was taking shape. He had crowds following him, and a certain number of disciples more particularly attached to him. But the time had come when there was need of a body of adherents more closely and officially connected with him, to be with him regularly and to do certain work for him.

**13. goeth up into the mountain.** One of the hills above the lake, and one with which he was familiar. Luke tells us that Jesus went there to *pray*, and that he continued in prayer all night. Thus did he prepare for the important act of the ordination.

**calleth unto him whom he himself would.** The election took place, Luke tells us, at the break of day, as Jesus came fresh from the night of communion with God.

**14. And he appointed twelve.** The election was a twofold one. First he called to him a certain number out of the whole body of his followers, and then from these he chose twelve—with reference no doubt to the twelve tribes.

**that they might be with him.** The Twelve were chosen for two great purposes. The first was that they might be his stated associates.

**send them forth.** The second purpose was that they should act as his messengers or delegates.

**to preach:** this was their primary duty, the proclamation of the good news of the kingdom.

**15. authority to cast out devils:** ('demons'). Matthew adds the power of *healing*. This authority was to be connected with the higher duty of preaching, to further it and attest their commission.

**16. Simon he surnamed Peter.** Four lists of the Apostles are given (Matt. x, Mark iii, Luke vi, Acts i). In each case the list falls into three groups of four names, having Peter, Philip, John, and James the *son* of Alphæus respectively at the head. Each list

brother of James; and them he surnamed Boanerges,  
 18 which is, Sons of thunder: and Andrew, and Philip,  
 and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James  
 the son of Alphæus, and Thaddæus, and Simon the  
 19 Canaanæan, and Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed  
 him.

begins with Peter and ends with the traitor. The new name Peter, Hebrew *Cephas=Rock*, expressed what he was to be to the Church in worth or in official position. John (i. 48) speaks of it as given on the occasion of Simon's first call. It may have been renewed or given with more specific distinction now.

**17. Boanerges**, explained as 'sons of thunder.' But for what reason the title was given is left untold. It may point to the ardent temper which shewed itself on certain occasions (cf. Mark ix. 38; Luke ix. 54). There is nothing in the Gospels or elsewhere in the N. T. to shew that this name, though given by Jesus himself, persisted. It is no more mentioned.

**18. Andrew, and Philip**: men of Bethsaida, mentioned together in John xii. 22. Philip is not introduced again in the narrative of the first three gospels.

**Bartholomew**: that is, 'son of Tolmai.' He is taken to be the same as Nathanael—for this among other reasons, that John mentions Nathanael twice but never Bartholomew, while the other evangelists speak of Bartholomew and not of Nathanael.

**Thomas**. Of him we see more in the Fourth Gospel (xi. 16, xiv. 5, xx. 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, xxi. 2).

**James the son of Alphæus**. In distinction from James, son of Zebedee, and probably the same as 'James the less' or 'the little,' son of Mary and brother of Joses.

**Thaddæus**. Probably the same as Lebbæus, and also as Judas the son or brother of James, the head of the church of Jerusalem.

**the Canaanæan**: not the 'Canaanite' nor 'the man of Cana,' but 'the Canaanæan' or 'the zealot' (cf. Luke vi. 15). He may have been of the party known as the Zealots, a fanatical patriotic party, fiercely opposed to foreign domination. Or the name may indicate simply the disposition of the man, his jealousy for the cause which he espoused.

**19. Iscariot**: that is, 'the man of Kerioth.' But where this Kerioth was is uncertain. A Kerioth-hezron is mentioned in Joshua xv. 25. If Judas belonged to it, he would be a native of Judæa, and the only one among the Twelve that was a Judean. A Kerioth in Moab is also referred to in Jer. xlvi. 24, 41. If this were the place in view Judas would belong to the district east of the Dead Sea. In most cases the name of this Judas is coupled with

And he cometh into a house. And the multitude 20 cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. And when his friends heard it, they went 21 out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself. And the scribes which came down from Jeru- 22 salem said, He hath Beelzebub, and, By the prince of the devils casteth he out the devils. And he called them 23

the terrible note of his treachery (Matt. x. 4; Luke vii. 16; John xii. 4, xviii. 2, 5; Acts i. 16).

**into a house:** or, as it may be, *home*, and so to Capernaum.

iii. 20, 21. *Intervention of the Friends of Jesus.* A short paragraph, given only by Mark. At this point Luke introduces the Sermon on the Plain.

**20. not so much as eat bread.** A graphic touch, recalling the actual scene—the crowd gathering as eagerly and tumultuously as before, and taking complete possession of him, so that he had no opportunity even to take food of any kind.

**21. friends.** Probably, as suggested by the ‘went out,’ his relatives. His mother and his brethren had come in all likelihood from Nazareth, anxious about him.

**lay hold on him:** to protect him from his own want of care and thought, as they deemed it.

**beside himself.** They took his absorption in his strange work as a sign of religious frenzy.

iii. 22-30. *Charge of working by Satanic Power:* cf. Matt. xii. 22-45; Luke xi. 14-28.

**22. scribes which came down from Jerusalem.** Mark is most definite here. Matthew speaks only of ‘Pharisees,’ and Luke only of ‘some of them.’ Those in view were no doubt scribes of the Pharisaic party. Matthew and Luke shew what led to this accusation, viz. the healing of one ‘possessed with a devil, blind and dumb.’ The people concluded that the Healer was the Son of David. The scribes gave another explanation.

**Beelzebul:** rather, ‘Beelzebul.’ The former is the name given to the god of Ekron (2 Kings i. 6), and is thought by some to mean ‘the god of flies.’ The form *Beelzebul* is of doubtful origin. Some take it to mean ‘the lord of filth’; others make it ‘the lord of the habitation,’ whether as the god of the air (Eph. ii. 2) or as the god of the nether world.

**By (or ‘in’) the prince of the devils** (‘demons’): cf. John xiv. 30, xvi. 11; Eph. ii. 2. A poor and unknown man like this, they thought, could not of himself do the works he un-

unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can  
 24 Satan cast out Satan? And if a kingdom be divided  
 25 against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house  
 be divided against itself, that house will not be able to  
 26 stand. And if Satan hath risen up against himself, and  
 27 is divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. But no  
 one can enter into the house of the strong *man*, and spoil

doubtedly did. He must be in collusion with the powers of evil, and so related to them that their prince works in him.

**23. in parables.** The first occurrence of the word in this Gospel. The word 'parable' in the O. T. represents a term which is used for proverbs (1 Sam. x. 12; Prov. i. 1, &c.), dark, enigmatical utterances (Ps. Ixxviii. 2; Prov. i. 6), mystical, prophetic intimations (Num. xxiii. 7, 18, &c.), and figurative speech with more or less of a narrative in it (Ezek. xvii. 1-10). In the N. T. it is applied to proverbial sayings (Luke iv. 23); institutions, persons, or events of a typical or suggestive character (Heb. ix. 9, xi. 19); illustrative statements or comparisons (Matt. xv. 15; Luke vi. 39); but usually in the Gospels to comparisons or similitudes containing something of a story. Here it has the more general sense of an illustrative or analogical statement. The Fourth Gospel has allegories, not parables proper.

**How can Satan cast out Satan?** Only Mark gives this question. Jesus speaks not of the 'prince of the demons,' but of 'Satan,' the 'adversary' (the ordinary Jewish name for the Spirit of evil). In the O.T. the references to Satan are few, the most definite being in Job i. 6, 12; Zech. iii. 1, 2. In the N. T. there is a frequency of allusion to Satan, under a number of names and in a variety of aspects, that contrasts remarkably with the reticence of the O. T.

**26. cannot stand.** The argument conveyed by the opening question in verse 23 is developed in three particular and parallel cases—a divided kingdom, a divided house, a divided Satan. In each the consequence would be the destruction of the subject. If Satan were in collusion with Jesus and lent him his power, he would be his own destroyer.

**27. the strong man.** Another succinct 'parable' or similitude; cf. Isa. xlix. 24, 25. It gives the positive side of the refutation. Not only is Jesus not in alliance with Satan—he is Satan's spoiler. The 'goods' of the strong man are explained by Luke (xi. 22) as his 'armour' and his 'spoils'—not only his possessions, but his weapons, the very things by which he is wont to conquer.

his goods, except he first bind the strong *man*; and then he will spoil his house. Verily I say unto you, All their 28 sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and their blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but 29 whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin: because 30 they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

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**28. Verily.** In John's Gospel we get the double form, *Verily, verily*. In the O. T. it is used, as we use Amen, as a conclusion. In the Gospels it is a grave and emphatic formula introducing something that is to be said.

**All their sins.** The point seems to be all *kinds* or *classes* of sins, with special reference to one kind or class which might well seem worse than any other. The scribes had accused Jesus of blasphemy, yet even for such an offence against himself, he says, there is forgiveness.

**29. against the Holy Spirit.** There is, however, this one exception, though only one, to the general assurance of forgiveness. What is meant by this blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? Some say it is something entirely peculiar to these Pharisaic slanderers of our Lord, with nothing like it in the present conditions of life. Others think it has no essential relation to the case of these Pharisees. The truth lies between these extremes. These scribes had seen an unmistakable instance of the working of a holy, supernatural power in the healing deeds of Christ. They had hardened themselves against that witness, and they had done this so relentlessly that they did not hesitate to ascribe those deeds of grace and goodness to Satanic power, dishonouring the Holy Spirit. To speak ill of the Son of Man, as he was seen in common human nature, might not imply hopeless evil and might be forgiven. To deal thus with the Holy Ghost, as if the power which was unmistakably His were the power of an evil spirit, revealed a mind so set against light and so lost to conviction as to lack the first conditions of forgiveness.

**hath never forgiveness:** 'hath not forgiveness for ever,' 'hath forgiveness nevermore'—an absolute negation, meaning that neither in this dispensation nor in any other is there forgiveness for such a sin.

**guilty of an eternal sin.** Each word here is of moment: 'guilty,' meaning literally *involved in, subject to*, the consequences of something; 'eternal,' in its natural sense of *enduring for ever*; 'sin,' not 'damnation' as in the A. V. It is in the nature of things, therefore, that the blasphemy in question should not have forgiveness.

31 And there come his mother and his brethren; and,  
 32 standing without, they sent unto him, calling him. And  
 a multitude was sitting about him; and they say unto  
 him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek  
 33 for thee. And he answereth them, and saith, Who is my  
 34 mother and my brethren? And looking round on them  
 which sat round about him, he saith, Behold, my mother

The impossibility lies in the fact that the man is involved in a sin that persists, a fixed disposition or character. An enduring sin carries an enduring punishment with it and in itself.

**30. because they said, He hath an unclean spirit:** perhaps an explanation added by the evangelist himself, shewing how it was the accusation made by these scribes that led to this solemn declaration.

iii. 31-35. *The Mother and the Brethren*: cf. Matt. xii. 46-50; Luke viii. 19-21. Luke brings in this paragraph after the Parable of the Sower. Matthew attaches it definitely to our Lord's reply to the request for a sign. Here the connexion is with the appearance of the friends (verse 21).

**31. his brethren:** they are named in vi. 3, and in Matt. xiii. 55. They are taken by some to have been half-brothers, sons of Joseph by a former marriage (the Epiphanian theory); by others, to have been cousins, sons of a sister of the Virgin Mary (the Hieronymian theory, or theory of Jerome); by others still, to have been brothers in the proper sense, younger sons of Joseph and Mary (the Helvidian theory). The last view is favoured by the natural sense of the word, the inference from the term 'first-born son' (Matt. i. 25; Luke ii. 7) and the mention of the mother (with the ordinary sense of that word) along with the *brethren*.

**standing without:** they are unable to get in by reason of the crowd, and, therefore, send a message to Jesus, which perhaps was passed from mouth to mouth till it reached those immediately about him.

**32. seek for thee:** moved probably by anxiety about him. There is nothing to indicate either that they claimed any guardianship over him, or that he gave the audience asked for.

**33. answereth them.** In the first instance those who conveyed the message, and then the others, the mother and the brothers probably being without.

**34. looking round . . . about:** a characteristic action, but meaning something different from the indignant survey in iii. 5.

**them which sat round about him:** doubtless the *disciples*, as the words following imply.

and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

And again he began to teach by the sea side. And **4** there is gathered unto him a very great multitude, so that he entered into a boat, and sat in the sea; and all the multitude were by the sea on the land. And he **2** taught them many things in parables, and said unto them in his teaching, Hearken: Behold, the sower went forth **3**

**35. the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.** There is no harshness in this declaration; nothing to suggest that he thought of disowning his own relations, or made little of natural human ties and affections, or bade us do so. But he gives us to understand that there is a higher relationship still, a family of God that is greater than the human family. Kinship to him is not of birth, but of the Spirit, and has its essence in obedience, the doing of his Father's will. 'He speaks in the full consciousness of his being the Son of God, who has duties incumbent on him in virtue of his mission' (Meyer).

iv. 1-9. *Parable of the Sower*: cf. Matt. xiii. 1-9; Luke viii. 4-8. This is the 'beginning of parables,' as the turning of water into wine was the 'beginning of miracles'—the great pattern-parable, and one of those which have a place in each of the Synoptists. Matthew and Mark agree in bringing it in after the incident of the mother and brethren. Luke places it in a different connexion, before that incident. Mark gives it as one of 'many' that were spoken (verses 2, 33), and reports in the same connexion other two. Matthew gives a cluster of seven.

**1. began to teach:** Jesus was again by the lake, and had resumed his teaching. At once a crowd gathered, and he betook himself for freedom's sake to the boat. Then his teaching took the form of *parable*. That this was a change, and one that surprised the disciples, appears from their question, 'Why speakest thou unto them in parables?' (Matt. xiii. 10). Hitherto he had taught in more direct and less pictorial terms, by words of grace like those of the Sermon on the Mount, or by simple figures which explained themselves. But he had now reached a point in his ministry at which he had to deal with the deeper things of his kingdom. These were so strange to the Jews, so unlike all their ideas and expectations, that he had to adopt a method of instruction that might conciliate, and provoke reflection, and gradually make a way to their minds for new truth.

**3. the sower.** The things on which his eye could rest as he

4 to sow: and it came to pass, as he sowed, some *seed* fell by the way side, and the birds came and devoured it.  
 5 And other fell on the rocky *ground*, where it had not much earth; and straightway it sprang up, because it  
 6 had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was risen, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered  
 7 away. And other fell among the thorns, and the thorns  
 8 grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. And others fell into the good ground, and yielded fruit, growing up and increasing; and brought forth, thirtyfold,  
 9 and sixtyfold, and a hundredfold. And he said, Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

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sat there in the boat—the sea, the cornfields, the soils of different kinds, the beaten pathway, the intertwining thorns, the flocks of birds, would suggest the similitudes.

**went forth:** those who tilled the soil lived together in townships or villages, and ‘went forth’ to do their day’s work in the fields.

**4. the way side:** the path by the field or passing through it, beaten by the tread of many feet and incapable of receiving the seed.

**5. rocky ground:** that is (cf. Luke’s ‘on the *rock*’), not soil merely mixed with stones, but solid rock thinly covered with soil. The seed might penetrate a little way, but could have no depth of root and would speedily be scorched.

**7. among the thorns:** in Matthew, ‘upon the thorns,’ that is, on thorny ground. Thorns, the *nâkk* of the Arabs, are an abundant crop in Syria. They look like the grain, and grow with it, but only to discover at last their deadly nature, and choke the wheat when it should yield its increase.

**8. thirtyfold, and sixtyfold, and a hundredfold.** Matthew begins with the highest degree of fruitfulness and goes down the scale. Luke says simply ‘a hundredfold.’ Writers, both ancient and modern, speak of the extraordinary fertility of Eastern soil (cf. Gen. xxvi. 12), and not least of that of Galilee. Of the Plain of Gennesaret Dr. Robinson says, ‘its fertility can hardly be exceeded’ (*Bib. Researches*, iii. 285).

The soils, therefore, have respectively the qualities of hardness, thinness, foulness, and goodness. The seed will have fortunes corresponding to the soils. In one case it does not spring at all; in the second it springs but to wither; in the third it springs

And when he was alone, they that were about him <sup>10</sup> with the twelve asked of him the parables. And he <sup>11</sup> said unto them, Unto you is given the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, <sup>12</sup>

and grows, but yields nothing; in the fourth it comes to maturity, and to an increase varying in measure according to the different degrees of the soil's softness, depth, and purity.

**9. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear:** solemn words reported by all three Synoptists here; spoken also in connexion with the sayings recorded in Matt. xi. 15, xiii. 43; Mark iv. 23; Luke xiv. 35. They do not occur in John's Gospel; but in the Apocalypse they appear eight times.

iv. 10-20. *Explanation of the Parable*; cf. Matt. xiii. 10-23; Luke viii. 9-15.

**10. they that were about him with the twelve asked of him.** The meaning of the parable was not clear even to the disciples and the Twelve, far less to others. When he has finished his teaching for the time and the crowd is gone, he explains things in private. He does this in response to a request made by his disciples (Luke viii. 9).

**11. the mystery.** By this is meant a secret that is told or is destined to be told; in that sense the *gospel* (Rom. xvi. 25; 1 Cor. ii. 1, 7), or some particular part or truth of it, e. g. the calling of the Gentiles (Eph. iii. 3), the change at the Resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 51), is a 'mystery.'

**them that are without.** Those outside the circle of the disciples. Mark alone gives this phrase.

**all things are done in parables.** Parabolic teaching serves more than one good purpose. It conciliates attention; it wins a place for strange or unwelcome truths in the mind; it illuminates and illustrates; it helps the memory and stimulates reflection; it guards the life of truth until it can be received. But it has also another use. It is, as Matthew Henry puts it, a 'shell that keeps good fruit for the diligent, but keeps it from the slothful.' It is this penal object or result that is in view here.

**12. that seeing they may see, and not perceive.** Our Lord here makes use of certain words of the O. T. (Isa. vi. 10) which appear repeatedly in the N. T. (cf. John xii. 40; Acts xxviii. 26), and which speak of a blindness that comes on the people as the penalty of their grossness and the hardening of their minds. He applies these words to the case of those who crowded him and yet were 'without.' He spoke as he did to the dull and carnal

and not perceive ; and hearing they may hear, and not understand ; lest haply they should turn again, and it  
 13 should be forgiven them. And he saith unto them, Know ye not this parable ? and how shall ye know all  
 14, 15 the parables ? The sower soweth the word. And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown : and when they have heard, straightway cometh Satan, and taketh away the word which hath been sown in them.  
 16 And these in like manner are they that are sown upon the rocky *places*, who, when they have heard the word,  
 17 straightway receive it with joy ; and they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while ; then, when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word,  
 18 straightway they stumble. And others are they that are sown among the thorns ; these are they that have heard

*'because seeing they see not'* (Matt. xiii. 13). So in Matthew it is expressed as *result*. But in Mark the words are given in terms of *purpose*—*'that seeing they may see, and not perceive.'* For with God result is also purpose. This solemn and difficult saying touches one of the sovereign laws of the kingdom of God—the fact that, in the Divine order and in the nature of things, refusal to receive the truth issues in inability to see the truth. The love of darkness has for its penalty ultimate insensibility to the light.

**13. Know ye not this parable ?** The parable had its occasion in the moral condition of the disciples. It was intended to free them from those mistaken, unspiritual anticipations of his kingdom, which stood in the way of their understanding his teaching, and to help them to see that that kingdom was to come not immediately and by power, but by means of a Divine message which required time to do its work.

**14. soweth the word.** The great subject of the parable, therefore, is the *word* ; this Divine message which he brought to men, the conditions of its efficiency, and the reception it was to have.

**15. the way side :** a figure of the spiritually obtuse, or the hearer whose ear is reached but not his heart, who is as if the word had never come to him.

**16. the rocky places.** So is it with the impulsive, heady hearer who receives the word, but in a way so superficial that he goes down at once before trial.

**18. among the thorns.** A third type of mind, sympathetic to

the word, and the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. And those are they that were sown upon the good ground; such as hear the word, and accept it, and bear fruit, thirtyfold, and sixtyfold, and a hundredfold.

And he said unto them, Is the lamp brought to be put under the bushel, or under the bed, *and* not to be put on the stand? For there is nothing hid, save that it should be manifested; neither was *anything* made secret, but that it should come to light. If any man hath ears to hear, let him hear. And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete it shall be measured unto you: and more shall be given unto you. For he that hath, to him shall be given:

the message and going far with it, but divided between God and the world, and so becoming ‘unfruitful’—reaching nothing worthy in life or in service.

**20. the good ground.** The mind that ‘takes in’ the word, keeps it, and submits itself to its spiritual work, and so obtains, in smaller or larger measure, the good of life and the power of service.

iv. 21-25. *The Responsibility of Hearing*; cf. Luke viii. 16-18.

**21. the lamp.** The kind of lamp no doubt that might be seen in any humble Galilean house, a simple earthenware saucer, perhaps, with wick and oil.

**22. that it should be manifested.** As a lamp is given not in order to be covered, but that it may give light, so the word is given by Christ to the disciples not that they may keep it for themselves, but that they may impart it to others. The explanation is offered perhaps with a view to the ‘mystery’ of the kingdom of God. The things of that kingdom are *mysteries*, but they are misunderstood if they are taken to be secrets meant to remain secret.

**24. Take heed what ye hear.** The importance of right hearing is seen in this—that the measure of attainment in this matter of knowing the mystery of the kingdom will be the measure of the attention given to the word.

**25. he that hath, to him shall be given.** Another of the

and he that hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath.

**26** And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth ; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how. The earth beareth fruit of herself ; first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth forth the sickle, because the harvest is come.

great laws of the kingdom. Knowledge adds to knowledge. The due exercise of the gift of insight into truth leads to larger insight, while neglect of gift leads to loss of gift.

**iv. 26-29. Parable of the Fruit-bearing Earth.** One of the three parables which speak of the things of the kingdom in terms of a sower's work ; akin to those of the *sower* and the *tares*, but with a distinct purpose, and illustrating a different aspect of the kingdom. It is peculiar to Mark.

**27. and rise night and day.** The picture is that of a farmer who, having done the work of sowing which belongs to him to do, goes about in the ordinary way of life, and attempts nothing further, but patiently and hopefully leaves the seed to the action of the forces in the earth.

**28. The earth beareth fruit of herself.** The heart of the parable is here, in the *spontaneous* action of the earth. While the man waits, the seed is passing through changes which are independent of his action, and are due to the unconstrained and unaided operation of the forces stored in the soil.

**first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.** These hidden forces work not only surely and effectively, but regularly, carrying the seed without fail through the orderly development of blade, ear, and full corn.

**29. when the fruit is ripe:** or, 'alloweth.' Only at the end has the farmer his time again. At last the seed returns to him as the ripe grain which it is for him to gather. All through the interval things have gone on in ways unknown to him, by the operation of powers hidden from him and uncontrolled by him.

The parable is best described as that of the *fruit-bearing earth*. It represents the kingdom of God indeed as a thing that grows silently and by successive orderly stages. But neither the *secrecy* nor the *gradual, regulated* method of increase is the immediate point here. It is that the kingdom of God is a spiritual thing introduced into the world, working in quiet and without haste

And he said, How shall we liken the kingdom of God? or in what parable shall we set it forth? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown upon the earth, though it be less than all the seeds that are upon the earth, yet when it is sown, groweth up, and becometh greater than all the herbs, and putteth out great branches; so that the birds of the heaven can lodge under the shadow thereof.

through the moral forces deposited in human life and society, and moving on to its assured end by laws of its own. This is a word, therefore, of encouragement. The Parable of the Sower spoke of disappointments and failures due to the nature of the soil in which the seed is committed. This one speaks of hidden forces beyond our knowledge or control, which secure the growth of the seed, when once it is fitly sown, and make it certain of increase.

iv. 30-32. *Parable of the Mustard Seed*: cf. Matt. xiii. 31, 32; Luke xiii. 18, 19.

**31. mustard seed.** Never mentioned in the O. T. In the N. T. it occurs thrice on the lips of Christ, and always in respect of its *smallness*, viz. here (with the parallels in Matthew and Luke), in Matt. xvii. 20, and Luke xvii. 6. No doubt the common mustard-plant is meant; not, as some have supposed, the tree known as the *khardal*, which is said to grow as high as twenty-five feet. For that tree does not appear to have been known in the districts in which Jesus was teaching.

**less than all the seeds:** that is, than those familiar to the Jews of these parts and wont to be handled by them.

**32. greater than all the herbs:** that is, than all that had a place in a Jew's garden. In hot countries the mustard (one of the tiniest of seeds) grew to a great size, ten or twelve feet high—as tall, we are told, as a horse and his rider.

**birds of the heaven can lodge.** Not for nesting, but rather for resting and for devouring the seeds. Birds are said to have a special favour for the mustard and its branches.

The point of the parable is in the contrast between the diminutive seed and the great increase. It is a word of hope, needed by the disciples and opportunely spoken. The kingdom of God as they now saw it was so unlike what they looked for, and so insignificant in its first appearance, as to suggest gloomy anticipations. This parable was spoken to correct that mood of mind, and give the assurance of a mighty future, notwithstanding the small and obscure beginning. The kingdom would yet cover the earth and

33 And with many such parables spake he the word unto  
34 them, as they were able to hear it: and without a parable  
spake he not unto them: but privately to his own  
disciples he expounded all things.

35 And on that day, when even was come, he saith  
36 unto them, Let us go over unto the other side. And  
leaving the multitude, they take him with them, even

embrace the *nations* (cf. Ezek. xxxi. 6, 12). The growth of the kingdom of God had already been set forth in the O. T. under the image of a tree (Ezek. iv. 10-12, xvii. 22, 24, xxxi. 3-9; Dan. iv. 10-12).

iv. 33-34. *Method and Principle of Christ's Teaching*: cf. Matt. xiii. 34, 35.

**33. many such parables.** It is but a selection, therefore, that is given by Mark.

**as they were able to hear it.** Jesus taught with a wise adaptation to the capacities of his hearers, beginning with the simpler questions of duty, proceeding to the deeper things of his kingdom, and unfolding these latter gradually. Cf. John xvi. 12. The Apostles taught on the same principle : cf. 1 Cor. iii. 2; Heb. v. 12, xii. 20.

**34. without a parable spake he not unto them.** We do not need, however, to take this to mean that he limited himself to the parabolic form of teaching on all occasions hereafter.

**expounded.** The word is used of the interpreting of dreams (Gen. xl. 8, xli. 8, 12), and also of the deciding of questions (Acts xix. 39). It was our Lord's stated practice, therefore, to open up to his disciples, when they were alone, the meaning of the parables he had spoken to the people generally. Matthew finds a fulfilment of Ps. lxxviii. 2 in this habitual use of parabolic address (ch. xiii. 14).

iv. 35-41. *The Stilling of the Storm*: cf. Matt. viii. 23-27; Luke viii. 22-25. Luke agrees with Mark in introducing this incident immediately after these parables. In all three Synoptists it is followed immediately by the story of the Gadarene demoniac.

**35. on that day.** Mark's note of time is very definite. Luke says simply 'on one of those days.'

**when even was come.** At the close, therefore, of an exhausting day's work he proposes to cross to the other side, no doubt with a view to be free of the crowd and obtain rest.

**36. take him.** Said appropriately of the disciples, as being in charge of the boat.

as he was, in the boat. And other boats were with him. And there ariseth a great storm of wind, and 37 the waves beat into the boat, insomuch that the boat was now filling. And he himself was in the stern, 38 asleep on the cushion: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And 39 he awoke, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there

**as he was:** without attempting any change or making any further provision for him. He was in the boat, and they start at once.

**other boats.** This is noticed only by Mark. They set out, probably, in eagerness to follow him. Nothing is told us of their fate.

**37. ariseth a great storm of wind.** Luke's description is peculiarly true to nature—'there came down a storm of wind on the lake.' It was one of those sudden, fierce winds that sweep down from the heights upon the deep-set lake, through the great rifts that open out on the shore.

**now filling:** not 'was now full,' as in the A. V. The waves, driven with sudden violence, began to fill the boat.

**38. he himself:** contrasting his tranquil slumber with the tumult raging about him.

**in the stern, asleep on the cushion.** This picture of his position is given by Mark alone. Matthew and Luke mention only his sleeping. 'In the stern'—where he could rest, out of the way of those handling the boat. 'Asleep'—because weary, like one of ourselves, and needing rest; so fast asleep, too, as to be unconscious of the tempest. This is the only occasion on which the Gospels directly ascribe sleep to him. 'The cushion'—a pillow, or perhaps the leather seat of steersman or rower.

**they awake him:** fear rendering them unable any longer to forbear.

**Master:** properly 'teacher,' 'Rabbi.'

**carest thou not?** An appeal with a touch of reproach in it, which does not appear in Matthew or in Luke.

**39. And he awoke.** What the noise of wind and wave did not do, is done at once by the call of the disciples.

**rebuked.** All three Synoptists notice the fact: Mark alone gives the terms of the command addressed to the sea.

**be still:** *lit.* 'be muzzled,' as if the sea were a raging, roaring beast. The form of the word, too, means 'be still forth-

40 was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are 41 ye fearful? have ye not yet faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

5 And they came to the other side of the sea, into 2 the country of the Gerasenes. And when he was

with and remain so.' With reference to the shrieking winds—' Peace'; with reference to the rushing waves—' be still.'

**ceased**: a picturesque word, expressing cessation from tiring toil and trouble. The lake sank back forthwith, like an exhausted creature, into motionless repose.

40. **he said unto them.** He had to rebuke the disciples as well as the winds and waves. In Matthew the order is reversed, and the chiding of the disciples precedes the stilling of the raging elements.

**fearful.** Courage fled because their trust failed.

**have ye not yet faith?** 'Not yet'—after all they had seen in these many days of association with him. Luke puts it, 'Where is your faith?' They had it in a measure, but it was not at hand then when they needed it.

41. **feared exceedingly.** They are mastered now by a different kind of fear—not weak timidity, but wholesome awe.

**Who then is this?** New questions spring to their lips, indicating how profoundly they are moved. A greater impression is made upon them by this work than by any other they have yet witnessed. It came home to themselves and concerned those uncontrollable forces of nature which put their awe on fisher-folk like them. To them it meant more than even the rebuke of demons (i. 27).

v. 1-20. *The Gerasene Demoniac*: cf. Matt. viii. 28-32; Luke viii. 26-33. The three Synoptists agree in bringing the incidents of the Gerasene or Gadarene demoniac, the woman with the issue, and the daughter of Jairus together in their narratives. Mark and Luke do this more completely than Matthew. These incidents are placed by Matthew, however, in a different relation to other events from that which they have in Mark and Luke. In the First Gospel the healing of this demoniac and the stilling of the storm which it follows are introduced after the restoration of Peter's mother-in-law and the incidents of the scribe and the disciple.

1. **the other side of the sea**: that is, the eastern side.

**the country of the Gerasenes.** The question of the locality is one of great difficulty, in respect both of topography and of variation in the text. The ancient MSS. differ greatly in all the

come out of the boat, straightway there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had 3 his dwelling in the tombs: and no man could any more bind him, no, not with a chain; because that 4 he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been rent asunder by him, and

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three Synoptical Gospels, and they differ in such a way as to point to a different designation of the place in each of the three. The evidence is in favour of 'the country of the *Gadarenes*' as the reading of Matthew; 'the country of the *Gerasenes*' as that of Mark; 'the country of the *Gergesenes*' as that of Luke, though the R. V. prefers '*Gerasenes*' in Luke as well as in Mark. It is possible that *Gerasenes* and *Gergesenes* are different pronunciations of the same word or a copyist's confusion of one with the other. What then is the place in view? It cannot be the *Gerasa* in Gilead, which is identified with *Jerâsh*; for that is some twenty miles east of the Jordan. Nor can it well be the *Gadara* which Matthew's reading might suggest, and which is identified with *Um-Keiss*; for that was at least six miles south of the lake, and was separated by a deep gorge from the plain sloping down to the lake. The conditions of the narrative are best fulfilled by a certain *Khersa* or *Gersa*, the ruins of which remain, occupying a site sufficiently near the sea, shewing traces of tombs, and within about a mile of the point at which the hills descend by a steep, even slope to within forty feet of the water's edge. The district known as 'the country of the *Gadarenes*' may have extended to the lake, and so have included this *Khersa*.

**2. straightway there met him:** not even in this remote locality was there rest for him. No sooner is he on shore than there is a call upon his grace. Matthew speaks of 'two possessed with devils.' Mark and Luke notice only one.

**3. tombs.** The man had his dwelling in these, and now came from them. They were sometimes built above ground, oftener perhaps they were caves in the rocks, natural or excavated. To touch a dead body or a grave was to become unclean, according to the Jewish Law (Num. xix. 11, 16).

**no man could any more bind him.** To such a pass had it come with him that he was now beyond all restraint. Not even fetters could hold him.

**4. because that he had been often bound.** Trial had been made both with fetters and with manacles, but to no purpose.

**rent asunder . . . broken in pieces.** A vivid description of untameable, frenzied strength, tearing chains in bits and 'crushing fetters' like so much pottery.

the fetters broken in pieces : and no man had strength  
 5 to tame him. And always, night and day, in the tombs  
 and in the mountains, he was crying out, and cutting  
 6 himself with stones. And when he saw Jesus from afar,  
 7 he ran and worshipped him ; and crying out with a loud  
 voice, he saith, What have I to do with thee, Jesus,  
 thou Son of the Most High God? I adjure thee by  
 8 God, torment me not. For he said unto him, Come  
 9 forth, thou unclean spirit, out of the man. And he  
 asked him, What is thy name? And he saith unto

**5. crying out, and cutting himself.** Each of the Evangelists adds something to the picture of the terror of the man's condition. Matthew notes that he made the way impassable ; Mark that he cried and cut himself in his fury ; Luke that 'for a long time he had worn no clothes.'

**6. from afar.** A touch peculiar to Mark.

**ran and worshipped him.** From a distance catching sight of Jesus, he comes bounding on in his fierce madness, but when he draws near him his mood changes and he prostrates himself in awe.

**7. what have I to do with thee?** There is here the same repudiation of anything in common with Jesus as in the previous case in i. 23.

**Son of the Most High God.** In the former case Jesus was addressed as 'the Holy One of God.' Here his Messiahship is confessed as a Divine Sonship, and the God to whom he is said to be in that relation of Sonship is designated by a peculiar O. T. name. It is a name that goes back to the oldest stages of Hebrew faith and worship, while it is used also in the Poetic and Prophetic books. See such passages as Gen. xiv. 18, &c. ; Num. xxiv. 16 (Balaam's prophecy) ; Deut. xxxii. 8; Ps. xviii. 13, xxi. 7, xlvi. 4, l. 14, lxxvii. 10, lxxviii. 17, xci. 1, 9, &c. ; Isa. xiv. 14. It is a note of the *supremacy* of God. In the N. T. it is most frequent in Luke.

**torment me not.** Matthew puts it in the form of a question and as if the torment were a thing anticipated, but a penalty of the future fulfilling itself too soon if it came now—'Art thou come hither to torment us *before the time?*' Mark alone gives the adjuration.

**9. What is thy name?** The question is put perhaps to clear the man's mind and bring matters to the point. The confusion of

him, My name is Legion ; for we are many. And he 10 besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. Now there was there on the moun- 11 tain side a great herd of swine feeding. And they 12 besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. And he gave them leave. And 13 the unclean spirits came out, and entered into the

consciousness is seen in the mixed, contradictory utterances, now human and now demoniac.

**Legion** : the name of a division of the Roman army, numbering 4,000, 5,000, or 6,000 men, and making one of the most tremendous instruments ever handled by the captains of war. In applying this name to himself the possessed man appealed to Christ's pity. It meant that he was miserable and helpless in the grasp of the most terrible, resistless, and harassing of evil forces—a sufferer from a demoniac power which was not one indeed, but the aggregate of many.

**10. out of the country.** This no doubt means out of this Gerasene territory with which they were familiar. But in Luke the request is that Jesus should not command them to 'depart into the abyss' ; which may mean the deep waters there before them, or rather the place of torment in the nether world.

**11. a great herd of swine.** Mark alone gives the number, 'about two thousand.' It is not stated whether the herd was the property of Gentiles or of Jews. It is not clear to what extent, if to any, the keeping of swine prevailed among the Jews of our Lord's time ; but through most of their history they seem to have avoided it. The eating of swine's flesh was forbidden by the Law (Lev. xi. 7 ; Deut. xiv. 8). The flesh and blood of swine are regarded by the O. T. as heathen offerings, offerings of abomination (Isa. lxv. 4, lxvi. 3, 17 ; cf. 1 Macc. i. 47).

**13. gave them leave.** With reference to the loss that ensued and the difficulty supposed to be created by the destruction of property, it is to be noticed that Christ's word did not go beyond *permission*. 'Those who measure rightly the value of a human spirit thus restored to itself, to its fellow men, and to God,' says Dr. Plumptre, 'will not think that the destruction of brute-life was too dear a price to pay for its restoration.' It may be, too, that in the sufferer's mental condition, and in order to his perfect recovery of the calm and clearness of the normal, undivided consciousness, it was necessary that he should have some unmistakable, visible evidence of his deliverance from the malign powers enthraling him.

swine: and the herd rushed down the steep into the sea, *in number* about two thousand; and they were  
 14 choked in the sea. And they that fed them fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they came  
 15 to see what it was that had come to pass. And they come to Jesus, and behold him that was possessed  
 with devils sitting, clothed and in his right mind, *even*  
 16 him that had the legion: and they were afraid. And they that saw it declared unto them how it befell him  
 that was possessed with devils, and concerning the

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**the herd rushed down the steep into the sea.** ‘We are told,’ says the author of *The Rob Roy on the Jordan* (p. 411), ‘that the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place. Literally it is “down the steep” in all three reports. It does not say that it was a high place, but steep, and that they ran (not fell) down this into the sea. There are several steeps near the sea here, but only one so close to the water as to make it sure that if a herd ran violently down they would go into the sea. Here, for a full half-mile, the beach is of a form different from any other round the lake, and from any that I have noticed in any lake or sea before. It is flat until close to the edge. There a hedge of oleanders fringes the end of the plain, and immediately below these is a gravel beach inclined so steep that when my boat was at the shore I could not see over the top even by standing up; while the water alongside is so deep that it covered my paddle (seven feet long) when dipped vertically a few feet from the shore. Now if the swine rushed along this short plain toward this hedge of underwood (and in the delta of Semakh their usual feeding-place would be often among thick brushwood of this kind) they would instantly pass through the shrubs and then down the steep gravel beyond into the deep water, where they would surely be drowned.’

**14. they came to see.** These would be the people of the town and the countryside, largely heathen. ‘The presence of these unclean animals, so abhorrent to the Jews, indicates, what we know from other sources, that the region was inhabited by a mixed population, in which Gentiles predominated’ (Gould).

**15. clothed and in his right mind:** so complete a transformation. Luke states explicitly (which Mark does not do) that in his demonised condition the man ‘for a long time . . . had worn no clothes’ (viii. 27).

swine. And they began to beseech him to depart 17 from their borders. And as he was entering into the 18 boat, he that had been possessed with devils besought him that he might be with him. And he suffered him 19 not, but saith unto him, Go to thy house unto thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and *how* he had mercy on thee. And 20 he went his way, and began to publish in Decapolis

**17. they began to beseech him to depart.** The first impression produced upon the people by the sight of the restored demoniac was that of *fear* (verse 15). When the whole story was told them their sense of awe passed into anxiety to get the Healer out of their neighbourhood. Perhaps they dreaded further loss. In no other case did a miracle wrought by Christ have an effect like this, adverse to himself.

**18. that he might be with him.** The sense of indebtedness and gratitude would naturally make him anxious to cling to Jesus—perhaps also the vague fear of what might happen if he were separated from the Fount of healing power.

**19. suffered him not.** Jesus had a higher mission for him. He was to return to the home which he had exchanged for the tombs, and be a witness there for the Healer. Cf. the case of *Aneas*, Acts ix. 35.

**tell them.** In the case of the leper (i. 44), and again in that of the witnesses of the raising of *Jairus's daughter* (v. 43), he commanded silence. In this instance he enjoins the publication of the miracle. The reason for the difference in this matter is not stated. It may have lain in the character of the man, or it may have its explanation in the nature of the region. For this was Perea, and in that remoter district, where also he would be less known, there might be less risk from publicity.

**the Lord:** the O. T. name for *God*. So the works done by Jesus are declared by him to be works done by God through him. Cf. Peter's address, Acts ii. 22.

**20. in Decapolis.** Only Mark mentions the locality by name. The term occurs only three times in the N. T.—here, and in Matt. iv. 25; Mark vii. 31. It means the region or confederation of the ‘ten cities.’ The district cannot be very exactly defined. Probably its limits varied somewhat from time to time, as the names of the cities also varied. Pliny gives them as follows:—Scythopolis, Hippo, Gadara, Pella, Philadelphia, Gerasa, Dion, Canatha, Damascus, Raphana. With the exception of Scythopolis (the ancient *Bethshan*, modern *Beisan*) they seem, therefore, to

how great things Jesus had done for him : and all men did marvel.

**21** And when Jesus had crossed over again in the boat unto the other side, a great multitude was gathered

have been all east of the Jordan and to the south-east of Galilee, within Gilead and Bashan. After the Roman conquest of these territories in B.C. 65, the cities were rebuilt and had certain privileges bestowed on them.

**all men did marvel.** The population of these parts was made up probably of natives, Greek-speaking colonists who had settled before the Roman conquest, and later Roman colonists. While it is said that 'all men did *marvel*,' it is not said that any became disciples of Jesus, nor is it likely that this would be the case with men who were so wishful that he should quit their district.

v. 21-24. *The case of Jairus and his daughter*: cf. Matt. ix. 18, 19; Luke viii. 41, 42. Three instances of the exercise of the miraculous power of Jesus in raising the dead to life are recorded in the Gospels—one where life had little more than fled, another where burial was impending, a third where the tomb had held its tenant for days. There were reasons for the selection of these three for record, in the nature of the case, if not in evidential value. For one was the case of a ruler's only child, another that of a widow's only son, and the third that of the Lord's friend, the brother of the sisters whom he loved. But of the three only the case of Jairus is reported by all the Synoptists, while the miracle at Nain is told only by Luke, and that of Bethany only by John. Mark's narrative here is the most vivid and circumstantial. He enables us to follow the event in all its touching and impressive details from beginning to end. Matthew's account is brief, Luke's is fuller. There are also certain differences in the connexion of this event and in the particulars.

**21. the other side:** the western side again, and, as we may judge, the neighbourhood of Capernaum.

**a great multitude was gathered.** The Gerasenes on the eastern side had been eager to see him depart. The people of the western side were eager to have him back. They 'were all waiting for him,' as Luke tells us, in a crowd upon the shore. The incident that follows is introduced by Luke as well as by Mark immediately after that of the Gerasene demoniac. But Matthew attaches it to the visit of the disciples of John who questioned Jesus on the subject of fasting, and speaks of Jairus coming to Jesus, not by the sea, but in the house. Matthew's words are precise—'while he spake these things unto them,

unto him: and he was by the sea. And there cometh 22 one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and seeing him, he falleth at his feet, and beseecheth 23 him much, saying, My little daughter is at the point of death: *I pray thee*, that thou come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be made whole, and live.

behold, there came a ruler.' Though it is his habit to group things, whether words or events, and that not according to their actual order, but according to subject, his words may indicate in this case the real historical order.

**22. one of the rulers of the synagogue.** Luke calls him 'a ruler of the synagogue,' Matthew says simply 'a ruler.' Usually there was only one such 'president' for each synagogue, though there might also be more than one. Paul and Barnabas were invited to give their word of exhortation in the Pisidian Antioch by 'the rulers of the synagogue' (Acts xiii. 15). The duties of such a 'ruler,' who was usually one of the elders of the congregation, had to do specially with the conduct of public worship, in its various parts of prayer, reading of Scripture, and exhortation.

**Jairus.** A name corresponding to the *Jair* of the O.T. A Jair is mentioned as a son of Manasseh in the time of Moses (Num. xxxii. 41; Deut. iii. 14, &c.), as one of the Judges (Judges x. 3, &c.), as the father of Mordecai (Esther ii. 5), and as the father of Elhanan (1 Chron. xx. 5). Nothing further is told us of this Jairus. It is supposed with some probability, however, that he belonged to Capernaum, and that thus he may have been one of those sent by the centurion who 'built a synagogue' to plead with Jesus on behalf of his sick servant (Luke vii. 3). If so, he might have had such previous knowledge of Jesus as would explain the earnestness and the confidence with which he approached him now, falling at his feet before all the crowd in a passion of entreaty.

**23. My little daughter:** a fond diminutive, a term of endearment used only by Mark. It is from Luke (viii. 42) we learn she was his only daughter.

**at the point of death:** *lit.* 'is in extremity.' Luke says 'she lay a dying.' Matthew, who says nothing of the message from the house, but gives a very concise statement in which the ruler's position is described in its final stage, represents him as saying, 'My daughter is even now dead.'

**lay thy hands on her.** Luke omits this, but Matthew gives it. The laying on of hands in cases of healing is mentioned again in vi. 5, vii. 32, viii. 23, 25, xvi. 18. So, too, in Acts ix. 17, xxviii. 8.

**24** And he went with him ; and a great multitude followed him, and they thronged him.

**25** And a woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered,

**24. he went with him.** Jesus at once left the seaside and set out with the father to the house of anxiety and sorrow, followed not only by his disciples (cf. Matt. ix. 19), but by a surging crowd pressing about him.

v. 25-34. *Incident of the woman with the issue of blood:* cf. Matt. ix. 20-22; Luke viii. 43-48. All three Synoptists record it as an episode in the course of the story of Jairus. Here, therefore, we have a narrative in the heart of a narrative, a miracle within a miracle. There is the further peculiarity that the healing work is done apart from the conscious act of Jesus. Here again Mark's narrative surpasses the others in its vivid realism.

**25. a woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years.** Her malady had lasted as long as the other sufferer now soliciting the compassion of Jesus had lived. The length of time points perhaps to the haemorrhage being of a periodical kind. Maladies of this kind were regarded as peculiarly afflictive ; ceremonial uncleanness attached to them (Lev. xv. 19).

**26. suffered many things of many physicians.** How senseless, useless, and costly the remedies were that used to be prescribed for such cases we learn from the Jewish books. Here is one of the simplest mentioned in the Talmud, the great storehouse of Rabbinical lore :—‘Take of the gum of Alexandria the weight of a zuzee (a small silver coin) ; of alum the same ; of crocus the same. Let them be bruised together, and given in wine to the woman that has an issue of blood. If this does not benefit take of Persian onions three logs ; boil them in wine, and give her to drink, and say, “Arise from thy flux.” If this does not cure her, set her in a place where two ways meet, and let her hold a cup of wine in her right hand, and let some one come behind and frighten her, and say, “Arise from thy flux.” But if that do not do, take a handful of cummin, a handful of crocus, and a handful of fenugreek. Let these be boiled in wine, and give them to her to drink, and say, “Arise from thy flux.”’ And so on through a succession of further prescriptions, embracing the digging of seven ditches, the burning of vine-cuttings, the seating of the patient over one ditch and then over another, and the like. See Geikie’s *The Life and Words of Christ*, ii. 167, 168, and Lightfoot’s *Horae Heb. et Talm.* on the passage.

but rather grew worse, having heard the things concerning Jesus, came in the crowd behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I touch but his garments, I shall be made whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her plague. And straightway Jesus, perceiving in himself that the power proceeding from him had gone forth, turned him about in the crowd, and said, Who touched my garments? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude

**27. having heard the things concerning Jesus.** Her faith, which was strong, ready, and resolved, came by hearing. She belonged probably to some place at a distance, where she had had no opportunity of seeing Jesus, but to which the report of his works had penetrated. She had come expectant; she had had to wait her opportunity, and when it presented itself, she at once seized it.

**touched his garment.** Mark and Luke state that it was 'the border' of his garment. She touched, that is, the edge or corner of the robe or one of the fringes or tassels fastened to it. The Jew was required by the Law to have tassels on the corners of his square outer robe. They were made of twisted threads of white wool attached to the garment by a cord of blue (Num. xv. 38, &c.). The woman made her way through the crowd till she got near Jesus, and put her light touch on one of the corners of his garment or on the tassel of it hanging behind him.

**28. she said, If I touch but his garments.** It was not merely that she *thought*, but that she *said* it, *kept saying* it indeed to herself, if not audibly to others. There was this weakness in her faith, that she thought her touch necessary, imagining, as it would seem, that the healing power was attached to the person of Jesus, to his garment, and indeed to that part of it of which strict Jews made so much. But he recognized the sincerity and the strength of her trust.

**29. felt in her body.** The new physical sensations which at once thrilled her made her certain not only that the haemorrhage was stopped, but that she was completely cured.

**30. perceiving in himself.** If the sufferer had the sense of health, the Healer had the consciousness of power gone forth from him. It was only by this, as Mark's narrative implies, that he became aware of the touch, and he 'turned about' to find out about it.

thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?  
**32** And he looked round about to see her that had done  
**33** this thing. But the woman fearing and trembling,  
 knowing what had been done to her, came and fell  
**34** down before him, and told him all the truth. And he  
 said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole ;  
 go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

**35** While he yet spake, they come from the ruler of

**31. sayest thou, Who touched me?** A question answering a question. To the disciples it seemed out of place to think of identifying any one individual's touch when there was about him a crowd so great that it was like to crush him.

**32. And he looked round about to see.** Another of those details which lead us to conclude that Mark's narrative was based on first-hand acquaintance with the facts. Jesus did not know who had been benefited by the power that had gone forth from him, and he cast his eyes around in search of anything that might indicate the person.

**33. told him all the truth.** Luke puts it even more strongly—'declared in the presence of all the people for what cause she touched him.' A trial it must have been to her womanly feeling, yet timid and trembling as she was, she came forward and kept nothing back from the Healer or from the people.

**34. Daughter:** a name given by our Lord to no other woman but this. She had made a great venture in faith, and it was for her faith's sake that Jesus confirmed the healing and gave her the word of peace.

In the Apocryphal *Gospel of Nicodemus* (v. 26) the woman is said to have been called Veronica. Eusebius (*Hist. Eccles.* vii. 18) mentions the tradition that she was a native of Cæsarea Philippi or Paneas. He adds that her house was shown there, and that there stood at its gates on an elevated stone a brazen image of the woman in the attitude of a suppliant stretching out her hands to another figure supposed to represent our Lord. Eusebius tells us that this statue of our Lord remained till his own day, and was seen by him.

v. 35-43. *Continuation of the story of Jairus and his daughter:* cf. Matt. ix. 23-26; Luke viii. 49-56.

**35. While he yet spake.** The interruption which had brought health and grace to one sufferer meant something sadly different to another. What a burden it must have been to the ruler's faith ! It had arrested Jesus on his way to one who seemed to need

the synagogue's *house*, saying, 'Thy daughter is dead : why troublest thou the Master any further ?' But Jesus, 36 not heeding the word spoken, saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Fear not, only believe. And he suffered 37 no man to follow with him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. And they come to the 38 house of the ruler of the synagogue ; and he beholdeth a tumult, and *many* weeping and wailing greatly. And 39

his help even more urgently than the woman. It had delayed him indeed till there appeared to be no more need of his compassionate service. Messengers came from the ruler's house announcing the damsel's death. They came with these sad tidings, too, just at the moment when the Lord was speaking his word of blessing to the woman and became again free to pass on.

**why troublest thou the Master** (i. e. the Teacher or Rabbi) **any further?** The word meant originally to *flay*, and in later Greek to *harass* or *inconvenience*. It did not seem to occur to them that he who could heal might also recall the vanished life. So far as the Gospels shew, only on one occasion up to this time had Jesus raised the dead to life, and that had been in another part of Galilee (Luke vii. 11, &c.).

**36. not heeding.** The A. V. makes it 'heard the word,' and the margin of the R. V. gives 'overhearing.' But it is rather as in the R. V. text. Jesus did hear what was said by the messengers, but he took no notice of it. Instead of saying anything of it, he spoke a word of assurance and also of counsel to the ruler.

**37. suffered no man to follow.** Up to this critical point he had done nothing to check the crowd. Now he separates himself from all, even from his disciples, with the exception of Peter, and James, and John. This is the first appearance of the select circle of three within the chosen circle of the Twelve.

**38. a tumult . . . weeping and wailing greatly.** Matthew mentions also 'the flute-players.' The noisy lamentations indulged in at Jewish funerals, the professional performers, the 'mourning women,' the doleful music of the minstrels, &c., are often referred to in the O. T. (Eccles. xii. 5; Jer. ix. 17; Amos v. 16; 2 Chron. xxxv. 25). Of these unrestrained Oriental ways of shewing grief Van Lennep says—'As soon as death takes place the female members of the household and the professional mourning-women announce it to the neighbourhood by setting up their shrill and piercing cry—called the *tahil*—which is heard at a great distance and above every other noise, even the din of battle, and is quite

when he was entered in, he saith unto them, Why make ye a tumult, and weep? the child is not dead, 40 but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. But he, having put them all forth, taketh the father of the child and her mother and them that were with him, 41 and goeth in where the child was. And taking the child by the hand, he saith unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, 42 Arise. And straightway the damsel rose up, and walked;

characteristic of the East' (*Bible Lands*, p. 586; cf. Clarke's *Mark* and *Luke*, p. 80).

**39. not dead, but sleepeth.** He had not yet seen the damsel. But by these words he does not mean that she was not really dead. That life was gone was clear to all. But he puts a new meaning upon her death.

**40. they laughed him to scorn.** So it is, in the same terms, in all three Synoptists. These excitable mourners could turn quickly from wailing to derision, and from derision again to wailing.

**put them all forth:** better, 'ejected them all.' The word is the same as is used of the expulsion of the traffickers in the Temple (xi. 15), and suggests stern, authoritative command. It was incongruous to have the noisy jeering crowd of mourners and others about him on an occasion so solemn and so pathetic. It was appropriate to have a few chosen companions as witnesses of his action. Elijah was alone when he raised the widow's son (1 Kings xvii. 17-24), and Elisha when he restored the Shunammite's child (2 Kings iv. 32-37). Jesus has the stricken parents and the select three with him in the chamber of death.

**41. taking the child by the hand.** The one thing done in the way of visible instrumentality; recorded by all three Synoptists.

**Talitha enumi:** the original Aramaic words, treasured doubtless in the heart of Peter, one of the hearers, and carefully preserved by Mark his 'interpreter.'

**damsel.** A word found repeatedly in the Greek version of the O. T., but in the N. T. used only here and in the case of the daughter of Herodias.

**Arise.** That is, 'waken out of thy sleep!'

**42. straightway.** The single word *Arise!* was enough. On the instant life returned to the dead child; and not only life but strength—she 'rose up,' and she 'walked.'

for she was twelve years old. And they were amazed straightway with a great amazement. And he charged them much that no man should know this: and he commanded that *something* should be given her to eat.

And he went out from thence; and he cometh into his own country; and his disciples follow him. And <sup>2</sup>

**for she was twelve years old.** An explanation of her *walking*. Though a child, she was old enough to be capable of that.

**43. charged them much.** There were witnesses enough of the miracle; but they were enjoined not to publish it abroad. To do so then might have no better result than to kindle popular excitement and mistaken, premature expectations which, instead of helping his real work, would hinder and confuse it.

**given her to eat.** A second charge, revealing his considerate attention to details. The child's immediate need was not overlooked. That she should have food shewed also how complete her recovery was, and how natural her condition.

vi. 1-6. *Visit to Nazareth and Rejection there:* cf. Matt. xiii. 53-58. See also Luke iv. 16-30. The difficulty here is as to the relations in which the three narratives stand to each other. Matthew's narrative is in most respects a pretty close parallel to Mark's. There are also resemblances between these two and the third narrative in Luke. So that not a few suppose all three to be versions of one and the same event. There are, however, noticeable differences between Luke's account and the others. Luke places the visit which he records at the very beginning of our Lord's ministry; he dwells upon the fierce wrath of the townsfolk; and he connects their murderous intentions with our Lord's departure to Capernaum. Luke's narrative, therefore, appears to refer to an earlier visit; while Matthew and Mark deal with a second visit, made perhaps with the twofold purpose of renewing his relations with his mother and his brothers and endeavouring again to commend himself to his fellow townsmen. Nor is there any improbability in the supposition that he should have made two visits to his old home, and that these should have had much in common as regards both his message and the reception given him.

**1. from thence:** from the house of Jairus, or from the city or district in which it was. Probably his wish was to get away from these hampering crowds.

**his own country:** that is, Nazareth and its parts. Neither Mark nor Matthew mentions it by name here, but it was there he spent his youth and there that his people lived (Luke iv. 16).

when the sabbath was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, Whence hath this man these things? and, What is the wisdom that is given unto this man, and what mean such mighty works wrought by his hands? 3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James, and Joses, and Judas, and Simon? and are

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**2. began to teach.** He came accompanied by his disciples, not as a private visitor, but as one with a mission to fulfil, and he took the first opportunity of delivering his message—in the synagogue on his first sabbath.

**astonished.** The impression made by his words on this occasion was different from that produced by the visit recorded in Luke's Gospel. *Amazement* was the effect now, murderous fury the effect then.

**mighty works:** 'powers,' i.e. miraculous powers. The report had reached them of miracles done by his means. They are astonished at the change in him indicated by the teaching which they had listened to and by the works of which they had heard something.

**3. the carpenter.** The only occasion on which he is called explicitly 'the carpenter.' In Matthew he is 'the carpenter's son.' Every Jew had to learn a trade. Jesus would naturally learn the one followed by Joseph, and would work in his shop at Nazareth. The Apocryphal gospels have much that is extravagant to say of him in this connexion. Justin Martyr tells us that in his time (the middle of the second century) rakes, harrows, and other articles were preserved which were said to have been made by Jesus. The *Gospel of the Infancy* represents him as setting Joseph right when he blundered in his work.

**son of Mary.** There is no reference to Joseph. Hence it has been inferred that Mary was now widowed. Joseph is mentioned, however, in Luke's narrative of the earlier visit (iv. 22). He passes now out of sight, whether he had died in the interval or still survived.

**brother of James.** As to the brothers of Jesus see on iii. 31. Their names are given only here and in Matt. xiii. 55.

**James:** the head of the Church of Jerusalem, as appears from Acts xii. 17, xv. 13, xxi. 18; called by Paul 'the Lord's brother' (Gal. i. 19); mentioned also as one of the three 'pillars' (Gal. ii. 9, 12); the probable author of the *Epistle of James*.

**Joses.** In Matthew 'Joseph' (xiii. 55).

**Judas.** The probable author of the *Epistle of Jude*. Eusebius

not his sisters here with us? And they were offended in him. And Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief.

(*Hist. Eccl.* iii. 20), quoting from Hegesippus, an historian of the second century, speaks of the 'grandchildren of Judas, called the brother of our Lord,' as living in the time of the Emperor Domitian (A.D. 81-96).

**Simon.** Mentioned also in the parallel passage in Matthew, but nowhere else. He is identified by some with Simon the Cananæan, and by others with the martyr Symeon, the head of the Jerusalem Church after the death of James; but in neither case on any sufficient basis of fact.

**his sisters.** Their names are never given. All that we know of them is that they lived in Nazareth, as the present passage indicates. This (with the parallel in Matt. xiii. 56) is the only mention of them in the Gospels, unless it be, according to one form of the text, in Mark iii. 32. In Acts i. 14 Mary and the brethren are noticed as among those who continued in prayer in Jerusalem. But nothing is said of the sisters.

**offended in him.** First 'astonished,' and then 'scandalized.' The difference between what his teaching and the 'powers' reported to be in his hands made him now to be, and what they knew him to have been, was too much for them.

**4. A prophet is not without honour.** Compare what is said of Jeremiah and the men of Anathoth (*Jer. xi. 21*). His use of this proverb was an indirect claim to the rank of a prophet.

**and among his own kin.** Mark alone inserts this—the sentence in which he names the sharpest pang in a bitter trial.

**5. could . . . do no mighty work.** Matthew says simply, 'he did not many mighty works.' The inability declared by Mark was a moral inability, not any physical arrest put upon his 'powers.' The moral conditions were wanting.

**a few sick folk.** There were, therefore, exceptions; some 'hidden ones' with a claim upon his compassion and with the inward preparation for the healing gift.

**6. marvelled.** It belonged to the integrity of his human nature that he was capable of real wonder as of real love and pity. 'The surprises of life,' says Dr. Swete, 'especially those which belong

And he went round about the villages teaching.

7 And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and he gave them authority over the unclean spirits; and he charged them that they should take nothing for *their* journey, save a staff only; no bread, no wallet, no money in their purse; 9 but *to go shod with sandals*: and, said he, put not on

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to its ethical and spiritual side, created genuine astonishment in the human mind of Christ.' The faith of the centurion (Matt. viii. 10), and the prejudiced unbeliever of the men of Nazareth, were both among these 'surprises of life' to him. They are the only cases in which *wonder* is definitely attributed to him.

vi. 7-13. *Mission of the Twelve*: cf. Matt. ix. 1, x. 5-xi. 1; Luke ix. 1-6. This mission is given at much greater length by Matthew than by Mark and Luke. His work being defeated in Nazareth by the prejudiced attitude of the people, he leaves the town, and begins a teaching tour among the villages. The extent of this tour is not distinctly indicated in any of the narratives, but there is no reason to suppose that it was confined to the immediate neighbourhood of Nazareth itself.

**7. began to send them forth.** The Twelve had an official position, and were originally destined for missionary service. He had been preparing them for that, and now he sends them forth on their first definite mission.

**by two and two.** Mark alone notices this arrangement. Each would thus help the other, and their testimony would be more telling. As they went forth in pairs, six different districts could be overtaken.

**authority over the unclean spirits.** From Matthew and Luke we see that their commission embraced also healing and preaching.

**8. nothing . . . save a staff only.** They were to be content with the simplest equipment. Usually journeys in the East were carefully prepared for. These men were to go forth promptly and as they were, taking neither bread, nor wallet, nor money, nor anything beyond the staff which every traveller carried. Matthew says '*nor* staff,' and Luke '*neither* staff, nor wallet.' Mark's '*save a staff only*,' is much the same as '*at most a staff*' The '*wallet*' or '*scrip*' (A. V.) was a leathern bag, swung over the shoulder, containing food for the journey. The '*purse*' was the loose girdle, in the folds of which the money was placed.

**9. shod with sandals:** the simplest covering for the feet.

two coats. And he said unto them, Wheresoever ye <sup>10</sup> enter into a house, there abide till ye depart thence. And whatsoever place shall not receive you, and they <sup>11</sup> hear you not, as ye go forth thence, shake off the dust that is under your feet for a testimony unto them. And they went out, and preached that *men* should <sup>12</sup> repent. And they cast out many devils, and anointed <sup>13</sup> with oil many that were sick, and healed them.

And king Herod heard *thereof*; for his name had <sup>14</sup>

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Shoes also were worn by Jews, costly shoes, such as were in use among the Babylonians, furnished with upper leather.

**two coats.** As Mark puts it, it is the wearing of two coats on this journey that is forbidden; as Matthew and Luke express it, it is the possession of two coats that is in view. They were to encumber themselves with nothing that would be unsuitable for plain men going about among ordinary folk. The 'coat' or 'tunic' was the garment worn under the cloak. In the case of the poor it might be the only garment.

**10. there abide till ye depart thence.** They were not to gad about from house to house, but to continue with the family that received them so long as they remained in the place.

**11. shake off the dust:** a symbolical act of renunciation. It was a testimony to the inhospitable that they were put upon a level with the heathen.

**12. should repent.** The burden of their preaching, therefore, was that with which both the Baptist and the Master began.

**13. anointed with oil.** This was a common specific with Jewish physicians. Only once again in the N. T. is it referred to in connexion with healing, viz. in Jas. v. 14. Though the Twelve used unction, it is not said that Jesus himself employed it in any of his works.

vi. 14-16. *Herod's fear:* cf. Matt. xiv. 1, 2; Luke ix. 7-9. The report of the miracles done by the Twelve reaches the tetrarch. He concludes that Jesus must be John risen from the dead.

**14. king:** here a title of courtesy only, the proper designation being *tetrarch*, as in Matthew and Luke. The 'tetrarch,' properly speaking, was the governor of the fourth part of a country or province. Under the Empire it was a title of tributary princes of less than regal rank. In the N. T. it is given to three rulers, the Herod of this passage, Herod Philip 'tetrarch of the region of Ituræa and Trachonitis' (Luke iii. 1), and Lysanias 'tetrarch of Abilene' (Luke iii. 1).

become known : and he said, John the Baptist is risen from the dead, and therefore do these powers work  
 15 in him. But others said, It is Elijah. And others said, *It is* a prophet, *even* as one of the prophets.  
 16 But Herod, when he heard *thereof*, said, John, whom

**Herod**: that is, Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great and Malthacé a Samaritan ; tetrarch of Galilee and Peræa by his father's will ; married first to a daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia Petræa, and then to Herodias. He is the Herod to whom our Lord was sent by Pilate (Luke xiii. 6, &c.). In the Gospels he appears as a sensual, cunning, capricious, cruel, weak, unscrupulous, superstitious, despotic prince (Matt. xiv. 9; Luke iii. 19, xiii. 31, 32, &c.). He founded the city of Tiberias in honour of the emperor. Losing the favour of Caligula, he was condemned to perpetual banishment at Lyons and died in exile.

**heard** thereof : that is, of the miracles wrought by the Twelve. These latest events and others before them had made the name of Jesus widely known.

**and he said, John the Baptist is risen from the dead** : rather 'the Baptizer.' For the term used here is not the official name, but a designation more appropriate on the lips of Herod. The margin of the R. V. notices the ancient reading 'they said,' according to which it was the popular belief (which Herod, therefore, had accepted) that John had reappeared in Jesus.

**therefore do these powers work in him.** John did no miracle during his lifetime. But if he had indeed risen from the dead, it would not be strange that new powers, supernatural powers, should be active in him.

**15. others said, It is Elijah.** Various opinions were taken, however, of the extraordinary person called Jesus. If some took him to be John risen, others thought he must be the promised Elijah, while others still held him to be not indeed that great figure among the prophets, but at least 'a prophet, *even* as one of the prophets,' that is, a true prophet, like one of the recognized order of prophets.

**16. John, whom I beheaded, he is risen.** This is what Herod himself feels that Jesus must be. He speaks under the stress of an evil conscience—'he whom I (the emphasis is on the *I*) beheaded, this man is risen.' Whether Herod was a Sadducee or not, he was an utter worldling. But his guilty conscience drove him for the moment into belief in the resurrection of the dead, and into the conviction that of the different explanations given of Jesus the right one was that which identified him with John.

I beheaded, he is risen. For Herod himself had sent <sup>17</sup> forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. For John said unto <sup>18</sup>

vi. 17-29. *The Story of John's Imprisonment and Death.* An episode introduced in explanation of Herod's view of Jesus. Cf. Matt. xiv. 3-12; also Luke iii. 19, 20. Luke gives only a brief statement of what led to John's imprisonment. Mark's account is the fullest.

**17. For Herod himself.** Mark represents the seizure of the Baptist as emphatically Herod's own act. Where he arrested him, whether at *Ænon* (John iii. 23) or elsewhere, is not stated. But the circumstances that led him to take the fatal step are related at length.

**in prison.** According to Josephus (*Antiq.* xviii. 5. 2) the prison was the strong fortress of Machærus in Peræa, the modern *Mkaur*, known as the 'diadem' and the 'black-tower' or 'black-fortress,' some miles to the east of the northern end of the Dead Sea. It had been fortified at an early date, then demolished by Gabinius and fortified anew by Herod the Great. It was in the possession of the King of Arabia, according to Josephus (*Antiq.* xviii. 5. 1), in the time of Herod Antipas. How it came into the hands of the latter we are not informed. Canon Tristram found two dungeons among the ruins at *Mkaur*, still shewing in their masonry the holes in which staples of wood or iron once had been fastened. He thinks one of these may have been the prison-house of John. See his *Land of Moab*, chap. xiv.

**Herodias.** Daughter of Aristobulus, son of Herod the Great and Mariamne, the beautiful daughter of Simon the high priest. She was the sister of Agrippa I—the Herod who killed James with the sword, imprisoned Peter, and died by the horrible death reported in the N. T. (Acts xii. 1-3, 23). Her mother was Bernice or Berenice, daughter of Salome, Herod's sister. Herodias was married first to Herod, one of the sons of Herod the Great, whom she left for Antipas. Ambition, it would seem, led her to enter into the union with Herod, who had become enamoured of her on one of his journeys to Rome. Her ambition also proved the ruin of Antipas.

**his brother Philip's wife.** This member of the Herodian family is to be distinguished from the Philip who is referred to in Luke's Gospel as the 'tetrarch of the region of Ituræa and Trachonitis' (iii. 1). The latter was the son of Herod the Great and Cleopatra of Jerusalem, and is described by Josephus as

Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's  
 19 wife. And Herodias set herself against him, and desired  
 20 to kill him; and she could not; for Herod feared John,  
 knowing that he was a righteous man and a holy, and  
 kept him safe. And when he heard him, he was  
 21 much perplexed; and he heard him gladly. And when  
 a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday

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a prince 'moderate and peaceful in his rule' (*Antiq.* xviii. 4. 1). The former was *Herod*, called also *Philip*, as appears from this passage and Matt. xiv. 3, son of Herod the Great and Mariamne. This Herod or Philip spent a private, undistinguished life. The fact that he was the first spouse of Herodias has kept his name alive.

**18. not lawful.** Philip, the husband of Herodias, was still alive. Antipas's wife, the daughter of Aretas, also was alive. She had been living with her husband, and fled to her father only when she heard of the determination of Antipas to have Herodias. Further, Herodias was niece to Antipas.

**19. set herself against him.** She was not content with seeing John cast into prison, but nursed her grudge against him and watched her opportunity to compass his death.

**20. feared John.** The Baptist's character made itself felt. The voluptuary whom he had boldly rebuked had a salutary regard for him, and perhaps dreaded, too, what might happen if he made away with him.

**kept him safe:** better than the 'observed him' of the A. V. Herod protected John against the malign designs of Herodias. He even continued to hear him from time to time, and did so gladly. It is not said where this took place. It may have been in the fortress-palace occupied by Antipas near the prison at Machærus. Antipas also may have sent for John to Tiberias now and again; for the Baptist appears to have been a considerable time in prison, perhaps a year and a half, and he was visited by his disciples. These things are recorded to the credit of Antipas. They are the only favourable things said of him in the Gospels. Matthew says that Herod himself would have put John to death, but was restrained by his fear of the people (xiv. 5). Josephus also ascribes to Herod the intention to kill John (*Antiq.* xviii. 5. 2).

**much perplexed:** a better reading than the 'did many things' of the A. V. He was in a strait between his sense of the righteousness of John and the monitions of his conscience on the one hand, and the attractions and insistence of Herodias on the other.

made a supper to his lords, and the high captains, and the chief men of Galilee; and when the daughter of <sup>22</sup> Herodias herself came in and danced, she pleased Herod and them that sat at meat with him; and the king said unto the damsel; Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. And he sware unto her, <sup>23</sup> Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom. And she went out, <sup>24</sup> and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. And she <sup>25</sup> came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou forthwith give me in a charger the head of John the Baptist. And the king <sup>26</sup>

**21. lords,** magnates, the most important civil officers; **high captains,** the military chiefs of the district, the military tribunes or colonels; **chief men of Galilee,** the provincials of highest rank.

**22. the daughter of Herodias herself.** Her name was Salome. To gain her fell purpose the great Herodias, the wife of a tetrarch and daughter of a king, stooped to send her child to take part in the voluptuous and degrading dances characteristic of such riotous feasts. The daughter of 'Herodias herself'—none else was likely to take Herod on the yielding side. The margin of the R. V. notices a curious old reading which would make the dancing-girl a daughter of Antipas himself, bearing her mother's name.

**23. the half of my kingdom.** So with Ahasuerus and Esther (Esther v. 3, vii. 2).

**25. came in straightway.** Thinking no doubt of her own advantage the girl went out to consult her mother. Herodias kept her not a moment. Her answer was sharp and short—her enemy's head. Before Antipas could think twice of his rash promise the damsel was back with her demand.

**I will that thou forthwith give me.** Her request is peremptory and pert. John being in the prison at hand, she knew it could be at once made good, and was determined to have it so. She did this, 'being put forward by her mother,' as Matthew explains.

**a charger.** A plate or flat dish large enough to hold a joint of meat—an *assiette*. Homer uses it of the wooden trencher on which meat was placed.

was exceeding sorry ; but for the sake of his oaths, and  
 27 of them that sat at meat, he would not reject her. And  
 straightway the king sent forth a soldier of his guard,  
 and commanded to bring his head : and he went and  
 28 beheaded him in the prison, and brought his head in  
 a charger, and gave it to the damsel ; and the damsel  
 29 gave it to her mother. And when his disciples heard  
*thereof*, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it  
 in a tomb.

30 And the apostles gather themselves together unto

**26. exceeding sorry.** His respect for John and his wish to protect him would make him genuinely and grievously vexed. But his sorrow could not prevail against his mistaken sense of honour and his false consideration for the opinion of his guests.

**his oaths.** He had repeated his promise, then, once and again, in the loud and swaggering terms, we may imagine, of the reveller. Too late he saw how rashly he had bound himself.

**reject her.** Rather, ‘refuse her,’ or ‘break faith with her.’

**27. a soldier of his guard.** The original term is a Latin term, designating a *scout*. In the times of the Empire it became the name of a member of the Roman Emperor's body-guard. One of the duties of these guards was to carry out orders of execution. Antipas followed the Roman custom. ‘Straightway,’ says Mark, the King dispatched the soldier. We can picture to ourselves what passed. Antipas, chagrined and vexed, would give the command in a gruff sentence. The soldier would at once march from the banquet-hall to the dungeon, and in a trice the bloody deed would be done. The prisoner would have neither warning of his end nor time for any farewell. Swift, tragic, staggering close to a life of high service and fearless rectitude !

**28. gave it to her mother.** The daughter knew it to be the mother's triumph and the mother's possession. ‘The Cathedral Church of Amiens claims to be in present possession of the head’ (Swete).

**29. in a tomb.** We know not where, but it was probably in the immediate neighbourhood of Machærus. Matthew adds that John's disciples, after they had paid their last sad tribute of honour to him by burying him, ‘went and told Jesus’ (xiv. 12). Some had joined Jesus before. Others, who had kept by John, would have the more reason now to attach themselves to Jesus.

vi. 30-33. *Return of the Twelve.* Cf. Matt. xiv. 13; Luke ix.

Jesus; and they told him all things, whatsoever they had done, and whatsoever they had taught. And he saith unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while. For there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they went away in the boat to a desert place apart.

**10, 11 ; John vi. 1-3.** This brief paragraph is one of deep and varied interest. It introduces the narrative of the great miracle of the Five Thousand. It marks the point at which the narrative of the four Gospels coincides for a time. It is remarkable also for the insight it gives us into the Lord's thoughtful care for the Twelve.

**30. the apostles gather themselves together unto Jesus.** The death of the Baptist and the return of the Twelve took place in spring, as we infer from John's reference to the Passover as at hand (vi. 4). There would be only about a year of our Lord's public ministry yet to run. The place to which the Twelve returned is not stated. Probably it was Capernaum or its neighbourhood. The Twelve have here the official name of 'Apostles.' This is the only occasion on which Mark gives them the title. It has a special appropriateness here in the report of their return from their first official mission. Usually Mark employs the less specific name 'disciples.'

**told him all things.** They gave a full report both of their teaching and of their works. Nothing is said, however, either of their success or of their Master's estimate of their labours.

**31. Come ye yourselves apart.** His concern was that they should have the privacy and rest which they needed after the novel experiences and the exertions of their mission.

**into a desert place.** Mark does not identify the place. Luke says 'to a city called Bethsaida' (ix. 10); which may mean simply *in the direction* of a city so named. There were many quiet, unfrequented spots in the neighbourhood of the lake, especially on the eastern side and at the northern end, but also on the western side.

**many coming and going.** Rest was not to be had, if they remained at the head quarters of their Master's ministry for the time. Streams of visitors, drawn thither by the fame of his works, and increased by the approach of the great Jewish festival (John vi. 4), kept them ever in movement and broke in even on their meals. These details are given only by Mark.

**32. in the boat:** this indicates that they were not far from the lake.

**to a desert place apart.** Their course seems to have been eastwards by the end of the lake, and the place where they

33 And *the people* saw them going, and many knew *them*, and they ran there together on foot from all the cities,  
 34 and outwent them. And he came forth and saw a great multitude, and he had compassion on them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began  
 35 to teach them many things. And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, The place

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landed for retirement cannot have been far from Bethsaida, the scene of the miracle that followed.

**33. ran . . . together on foot.** The disciples did not get the rest which Jesus sought for them. Jesus and his party were recognized, the course of the boat was seen, and the eager people made their way by the shore to the expected place of landing.

**outwent them.** They were there indeed before those in the boat themselves. This was possible enough. The distance across the lake might be some four miles indeed, while by land it might be more than twice as much. But good walkers could beat the boat, if the wind was either adverse or insufficient. Mark alone mentions this.

vi. 34-44. *The Miracle of the Feeding of the Five Thousand.* Cf. Matt. xiv. 14-21; Luke ix. 12-17; John vi. 4-13. Here, too, we have the conjoint narrative of the four Gospels. This is the only miracle recorded by all the four. Of all the miracles reported in the Gospels, this, too, is the one that was witnessed by the largest gathering of spectators and in which the largest number of people took part.

**34. he came forth and saw.** Not till he got out of the boat did Jesus become aware of the state of things. His expectation of quiet was defeated, but instead of giving way to the sense of disappointment, he thought only of the needs of the people. Luke tells us that he even 'welcomed them' (ix. 11).

**as sheep not having a shepherd.** The same phrase occurs in Matt. ix. 36 (cf. also Num. xxvii. 17; 1 Kings xxii. 17; 2 Chron. xviii. 16). His compassion was stirred by the spectacle of the eager interest of those crowds who had been left so un instructed in the things of the kingdom of God by the recognized teachers of the law.

**began to teach them.** And not only so, he also healed their sick, as both Matthew and Luke tell us.

**35. when the day was now far spent.** Another interesting note of time, indicating that the miracle took place shortly before sunset, which at that season would be about six o'clock.

is desert, and the day is now far spent: send them away, 36  
 that they may go into the country and villages round  
 about, and buy themselves somewhat to eat. But he 37  
 answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat.  
 And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two  
 hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?  
 And he saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? 38  
 go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and  
 two fishes. And he commanded them that all should 39

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**his disciples came unto him, and said.** According to John (vi. 5), Jesus himself said to Philip, ‘Whence are we to buy bread, that these may eat?’ The concern now expressed by the disciples for the physical wants of the multitude may have been prompted by the Lord’s considerate question previously addressed to one of them.

**37. Give ye them to eat.** The disciples would have had him dismiss them and let them provide for themselves. He will have them remain, and be provided for by the disciples.

**Shall we go and buy.** The Lord’s prompt word, ‘Give ye them to eat,’ may well have seemed to them a direction to attempt the impracticable. They think of their resources, and of what might be required.

**two hundred pennyworth of bread.** A hasty, indeterminate estimate, but one pointing to a considerable sum. Only Mark and John mention the quantity of bread or the sum of money, and John refers to the money only to declare it inadequate. Luke omits this, and Matthew passes over the suggestion to purchase. The ‘penny’ is a misleading rendering of the coin in question—the *denarius*—all the more that, as has been noticed, in most of its occurrences in the N. T. it suggests the idea of a liberal sum. It varied in value from about  $8\frac{1}{2}d.$  to  $7\frac{1}{2}d.$  It was the stated day’s wage for a labouring man (Matt. xx. 2, &c.). ‘Shilling’ would be a better rendering than ‘penny.’ Two hundred *denarii* might represent something over £7 of our money. It is not likely that the disciples had so much with them. But even such a sum, distributed among 5,000 men, would mean only about a third of a penny for each.

**38. How many loaves have ye?** Only Mark tells us that the disciples were *sent* to find this out. John introduces Andrew here, and tells us that there were five loaves and two fishes in the hand of a lad who was present (vi. 8, 9).

40 sit down by companies upon the green grass. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.  
 41 And he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake the loaves; and he gave to the disciples to set before them; and  
 42 the two fishes divided he among them all. And they  
 43 did all eat, and were filled. And they took up broken

**39. sit down by companies.** The instruction that they should be so arranged was given through the disciples, as we learn from Luke and John. Provision was thus made for an orderly disposition of the crowd.

**upon the green grass.** Both Matthew and John mention that they were seated on the *grass*, on which they could recline at ease, as Jews were accustomed to do on couches at table. John notices also that there was '*much* grass in the place.' Only Mark notices its *greenness*. In early spring the grass would be peculiarly fresh and attractive. Later it would become scorched and brown.

**40. they sat down.** That they acted at once on the instructions of the disciples meant that they trusted them and looked for something to happen.

**in ranks:** *lit.* 'in garden beds.' This has been taken to mean in *parterres*, as if the point of comparison was the flower-bed, and the idea that of the picturesque appearance presented by the people thus arranged in sets with the bright variegated colours of their clothing. But the word is used ordinarily of the beds of garden herbs, and the idea seems to be the simpler one of the regular rectangular arrangement in groups of fifties and hundreds. Order would thus be preserved, and the matter of distribution as well as of counting made easy. Matthew and John do not mention the sizes of the ranks. Luke notices only the arrangement in companies, 'about fifty each.'

**41. he took the five loaves and the two fishes.** Jesus was recognized as the Master and Host, and the provisions were brought to him as such.

**looking up to heaven:** that is, in the attitude of prayer. See also in the O. T. Job xxii. 26, and in the Gospels Mark vii. 34, John xi. 41.

**blessed:** that is, 'gave thanks.' In John it is 'having given thanks' (vi. 11).

**42. were filled.** The word is a strong one, indicating that the provision made was large enough to give each as much as he wished, even of the fishes. So John puts it—'likewise also of the fishes as much as they would' (vi. 11).

pieces, twelve basketfuls, and also of the fishes. And 44 they that ate the loaves were five thousand men.

And straightway he constrained his disciples to enter 45

**43. twelve basketfuls:** it was by the direction of the Master that the broken pieces left over were carefully gathered (John vi. 12). The quantity taken up shewed the liberal measure of the provision. The word for *basket* here is the same in all the four narratives, and is different from that mentioned in the subsequent narrative of the Four Thousand. This denotes the common wicker basket which a Jew took with him for the purpose of carrying his provisions. It has been suggested that the twelve baskets used on this occasion may have been those in which the Twelve Apostles had carried the food which they required on their missionary journey recently finished.

**44. five thousand men.** That is *men* as distinguished from women and children. Matthew says expressly 'beside women and children' (xiv. 21). These would not sit down with the men.

From Luke (ix. 10) we gather that the scene of this stupendous and most humane miracle was at or near 'a city called Bethsaida.' That is the Bethsaida which is known to have been planted on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, east of the Jordan, in the district of the Lower Gaulonitis, near where the river enters the Lake. It was raised from the rank of a village to that of a 'city' by Philip the Tetrarch, who also attached to it the name *Julias* in honour of Julia, the daughter of Augustus. Its site is supposed by modern travellers to be found at *et-Tell* near where the Jordan enters the green, grassy plain called *el-Bateihā*, or at *Mas'adiyeh* in the same plain, but nearer the Lake and at the river's mouth.

vi. 45-52. *The incident of the Walking on the Sea*: cf. Matt. xiv. 22-33; John vi. 16-21. We have no longer the fourfold narrative, for Luke drops out. But it is of importance to notice the agreement of John at this point also with the Synoptical narrative as represented by two of the writers.

**45. And straightway he constrained his disciples.** The explanation of this is found in John's Gospel. It alone informs us of the impression produced by the miracle of the Five Thousand. It was great and immediate. The people confessed Jesus to be 'of a truth the prophet that cometh into the world.' They would even have taken him by force and made him a king (vi. 14, 15). This determined him to withdraw 'into the mountain himself alone' (vi. 15). It made him also resolved to send the disciples on before him, to the other side, while he himself dismissed the

into the boat, and to go before *him* unto the other side to Bethsaida, while he himself sendeth the multitude <sup>46</sup> away. And after he had taken leave of them, he <sup>47</sup> departed into the mountain to pray. And when even was come, the boat was in the midst of the sea, and <sup>48</sup> he alone on the land. And seeing them distressed in rowing, for the wind was contrary unto them, about the

multitude. The disciples no doubt required to be *constrained*. For it could not but seem strange to them that he should separate himself from them, and send them away from the neighbourhood of the very place he had chosen with a view to giving them rest.

**unto the other side to Bethsaida.** Matthew says simply 'to the other side,' without mentioning Bethsaida (xiv. 22). John says 'over the sea unto Capernaum' (vi. 17). Their way, therefore, was westward across the Lake. Matthew and Mark both state explicitly that they came at last to *Gennesaret* (Matt. xiv. 34; Mark vi. 53). Were there then two Bethsaidas, one on the eastern side of the Lake, and another on the western? To say that there were two is the simplest explanation, though we have no such evidence of the western Bethsaida as we have of Bethsaida Julias. Some suppose that there was but one city of the name, but that it was divided by the Jordan into an eastern part and a western. Others think that all that is meant by the phrase 'to the other side' is to 'the opposite side of the little bay which lay between the sloping ground where the miracle was wrought and Philip's new city' (so Swete). But it is difficult to adjust the different particulars of the narratives, the natural sense of 'the other side,' the express mention by Luke of Bethsaida, and others, to these explanations or to any other supposition than that of the existence of a Bethsaida on the western shore.

**46. taken leave.** The words are used of taking farewell of friends. It was, therefore, a kindly, though decided, dismissal.

**into the mountain.** He had been on the height before (John vi. 3), and had returned to its solitude. The death of John and the attitude of the people made another crisis in his career, which required prayer and thought.

**47. when even was come.** The miracle had taken place not long before sunset. It was now dark, as John states (vi. 17), and the wind had risen to a storm, and they were alone on the treacherous sea as their Master was alone on the mount.

**in the midst of the sea.** They had rowed, says John (vi. 19) 'about five and twenty or thirty furlongs'—little more than halfway across.

fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking on the sea ; and he would have passed by them : but 49 they, when they saw him walking on the sea, supposed that it was an apparition, and cried out : for they all 50 saw him, and were troubled. But he straightway spake with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer : it is I ; be not afraid. And he went up unto them into the 51 boat ; and the wind ceased : and they were sore amazed

**48. the fourth watch.** From the height Jesus had watched their distress, and in due time went to their relief. The 'fourth watch' was from 3 to 6 a.m. The Jews reckoned by three watches, the *first* or *beginning* of watches (sunset to 10 p.m.), the middle watch (10 p.m. to 2 a.m.), and the morning watch (2 a.m. to sunrise). The Romans reckoned by four watches, and this was followed by the Jews of our Lord's time. And so it is in Matthew and Mark.

**would have passed by them:** cf. Luke xxiv. 28. This is reported only by Mark, and it means that it was the deliberate purpose of Jesus to pass by them—no doubt to test them and instruct their faith.

**49. an apparition.** Better than 'a spirit' as in the A. V. ; cf. Job iv. 15, &c., xx. 8. It is 'spirit,' not 'apparition,' on the other hand in Luke's narrative of the appearance of the risen Lord (xxiv. 37, 39).

**cried out.** Their faith failed them. They did not recognize Jesus, nor did the thought suggest itself that he was likely to come to them in their need. The figure looked spectral and unsubstantial as it moved on the water, and they were terror-stricken.

**50. all saw him.** It was not the delusion, therefore, of one heated brain or perverted eye.

**Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.** The words are the same as reported also by Matthew and by John, except that the latter omits the 'Be of good cheer.' Here again we have in Mark's Gospel tokens of a narrative founded on the testimony of eye and ear. The assuring word was spoken without delay. The voice was recognized, though the figure was not, and the terrors of the disciples were relieved.

**51. went up unto them into the boat.** John does not speak of him as having actually gone on board, but refers to the disciples as *purposing* to take him in, when straightway the boat was mysteriously brought to land. As another incident in the miracle Mark adds that 'the wind ceased.'

**52** in themselves ; for they understood not concerning the loaves, but their heart was hardened.

**53** And when they had crossed over, they came to the

**sore amazed in themselves.** They were profoundly moved and staggered, so much so that they did not or could not give expression to their thoughts. Matthew adds that they *worshipped* him.

**52. understood not concerning the loaves.** What they had seen in connexion with the immediately preceding miracle should have made this further miracle less of a difficulty to them. But it was not so, and the reason for it was that 'their heart was hardened.' That is, they were not in a state of mind to receive the proper impression. The *heart*, according to Hebrew ideas, was the seat of the intelligence, and not of the affections only.

Matthew attaches to this narrative the incident of Peter stepping from the boat into the sea and essaying to walk on the water to Jesus (xiv. 28-33). It is impossible to explain this miracle away by saying that Jesus only walked upon the shore and was taken by the disciples, panic-stricken and in the dark as they were, for a spectre moving on the sea. The careful mention of the distance they had rowed (25 or 30 furlongs) and the point they had reached ('in the *midst* of the sea'), and other particulars in the narrative, put that out of the question. It belongs to the class of nature-miracles, and is one of the strangest of these, as the feeding of the Five Thousand is one of the most stupendous.

vi. 53-56. *The ministry of Jesus in the Plain of Gennesaret*: cf. Matt. xiv. 34-36. This brief paragraph, which has no parallel in Luke or in John, is one of the most graphic of all Mark's descriptions. It bears in every line the marks of a transcript from the report of a keen and interested eye-witness.

**53. And when they had crossed over, they came to the land unto Gennesaret.** It may also be, as it is given in the margin of the R. V., 'and when they had crossed over to the land, they came unto Gennesaret.' So the place where they landed at last is recorded by Mark to have been neither the Bethsaida to which Luke tells us Jesus had withdrawn with the disciples (ix. 10), nor the Capernaum to which John tells us they were going over the sea (vi. 17), but a place some miles south of both. They had been driven so far out of their course. This Gennesaret, from which the lake seems to have taken one of its names, is supposed to be the modern *el-Ghuweir*, a charming plain on the western side, some two-and-a-half or three miles long and a little more than a mile broad. 'Such is the fertility of the soil,' says Josephus, 'that it rejects no plant, and accordingly all are here cultivated

land unto Gennesaret, and moored to the shore. And 54 when they were come out of the boat, straightway *the people* knew him, and ran round about that whole region, 55 and began to carry about on their beds those that were sick, where they heard he was. And wheresoever he 56 entered, into villages, or into cities, or into the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole.

And there are gathered together unto him the Pharisees, 7 and certain of the scribes, which had come from Jerusalem,

by the husbandman, for so genial is the air that it suits every variety. The walnut, which delights beyond other trees in a wintry climate, grows here luxuriantly, together with the palm which is nourished by the heat, and near to these are figs and olives to which a milder atmosphere has been assigned.' He speaks also in glowing terms of the 'fruits of opposite climes,' of which it 'maintains a continuous supply.' 'Thus it produces,' he proceeds, 'those most royal of all, the grape and the fig, during ten months, without intermission, while the other varieties ripen the year round; for besides being favoured by the genial temperature of the air, it is irrigated by a highly fertilizing spring, called Capharnaum by the people of the country' (*Jewish War*, iii. x. 8).

**moored**: the only occurrence of this word in Scripture.

**55. beds**: that is, pallets.

**56. border of his garment**: see on ch. v. 27.

The paragraph gives a vivid picture of the rapidity with which the news of the coming of Jesus spread, the intense faith of the people in his power to heal, and the eagerness with which he was welcomed alike in town and country.

vii. 1-23. *Questions regarding washings*: cf. Matt. xv. 1-9. The fact that the disciples of Jesus were observed to eat without performing the usual ceremonial ablutions was made a matter of complaint. Jesus uses the occasion to expose the false ideas that were current on the questions of tradition and defilement.

**1. certain of the scribes, which had come from Jerusalem.** These have been mentioned in iii. 22. An opportunity for trying him again with entangling questions is furnished by something they had seen his disciples do. On what occasion they had observed the practice in question is not stated.

2 and had seen that some of his disciples ate their bread  
 3 with defiled, that is, unwashen, hands. For the Pharisees,  
   and all the Jews, except they wash their hands diligently,  
 4 eat not, holding the tradition of the elders: and *when*  
*they come* from the marketplace, except they wash them-  
   selves, they eat not: and many other things there be,  
   which they have received to hold, washings of cups, and

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**2. defiled** (or, common), **that is, unwashen, hands.** Mark explains the technical Jewish term for the sake of his Gentile readers. What is in view is the traditional ceremonial ablution, to which great importance was attached.

**3. the Pharisees, and all the Jews.** This is the only instance in which the term 'the Jews' is used by itself in Mark, although we have also the designation 'the King of the Jews.' In John's Gospel it has the more definite sense of Jews as opposed to Christians, and in particular, the scribes, priests, members of the council, and official classes generally as representatives of the absolute hostility of the nation to Christ and his followers. It is possible that it has something approaching that sense here. But more probably it is a large and general application of the ordinary sense, indicating that the practice, which had begun with the rigid Pharisees, had got hold of the mass of the people.

**diligently:** the word is a difficult one, and is variously rendered 'frequently,' 'up to the elbow,' 'to the wrist,' 'with the fist,' &c. According to the last, which is the rendering preferred by some of our best scholars, the idea is, that they performed the scrupulous ceremonial act by placing the closed fist in the hollow of the other hand and rubbing and rolling it there.

**the tradition of the elders.** That is, the rules which had come down from the scribes of ancient times. In the Gospels the word 'tradition' occurs only here and in the parallel passage in Matthew. It means the collection of oral interpretations of the written Law of Moses which had been given by the Rabbis from time to time and handed down from one generation to another. Cf. 'the traditions of my fathers' of which Paul wrote (Gal. i. 14).

**4. except they wash themselves:** rather, 'except they bathe themselves.' The word is 'baptize,' a term always conveying in its N. T. occurrences the idea of immersion. There were, therefore, two kinds of ceremonial washing, *first* the washing of the hands, which had to be done always before eating; and *second* the taking of a bath, which had to be done only when a Jew came from the 'market-place,' where the number and the mixture of people made the risk of defilement so great.

pots, and brasen vessels. And the Pharisees and the 5 scribes ask him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with defiled hands? And he said unto them, Well did Isaiah 6 prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written,

This people honoureth me with their lips,

But their heart is far from me.

But in vain do they worship me,

7

Teaching *as their* doctrines the precepts of men.

Ye leave the commandment of God, and hold fast the 8 tradition of men. And he said unto them, Full well do 9 ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and 10 thy mother; and, He that speaketh evil of father or mother, let him die the death: but ye say, If a man 11 shall say to his father or his mother, That wherewith thou mightest have been profited by me is Corban, that

**6. hypocrites:** the only occurrence of this word in Mark.

**this people honoureth me with their lips.** The quotation beginning with these words is from Isa. xxix. 13. It differs somewhat from the form it has in the O. T. These hypocritical tradition-bound scribes of Christ's day were like the Jews of Isaiah's time, and the rebuke of the latter fell upon the former. In each case the human got the place of the divine, and the vain thoughts of narrow precept-mongers were taught as the doctrines of God.

**8. ye leave the commandment of God.** Not only did they inculcate their own rules as if they were the Divine Law, but they forsook the latter for the former. These traditional rules, which in most cases went far beyond anything contained in the ordinances of Moses, came to be regarded as of more importance than the written Law itself. The scribes sought to justify this preference by strained interpretations of such passages as Deut. iv. 14, xvii. 10.

**10. Moses said:** see Exod. xx. 12, xxi. 17.

**die the death:** that is, 'surely die,' as in the margin. The quotation expresses the value which the Law put upon that duty of children to parents which was so lightly evaded.

**11. Corban:** a Hebrew word meaning an *offering*. It is explained for the sake of non-Jewish readers to mean something 'given'—something set apart for God or for the Temple. The

12 is to say, Given to God; ye no longer suffer him to do  
 13 aught for his father or his mother; making void the  
     word of God by your tradition, which ye have delivered:  
 14 and many such like things ye do. And he called to  
     him the multitude again, and said unto them, Hear me  
 15 all of you, and understand: there is nothing from  
     without the man, that going into him can defile him:  
     but the things which proceed out of the man are those  
 17 that defile the man. And when he was entered into the  
     house from the multitude, his disciples asked of him  
 18 the parable. And he saith unto them, Are ye so  
     without understanding also? Perceive ye not, that  
     whatsoever from without goeth into the man, *it* cannot  
 19 defile him; because it goeth not into his heart, but

Law did not give offerings the precedence over moral duties. For it had the Decalogue in its heart. But the inventions of the scribes had so perverted the moral intelligence that it had come to be a recognized thing that to declare any possession *Corban* left one free to refuse to use it for the help even of father or mother.

**13. making void.** A strong word meaning to *invalidate*. It occurs only in this paragraph, the corresponding section in Matthew, and Gal. iii. 15, 17.

**14. called to him the multitude again.** The people seem, therefore, to have been dismissed or to have withdrawn for a time, while he spoke the stern words about tradition to the company of Pharisees and scribes. They are recalled in order to hear a declaration of principle in which all required instruction, and which went to the quick of these questions of the clean and the unclean.

**15. nothing from without the man . . . can defile him.** He takes them at once beyond all ceremonial conditions to moral verities, and from the outward to the inward. He enunciates a general principle which struck at the heart of these mechanical prescriptions of the unwritten law, and indeed at the whole Levitical system of distinctions between things clean and things unclean which was but for a time.

Verse 16 of the A.V. is omitted by the R.V. as insufficiently attested.

**17. entered into the house.** He had stated the principle broadly to the people without. He states it again and explains it now to the disciples within at their request.

into his belly, and goeth out into the draught? *This he said,* making all meats clean. And he said, That 20 which proceedeth out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, evil thoughts 21 proceed, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, covetings, 22 wickednesses, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, railing,

**19. making all meats clean.** The A. V. adopts the reading ‘purging all meats,’ according to which the reference would be to the separation of all impurities from the food which is effected by its being passed into the draught. But the reading of the R. V. is the better supported, and it also gives the better sense. It makes Jesus the Speaker, and represents him as emitting a great revolutionary declaration. The sentence becomes a note explaining that Jesus, in speaking as he did, abolished the old Levitical ideas of distinction, though the disciples did not discern it, and pronounced all meats to be things in themselves equally clean.

**21. from within, out of the heart of men.** Real uncleanness, moral defilement, has its source and its seat in the centre of the moral feeling and intelligence—the heart.

**evil thoughts.** The mental acts, the ideas of evil, that precede and prompt all sinful deeds. Or it may be that in the ‘evil thoughts’ we have the general term, and that in the terms which follow we have the particulars—so many forms of evil in which the ‘evil thoughts’ take effect.

**fornications, &c.** So many plural terms are used first, denoting different *acts* of sin.

**22. covetings.** The Vulgate and Wycliffe make it ‘avarices.’ The word is not to be limited to what comes under the idea of the lust of gold. It is mentioned not only along with thefts and extortion (1 Cor. v. 10); but also with sins of the flesh (1 Cor. v. 11; Eph. v. 3, 5; Col. iii. 5). It includes all forms of grasping self-seeking and self-gratification.

**deceit, &c.** Next come so many singular terms, expressing each a particular *disposition*.

**lasciviousness.** A strong term, meaning in classical Greek *insolence*, in later Greek sensuality. It expresses the kind of sensuality or wantonness that ‘shocks public decency’ (Lightfoot).

**an evil eye.** That is, envy.

**pride.** A term common enough in classical Greek, but in the N. T. found only here, though the corresponding adjective occurs repeatedly (Luke i. 51; Rom. i. 30; 2 Tim. iii. 2; James iv. 6; 1 Pet. v. 5). It means the pride that is arrogant, such as is seen, e. g. in the attitude of the typical Pharisee to other men.

23 pride, foolishness: all these evil things proceed from within, and defile the man.

24 And from thence he arose, and went away into the borders of Tyre and Sidon. And he entered into a

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**foolishness.** In the ethical sense, not mere lack of reason, but moral senslessness, ‘foolishness of moral practice’ (Meyer).

Mark enumerates thirteen sins, or, as it may also be put, twelve particular forms included in the ‘evil thoughts.’ Matthew’s list contains only seven, or six particular forms embraced in the ‘evil thoughts.’ Nor are the forms entirely the same in the two lists. Attempts to classify them have been made, but with very partial success.

vii. 24-30. *The case of the Syrophenician woman and her daughter.* Cf. Matt. xv. 21-28. The spirit of hostility is rising, and Jesus quits those districts of Galilee in which he had been moving about for a time. But though he withdraws to new parts at a considerable distance from the scenes of the events which had spread his fame abroad, he is not allowed to remain unnoticed or unapproached. Matthew’s report makes more of what was said, Mark’s more of what was done on the occasion. The two together give us a remarkably complete account of the incident.

**24. the borders of Tyre and Sidon.** Compare Elijah’s journey to ‘Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon’ (1 Kings xvii. 9, 10). Matthew says, ‘into the *parts* of Tyre and Sidon.’ The question arises—Did Jesus actually cross the boundary and enter the Gentile territory? Or did he keep on the Galilean side? Mark’s word ‘the borders’ may mean either the parts touching the cities, or the parts which belonged to the cities. The statement in verse 31 that in leaving ‘the borders of Tyre’ Jesus ‘came through Sidon’ favours the former view, as also does Matthew’s phrase on the whole. Nor would there be anything inconsistent with the plan of his ministry in his crossing into Gentile territory for a space. For the narratives mean that it was with a view to retirement, and not for the purpose of teaching or of doing his wonderful works, that he came so far. Such is implied in the statement that he ‘would have no man know it’ (ver. 24).

**Tyre.** The ‘Rock,’ as the word meant, in ancient days was ‘the merchant of the peoples unto many isles’ (Ezek. xxvii. 3). It was a fortified city in Joshua’s time, and its strength is repeatedly referred to in the O. T. (2 Sam. xxiv. 7; Isa. xxiii. 14; Zech. ix. 3). The Tyrians were amongst the most famous sailors of the ancient world. By its glass-work, its famous dyes, and its maritime enterprise the city acquired great wealth. In our Lord’s time it was still a powerful and populous town. It was the city of Hiram and of Jezebel. It was planted in the Phœnician

house, and would have no man know it: and he could not be hid. But straightway a woman, whose little <sup>25</sup> daughter had an unclean spirit, having heard of him, came and fell down at his feet. Now the woman was <sup>26</sup> a Greek, a Syrophœnician by race. And she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter. And he said unto her, Let the children first <sup>27</sup> be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread

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plain between Zidon and Acre. Nothing remains of it but some ruins on which a poor modern town is built.

**Sidon:** or 'Zidon,' 'Fishtown,' the rival of Tyre, situated about twenty miles north of that city and about the same distance south of Beyrouth. Zidon, originally a fishing village, rose to the proud position of a great commercial city before Tyre became of importance, and in Isaiah the latter is spoken of as 'the daughter of Zidon' (xxiii. 12). But the power had passed from Zidon to Tyre by Solomon's day at least, and the latter became 'the mart of nations' (Isa. xxiii. 3). Men of Tyre and Sidon were among those who came to Jesus at the sea in his early ministry (Mark iii. 8). The two cities appear in the story of Herod in Acts (xii. 20). Paul touched at Sidon on his voyage to Italy (Acts xxvii. 3).

**25. straightway.** The fame of Jesus had penetrated even into Phoenicia, so much so that *at once* when it became known that he had come to those distant parts the seclusion which he sought was broken in upon by a suppliant.

**26. a Greek, a Syrophœnician.** Matthew describes her as 'a Canaanitish woman.' The designations express her connexions by religion and by race. As a 'Greek' she was a Gentile; as a Canaanite she was of the stock of the doomed race that was dispossessed by Israel; as a 'Syro-Phœnician' she belonged to the Phœnicians of the Roman province of Syria, as distinguished from the Libo-Phœnicians or Liby-Phœnicians, the Phœnicians of Libya on the Punic or Carthaginian coast. The conjunction of the words also suggests that the woman, though a Phœnician, spoke Greek.

**besought him.** Matthew tells us how she adjured him by the title 'Son of David' to have mercy on her. Intercourse with the Jews of the vicinity had made her acquainted no doubt with their Messianic expectations generally, and with this Messianic name in particular.

**27. let the children first be filled.** So he enunciates the principle on which his own mission was to proceed, and on

28 and cast it to the dogs. But she answered and saith unto him, Yea, Lord: even the dogs under the table 29 eat of the children's crumbs. And he said unto her, For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of 30 thy daughter. And she went away unto her house, and found the child laid upon the bed, and the devil gone out.

which the Apostles also acted subsequently—‘to the Jew first.’ But while the Jew had the *first* claim it did not follow that he had the *only* claim. It was ‘also to the Greek.’

**dogs.** In Scripture the dog is seldom, if ever, mentioned, but in terms of contempt. Evil qualities, cowardliness, treachery, laziness, filthiness, and the like are always associated with him. It is the street dog that is in view, the outcast animal that infested the towns and villages of the East. (Cf. such passages as Deut. xxiii. 18; Job xxx. 1; 2 Kings viii. 13; Phil. iii. 2; Rev. xxii. 15). The ancient Jew spoke of the heathen as *dogs*. Here, however, it is not the usual term for ‘dogs’ that is used, but a diminutive form which softens the harshness of the words and points to the little house-dogs that might be about, and most naturally under the table. This is the more likely, because our Lord speaks in terms of a family meal.

**28. Yea, Lord: even the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs.** It is as if she said—‘I grant, Lord, that the meal is for the family, and that the children must be fed. But are not the dogs also of the house, and is there not also something for them in their turn?’ She does not think of contradicting Jesus, but accepts what he says as true, and turns it into an argument in favour of her appeal.

**29. For this saying.** Her words expressed a confidence in him so assured that it could not contemplate denial. In Matthew the greatness of her faith is explicitly mentioned as the reason for Christ’s compliance.

**found the child laid upon the bed, and the devil (demon) gone out.** Her faith had its reward. The evil spirit was gone, though the child was not yet recovered from the exhaustion of the possession. So in the case of the nobleman’s son, the ‘fever left him’ and he ‘began to amend’ (John iv. 52).

Matthew’s account is fuller at some points, giving e. g. the several stages in the trial of the woman’s faith. It shews how Jesus met her first by *silence* (xv. 23), then by *refusal* (xv. 24), and finally, by seeming *reproach* (xv. 26). This miracle has some special notes of interest. It was done on the ground of the faith, not of the

And again he went out from the borders of Tyre, and <sup>31</sup> came through Sidon unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the borders of Decapolis. And they bring unto <sup>32</sup> him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to lay his hand upon him. And he took him aside from the multitude <sup>33</sup> privately, and put his fingers into his ears, and he

sufferer herself, but of her mother. It is also one of the three instances of healing effected at a distance. The others are the nobleman's son (John iv. 46-54) and the centurion's servant (Luke vii. 1-10).

vii. 31-37. *Healing of a deaf man with an impediment in his speech.* This narrative is peculiar to Mark. Matthew attaches to his account of the Syro-Phoenician woman only a general statement regarding the departure of Jesus, and the multitudes healed by him (xv. 29-31).

**31. through Sidon unto the sea of Galilee.** Leaving the neighbourhood of Tyre he made his way back to the familiar Lake. But he did this by a peculiar course, the reason for which is not stated. He travelled first in a northerly direction by the coast-line, and (as is indicated by the reading rightly adopted by the R. V., though not by the A. V.) passed through the Gentile city of Sidon. From these parts he took his journey across to the Sea of Galilee—to the eastern side of the Jordan and again into the region of Decapolis. This meant a considerable *détour*. But modern travellers tell us that there was a road from Sidon to Damascus, leading over the hills, across the Leontes, and by the Lebanon.

**32. they bring unto him one that was deaf.** Jesus had been in the neighbourhood of Decapolis before, and had been asked to quit it (v. 1-20). Returning now he is received in a different manner. The healing of the deaf was one of the signs of his Messiahship to which he pointed John's disciples (Matt. xi. 5). It was a note of the same in ancient prophecy (Isa. xxxv. 5, xlvi. 18).

**an impediment in his speech.** Not only *deaf*, but a *deaf-mute*, or, if not absolutely dumb, incapable of speaking intelligibly.

**33. took him aside.** For the most part, the works of Jesus were done in the sight of all. But there were cases, of which this was one, in which they were done apart, and with more or less privacy. There were no doubt special reasons for this in each case in the circumstances or the mental condition of the subject or in the attitude of the people to the Healer and his mission.

**put his fingers into his ears.** Rather 'thrust' them in.

34 spat, and touched his tongue ; and looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be 35 opened. And his ears were opened, and the bond of 36 his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain. And he charged them that they should tell no man : but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal 37 they published it. And they were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well : he maketh even the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

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It was a sign of what he was to do, suitable to the man's state of mind and fixing his attention.

**spat:** spittle was thought to have medicinal virtue, and was often accompanied by magical formulæ. Here it is simply the medium of the healing power (as was the case with the oil, vi. 13), or a second visible sign to help the man's faith.

**34. looking up:** as in the case of the Five Thousand (vi. 41).

**sighed:** or 'groaned.' This is the only occurrence of the word in the Gospels. It is found also in the Epistles ; e.g. in Rom. viii. 23 ; 2 Cor. v. 2, 4, where it is rendered 'groan.' It expresses Christ's deep, pained sympathy.

**Ephphatha:** another of the Lord's words which Mark got from Peter and treasured up in the vernacular.

**35. spake plain:** what he said is not recorded. The significant fact was that he could *speak*, not with stuttering sounds, but *articulately* and at once.

**36. the more a great deal they published it:** the injunction to silence had been earnestly and repeatedly laid upon them. In their excitement they disregarded it, and the more the charge was urged the more did it stimulate their zeal to proclaim the work. 'The conduct of the multitude is a good example of the way in which men treat Jesus, yielding him all homage, except obedience' (Gould).

**37. beyond measure:** a very strong word, of which this is the one occurrence in the N. T. The impression produced in all cases by our Lord's mighty works was in this case, and among these half-pagan people, far greater than ever.

**He hath done all things well:** 'he has been gracious everywhere and successful in everything' (Clarke).

This miracle is remarkable not only for the comparative privacy in which it was performed and the manifestation of the Healer's feelings which accompanied it, but for the use of tangible signs and the gradual way in which it was done, by so many distinct

In those days, when there was again a great multitude, 8  
and they had nothing to eat, he called unto him his  
disciples, and saith unto them, I have compassion on 2

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acts—taking the man aside, putting the fingers into his ears,  
applying spittle, touching the tongue, and then the upturned look,  
the groaning, and finally the short word of command.

viii. 1-10. *The feeding of the Four Thousand*: cf. Matt. xv. 32-39. In contrast with the fourfold narrative in the former miracle of feeding, we have in the present case only the twofold record. The question arises whether this narrative is only another form of that of the Five Thousand, or the report of a distinct occurrence. It is held by some that the narratives in Matthew and Mark are simply duplicate accounts, with some natural differences in the details, of one and the same work. Others think that there were two distinct incidents of miraculous feeding, much the same in character, but that in the primitive tradition the reports of these became to some extent assimilated. The chief reasons urged in support of the duplicate theory are the general resemblances of the two accounts, the difficulty felt by the disciples (viii. 4), and the fact that they betray no recollection of a previous work of the same kind. But there are weightier considerations on the other side. There are, e.g., several points of difference between the two narratives. The numbers fed in the one case are 5,000, in the other 4,000. In the one case we have five loaves and two fishes, in the other seven loaves and a few fishes. In the one case twelve baskets were filled with the fragments, in the other seven. The particular kind of basket mentioned is also different in the two narratives. In the case of the Five Thousand it is the small wicker basket, in that of the Four Thousand it is the large rope-basket. Further, in the one the people concerned are the men of the coast-villages of the north, in the other they are the men of Decapolis and the eastern side. In the case of the Five Thousand the people were demonstrative and would have made Jesus a king (John vi. 15), but in that of the Four Thousand nothing is said of any such excitement. It may also be said that, as the works of Jesus were done for the relief of human ills and needs, and as these ills and needs met him in the same forms on different occasions, there could be no reason in the nature of things why the same miracle might not be wrought on more than one occasion. Here, too, Jesus was among a different people, and a people in a new mental attitude to him. The Evangelist says simply and distinctly that there was '*again* a great multitude, and they had nothing to eat.' Why should we not accept his statement?

the multitude, because they continue with me now three  
3 days, and have nothing to eat: and if I send them away  
fasting to their home, they will faint in the way; and  
4 some of them are come from far. And his disciples  
answered him, Whence shall one be able to fill these  
5 men with bread here in a desert place? And he asked  
them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven.  
6 And he commandeth the multitude to sit down on the  
ground: and he took the seven loaves, and having given  
thanks, he brake, and gave to his disciples, to set before  
7 them; and they set them before the multitude. And they  
had a few small fishes: and having blessed them,  
8 he commanded to set these also before them. And they  
did eat, and were filled: and they took up, of broken  
9 pieces that remained over, seven baskets. And they  
were about four thousand: and he sent them away.

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**2. three days.** By which time they had consumed all the food they had brought. Their eagerness to be with Jesus was bringing them into straits, and his compassion was roused, all the more because some had far to go before they could reach their homes.

**4. Whence shall one be able to fill these men with bread?** The deficiencies of the disciples are never concealed. Their question betrayed their forgetfulness and the little they had yet learned. It is to be noticed also that it is not quite the same as their question on the previous occasion. Then their difficulty was about the large sum of money that would be needed to purchase provisions. Here it is the difficulty of finding anywhere in the sparsely-peopled district in which they were now a sufficient supply for such a multitude of mouths.

**6. he commandeth the multitude to sit down.** On this occasion he gives his instructions not to the disciples, but directly to the people themselves. Neither is there any reference now to the *green grass*. They are seated 'on the ground.'

**8. seven baskets.** The basket used on this occasion was a sort of *hamper*, a plaited basket of reeds or rope. It might be of considerable size, large enough indeed to hold a man. It was in a basket of this kind that Paul was lowered 'down through the wall' at Damascus (Acts ix. 25).

**9. four thousand.** As in the previous case Matthew adds 'beside women and children.'

And straightway he entered into the boat with his disciples, 10  
and came into the parts of Dalmanutha.

And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question 11  
with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting  
him. And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why 12

**10. Dalmanutha.** This is the only passage in which this word occurs. Matthew says that Jesus ‘came into the borders of Magadan’ (xv. 39); where this reading of the R.V. is to be preferred to the *Magdala* of the A.V. But we know about as little of this Magadan as of Dalmanutha. The only place with a name at all like Dalmanutha is *ed-Delhemiyeh*. But that is some five miles to the south of the Lake, on the eastern bank of the Jordan and near its junction with the *Yarmük*. Some identify Magadan with Magdala, and so with *el-Megdel* at the south end of the Plain of Gennesaret. But that, too, is uncertain.

viii. 11-13. *Further questions of the Pharisees*: cf. Matt. xvi. 1-4.

**11. the Pharisees.** Matthew says also the *Sadducees*, who have not appeared as yet as parties in any meeting with Jesus. In neither of the Gospels are we told from whence, whether from their homes in the neighbourhood of Dalmanutha or from some more distant place, these Pharisees came forth. But Jesus had been away for a time out of their parts; and now that he is back they resume their former policy with him.

**a sign from heaven.** They ‘began’ this policy of entangling questions again by a demand for a *sign*. Not satisfied with *miracles* as ‘signs,’ they ask him for a ‘sign’ of another kind—one from heaven, some audible or visible manifestation unmistakably from above, something different from those works which were wrought by Jesus on earth. They are not more explicit as to the *kind* of sign; but they may have had in mind the standing still of sun and moon in Joshua’s case, the thunder and hail in that of Samuel, the rain in Elijah’s case (1 Kings xviii. 38; 2 Kings i. 10, &c.), or the manna (cf. John vi. 30, &c.), or perhaps the peculiar ‘sign,’ the *Bath-Kol*, the ‘daughter of the voice’ or the ‘daughter-voice,’ of which much is made in the Rabbinical books—a heavenly voice which was supposed to have come after the cessation of O.T. prophecy, and which conveyed the testimony of heaven on special occasions. This incident is given by Luke in a different connexion (xi. 16, 29). Matthew introduces it in both connexions (xii. 38-41, xvi. 1-4).

**tempting.** That is, putting him to the test.

**12. sighed deeply**, or, ‘groaned deeply.’ An intensive form of the verb, occurring only here. What moved him thus painfully

doth this generation seek a sign? verily I say unto you,  
 13 There shall no sign be given unto this generation. And he left them, and again entering into *the boat* departed to the other side.

14 And they forgot to take bread; and they had not in the boat with them more than one loaf. And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees

was the hardened attitude of these Pharisees, which betokened the final separation between them and him, and the results thereof.

**13. he left them.** He refused them the kind of sign they sought, and turned away from them, recognizing that his ministry could have no success with such as they.

**to the other side.** Our ignorance of the position of Dalmanutha leaves it uncertain whether this was to the eastern side or to the western. Only we see that they came by-and-by to Bethsaida (viii. 22).

viii. 14-21. *Warning against the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.* Cf. Matt. xvi. 5-12.

**14. they forgot to take bread.** It was the duty of the disciples, and more particularly of Judas the purse-bearer, to see to the provision needed for a journey. But they had omitted to do so. Perhaps their forgetfulness was due to the haste of their departure. Matthew's account might suggest that it was when they arrived that they overlooked this plain duty. It is only Mark who notices that all they had by them was a single loaf.

**15. charged them.** The tense in the original indicates either that he proceeded to do this while they were crossing, or that he did it once and again.

**the leaven.** The use of leaven during Passover and in connexion with certain offerings (Lev. ii. 11) was strictly forbidden by the law. As a thing that was to be purged out, it readily became a figure of what was evil or corrupt. Only once in the N. T. is it used in the neutral sense, viz. in the Parable of the Leaven. Otherwise it is a figure of evil, and more particularly of secret, penetrating, insidious evil (1 Cor. v. 6, 7, 8; Gal. v. 9). The explanation given by Matthew (xvi. 12) suggests that what Jesus had specially in view on this occasion was the insidious influence of corrupt *teaching*.

**of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.** The repetition of the word 'leaven' indicates that two distinct kinds of evil influence are referred to. In Matthew it is the leaven of 'the Pharisees and Sadducees.' But the leaven of Herod would be akin to that of the Sadducees. The leaven of the Pharisees would

and the leaven of Herod. And they reasoned one with 16 another, saying, We have no bread. And Jesus perceiving 17 it saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? do ye not yet perceive, neither understand? have ye your heart hardened? Having eyes, see ye not? and 18 having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember? When I brake the five loaves among the five thousand, 19 how many baskets full of broken pieces took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. And when the seven 20 among the four thousand, how many basketfuls of broken

be the influence of their religious arrogance, their formalism, and the like, but here particularly that of their narrow, rigorous, unspiritual teaching. The leaven of Herod would be the pernicious influence of the worldliness and licence that go with unbelief.

**16. reasoned.** They kept talking with each other about the Lord's warning, but took him to speak only of their neglect to have bread with them.

**17. do ye not yet perceiue, neither understand?** There is a tone of reproach or censure in the question. Even after all that they had witnessed they had not yet learned to reflect and take in the real meaning of things. In Matthew (xvi. 8) it is the defect of their faith that is made prominent. What they had already seen him do in supplying need should have taught them to trust him more, and not to let their thoughts run as they had been doing on this lack of provision.

**18. Having eyes, see ye not?** The best arrangement of the clauses in verses 18, 19 probably is this—‘Having eyes, see ye not, and having ears hear ye not? And do you not remember, when I broke the five loaves among the five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments you took up?’

**19. baskets full.** The narrative, in its references to the two miracles, carefully preserves the distinctions between the five thousand and the four thousand, and between the five fishes and the seven, and (what is more remarkable) between the kinds of basket used on the two several occasions, as brought out in the separate accounts already given. The R. V. calls attention to this last fact by giving the rendering ‘baskets full’ in verse 19 (with reference to the wicker basket in the case of the five thousand), and the rendering ‘basketfuls’ in verse 20 with reference to the larger basket or hamper in the case of the four thousand. Wycliffe's translation is curious. He gives ‘coffens ful of broken mete’ in the one case, and ‘lepis of broken mete’ in the other.

21 pieces took ye up? And they say unto him, Seven. And he said unto them, Do ye not yet understand?

22 And they come unto Bethsaida. And they bring to him a blind man, and beseech him to touch him.

**21. do ye not yet understand?** Even after their experience of these *two* miracles they had remained obtuse, and had learned neither to trust him better nor to take in the real meaning of his words. Matthew's account is more detailed and explanatory at this point. It gives the question of Jesus in a fuller form, and it states that at last the disciples did come to see that in speaking to them of the leaven he had the corrupt teaching of the Jewish sects in view, not the mere matter of bread (xvi. 11, 12).

viii. 22-26. *Restoration of sight to a blind man at Bethsaida.* The second of the two miracles which are recorded only by Mark. In this case, as in the former (the healing of the deaf-mute in Decapolis), the miracle is done apart from the multitude, in a gradual way, and with the help of tangible means.

**22. unto Bethsaida.** They had come to 'the other side' from Dalmanutha. But as the position of Dalmanutha is unknown, the question is left so far open as to whether this Bethsaida is on the eastern side of the lake or on the western. As Jesus proceeded from this Bethsaida to 'the villages of Cæsarea Philippi,' it is probably Bethsaida Julias, on the north-eastern shore, that is meant. It is objected that Bethsaida Julias was a *city*, whereas this Bethsaida is called a 'village.' But the elevation of the north-eastern town to the rank of a city was of recent date, and the old familiar title may have survived among the people.

**a blind man.** So far as Mark's record goes, this is the first case of the kind brought to Jesus. Mark also reports the case of Bartimæus (x. 46, &c.) Each of the Gospels selects one or more out of the number of such miracles for detailed narration. Matthew, e. g. records the instances of the two blind men in the house (ix. 27-31), and the two blind men near Jericho (xx. 30-34); Luke that of the blind beggar at Jericho (xviii. 35-43); John that of the man born blind (ix. 1-41). But that Jesus did many more works of healing in the case of the infirmity of blindness than are reported at length in the Gospels appears from the briefer accounts of the possessed man who was both blind and dumb (Matt. xii. 22), and the blind and lame whom he healed in the temple (Matt. xxi. 14), and from the reference made by Jesus to the blind receiving their sight in his answer to John's disciples (Matt. xi. 5; Luke vii. 21).

Blindness and ophthalmia have always been commoner troubles in the East than in the West. The conditions of climate and life account

And he took hold of the blind man by the hand, and 23 brought him out of the village; and when he had spit on his eyes, and laid his hands upon him, he asked him, Seest thou aught? And he looked up, and said, 24 I see men; for I behold *them* as trees, walking. Then 25

for this. The Mosaic law had special provisions for the protection of the blind (Lev. xix. 14; Deut. xxvii. 18). The word 'blind' or 'blindness' occurs no less than thirty-six times in the literal sense in the N. T., not to speak of its figurative use. Sightless, blear-eyed, fly-infected, miserable men and women often confront one in Syrian towns and villages, and make one of the most distressing spectacles in Eastern life.

**23. took hold.** The deaf-mute was taken aside; the blind man is led by the hand.

**out of the village.** At this period of his ministry Jesus seems to have taken special precautions against a publicity which might prejudice his work or drive it to a premature issue. But in taking this man so carefully and deliberately apart from the noisy, excitable crowd he had regard also, as the injunction in ver. 26 suggests, to the man's own mental condition.

**spit on his eyes.** As in the case of the deaf-mute. These are the only two occasions on which Jesus applies the moisture of his mouth in this way. 'He links on his power' (says Archbishop Trench) 'to means already in use among men; working through these means something higher than they could themselves have brought about, and clothing the supernatural in the forms of the natural. Thus he did, for example, when he bade his disciples to anoint the sick with oil—one of the most esteemed helps for healing in the East.'

**laid his hands upon him.** The appeal had been that he might *touch* him. To aid and stimulate the man's faith, which may well have been dull and inert, he responds to the appeal and does even more.

**24. looked up.** The first and most natural thing to do when such a question is put to him. Instinctively he would raise his eyes.

**I see men; for I behold them as trees, walking.** This rendering of the R. V. is better than that of the A. V., 'I see men as trees walking,' which overlooks the 'for.' Better still is the rendering, 'I see the men, for like trees I perceive persons walking about' (Meyer), or 'I see men, for I perceive objects like trees walking' (Swete). His answer to the question was prompt. It was that now he had his sight. He gave his reason for saying this, namely, the fact that he could discern large objects in motion.

again he laid his hands upon his eyes ; and he looked stedfastly, and was restored, and saw all things clearly.

**26** And he sent him away to his home, saying, Do not even enter into the village.

He judged they must be men, though they looked like trees, because they were walking about. But his vision was yet imperfect. He did not see things distinctly and in their real proportions. ‘Certain moving forms he saw about him, but without the power of discerning their shape or magnitude—trees he should have accounted them from their height, and men from their motion’ (Trench). Even in Mark’s narrative there is nothing more life-like, no more truthful, realistic reproduction of a scene than this. The experience of the healed man, the first rawness and uncertainty of his vision, the appearance of things in unnatural dimensions and indistinct outline, are all true to nature and to medical testimony. It is not said whether the man was blind from birth or had lost his sight. The description corresponds better perhaps with the case of one born blind. On the other hand, what the man says about *trees* and *men* and the use of the word ‘restored’ might suggest that once he had seen, and that he still had some vague recollections of the look of things.

**25. again he laid his hands upon his eyes.** It required two applications of the hands before the cure was complete. So gradual was the work of restoration. It needed time, and touch, and concentrated attention on the part of the subject to interpret the new sensations. Archbishop Trench refers to Cheselden’s account of the cure of a man who had been blind from birth—‘When he first saw,’ the report proceeds, ‘he knew not the shape of anything, nor any one thing from another, however different in shape or magnitude ; but being told what things were, whose forms he before knew from feeling, he would carefully observe, that he might know them again.’

**he looked stedfastly.** The term here is the one which is rendered ‘see clearly’ in our Lord’s charge regarding the beam and the mote (Matt. vii. 5 ; Luke vi. 42). It describes the act of fixing one’s eyes on an object with the view of discerning distinctly what it is.

**saw all things clearly.** This word ‘clearly,’ of which this is the only occurrence in the N. T., conveys the idea of *distance*. The cure was now complete. It was so perfect that the man could see things near and far distinctly.

**26. Do not even enter into the village.** The man did not belong to the village. He had been brought to it and Jesus himself had led him out of it. The Healer now will have him go at once to his home, without mixing with the people of the village

And Jesus went forth, and his disciples, into the <sup>27</sup> villages of Cæsarea Philippi: and in the way he asked

or so much as putting foot within the place. So should he have the opportunity for reflection; while the risk of public excitement and agitation, which might be hurtful to the real objects of Christ's ministry, would also be avoided.

viii. 27-30. *Visit to the neighbourhood of Cæsarea Philippi.* Cf. Matt. xvi. 13-20; Luke ix. 18-21. Here again we have the advantage of the triple narrative. And the journey was a momentous one. It took Jesus to a remote and retired part of the country, which he had not yet visited in the course of his ministry, and in which he could have the retirement which he had sought in vain elsewhere. It was undertaken when opposition was sharpening and the crisis of his life was drawing on. It gave him opportunity also to bring matters to a point with his disciples with regard both to his Person and to his Passion. His way took him northwards along the course of the Jordan, as far almost as its sources, beyond the waters of Merom and twenty-five miles or thereby above the Sea of Galilee. It brought him into one of the most remarkable parts of the Holy Land—a region of deep solitudes, where Nature also is seen in her grandest and fairest forms.

**27. Cæsarea Philippi.** So called to distinguish it from another Cæsarea, the *Cæsarea Palestinae*, or the 'Cæsarea on the Sea,' the city north of Jaffa in which St. Paul was imprisoned. It got the name *Cæsarea* in honour of the Emperor Augustus Cæsar, and the *Philippi* was added in honour of Philip the tetrarch of Trachonitis, who had rebuilt it and had made it splendid with altars, and statues, and votive images. In remote antiquity the site had been occupied, it is thought, by a city which is identified by some with the Baal'-Gad of Joshua (xi. 17, xii. 7, xiii. 4), by others with the Baal-Hermon of Judges (iii. 3) and 1 Chronicles (v. 23). Later it was occupied by a town known as Paneas (the modern Banias) from the Paneion, a sanctuary of Pan in a deep cavern in the neighbourhood (Josephus, *Antiq.* xv. 10. 3). Planted at the foot of the Lebanon on a terrace 1,150 feet above sea-level, surrounded by groves of oaks and poplars, with fertile plains stretching westwards, and the snowy Hermon to the north-east, it has a grand, romantic beauty beyond any other town in the land. 'Almost a Syrian Tivoli' is Dean Stanley's description of it.

**In the way he asked his disciples.** He draws from them their ideas of himself. It is the first time that he questions the Twelve directly about himself. The occasion is one of such solemn moment that he prepared himself for it by prayer, as we gather from Luke (ix. 18). So had he done also before he went

his disciples, saying unto them, Who do men say that I am? And they told him, saying, John the Baptist: and others, Elijah; but others, One of the prophets. And he asked them, But who say ye that I am? Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ. And he charged them that they should tell no man

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on his first circuit among the synagogues of Galilee (Mark i. 35), and before he chose the Twelve (Luke vi. 12).

**Who do men say that I am?** His first question was about the opinions of others. The reply of the disciples shewed how various these were, and how different were the impressions produced by his works.

**28. And they told him.** The Baptist risen from the dead, the Elijah who was to return, one of the line of the prophets—these were some of the estimates formed of him. Matthew adds *Jeremiah*, the prophet who had come to be regarded as in some respects the greatest of all. But it is not said that any of the people took him to be the Messiah. Compare the similar explanations recorded in vi. 14, 15.

**29. But who say ye that I am?** Now he will have their own view—‘But ye—who say ye that I am,’ as the order of the words puts it.

**Peter answereth.** All three Synoptists make Peter the spokesman.

**Thou art the Christ.** In Matt. it is ‘Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God’ (xvi. 16), and in Luke it is ‘The Christ of God.’ But the confession is the same, though the reports differ slightly as to the precise terms. It is to be observed also that according both to Matthew and to John there had been earlier confessions by the disciples of Jesus as ‘the Son of God’ (Matt. xiv. 33), and ‘the Holy One of God’ (John vi. 69); and that the Fourth Gospel indeed speaks of Simon as recognizing Jesus to be the Messiah when he first followed him (John i. 41). The confession is now made by Peter in name of the disciples, in response to the Master’s own question and in the most explicit terms. It was their solemn, formal, convinced acceptance of him as the Messiah; and the scene of this momentous declaration was the neighbourhood of a heathen city dedicated of old to Pan, and in Christ’s time to the deified Augustus. Mark omits the benediction pronounced on Peter and the promise made him, which Matthew records (xvi. 17-19)—proof sufficient that the Second Gospel was not written with a Petrine tendency or in the interests of Peter and a party following him.

**30. charged them.** A strong word, usually conveying the idea

of him. And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes, and

of rebuke. The silence was enjoined because the times were not yet ripe for a public and general declaration of his Messiahship. It was possible to do that prematurely, and at the cost of disaster.

viii. 31-33. *The Announcement of the Passion and the Rebuke of Peter*; cf. Matt. xvi. 21-23; Luke ix. 22. The confession has been made. The time will come, though it is not yet, for the proclamation of the claims thus recognized. What is involved in that confession is from this time forth disclosed to the disciples as they were able to receive it.

**31. began to teach them**: this marks the occasion as one that made an important turning-point in Christ's work. He was to give now a new direction to his training and instructing of the Twelve.

**must**: the word expresses the moral necessity, the Divine plan, in his career. It is used also on other decisive occasions in his life, as Luke specially notices, e. g. when the consciousness of his peculiar relation to God first expresses itself (Luke ii. 49), at the beginning of his ministry (Luke iv. 43), after his resurrection (Luke xxiv. 26); cf. also John ix. 4.

**suffer many things**: so in Matt. xvi. 21; Mark ix. 12; Luke ix. 22, xvii. 25.

**rejected**: perhaps with reference to Ps. cxviii. 22. The word means properly an official rejection—a rejection after trial.

**elders**: here in the official sense of members of the Sanhedrin, the supreme ecclesiastical court or council in Jerusalem—those members of that body who were neither chief priests nor scribes. They might be either laymen or priests.

**chief priests**: the most distinguished representatives of the Jewish priesthood, and the leading members of the supreme court. They belonged to the sacerdotal aristocracy, and were mostly, though not exclusively, of the party of the Sadducees.

**scribes**: the professional lawyers, mostly, though not exclusively, Pharisees. See on chap. i. 22 above. These were the three distinct classes that made up the membership of the Sanhedrin. In most cases where they are named together in the N. T. the chief priests are mentioned first. There are a few cases in which this order is not kept (Matt. xvi. 21; Luke ix. 22, xx. 19, in addition to the instance here in Mark), and only two in which the chief priests are not named at all (Matt. xxvi. 57; Acts vi. 12). The enumeration is made here in a form that particularizes each of the three parties in the Sanhedrin as involved in the acts referred to.

32 be killed, and after three days rise again. And he spake the saying openly. And Peter took him, and 33 began to rebuke him. But he turning about, and seeing his disciples, rebuked Peter, and saith, Get thee behind me, Satan : for thou mindest not the things of God, 34 but the things of men. And he called unto him the

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**after three days**: so again in ix. 31, x. 34. Matthew says 'the third day' (xvi. 21). But that the two expressions mean the same thing is shewn by Matt. xxvii. 64. Cf. Hosea vi. 2.

**32. openly**: that is in plain terms, not in parable or indirectly, and in presence of all. Cf. John xi. 14. This statement is given only by Mark. Jesus had not been wholly silent on these things before, but had spoken with reserve and by figure or suggestion, as is seen e. g. from John ii. 19, iii. 12-16, vi. 47-56, and in the mention of the bridegroom (Matt. ix. 15; Mark ii. 20).

**took him**: put his hand on him and took hold of him so as to take him aside. The idea of *suffering*, of what betokened failure, in the case of him whom he had just confessed to be the Christ was still strange to Peter ; and that Jesus should speak of it with such frankness and publicity was more than he could bear. He will take him apart, out of the hearing of others, and remonstrate with him.

**rebuke him**: the words of the remonstrance are given by Matthew (xvi. 22).

**33. turning about**: cf. v. 30; John xxi. 20; Acts ix. 40; Rev. i. 12. Another of Mark's vivid strokes. At Peter's touch and speech Jesus turns sharply round as if to address him. In doing so his eye rests on the disciples watching what was passing. He directs his rebuke to Peter, but to him as the spokesman for all. Matthew and Mark both mention that it was Peter who was reproved. Mark who omits the honour done to Peter by Jesus on the occasion of his confession, does not fail to tell of the sharp reproof that followed so soon.

**Get thee behind me, Satan**: the very words used by Jesus in the temptation (Matt. iv. 10; Luke iv. 8). In Peter's remonstrance Jesus saw a repetition of the temptation to follow a worldly course by which Satan had tried him in the wilderness.

**mindest**. Better than the A. V. 'savourest,' an old English word, derived from the Latin through the French, meaning to *discern* and *relish*. Peter's hasty and officious act betokened a lack of spiritual understanding and liking—a mind far away yet from the mind of God.

viii. 34—ix. 1. *Declaration of self-denial even unto death as the condition of discipleship, and the secret of the gain of life.* Cf. Matt. xvi. 24-28; Luke ix. 23-27.

multitude with his disciples, and said unto them, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever

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**34. the multitude:** even in these remote, heathen parts, Jesus had crowds of curious spectators and listeners. He turns now from the disciples and from the mystery of his own Passion to the mass of the unattached and to another subject. He even calls them to him and addresses to them words of larger meaning suited to all.

**take up his cross:** Luke adds 'daily.' Probably Jesus had spoken of the *cross* before this to his disciples (Matt. x. 38), but not, as far as appears, to those outside. Neither then nor now did he speak of the cross as the way of death for himself; nor has he yet spoken of suffering at the hands of any but Jews. Crucifixion was the Roman mode of capital punishment. The word about taking up the *cross* must have carried with it repellent, terrifying ideas. It expressed the call to a denial of self that meant the utmost conceivable pain. It has been asserted by some that only now did our Lord clearly foresee his own Passion. But apart from the proper reference of his words on this occasion, we have testimonies in the Gospels to the fact that he had spoken of it, at least in terms foreshadowing it, before this, as e. g. in the hidden saying about the temple of his body (John ii. 20, 21); the words to Nathanael about the destiny of the Son of man to be 'lifted up' (John iii. 14); the declaration about the giving of his flesh and blood (John vi. 51-56); and the statement about the bridegroom being 'taken away' which is given in all the three Synoptists (Matt. ix. 15; Mark ii. 20; Luke v. 35).

**35. life:** or 'soul,' as in the margin of the R. V. The word rendered 'soul' (*psyche*) is different from that rendered 'spirit' (*pneuma*). *Soul* is the term used in Scripture to designate the *self*, the conscious personal life. It means life embodied, as the other means life animating. 'Spirit is life as coming from God; soul is life as constituted in man. Consequently, when the individual life is to be made emphatic, "soul" is used' (Laidlaw, *The Bible Doctrine of Man*, p. 69). Thus, too, in connexions like the present, the latter term may express the *self* in two different aspects, a lower and a higher, or the *life* as mere life, and as the good of life—life worthy of the name. It is to be observed also that this is not the only time that this far-reaching declaration about *saving* and *losing* one's life was made by our Lord, according to the Gospel records. See Matt. x. 39; Luke xvii. 33; John xii. 25. It is, indeed, one that bore to be repeated, and that might be called forth by more than one occasion.

shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall  
 36 save it. For what doth it profit a man, to gain the  
 37 whole world, and forfeit his life? For what should  
 38 a man give in exchange for his life? For whosoever  
 shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this  
 adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of man also  
 shall be ashamed of him, when he cometh in the

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**for my sake:** words spoken simply and calmly, but revealing his consciousness of a supremacy beyond the highest human measure, making devotion to himself the first of duties and the life which is a gain worth any cost.

**and the gospel's.** It is only Mark who uses the word 'gospel' thus without any addition or definition.

**36. gain the whole world.** The contrast passes now from the *life saved* and the *life lost* to the *world gained* and the *life forfeited*. The term 'world' here has not the deep, mystical sense it has in the writings of John. It is the 'world' in the common sense of the word, the material, visible world or system of things with all it has to offer. In the experiences of the wilderness, Jesus himself had been tempted to gain the world by forsaking his proper mission and forgetting his relation to God. 'Forfeit' is the proper rendering here in the clause 'forfeit his life.' For the word expresses not mere loss, but loss coming by penalty inflicted.

**37. For what should a man give in exchange:** or, 'as an exchange.' It is an argument for the profitlessness of the gain of the whole world from the fact that it is at the cost of a loss that cannot be repaired. Once the life is gone, nothing can buy it back.

**38. For whosoever shall be ashamed.** The statement becomes yet more definite, and points to yet larger claims on the part of the speaker. It brings the question of loyalty to Christ to the final test of his own judicial prerogative. When that test is applied the just equalities of things will be seen. Then shame shall be met by shame, and he who disowns shall himself be disowned.

**when he cometh:** the N.T. speaks of a 'coming' or 'presence' of Christ, which it describes as an objective event of the future, a visible return of Christ which is connected with the raising of the dead, the last judgement, and the establishment of the kingdom of God in its final completeness and glory (Matt. xxiv. 3, 37, 39; 1 Thess. iii. 13, iv. 15, v. 23; 2 Thess. ii. 1, 8; 1 Cor. i. 7, xv. 23; Jas. v. 7; 2 Pet. i. 16, iii. 4; 1 John ii. 28, &c.). It also speaks of the kingdom of God, of the day of the Lord, and

glory of his Father with the holy angels. And he **9**  
said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There be some  
here of them that stand *by*, which shall in no wise  
taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come  
with power.

of the Lord himself as ‘coming’ (Matt. x. 28, xxiv. 30, 42; Luke xvii. 20, xxii. 18; John xxi. 22; Acts ii. 20; 1 Cor. xi. 26, &c.). This ‘coming’ is associated with the end of the world, but also, as it appears, e. g. in Matt. xxiv, xxv, with the destruction of Jerusalem. The prophecies of the O. T. brought events together which the course of history proved to be separated from each other in time. They looked forward to the judgements of the near future, and saw in these preliminary and partial acts of judgement on the nations the coming of the kingdom of God, which was at last to be supreme. So in the intimations made by the N. T. on the subject of the Last Things, judicial acts or redemptive acts of decisive significance, like the destruction of the Temple or the presence of the Lord in the special gift of the Holy Spirit, are described as ‘comings’ of the Lord, and are identified with that final Advent to which in principle they belonged. See also on chap. xiii.

**in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.** Matthew attaches the definite statement of *judgement* as well as glory—‘then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds’ (xvi. 27). The glory which the Son of man sees before him is given by Luke as ‘his own glory, and *the glory of the Father*’ (ix. 26).

**ix. 1. And he said unto them.** This verse belongs to the preceding. It is by mistake that it has been made the beginning of a new chapter. The mal-arrangement has been due to taking the words ‘And he said unto them’ as the introduction to a new paragraph. Or it may have been occasioned by the idea that what Jesus said about his ‘coming’ had its fulfilment in the event of the transfiguration.

**taste of death.** That is, experience it: cf. Job xx. 18; Ps. xxxiv. 8; Heb. ii. 9. The announcement recorded in this verse is given in all three Synoptists; most simply in Luke, who says only ‘till they see the kingdom of God’; more precisely in Matthew—‘till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom’; most definitely in Mark—‘till they see the kingdom of God come (i. e. already come) with power.’ This is what *some* of the bystanders are to see in their lifetime. How was this prediction fulfilled? Some say, in the coming of the Spirit and the first triumphs of the Gospel. Others, in the manifestation of the glory of the Son of man in the transfiguration. But the prophetic

2 And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart by themselves: and he was

words seem to point beyond an event so immediate, one indeed that was to take place within a week. In the final Advent at the end of the world, according to others; or in the destruction of Jerusalem and the displacement of the ancient Jewish dispensation. This last interpretation suits sufficiently well both the nature of prophetic discourse (which sees the decisive event in preliminary events of the same kind) and the indication of time.

ix. 2-8. *The Transfiguration.* Cf. Matt. xvii. 1-13; Luke ix. 28-36. This exceptional event in our Lord's ministry is recorded by all three Synoptists, and is referred to distinctly in 2 Pet. i. 16-18. The three evangelical reports give substantially the same account of the incident. They have much in common also in the terms. The resemblance between Matthew and Mark is particularly close, while the language of the third Gospel has more a character of its own. Each of the Evangelists also has something peculiar to himself. Only Matthew, e.g., tells us that the disciples fell on their faces when they heard the voice, and that Jesus came and touched them, and said, 'Arise, and be not afraid.' To Luke alone we owe the mention of the facts that Jesus ascended the mount to *pray*, and that it was when he was *praying* that he became transfigured. The same Evangelist is the only one who notices that Moses and Elijah talked of the Lord's 'decease which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem,' and that 'Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep.' In the description of the garments Mark intensifies the sense of their glistering whiteness by adding the words 'so as no fuller on earth can whiten them.'

**2. after six days.** So also in Matthew. But in Luke it is 'about eight days'—a less precise statement, as is indicated by the 'about,' and one not inconsistent with the other.

**Peter, and James, and John.** The same select witnesses as were with him in the death-chamber in the house of Jairus.

**a high mountain.** The 'holy mount': cf. 2 Pet. i. 18. Luke says simply 'the mountain.' Ancient tradition in one form identifies this mountain with the Mount of Olives. But the description 'high' could not apply to that; and the narratives point to a different part of the Holy Land, as they shew Jesus to have been in Galilee both before and after the event. A much more important tradition makes it Mount Tabor. This meets some of the conditions of the case; and being followed by Cyril of Jerusalem, Jerome, and other ancient authorities, it became widely

transfigured before them: and his garments became 3 glistening, exceeding white; so as no fuller on earth can whiten them. And there appeared unto them 4

accepted. Tabor is of some height (about 1,700 or 1,800 ft.); it has a commanding position, rising as it does out of the plain of Esdrælon; and it is not at an impossible distance from the locality in which Jesus last was. But there are serious objections to it. It is not likely that Jesus could have found on it the solitude he sought; for there appears to have been at this time a fortified town or village on it (*Josephus, Jew. War*, iv. 1. 8, ii. 20. 6; *Antiq.*, xiv. 6. 3). And further we see that Jesus was last in the parts about Cæsarea Philippi in the far north, and we learn that after the Transfiguration he travelled through Galilee to Capernaum (*Mark ix. 30, 33; Matt. xvii. 22, 24*). But it is not probable that he should have gone all the way from Cæsarea Philippi to Tabor, passing Capernaum there and making his way back to that city after the event. Hence the best scholars now conclude in favour of Mount Hermon—a ‘high mountain’ indeed, for it rises over 9,000 ft.; near enough to Cæsarea Philippi to be easily reached from thence in a few days; and in all respects a fit scene for such an event.

**transfigured.** The change came over him when he was *praying* (*Luke ix. 29*); as it was also when he was praying that the heavens opened, and the Holy Ghost descended on him at his baptism (*Luke iii. 21*). The change is described most definitely by Matthew and Mark as a ‘transformation’ (*Luke* says simply ‘the fashion of his countenance was *altered*’) or a change to the effect that he was ‘transfigured,’ as all the English versions from Wycliffe’s have agreed to render it. The O. T. has its parallel case in the shining of the face of Moses which was due to his speaking with the Lord on the Mount (*Exod. xxxiv. 29*). The face of Stephen was seen ‘as it had been the face of an angel’ (*Acts vi. 15*). And in instances less exalted there is at times a transfiguration of the countenance which is the effect of rapt communion with God.

**3. glistening:** the word does not occur again in the N. T., but elsewhere it is used of the ‘flashing of burnished brass or gold’ (*1 Esdras viii. 56; 2 Esdras viii. 27*) as Dr. Swete notices, ‘or steel (*Nahum iii. 3*), or of sunlight (*1 Macc. vi. 39*).’

**exceeding white.** The A. V. adds ‘as snow,’ appropriate to the appearance of Hermon, and perhaps suggested by it, but without sufficient documentary authority.

**no fuller on earth can whiten them.** Mark describes only the appearance of the garments, and this touch is peculiar to him. Matthew tells us that ‘his garments became white as the light,’

Elijah with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.  
 5 And Peter answereth and saith to Jesus, Rabbi, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for  
 6 Elijah. For he wist not what to answer; for they  
 7 became sore afraid. And there came a cloud over-

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but notices also the change upon the person—‘his face did shine as the sun.’

**4. Elijah with Moses.** Representatives of the two great stages of O. T. revelation, Prophecy and the Law. It was expected that Elijah was to come, but here another has come with him—Moses, of whose return the prophets said nothing. That is what surprised Peter, and through Peter’s recollections it has left its impression on Mark’s narrative.

**talking with Jesus.** Luke gives the subject (ix. 31). It was the event of which Jesus had just begun to speak openly.

**5. Peter answereth.** To the occasion, that is to say, or to words left unuttered or at least unrecorded. Peter is the spokesman in all three Synoptists. From Luke we gather that Peter broke in with his proposal that they should stay on just when Elijah and Moses were withdrawing (ix. 33).

**Rabbi.** Mark gives the original Aramaic address; for which Matthew gives ‘Lord,’ and Luke a word of his own, ‘Master,’ different from both and not conveying so definitely the idea of teacher.

**three tabernacles,** or ‘booths.’ These were made by intertwining the branches of trees, and on the slopes of Hermon there would be brushwood enough for such a purpose. Perhaps Peter had in mind the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. xxiii. 40, &c.): ‘He would anticipate it by a week spent on this leafy height in the presence of the three greatest masters of Israel’ (Swete). He spoke vaguely, with no very clear ideas beyond this, that it was ‘good’ for him and his brethren to be where they were, and ‘good’ for them to remain in the presence of these three.

**6. he wist not what to answer.** The same is said of the chosen three in the Agony of the Garden (xiv. 40). A scene so wholly outside his experience, so overwhelming with its unwonted glory and mystery, dazed Peter. He spoke he knew not what, overcome by the terror, in which also James and John shared—‘for they became sore afraid.’

**7. there came a cloud.** Instead of an answer to Peter’s well-meant but only half-coherent proposal, a cloud, ‘a bright cloud’ (Matt. xvii. 5), swept down upon the scene and overshadowed them all—not merely Jesus, and Elijah and Moses, but the disciples

shadowing them: and there came a voice out of the cloud, This is my beloved Son: hear ye him. And suddenly looking round about, they saw no one any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

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also; for 'they feared,' Luke tells us, 'as they entered into the cloud' (ix. 34). The cloud came while the words were yet on Peter's lips—'while he was yet speaking' (Matt. xvii. 5), 'while he said these things' (Luke ix. 34). The *overshadowing* cloud recalls the cloud that 'covered the tent of meeting,' by reason of which Moses was 'not able to enter' (Exod. xl. 34, 35). Mention is made also of the 'cloud' in the case of the Ascension (Acts i. 9), and of the 'clouds' in the announcement of the Second Coming (Mark xiii. 26, xiv. 62; Rev. i. 7). In the O. T. the 'cloud' is associated with special manifestations of God, as in the wilderness (Exod. xvi. 10, xix. 9, 16, xxiv. 15; Lev. xvi. 2; Num. xi. 25), and at the dedication of the Temple (1 Kings viii. 10). The later Jewish writings indicate that there was a belief that it was to reappear in the time of the Messiah (2 Macc. ii. 8).

**a voice out of the cloud.** The voice was heard also at the Baptism of Jesus. There it was meant for Jesus himself; here it is addressed to the disciples. All three Synoptists report the addition—'hear ye him.' This 'hear ye him' spoke of a new duty and a new relation. The men of the old Israel had listened to Moses and the Prophets. Those who were to be the beginning of the new Israel were to listen to Christ, the final utterer of God's mind (Heb. i. 1). In 2 Peter the voice is mentioned, and is described as having come 'from the excellent glory,' and to have been 'heard come out of heaven' by the Apostles (i. 17, 18). Matthew adds that the disciples 'fell on their face, and were sore afraid' (xvii. 6). The terrors already kindled by the scene generally, and especially by the entering into the cloud, were brought to their height by the voice breaking out of the cloud.

**8. suddenly looking round about, they saw no one.** The awful scene ended as unexpectedly as it had begun. All vanished as at a touch, and only Jesus as they had known him was seen. It was only when Jesus touched them as they lay prostrate and stupefied with terror, and spoke his own word of cheer, that they were relieved of their fears and lifted up their eyes again. The discovery was immediately made that the vision was gone, and things were again as they had been (Matt. xvii. 7, 8).

The report of this incident, resting upon the coincident testimony of three narratives, each with its own marks of independence, and at least one of them reproducing the recollections of an eye-witness, cannot be explained away as an imaginative version of merely

9 And as they were coming down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, save when the Son of man should

natural phenomena, or as the highly-coloured record of mistaken impressions. Least of all can it be explained away as a mythical growth. For the idea of a suffering, dying Messiah was abhorrent to the Jew, and there was nothing in the popular Jewish conception of the great expected King that could form the nucleus on which the mythological faculty might work till it produced a story like this, having the 'decease' of Jesus as its heart. The event meant much for Jesus himself. This change was not the object with which he ascended the mountain, nor is anything said to suggest that he looked for it. His object was to pray, and thereby to prepare himself at this crisis of his ministry for the Passion that was before him. The glory came to him when he was so engaged, as angelic help came to him in the Temptation and in the Agony; and it strengthened him for his course. But the event meant much also for the Apostles. They, too, had reached a crisis in their calling. They had made their confession of their faith, and they had been staggered by the announcement of his way of suffering. They did not see all that happened on the mount; for Luke tells us that they were 'heavy with sleep,' and that it was only 'when they were fully awake' that 'they saw his glory.' But what they did see and hear was an important element in their training. They had a glimpse at least of the glory that was within and behind the lowness of the Master; and it gave them the assurance, in after years of trial and separation, that they 'did not follow cunningly devised fables' when they looked for 'the power and coming' of Christ, and made the same known to others (a Pet. i. 16).

*ix. 9-13. Questions regarding the resurrection of the dead and the coming of Elijah:* cf. Matt. xvii. 9-13. Of what passed as Jesus and the three were on their way down from the mountain Luke tells us nothing. He simply remarks that these witnesses of the Transfiguration 'held their peace, and told no man in those days any of the things which they had seen' (Luke ix. 36).

**9. as they were coming down.** From Luke's mention of what took place 'next day' (ix. 37) we may infer that the descent took place the day after the Transfiguration, and early in the day.

**charged them.** The injunction to silence which had been laid on others who would have proclaimed his miracles is now laid upon the chosen three with regard to the mighty work done on himself. But in this case there is a limit—till he is risen. Of that event, his Resurrection, these men were to be witnesses and preachers.

have risen again from the dead. And they kept the 10 saying, questioning among themselves what the rising again from the dead should mean. And they asked 11 him, saying, The scribes say that Elijah must first come. And he said unto them, Elijah indeed cometh 12 first, and restoreth all things: and how is it written of the Son of man, that he should suffer many things and

**10. kept the saying.** That is, they did not neglect this prohibition, but held fast to it. So Luke says 'they held their peace.'

**questioning among themselves.** Though they were faithful to Christ's charge and told no man, they had discussions among themselves about the rising of the dead. These could scarcely be about a resurrection of the dead generally; for the doctrine of a resurrection was nothing unfamiliar, being one of the chief tenets of the great Pharisaic party. They must have been about the strange idea of a resurrection in the case of Jesus, implying unwelcome and perplexing thoughts of the death of their Messiah.

**11. they asked him.** They had a further difficulty, which was suggested probably by the appearance of Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration. And on this they interrogate Jesus. The scribes (sounding no doubt on Mal. iii. 1, iv. 5) taught them that Elijah was to come before the Messiah himself. But here was an appearance of Elijah *after* the Messiah's advent, and furthermore Jesus had charged them to say nothing of it. What were they to make of this?

**12. Elijah indeed cometh first.** Jesus replies that it is true indeed as the scribes said, but that they did not give the whole truth. Elijah was to come before the Messiah; and he was to 'restore all things,' that is to say, to initiate a great moral renovation of Israel which would prepare the way for Messiah (Mal. iii. 2-4, iv. 6). But there was more in their Scriptures than that. They spoke not only of the prophet who was to precede Messiah, but also of suffering and rejection as destined for Messiah himself.

*The title 'the Son of Man.'* The N. T. says nothing of the origin of this great title, nor does it explain its meaning. There is much diversity of opinion, therefore, on the subject, and it cannot be said that, even after all the patient inquiry that has been expended on it, all things are clear.

With respect to the *use* of the term, it is enough to say that there is a marked difference in this matter between the O. T. and the N. T. In the O. T. the phrase 'son of man' is often simply a synonym for *man*—a member of the human family, and with

special reference to the frailty and dependence of man (*Num. xxiii. 19; Job xxv. 6, xxxv. 8; Ps. cxliv. 3; Isa. li. 12, &c.*). But in the prophecy of Ezekiel it is used over ninety times as the name by which the prophet is addressed. Also in the Book of Daniel it appears in the description of the ‘one like unto a son of man’ who receives ‘dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him’ (*vii. 13, 14*). In the N. T., again, its use is singular and of great interest. It is our Lord’s chosen designation of himself. With the exception of one occurrence in *Acts* (*vii. 56*), the quotation in *Heb. ii. 6*, and perhaps two passages in the *Apocalypse* (*Rev. i. 13, xiv. 14*) it is found only in the Gospels; and, with the exception of Stephen’s case in the passage in *Acts*, and these possible occurrences in the visions of John (*Rev. i. 13, xiv. 14*), it is never used directly of Christ but by himself. It occurs some eighty times in the Gospels, representing at least forty distinct occasions. Its application also is varied. Sometimes it is used with special reference to our Lord’s life or ministry on earth, particularly his humiliation, poverty, or sufferings; at other times with special regard to his exaltation, his glory, his return. Sometimes it is used in connexion with prerogatives exercised then on earth—such as, lordship over the sabbath, the forgiveness of sins; at other times in connexion with the prerogative of judgement in the future.

As to its origin, it appears sufficiently clear that the title goes back to the figure of the ‘one like unto a son of man’ seen in the Danielic vision, and that is the figure of a man above the ordinary human measure—a glorious being, the sovereign of an everlasting and universal dominion. This figure, which appears to have originally represented the people of Israel in their ideal character and victorious destiny, was understood at a very early period to betoken the Messiah. Further, in looking for the origin of the title, regard must be had to the fact that in the non-canonical Jewish writings, especially in that section of the *Book of Enoch* which is known as the ‘Parables’ or ‘Similitudes,’ the ‘Son of Man’ is a designation of the Messiah, and of the Messiah in the character of a superhuman being, seated on the throne beside God ‘the Head of Days,’ and acting as judge of men. But in addition to this the title sounds also on the representation of the ‘Son of Man’ in *Ps. viii.*, and probably in the enlargement of its meaning it owed something to the picture of the suffering servant of the Lord in *Isaiah*.

As regards its *meaning*, one of the questions specially discussed is whether it is a Messianic title in the proper sense, distinctly and definitely so, used by our Lord himself and understood by others as a name for the Messiah. The way in which the name is received on significant occasions in the N. T. (e. g. *John xii. 34*); the fact that our Lord disclosed his Messiahship only gradually; and the further circumstance that the title occurs repeatedly before Peter

be set at nought? But I say unto you, that Elijah 13 is come, and they have also done unto him whatsoever they listed, even as it is written of him.

And when they came to the disciples, they saw a great 14

and the Apostles made their great confession that Jesus was the Christ, point to the conclusion that it was not a current and well-understood Messianic name, at least not one readily taken in that sense by the people generally, and that it was used by our Lord during his Galilean ministry to veil rather than to reveal his Messianic claims, and to present him in another character. It is the select name by which he expresses the uniqueness of his personality in respect of his peculiar relation to men. On the one hand it identifies him with us, setting him before us as true man, and placing him on the plane of our common humanity. On the other hand it marks him off as different from us, not 'a son of man' simply, but '*the Son of Man*,' beside whom there is none else—one in whom manhood is seen in its realized ideal, the perfect, representative man, like us and with us in all normal human qualities, but also above us and apart from us in the completeness of his humanity and in the prerogative and authority belonging to one in a unique relation to God as well as to us.

**13. Elijah is come.** And not only is it that the coming of Elijah was foretold. It has taken place (in the case of the Baptist), and who has observed it? His fate has been to have had 'done unto him whatever men listed'—an indirect but expressive reference to Herod's cruel and arbitrary action. So the Forerunner has come and has been killed. What of the Messiah himself, therefore, and the things he shall suffer at the hands of men?

**as it is written of him.** This refers to what Jesus has just said of the fate of the second Elijah. The three Apostles understood that Jesus identified Elijah with John, and Matthew expressly tells us that they did (xvii. 13). On an earlier occasion indeed Jesus had pointed to this identification (Matt. xi. 14). But where is it 'written' that Elijah was to suffer? It is not enough to say that Jesus spoke with reference simply to the statements made in the O. T. on the sufferings of prophets generally. For the 'of him' makes it clear that the particular case of Elijah is in view. What is meant, therefore, must be what is written in the O. T. regarding the treatment of Elijah by Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kings xix). This was typical of the treatment of John by Herod and Herodias.

ix. 14-29. *Healing of the Demonic boy*: cf. Matt. xvii. 14-20; Luke ix. 37-43. Mark's narrative is most graphic and circumstantial. The narratives of Matthew and Luke are both condensed, the former shewing special signs of compression. Yet both

multitude about them, and scribes questioning with them.

**15** And straightway all the multitude, when they saw him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him.

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Matthew and Luke give some particulars not mentioned by Mark.

**14. came to the disciples.** They had returned now to the place and the company they had left for the time. None of the Apostles had remained at the foot of the mountain. Jesus and the three found those from whom they had parted now in the midst of a crowd of people, and engaged in a discussion with certain scribes. These scribes, who belonged probably to some synagogues in the district, seized an opportunity which presented itself for damaging the disciples of Jesus in the eyes of the public.

**questioning with them.** The incident of the discussion with the scribes is omitted both by Matthew and by Luke. Mark not only gives it, but indicates its occasion and its subject. The matter at issue was the failure of the disciples to effect a certain cure. This gave the scribes their opportunity to throw doubt on 'the authority over unclean spirits' (vi. 7) which Jesus was said to have given them. Their failure in this case may well have been a perplexity to the disciples themselves, raising questions in their minds and making it difficult for them to answer the scribes.

**15. straightway all the multitude.** As if with one impulse the crowd turned from the scribes to Jesus. It is not said that the scribes themselves shewed any such interest in his appearance.

**greatly amazed:** the word is very strong, and is found only in Mark. He uses it when he tells us that Jesus was 'greatly amazed' in his Agony (xiv. 33), and again when he reports how the women were 'amazed' when they entered the Lord's tomb (xvi. 5, 6). The adjective connected with the verb occurs also in the description of the 'amazement' of the people when they saw the lame man walking and leaping (Acts iii. 10). What caused the 'amazement' of the multitude on this occasion? The lingering radiance left by the transfiguration on the face of Jesus, say some. They point to the analogy of the glory on the face of Moses when he came down from the Mount of Vision and Communion (Exod. xxxiv. 29, &c.). But there is nothing in the narrative to suggest that the countenance of Jesus was changed in any way; and while the effect of the sight in the case of Moses was that Aaron and the people were 'afraid to come nigh him' (Exod. xxxiv. 30), in this case the effect was that the people ran to Jesus and saluted him. The cause was rather the suddenness and opportuneness of his appearance. The multitude had a case before them in which the healing power of the disciples had come to nothing, and Jesus himself was far away. When they were disconcerted by it and the

And he asked them, What question ye with them? 16  
 And one of the multitude answered him, Master, I 17  
 brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; and wheresoever it taketh him, it dasheth him down: 18

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disciples themselves were baffled, the Master, whom they thought to be out of reach to help them, unexpectedly comes upon the scene. All thoughts of the scribes and their objections, the disciples and their discomfiture, are lost in the sense of startled, glad surprise, and they run to welcome him.

**16. he asked them.** He took no notice of the scribes, but turned to the people, seeing they had some difficult matter in hand, and asking them what it was.

**What question ye with them?** That is, with the disciples, not with the scribes. The multitude had turned with their questions to the disciples when they heard the scribes putting their difficulties.

**17. one of the multitude answered.** The reply to the interrogation of Jesus comes from an individual in the crowd, and from the one who could least keep silent. Matthew tells us how the man came to Jesus, 'kneeling to him' and addressing him as 'Lord' (xvii. 14, 15). Luke, taking the incident perhaps in its first stage, puts it as if the man had spoken from within the crowd—'a man from the multitude cried' (ix. 38).

**Master.** Here again in the sense of *Teacher*.

**I brought unto thee my son.** From this we infer that the father had come expecting to find Jesus himself there, but had had to be content with the disciples. Matthew refers only to the application to the disciples (xvii. 16). Luke tells us that the boy was the man's 'only child' (ix. 38).

**a dumb spirit.** He could cry out (Luke ix. 39), but could not utter articulate sounds. It appears from our Lord's word that the unclean spirit was also deaf (ix. 25). Cf. the case in Decapolis (vii. 32). What is said of the spirit describes what is the condition of the afflicted boy.

**18. wheresoever it taketh him.** The boy was the victim of fits, which were of extreme violence, frequent occurrence ('oft-times,' ix. 22), and of a kind that might come upon him without warning anywhere. They were the convulsive, recurrent, perhaps periodical seizures of an epileptic. So Matthew represents the father as saying—'he is epileptic' (xvii. 15).

**dasheth him down.** The combined accounts of the three Synoptists give a harrowing picture of the effects of these seizures—the sudden scream ('he suddenly crieth out,' Luke ix. 39), the hurling of the sufferer on the ground, the tearing convulsions, the foaming at the mouth, the wallowing, the grinding

and he foameth, and grindeth his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should  
 19 cast it out; and they were not able. And he answereth them and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I bear with you? bring  
 20 him unto me. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him grievously; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed  
 21 foaming. And he asked his father, How long time is it since this hath come unto him? And he said,  
 22 From a child. And oft-times it hath cast him both into the fire and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do anything, have compassion on

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of the teeth, the pining, wasting form. The word used for this last-mentioned effect is the one used of the *withering* of the hand of the man in the synagogue (iii. 1), of the plant that had no root (iv. 6), of the grass (Jas. i. 11), and of the *drying up* of the water of the Euphrates (Rev. xvi. 12).

**I speak to thy disciples.** In the belief that they had the power, having perhaps seen it used to good effect (vi. 12). So that he too would be surprised at the failure.

**21. he asked his father.** The interesting details given from this point on to the first half of verse 25 are peculiar to Mark. They shew at how early a stage in the boy's life ('from a child,' from the time when he was quite a little boy) these seizures began, how frequent they were, and how dreadful—taking in point of fact, as the casting 'into the fire and into the waters' indicates, the form of suicidal frenzy. They shew also how the father's faith had been tried, and how nevertheless it could rise to the word of Jesus.

**22. if thou canst do anything.** The leper had said, 'If thou wilt, thou canst' (i. 40). But this man's confidence in the Healer had suffered the shock given it by the unexpected powerlessness of the disciples of the Healer.

**23. If thou canst!** This is a repetition. Jesus takes up the father's word and utters it again with a touch of compassionate rebuke; while he also corrects it by declaring how the question of the *ability* turns upon the question of the *faith*. 'If thou canst, thou sayest: but it is to the believer that all becomes possible.' So the question of the possibility of healing for the son is turned from what is in Jesus to what is in the father himself.

us, and help us. And Jesus said unto him, If thou 23 canst! All things are possible to him that believeth. Straightway the father of the child cried out, and said, 24 I believe; help thou mine unbelief. And when Jesus 25 saw that a multitude came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I command thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And having cried out, and 26 torn him much, he came out: and *the child* became as one dead; insomuch that the more part said, He is

**24. Straightway the father of the child cried out.** The father understands how the Master's word throws him back in the first instance upon himself, and upon the spiritual condition on his side for the efficient exercise of the power on the side of Jesus. Instantly he rises to a higher faith—a faith, too, which can declare itself openly, and at the same time recognizes its infirmity and petitions for help in it. The father's faith is accepted, as in the case of the Syro-Phoenician woman, for the faith which the sufferer is not in a position to offer.

**help thou mine unbelief.** The help which is needed, he sees, is first for himself—for the faith which had been like to fail in him, for the unbelief into which he had been driven. Those who best believe best know the unbelief that lurks in their hearts. ‘There is no contradiction here, and scarcely even paradox, but only deep sincerity in the beginnings of faith, joined with the eagerness of strong desire for a special gift’ (Clarke).

**25. when Jesus saw that a multitude came running together.** In the father's faith the condition on which the application of the healing power was suspended is now made good. There is no reason for further delay. There is an obvious reason for speedy action. For the crowd is becoming restless and excited. Jesus sees this, and at once speaks the word of expulsion for the unclean spirit and deliverance for the boy. He speaks it in his own name, with emphasis on the *I*—‘*I* command thee.’

**26. torn him much.** The command had been uttered in a tone of particular authority and in very definite terms—‘come out of him, and enter no more into him.’ The case required this, for it was one of extraordinary severity. This was seen in its very last stage. Convulsions seized the boy again ere he obtained relief—convulsions so violent and protracted that they left him utterly exhausted, and as if the life had gone out of him. Most who saw him took him indeed for dead.

27 dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and raised  
 28 him up; and he arose. And when he was come into  
 the house, his disciples asked him privately, *saying*, We  
 29 could not cast it out. And he said unto them, This  
 kind can come out by nothing, save by prayer.

30 And they went forth from thence, and passed through  
 Galilee; and he would not that any man should know

**27. took him by the hand.** So giving him matter of fact help  
 in his collapse and raising him out of it; as he did in the two  
 previous cases of Peter's wife's mother (i. 31) and the daughter  
 of Jairus (v. 41). And the cure was complete—the sufferer who  
 lay on the ground still and helpless as a corpse arose, and, as  
 Matthew tells us, 'the boy was cured from that hour' (xvii. 18).  
 Luke adds that Jesus 'gave him back to his father' (ix. 42).

**28. his disciples asked him privately.** Luke alone records  
 the impression produced on the people by this miracle. They  
 recognized the hand of God in it—'they were all astonished at  
 the majesty of God' (ix. 43). Matthew and Mark notice what  
 happened with the disciples themselves. The work being finished,  
 Jesus leaves the excitable crowd and goes indoors. When the  
 Twelve are in private with him, the nine ask him, as it was  
 natural for them to do, why they had failed.

**29. by nothing, save by prayer.** The A. V. adds 'and fasting.'  
 But the shorter reading of the R. V. is the better supported.  
 With 'this kind,' that is to say, this kind of demons, such  
 aggravated cases of possession, nothing availed but prayer. The  
 cause of the inability of the disciples, therefore, was in themselves.  
 Matthew reports Jesus to have told them in explicit terms that it  
 was because of their 'little faith.' They had been trusting in their  
 commission, and had thought but little of the moral conditions,  
 those of prayer and faith, on which the efficiency of their gift  
 depended.

ix. 30-32. *Second open Announcement of the Passion and the Resurrection.* Cf. Matt. xvii. 22, 23; Luke ix. 43-45.

**30. from thence.** That is, from the foot of Hermon and the  
 far north.

**through Galilee.** Thus by the west side of Jordan. On their  
 way to Cæsarea Philippi and the north they may have come by  
 the east side of the river, or they may have kept by the west side  
 so far and have crossed at a point below the waters of Merom.  
 The route which they took now was probably 'by Dan across the  
 slopes of Lebanon, thus escaping the publicity of the ordinary  
 high roads, and securing secrecy and seclusion' (Maclear).

it. For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, <sup>31</sup> The Son of man is delivered up into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and when he is killed, after three days he shall rise again. But they under- <sup>32</sup> stood not the saying, and were afraid to ask him.

And they came to Capernaum: and when he was <sup>33</sup> in the house he asked them, What were ye reasoning in the way? But they held their peace: for they had <sup>34</sup>

**31. taught his disciples.** Not on a single occasion, but repeatedly during the course of the journey. This teaching and training of the Twelve made his work then, and his chief subject was his Death and Resurrection. Luke adds that Jesus bade them let his words on these great topics sink into their ears (ix. 44).

**delivered up.** So too, in Matthew. A still clearer announcement than the former.

**32. afraid to ask him.** So, too, in Luke. Matthew says they were 'exceeding sorry' (xvii. 23). They had, therefore, some indistinct and painful sense of what he meant, but no proper comprehension of it; and they refrained from asking him. The awe of his words made them shrink from a closer acquaintance with their purport. They had seen also how Jesus could rebuke even Peter when he spoke rash words on the former occasion (Mark viii. 33).

**ix. 33-37. Discussions about Precedence:** cf. Matt. xviii. 1-5; Luke ix. 46-48. Immediately before this, Matthew, and he alone, introduces the narrative of the half-shekel in the mouth of the fish.

**33. to Capernaum.** Here he had begun his Galilean ministry, and here, so far as the Gospels shew, he closed it. After his Resurrection he may have been twice at least in the neighbourhood (Matt. xxviii. 16; John xxi. 1). But there is no reference to his being in the town itself from the time of this return onwards. His way now was to be to the south.

**in the house.** Perhaps Simon's house, or Levi's (i. 29, ii. 15).

**asked them.** He had observed them disputing on the way, and perhaps had overheard them in part.

**34. held their peace.** Realizing now the impropriety of their conduct. Mark and Luke refer to the discussion as if it did not go beyond the disciples themselves. Matthew tells us that the disciples, perhaps at a further point in our Lord's address, came to Jesus with the question—'Who then is greatest in the kingdom

disputed one with another in the way, who *was* the greatest. And he sat down, and called the twelve; and he saith unto them, If any man would be first, he shall be last of all, and minister of all. And he took a little child, and set him in the midst of them: and taking him in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such little children in my

of heaven ?' (xviii. 1). The discussion probably had its occasion in the selection of the three to be the companions of their Master on the mount. Did this mean that these three were greater than the rest of them? Were there to be such distinctions and preferences in the kingdom of the Messiah?

**35. sat down.** As a Jewish Rabbi did when he was about to teach.

**the twelve.** The entire Apostolic band. All had need to learn what true greatness was, and how it was to be attained in the new kingdom Jesus founded. The lesson was repeated on a later occasion (Matt. xxiii. 8, &c.; Luke xxii. 24, &c.).

**If any man would be first.** The lesson is given first in the form of deliberate, oral statement. The condition of greatness in his kingdom is the spiritual condition of humility—a humility that glories in service, the service not of a class but of all.

**36. took a little child.** The verbal lesson is followed up by an object-lesson which none could mistake. A child is looking on or amusing himself near by. He is unnamed. There is a tradition, but one of small value, that he was the Ignatius who grew up to be the famous bishop and martyr. It is suggested that he may have been Peter's child (cf. i. 30). Jesus calls the little one (Matt. xviii. 2) as he had called the disciples, and takes him beside himself ('by his side,' says Luke, ix. 47), and sets him in the heart of the company of the Twelve, and then lifts him up into his arms, and so repeats his lesson. Mark alone records the taking of the child into his arms. Matthew gives the words which he spoke on the occasion at greater length (xviii. 3, &c.). Jesus had himself been taken as a babe into the arms of the aged Simeon (Luke ii. 28).

**37. receive one of such little children.** This child was the representative of the class of little children, and a type also of the order of true disciples—simple, trustful, unassuming.

**in my name:** *lit.* 'on my name,' that is, 'on the ground of what I am,' 'out of regard for me.' The 'name' is the sum of what a man is known to be and to do. The 'name of Christ' is all that he is revealed to be in dignity, character, authority, and deed.

name, receiveth me: and whosoever receiveth me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

John said unto him, Master, we saw one casting <sup>38</sup> out devils in thy name: and we forbade him, because he followed not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: <sup>39</sup>

**receiveth . . . him that sent me.** True greatness is found not in the assertion of self above others, but in lowly self-denying service for others. The note of true discipleship is the possession of the spirit of a child, which is the spirit of Christ. To recognize this spirit and receive the humble disciple in whom it is seen, is to recognize and receive Christ himself. Nor is this the end of all. So to receive Christ is to receive God Himself. For Christ is in the world, not of himself, but as sent by God and representing God.

ix. 38-40. *John's report of a case of interference with the work of one outside the circle of disciples: cf. Luke ix. 49, 50.*

**38. John said.** John seldom appears in any prominent way in the Synoptical narratives, and only on this one occasion is he spokesman. He is coupled with James in the ambitious request for the chief places in the kingdom (x. 35), and with Peter and James and Andrew in the question about the time of the end (xiii. 3).

**we saw one casting out devils** ('demons') **in thy name.** The Master's word just uttered about receiving one *in his name* recalls an incident in the work of the disciples, and John is not the man to keep it back. Where or when the incident took place is not told. Probably it was during the mission in Northern Galilee on which they had already reported.

**we forbade him:** or rather, 'tried to forbid him.' They had seen one, who had not the right that comes from discipleship and the possession of a commission, taking a liberty, as they judged it, with the name of Jesus in the work of exorcism, and they tried to stop him. John is uneasy about this. Were they right in so acting? Was this in accordance with the Master's mind? Jesus had spoken of doing something *in his name*, but it was receiving, not rejecting.

**because he followed not us.** But Luke says, 'because he followeth not *with us*' (ix. 49). They had a reason for their action, and John states it. It was the fact that the man was not one of themselves, a fellow disciple. The narrative suggests, especially in Christ's reply, that the man, though he had not joined the circle of professed disciples, acted in sincerity and believed in some measure in Jesus and the power of his name.

**39. Forbid him not.** The answer of Jesus to the implied

for there is no man which shall do a mighty work in my name, and be able quickly to speak evil of me.

**40, 41** For he that is not against us is for us. For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink, because ye are Christ's, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise

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question of John was direct and definite. It meant that they had erred by excess of zeal. To such a man their attitude had best been one of neutrality, or sufferance, not of positive repudiation. Compare the case of Joshua and the reply of Moses (*Num. xi. 28, 29*).

**speak evil of me.** Jesus, too, gives his reason. There was nothing to fear from leaving such a case alone. A man who, though yet outside, had faith enough in the power of the name of Jesus to think of using it in casting out demons, was not likely to prove an enemy. Rather might he be gained as a friend.

**40. For he that is not against us is for us.** On another occasion, but also in connexion with a case of possession, Jesus said—‘He that is not with me is against me’ (*Matt. xii. 30*). The cases are different, and the two sayings are in principle the same. It is the simple principle that we cannot be for and against, friend and foe, at the same time. One cannot be against Christ if he has faith, however imperfect, in his name. One cannot be the friend of Christ if he has so little faith in him as to think that his works are works of Satan. The one saying does not negative the other, but supplements it. The one deals with our conduct towards others, of whose acts we are partial judges; the other with our inner attitude to Christ.

*ix. 41-50. Resumption of our Lord's teaching on discipleship. The question of offences.* Cf. *Matt. xviii. 6-9; Luke xvii. 1, 2.*

**41. because ye are Christ's.** The sentence means literally, as it is given in the margin of the R. V., ‘in name that ye are Christ's,’ that is, on the ground that ye belong to Christ. Hence the great Pauline phrase (*1 Cor. iii. 23; 2 Cor. x. 7; cf. also Rom. viii. 9; 1 Cor. i. 12*). At this point the teaching, which had been broken in upon by John's report, is resumed. The subject remains the same, and Jesus proceeds to speak first of the worth of the smallest service rendered to a disciple in the spirit of a disciple. So simple an act as the giving of a cup of cold water—a thing that no one in these hot lands would grudge to do—if done for Christ's sake, has a certain and enduring reward. The use of the official term ‘Christ’ in place of ‘the Son of man,’ is to be noticed here. The time is coming when the Messianic claims of Jesus are to be made openly and definitely.

lose his reward. And whosoever shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it were better for him if a great millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. And if thy hand cause thee to stumble, cut it off: it is good for thee to enter into life maimed, rather than having thy two hands to go into hell, into the un-

**42. cause . . . to stumble.** On the other hand an injury (it is a spiritual injury that is in view) done to a disciple, however lowly, brings heavy penalty to the wrongdoer. The infirm ones, who can be so easily hurt, ought to have special consideration. On this principle Jesus himself acted, even in the case of those outside (cf. Matt. xvii. 27). This principle of patient regard for the weak has a large place also both in the teaching and in the practice of Paul (Rom. xiv. 21; 1 Cor. viii. 13; 2 Cor. xi. 29).

**better for him if a great millstone.** The word means literally 'an ass-millstone,' that is one turned by an ass. What is meant by this? The ordinary hand-mill, as it may be seen in the East to-day, consisted of two circular stones one above the other, the upper one being the one that did the grinding. It was worked by women, female slaves, and others (Exod. xi. 5; Judges ix. 53). This upper stone was sometimes called the 'ass,' and so some think this is what is in view here. But it is only in classical Greek that the word 'ass' is so used. Hence the reference is to another kind of millstone, the *tāhānet*, which was large enough to require an animal to work it. A strong figure expressing utter loss, a penalty from which there is no escape.

**43. if thy hand cause thee to stumble.** Jesus carries this serious question of offences now from the case of injuries inflicted on others to that of wrongs done to ourselves. Spiritual hurt may come to a man from himself, from some part of his nature which he suffers to become unsound. What he does injuriously or inconsiderately to others may also mean injury to himself. It is his wisdom, therefore, to cut off the occasion at whatever cost and wherever it may lie, whether in hand, in foot, or in eye. In the personal life, too, such is the need for self-sacrifice.

**into life.** Life, that is, in the sense not of mere existence, but the good or joy of life—'life that is life indeed' (1 Tim. vi. 19).

**into hell.** That is, 'into Gehenna.' This word *Gehenna*, though it is not found in the Fourth Gospel, occurs eleven times in the Synoptists. It represents the O. T. *Ge Hinnom*, 'the valley of Hinnom,' 'the valley of the son of Hinnom,' 'the valley of the children of Hinnom' (Neh. xi. 30; Joshua xv. 8, xviii. 16;

45 quenchable fire. And if thy foot cause thee to stumble, cut it off: it is good for thee to enter into life halt, rather than having thy two feet to be cast into hell.  
 47 And if thine eye cause thee to stumble, cast it out: it is good for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast  
 48 into hell; where their worm dieth not, and the fire  
 49 is not quenched. For every one shall be salted with

<sup>a</sup> Chron. xxviii. 3; Jer. vii. 32; <sup>a</sup> Kings xxiii. 10); the name given to a gorge in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem where in ancient times idolatrous Israelites practised the horrid rites of Moloch. The Topheth in it, which was associated with the sacrifices of children, was defiled by Josiah, and the place became a receptacle for the dead bodies of animals and refuse of all kinds. The horrors associated with the name made it a natural figure for the place of future punishment, and that sense it bears in the later Jewish books, the *Book of Enoch* (xxvii. 1), the *Sibylline Oracles* (i. 103), 4 *Esdras* (ii. 29), &c. Our Lord uses it here and elsewhere, in his most solemn utterances, in this sense of the final place or condition of retribution.

**into the unquenchable fire.** Another figure of speech, recalling the closing words of the second Isaiah (lxvi. 24). It is taken perhaps from the fires that burned in the ancient *Ge Hinnom*. The existence of these fires, however, which are alleged to have been kept burning perpetually for the consumption of the offal deposited in the ravine, is not certain. In any case it is the figure of a lasting spiritual penalty. Verses 44, 46, which appear in the A. V., are rightly omitted by the R. V. as being insufficiently attested.

**47. the kingdom of God.** The phrase is used here as an equivalent to the 'life,' which in the previous verses expresses one of the two final issues of our doings with others and with ourselves.

**48. where their worm dieth not.** Yet another strong figure, again recalling Isa. lxvi. 24, and expressing a future, spiritual penalty that does not exhaust itself. It is 'a *figurative* designation' says Meyer, 'of the extremely painful and endless punishments of hell (not merely the terrors of conscience).'

**49. every one shall be salted with fire.** The clause added by the A. V., 'and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt,' has considerable support, but not enough to give it a sure place in the text. This declaration about being salted with fire stands absolutely alone in the Gospels. Its meaning and its particular

fire. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost its saltiness, **50** wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace one with another.

And he arose from thence, and cometh into the **10**

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point here are not easy to grasp. It is introduced in explanation or enforcement of the preceding solemn statement, which inculcates the wisdom of sacrificing hand, foot, or eye rather than risk endless loss. It seems to be connected with the immediately preceding mention of a fire that is not quenched, as if the words had run thus—‘Yes, the *fire*, I say, is not quenched, for it is with *fire* all are to be salted.’ The key to its meaning is found probably in the Levitical regulation which provided that with all oblations salt was to be offered (Lev. ii. 13). Salt was used in connexion with the making of covenants, and the sacrificial salt of the Levitical offerings was the symbol of the covenant-relation between God and Israel. But that covenant had its responsibilities and its retributive side to the faithless, as well as its gracious side to the true. So the disciples of Christ are in a covenant-relation, and there is a test of their attitude to it by which each of them shall be tried. That test is a Divine fire, the fire of the Divine holiness, which has a twofold action, as the covenant-relation has a twofold aspect. In the case of the true it will preserve and purify and bring reward; in the case of the false, who enter into Gehenna, it will burn and bring penalty. Hence the necessity for the practise of the sacrifice of self, that that reward may be gained and this loss escaped.

**50. lost its saltiness.** The sweeping out of salt that has lost its virtue and become useless or hurtful, travellers tell us, is still a common sight in Palestine.

**wherewith will ye season it?** Salt once spoilt can never have its saltiness restored. So if the qualities which make the true disciple—fidelity to his covenant-relation, consideration for the weak, self-abnegation, and the like—are turned to faithlessness and selfishness, what remains of the discipleship, and what can restore the loss?

**Have salt in yourselves.** Be true to your covenant obligations, to all that makes your discipleship.

**and be at peace one with another.** Let this fidelity to your relation to Christ fulfil itself in brotherly relations with one and another. So the words bring us back to the disputing of the disciples (ix. 33) which had been their occasion. Selfish claims for the chief places, wranglings about precedence—such things are not of the spirit of the disciple.

**x. 1-12. Departure from Galilee. Questions of Divorce:** cf. Matt. xix. 1-9. Partial parallels also in Matt. v. 31, 32; Luke

borders of Judæa and beyond Jordan : and multitudes come together unto him again ; and, as he was wont,  
 2 he taught them again. And there came unto him Pharisees, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to  
 3 put away *his* wife ? tempting him. And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you ?  
 4 And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorce-  
 5 ment, and to put her away. But Jesus said unto them, For your hardness of heart he wrote you this command-

xvi. 18. Mark omits (as also does Matthew) a number of events for our knowledge of which we are dependent on John. These include two visits to Jerusalem, at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, and again at the time of the Feast of Dedication (John vii. 14, x. 22) ; the retreat beyond Jordan 'into the place where John was at the first baptizing' (John x. 40) ; the visit to Bethany and the raising of Lazarus (John xi. 1-46) ; the counsel of Caiaphas and the withdrawal to Ephraim (John xi. 47-54).

**1. arose from thence.** It was the Lord's final departure from Galilee. Jerusalem was now his goal, but his way took him first to the borders of Judæa and into Peræa. The Fourth Gospel, as we have seen, indicates that before the raising of Lazarus and his final journey to Jerusalem he went into the parts beyond Jordan and did miracles there (John x. 40-42). Multitudes still kept by him, and he taught them.

**2. came unto him Pharisees.** That is, certain members of that class, quick to try him again with entangling questions as he began again to teach publicly.

**put away his wife.** Jesus had already declared himself on the subject of divorce, but before a different audience (Matt. v. 31, 32). These Pharisees put their question 'tempting him,' for a negative reply might bring him into conflict with the Mosaic Law. It might also be turned to account against him with Antipas.

**3. What did Moses command you ?** Jesus turns the point of their question by appealing at once to the authority which they recognized.

**4. bill of divorcement:** see Deut. xxiv. 1-4. The Deuteronomic statement of the grounds on which an act of divorce might proceed was differently interpreted by the Rabbis, the school of Shammai and the school of Hillel being sharply divided on the subject. The Pharisees here say nothing of the *reasons* to justify an act of divorce, but refer only to the clause in the Law allowing it.

**5. For your hardness of heart he wrote you this com-**

ment. But from the beginning of the creation, Male 6 and female made he them. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the twain shall become one flesh: so that they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. And in the house the disciples asked him again of this matter. And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery

**mandment.** It is not meant that the Mosaic Law enjoined divorce or encouraged it, but only that it permitted it and controlled it. The ‘commandment’ here is the *regulation* referred to, and its object was to check abuse and protect the wife. The Deuteronomic Law did no more than *permit* divorce, and that for a particular reason—the moral condition of the people it had to deal with—the ‘hardness of their hearts.’

**6. But from the beginning of the creation.** The permissive ordinance of the Mosaic Law was also only provisional and temporary. Divorce was not contemplated in the original relation of man and woman.

**8. the twain shall become one flesh.** The creation of man, male and female, is the ground for the common life of the marriage union, and that life makes husband and wife in such sense one that every other relation, even the filial, must yield to it. The words attributed to the first man in the O. T. record of creation (Gen. ii. 24) are here made his own by the Son of man. In Matthew they are given to the Creator himself (xix. 4-6). Cf. also 1 Cor. vi. 16; Eph. v. 31.

**10. in the house.** The house which was the home of the disciples for the time. Where it was is not stated. Some take them to have been at this time at Ephraim, the city mentioned by John (xi. 54), which is thought by some to have been near Ophrah, not far from Bethel, and to be the same as the modern *Taiyibeh*, some twenty Roman miles north-east of Jerusalem. Others suppose them to have been somewhere in Peræa. Matthew continues the statement on divorce as if the whole had been addressed to the Pharisees. Mark gives the particulars more fully, and records the fact that Jesus was again interrogated on the subject, but now by the disciples themselves when they had returned to their house.

**11. Whosoever shall put away.** The statement is given absolutely here, as if divorce could in no case be followed lawfully by another marriage union. But in Matt. v. 32 and again in xix. 9 one important qualification of the absoluteness of the declaration

- 12 against her : and if she herself shall put away her husband, and marry another, she committeth adultery.
- 13 And they brought unto him little children, that he should touch them : and the disciples rebuked them.
- 14 But when Jesus saw it, he was moved with indignation,

is given. One offence, but only one, is mentioned as justifying divorce, and when divorce proceeds on that ground the marriage of the man who puts away his wife is not unlawful. That is the natural inference from the words. Yet many Roman Catholic divines and not a few Anglicans affirm that, so long as the divorced wife is alive, however guilty she may have been, the husband cannot marry again.

**12. if she herself shall put away her husband.** The wife's right to divorce the husband was not recognized among the Jews. Cases like those of Michal (1 Sam. xxv. 44) and Herodias (Matt. xiv. 3, &c.) were exceptional. Josephus states that while the husband might put away the wife and give her a bill of divorce, it was not lawful for a wife who voluntarily departed from her husband to be married to another, unless her former husband renounced her (*Antiq.* xv. vii. 10). But among the Greeks and Romans the wife had the right of divorce, and Jesus concludes his statement by a reference to the heathen custom. This was the more appropriate because the disciples had been so recently in heathen circles.

**x. 13-16. Incident of the blessing of children :** cf. Matt. xix. 13-15; Luke xviii. 15-17. Each of the three narratives has something distinctive.

**13. little children.** The word used by Mark is applicable to children of twelve years of age (Mark v. 39, 42) and to infants eight days old (Gen. xvii. 12). Luke uses a word more definitely applicable to babes and very young children (Luke xviii. 15; cf. Luke ii. 12, 16; 2 Tim. iii. 15). The children, therefore, were of different ages, babes in arms and little ones somewhat grown, but yet young enough to need the mother's care.

**touch them.** Matthew puts it 'that he should lay his hands on them, and pray' (xix. 13). The *touch*, with reference to the power they believed to be in him (cf. the case of the woman with the issue of blood); *the laying on of hands*, with reference to the benediction which the ruler of a synagogue was wont to pronounce. Cf. the case of Israel blessing Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen. xlvi. 14).

**rebuked them:** in mistaken concern for the Master's dignity or ease.

**14. moved with indignation.** *Wrath* together with grief is ascribed to Jesus in Mark iii. 5. This is the only occasion on

and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not 15 receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein. And he took them in his 16 arms, and blessed them, laying his hands upon them.

And as he was going forth into the way, there ran 17

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which the expressive word selected here for *indignation* is used of him. It is the word that describes the *indignation* or sore displeasure of the chief priests and scribes when the children in the Temple cried, Hosanna to the son of David (Matt. xxi. 15). It was a disappointment that kindled strong feeling to see his mind so misunderstood and his gracious work hindered, and that by the very men he had been instructing so patiently.

**suffer . . . forbid them not.** The charter of the children's rights. Words of infinite grace to all parents, but spoken to the mistaken disciples in tones that at once arrested them. 'We hear the Lord's indignant call, as it startles the disciples in the act of dismissing the party' (Swete).

**of such is the kingdom of God.** The graces of innocence, simplicity, trustfulness, tenderness, docility, affection seen in children are the very qualities that make the moral condition for entrance into the kingdom. They that have them cannot be forbidden, for they belong to the kingdom.

**15. Verily.** With these great words regarding children and the children's spirit Jesus concludes the instructions which had begun with the question of the sacredness of the wedded life. He sets his seal on them by his solemn formula—'Verily I say unto you.' But he has one thing yet to do before he lets these little ones go.

**16. he took them in his arms.** This is noticed only by Mark. Already Jesus had selected one little child and had taken him up in his arms (ix. 36). Now at the end of this discourse he repeats the act on a larger scale, lifting each of these little ones (we may infer), as they were brought one after another to him, up into his arms. He brings the incident to an end by pronouncing over them his benediction with the laying on of hands. Luke omits this. Matthew records the laying on of hands, but not the loving embrace.

x. 17-22. *The incident of the Rich Young Man.* Cf. Matt. xix. 16-22; Luke xviii. 18-23.

**17. into the way:** or, as in margin, 'on his way.' This interesting incident took place just as Jesus was resuming his journey,

one to him, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good?

19 none is good save one, *even* God. Thou knowest the

**ran one to him.** From Matthew we learn that he was young, the term 'young man' being one, however, that might cover any age from earliest manhood to middle life (xix. 22); and from Luke that he was a 'ruler,' a person of position, perhaps one of the rulers of the synagogue (xviii. 18). All three Gospels notice his wealth. Mark alone mentions that he 'ran' to Jesus, so eager was he.

**kneeled to him:** another fact shewing his earnestness and his sense of the dignity of this new teacher, noticed only by Mark.

**Good Master:** that is, 'Teacher.' The young man recognized Jesus as a great Rabbi, one of eminent character, and he saluted him reverently as such, as pupils were accustomed to do homage to distinguished teachers. But he had no higher idea of what Jesus was.

**inherit eternal life:** this great phrase 'eternal life' occurs first in Daniel (xii. 2), and there as a contrast to 'eternal' or 'everlasting' 'contempt.' It was familiar to the Jews, especially to the scribes and Pharisees. It had become a frequent subject of discussion, and in connexion with it many questions, some of them serious and others more theoretical, had arisen. In Luke (x. 25) we have the question which is put here by an earnest inquirer put in a very different spirit by a lawyer. The question and the answer are given in substantially the same form in Mark and in Luke. They appear somewhat differently in Matthew. There, according to the best reading, the question is, 'What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?' and the answer is—'Why askest thou me concerning that which is good? One there is who is good' (xix. 17).

**18. Why callest thou me good?** The young man's sincerity and earnestness we have no reason to doubt. But his ideas were superficial. It is to correct these, not to disclaim his own moral perfection or to make himself simply a man, one of the ordinary, erring children of humanity, that Jesus replies in these terms. The ruler had no proper conception of what 'eternal life,' as Jesus conceived it, was; and his notion of *goodness* was inadequate. Jesus throws the inquirer back upon himself by apparently disowning the title 'good' as it was thus easily applied to him, pointing the speaker to goodness as seen in God, and bringing him to the test of the Divine law.

**19. Thou knowest the commandments.** As he is referred,

commandments, Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honour thy father and mother. And he said unto him, 20 Master, all these things have I observed from my youth. And Jesus looking upon him loved him, and said unto 21 him, One thing thou lackest: go, sell whatsoever thou

with a view to a worthier conception of *goodness*, to God in whom alone it exists in its perfection, so he is referred further to the *commandments*, in which, and most especially according to the ideas of a Jew, the mind of God is seen. The order in which the commandments are cited, according to Mark and Luke, is this—the sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, fifth; according to Matthew, it is the seventh, sixth, eighth, ninth, fifth. The question is what is meant by the one in the series which is expressed as ‘do not defraud,’ that is, ‘do not take from others what is theirs.’ It may sum up the four precepts mentioned before it, as some suppose; but it is rather a form of the ninth commandment. Some think it is a free quotation from Exod. xxi. 10; Deut. xxiv. 14. The mention of the commandments would come as a welcome surprise to the young man. He had thought probably that something more was needed than that observance of the Law which he had studied, and which he could say he had fulfilled in his own literal and formal way.

**20. all these things have I observed from my youth.** Jesus recites only the commandments dealing with our relations to our fellow men. Our fulfilment of the open and unmistakable duties to which these have regard is the test of the sincerity and reality of our observance of those duties toward God which lie more within the cover of our own hearts and are open to mistake by ourselves as well as by others. In naming those precepts of the second table Jesus takes the suitable way of approach to a mind which, while open and honest, does not rise beyond the external aspects of things.

**21. looking upon him loved him.** Compare the *look* turned on Simon (John i. 42), and on Peter in his denial (Luke xxii. 61). These particulars are recorded only by Mark, but they go to the heart of the matter. Jesus, turning his searching look on the young man, saw in his frank and earnest face the witness to the fact that he was an honest and anxious, though mistaken, inquirer after life, and he regarded him with affectionate, yearning interest as he brought him to the further test. Great Rabbis, we are told, were in the habit of kissing the heads of pupils of brilliant parts.

**One thing thou lackest.** The young man had not got beyond the ordinary Jewish ideas of an external, circumstantial

hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure  
**22** in heaven: and come, follow me. But his countenance fell at the saying, and he went away sorrowful: for he was one that had great possessions.

**23** And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter  
**24** into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and

observance of the Law. The requirement now made of him brought him face to face with the question of self-denial, and so with the inwardness of the Law, the deeper meaning of 'eternal life' and the 'good,' and what it cost to win the former and achieve the latter.

**follow me:** this is the final test, and one that would make him know himself better.

**22. his countenance fell.** The word rendered 'fell' is one that means 'clouded over.' It is used of the *lowering sky* (Matt. xvi. 3). It expresses the *darkening* or *saddening* of the face under the influence of gloomy thoughts, and in particular under the sense of grief or sudden disappointment.

**went away sorrowful.** He had thought of securing eternal life by *doing*, and had thought less of *being*. He discovered that there was a *doing* that was far beyond him, a fulfilment of the Law that meant inward conditions of the spirit, not outward conditions of the letter, and had its evidence in readiness to give up what was dear. His easy notions of righteousness and goodness, of eternal life, and the keeping of the commandments, were dissipated, his hopes were shattered, and he turned away not angry, but grieved and disappointed. He was unable then to pay the price of true discipleship, and of his future course nothing is told us. We are left to surmise that one whom Jesus *loved* while he tested him may have afterwards entered the Kingdom.

**x. 23-27. Discourse on Riches and the Kingdom of God.** Cf. Matt. xix. 23-26; Luke xviii. 24-27.

**23. looked round about.** This is noticed only by Mark. The look which had been turned lovingly and searchingly on the young man is now cast round about the circle of the Twelve. Cf. iii. 5.

**riches.** The word used here is one of wider scope than that used in verse 22, and includes all kinds of possessions, in money, goods, or anything else.

**24. amazed.** This, too, is given only by Mark. It is a strong term expressing the *consternation* into which these words of Jesus threw even his most select followers. The rich! Were not they

saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God ! It is 25 easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And 26 they were astonished exceedingly, saying unto him, Then who can be saved ? Jesus looking upon them saith, With 27

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the privileged ? How different this Kingdom must be from what they anticipated—a Kingdom open to men who were like little children, and not to the great and wealthy !

**Jesus answereth again.** He repeats his staggering declaration, notwithstanding their amazement. But in doing so he qualifies its hardness somewhat both by the terms of his address and by a distinction which he now makes. 'Children,' he says, an affectionate and considerate designation, used with direct reference to the Twelve only in this passage, and indicating his sympathy with them and his regard for them in their present perplexity. So in the solemn words uttered later, when the traitor had gone out, he addresses them as 'little children' (John xiii. 33). And instead of the hardness of an entrance into the Kingdom of God for those who '*have* riches,' he now speaks of the hardness besetting those who '*trust* in riches.' So far the saying is softened and simplified. Yet in the next breath he gives it again in the most absolute form.

**25. for a camel to go through a needle's eye.** A strong hyperbolical expression, which is to be taken precisely as it is. Some have thought it necessary to reduce its seeming exaggeration by turning the *camel* into a *cable* (these two words being somewhat similar in the Greek), or by taking the *needle's eye* to be the name of a small side-gate near the great gate at Jerusalem. This is wholly to miss the point of the statement. The Jewish Rabbis were accustomed to use such extreme, paradoxical comparisons. This one is meant to express in the strongest possible form the incongruity of placing wealth or position on the same plane with the Kingdom of God, the utter impossibility of having riches accepted as a qualification for that Kingdom, and the difficulty which the rich have beyond others in entering it.

**26. astonished exceedingly.** Their amazement is intensified by these further words of Jesus, which seem to raise the difficulty of an entrance into the Kingdom, even in the case of the privileged, to the height of impossibility. They were quite beside themselves with astonishment. No doubt their old Jewish ideas clung to them, which connected prosperity with righteousness, and made it natural for them to think of those who manifestly were favoured by God in outward things as meant by Him to have His Kingdom,

men it is impossible, but not with God: for all things  
28 are possible with God. Peter began to say unto him, Lo,  
29 we have left all, and have followed thee. Jesus said,  
Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left  
house, or brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or

**27. all things are possible with God.** Jesus accepts the construction put upon his words by the disciples in their consternation, but at the same time provides the needed relief. *Impossible* it indeed is to establish a claim to the Kingdom of God. But the impossibility is only on man's side. With God it is otherwise. He can make the impossible actual, and accomplish by grace what rank or privilege or human effort cannot effect. In the Divine power which He gives in lieu of human incapacity is the ground of man's hope of a place in the Kingdom.

x. 28-31. *The Reward of Discipleship.* Cf. Matt. xix. 27-30; Luke xviii. 28-30.

**28. Peter began to say unto him.** All three Synoptists agree in naming Peter as the spokesman here. He breaks in and utters, as was his wont, what was in his mind. But our Lord's reply shews that the rest of the Twelve had the same thoughts.

**we have left all.** The emphasis is on the 'we'—'we your Apostles here.' Peter's interruption was suggested no doubt by the case of the rich young man. 'We at least have done,' he meant to say, 'what the ruler has not done. And what is to come to us for so doing?' It is only Matthew who records the blunt claim for tangible reward—'what then shall we have?'

**29. Verily I say unto you.** The reply of Jesus is directed not to Peter in particular, but to all the Twelve. Matthew gives it more fully than Mark or Luke. These two record only what applies to all followers of the Lord. Matthew reports first what was meant specially for the Twelve themselves—the promise of a share in the prerogative of judgement in 'the regeneration' when 'the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory.'

**left house, or brethren.** The instances of renunciation mentioned by Jesus are suggested by the case immediately before him. These Apostles for whom Peter spoke had indeed left home, and relations (as was done, e. g. by James and John), and possessions (some leaving their boats and nets, others, e. g. Levi, their occupations of a different kind which brought income with them). Luke omits the 'lands,' and inserts 'wife.' At this time (though not for ever, as we see from 1 Cor. ix. 5) Peter had also made this last sacrifice. It is to be noticed that nothing is yet said of giving up *life*.

children, or lands, for my sake, and for the gospel's sake, but he shall receive a hundredfold now in this time, 30 houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. But many *that are* first shall be 31 last; and the last first.

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**30. he shall receive a hundredfold.** So also in Matthew, but in Luke it is 'manifold more.' In its terms this promise resembles the descriptions of the blessings of the Messianic kingdom which were familiar to the Jews of our Lord's time, and are found in their non-canonical literature. It is expressed as if the reward was to be given in *kind*—houses for houses, relations for relations, possessions for possessions, but in more liberal measure. It is expressed at the same time in terms so large as at once to suggest something beyond that—a return in kind and yet different, inward good for outward, spiritual relationships and possessions for natural connexions and material substance, rewards, in short, in the form of the blessings belonging to the new Messianic kingdom.

**now in this time.** He who gives up other things in order to follow Christ has his reward even here and now—a present reward which brings a gain not to be put in comparison with what is surrendered; though it is qualified now by 'persecutions' as Mark, and only he, is careful to add.

**and in the world to come.** That is, in the age that follows Christ's Second Advent, the new condition of things which is to be inaugurated by that decisive event and in which the kingdom is to have its consummation. In that age there is a further reward for the follower of Jesus, and one no more qualified by 'persecutions.' That final reward is 'eternal life'—a phrase conveying the Israelite's hope from the time of the prophecy of Daniel onwards, and into which Jesus infused a higher and more spiritual meaning.

**31. first shall be last.** This closing declaration is omitted by Luke on the present occasion. He gives it, however, in his account of our Lord's reply to the question—'Are there few that be saved?' (xiii. 30). Matthew gives it again in his report of the parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard (xx. 16), which he introduces immediately after the present incident. That parable and the declaration on the subject of the 'first' and the 'last' convey the lessons that the rewards of the kingdom of the Messiah and of Christian discipleship are not given on the ground of priority in time, or calculable service, or man's ideas of merit, but on the ground of inward conditions, and the wise and just counsel of God to whom all hearts are open.

**32** And they were in the way, going up to Jerusalem ; and Jesus was going before them : and they were amazed ; and they that followed were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them the things that were  
**33** to happen unto him, *saying*, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem ; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the

x. 32-34. *Further announcement of the Passion and the Resurrection.* Cf. Matt. xx. 17-19 ; Luke xviii. 31-34. Mark's narrative is peculiarly vivid and impressive here. It deals with this occasion as one of critical moment, and enables us to realize, as the other Gospels do not do in like measure, the bearing of the Master and the feelings of the disciples.

**32. they were in the way.** It was when he 'was going forth into the way' that Jesus was arrested by the ruler's question. With the Twelve he is now 'in the way,' his journey being resumed and his course directed to Jerusalem. The 'way' no doubt was the open highway that was followed by the usual bands of pilgrims at the stated seasons of ascent to the Holy City.

**going up.** Jerusalem was so placed that to reach it from any point meant literally a 'going up.'

**going before them.** Only Mark notices this, and he evidently attaches exceptional significance to it. Jesus parted for a time from the immediate companionship of the Twelve, and contrary to his habit moved on before them.

**they were amazed.** The action was unusual. But there was not enough in that to account for this *amazement*. There must have been something in the way in which Jesus went before them, in the solemn deliberateness of his action, the resolved attitude he assumed, the impression of brooding thoughts conveyed by his demeanour, that awed the Twelve with the sense of the fatefulness of this movement towards Jerusalem. Cf. Luke ix. 51.

**they that followed were afraid.** Others also who were in the company, the people who were accustomed to keep by him, were affected as the Twelve themselves were. Forebodings of evil smote them and filled them with vague terrors.

**took again the twelve.** This is noticed by each of the three Synoptists. Matthew states explicitly that Jesus took them apart. Seeing how the Twelve were moved by the change in him he joins them again, and takes them by themselves in order to explain his action and declare to them what was in his mind.

**33. the Son of man shall be delivered.** This is the third announcement of his Passion that he makes to the unwilling ears of the Twelve, and it is remarkable for its distinct and circumstantial character. It makes mention of the betrayal into the

chief priests and the scribes ; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him unto the Gentiles : and they shall mock him, and shall spit upon him, and 34 shall scourge him, and shall kill him ; and after three days he shall rise again.

And there come near unto him James and John, the 35 sons of Zebedee, saying unto him, Master, we would that

hands of the Jewish authorities, the members of the Sanhedrin or Council, who dealt with cases coming under the Jewish law ; the condemnation by that court ; the subsequent delivery to the Gentiles, that is, to the Roman authorities, who reserved to themselves the right of ordering the penalty of death ; and the circumstances attending the sentence and the punishment—the mockery, the contumelious spitting, the scourging (which always accompanied crucifixion), and the death itself. The betrayal to the chief priests and scribes is noticed by Matthew and Mark ; the delivery to the Gentiles, which was not referred to in the former announcements, the mocking, and the scourging, are recorded by all three ; the spitting is mentioned only by Mark and Luke. Matthew alone specifies *crucifixion* as the mode of death. All three give the intimation of the Resurrection. Luke introduces a reference to O. T. prophecy—‘All the things that are written by the prophets shall be accomplished unto the Son of man.’ From Luke we also gather that, notwithstanding its definiteness and the remarkable circumstances in which it was spoken, this third prediction of the Passion and Resurrection of their Master was as little understood by the Twelve as were the former two. The ‘saying was hid from them, and they perceived not the things that were said’ (xviii. 34).

**x. 35-45. The Ambitious Request of the Sons of Zebedee.** Cf. Matt. xx. 20-28. This incident is omitted by Luke, who gives, however, in a later chapter, the story of the contention among the disciples as to who should be greatest (xxii. 25-28). There is this difference also between the narratives of Matthew and Mark here, that in the former the petitioner is the mother (whom we know to be *Salome* by comparing Mark xv. 40 with Matt. xxvii. 56), while in the latter the sons themselves make the request. The mother’s solicitude for the honour of her sons made her the first speaker. The application probably was her thought, but the sons joined in it and expressed their own sense of what they considered themselves entitled to look for.

**35. the sons of Zebedee.** The only occasion on which Zebedee is brought very directly before us in the Gospels is when his sons

thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall ask of thee.

**36** And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do  
**37** for you? And they said unto him, Grant unto us that  
     we may sit, one on thy right hand, and one on *thy* left  
**38** hand, in thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know

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were called by Jesus. Thereafter the Gospels are silent regarding him, or refer to him only as here. It is possible that he may not have lived long after James and John left him to become followers of Jesus. It has been suggested that, unlike Salome, he had taken no interest in the claims and the ministry of Jesus, and for that reason is little noticed in the Gospels. Where all is matter of conjecture, it is more reasonable to suppose that, like his sons, he had been a disciple of the Baptist and had recognized Jesus as the Messiah. The fact that nothing is said as to his opposing the departure of James and John when they were called so far favours this supposition. But all is left uncertain by the Gospels themselves.

**we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall ask of thee.** A large, bold, inconsiderate demand, that comes so strangely after Jesus has spoken of scourging and death as his own lot, and betrays how little the Twelve, and even the select three, yet understood what it meant to be followers of Jesus, or what his kingdom was.

**36. What would ye that I should do for you?** He will have them first state distinctly what is in their hearts before he will commit himself to their large request.

**37. Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and one on thy left hand, in thy glory.** They think only of grandeur and glory as associated with his kingdom, and will have the places of highest honour in it, the 'right hand' of the host or the monarch being the position reserved for the most distinguished guest or dignitary, and the 'left hand' the position next in honour; cf. 2 Sam. xvi. 6; 1 Kings ii. 19; Acts vii. 55, 56; Rom. viii. 34. The presenting of such a request may have been suggested by the words of Jesus on the subject of reward—the hundredfold that was to be received now by any one who had left house, or brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or lands, for his sake and the gospel's (x. 30).

**38. Jesus said unto them.** In Matthew's Gospel the petitioner is the mother. If there were *four* women at the cross, and if Salome, the mother of James and John, is the person meant by 'his mother's sister' in John's narrative of the crucifixion (xix. 25), she was connected by ties of blood with Jesus, and may have found in that her encouragement to take her sons with her to

not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink the cup that I drink? or to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We are able. 39 And Jesus said unto them, The cup that I drink ye shall drink; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized: but to sit on my right hand or on 40 *my left hand is not mine to give: but it is for them for*

him and make her application in their interest. But even in Matthew's Gospel it is to the sons themselves, not simply to the mother who spoke for them, that Jesus addresses his reply.

**Ye know not what ye ask:** the reply touched first their lack of understanding.

**Are ye able to drink the cup that I drink?** It then brought them to the question of their capacity for fellowship with him in suffering. The term 'cup' is a frequent figure both in the O. T. and in the N. T., and is used in different applications. It occurs as a figure of speech: (1) for the happy lot or experience of the godly, the idea being that that comes from God as the wine-cup at table comes from the host (e. g. Ps. xvi. 5, xxiii. 5, lxxiii. 10); (2) for the unhappy lot of the wicked (e. g. Ps. xi. 6); (3) for the Divine wrath (e. g. Jer. xxv. 15; Ezek. xxvii. 32-34; Isa. li. 17; Zech. xii. 2; Rev. xiv. 10); (4) for the experience of salvation, the reference being to the wine of the thank-offering (Ps. cxvi. 13); (5) for consolation, the wine offered for refreshment to the mourner probably being in view (Jer. xvi. 7).

**or to be baptized with the baptism.** Another figure for suffering, overwhelming suffering in which one is immersed or submerged. Jesus uses it again of his sufferings when he speaks of being come to 'cast fire upon the earth' (Luke xii. 49). It is akin to one of the most frequent figures of the O. T., especially of the Book of Psalms—that which speaks of one who is in dire peril or affliction as being in deep waters (Ps. xviii. 16, xlvi. 7, lxix. 1, cxxiv. 4, cxxx. 1).

**39. We are able.** Their answer betrayed again their lack of discernment. They were capable of much. They could be loyal and they could be courageous. But as yet their ideas of things were so unspiritual and confused that they did not even understand the capacity he had in view, much less did they possess it. But they were to learn it by the surest of all teachers—sharp experience.

**40. is not mine to give.** There was a difference between drinking of the cup and sitting on the right hand of the Great King. Fellowship with Jesus in the former they were to have,

**41** whom it hath been prepared. And when the ten heard it, they began to be moved with indignation concerning **42** James and John. And Jesus called them to him, and

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and it needed not to be *given* them. It would come of itself in their conflict with an evil world. But fellowship with him in glory demanded conditions of which they had no understanding, and was not a thing to be given by disposition simply, not even at the bidding of the Son of man. Throughout the N. T. Jesus is declared by himself, as well as by his Apostles, to be the final Arbiter who is to give to every man his due (Matt. xxv. 31-46; 2 Tim. iv. 8; Rev. xxii. 12). But in this he acts not arbitrarily or without regard to the Father's will. It is the Father who has committed to him the power of judgement, and it is the Father's will that he fulfils in that as in everything else (John v. 22, 27).

**for whom it hath been prepared.** That is, by God. In Matthew it is expressly put so—‘*for whom it hath been prepared of my Father*’ (xx. 23). Here our Lord brings us within sight of the great principle of a Divine *election* or *predestination*, which is expressed at length in the Epistles to the Romans (viii. 33-39, ix. 6-33) and Ephesians (i. 4-12), in 1 Peter (i. 2), and elsewhere. As Christ's word here indicates, this ‘preparation’ and the *choice* or determination which it implies are no arbitrary decisions, but the wise and gracious dispositions of the *Father*. And they for whom the things here in view are prepared are themselves also prepared for them. For the use of the term in its various applications see such passages as Matt. xxv. 34, 41; Luke ii. 31; Rom. ix. 23; 1 Cor. ii. 9; Eph. ii. 10; 2 Tim. ii. 21; Heb. xi. 16.

**41. when the ten heard it.** The ‘ten,’ it is to be observed, not the ‘nine.’ In this matter Peter went not with his comrades in the select band of the three, but with the other members of the Apostolate. Whether the ten knew of the selfish and exclusive request of James and John by hearing it as it was made, or by having it reported to them, is not told. In any case when it came to their knowledge their indignation was kindled, and with it doubtless those evil feelings of jealousy and self-assertion which Jesus had already had to check and correct (ix. 33-37).

**42. called them to him.** He had again to deal with the whole company of the Apostles, and not merely with two individuals. He does so deliberately and pointedly, summoning them to him for the purpose. Bent on putting them right he takes the wise and considerate way of calling their attention to the broad principles at issue, and makes no reference to the fault of James and John.

saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you: but whosoever would become great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever would be first among you, shall be servant of all. For verily the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

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**43. it is not so among you.** If they were to be in his kingdom, their ideas must be different from those that prevailed in heathen society and characterized heathen ways of life. Among the Gentiles it was the accepted order of things that those in power should rule according to their will, and dispense their good things and their evil things arbitrarily. But in him they had a Master of another kind, and in his kingdom a society of a radically different order—a society to which ambition, and honours arbitrarily bestowed, dignities won by competition and self-assertion, were entirely strange, and in which only one pre-eminence was known—that of humility and service.

**45. For verily the Son of man came not to be ministered unto (or, served), but to minister (or, serve).** That greatness in his kingdom was so unlike what it was in the Gentile world, and that the thoughts of his disciples must be so essentially different from those of others, is made clearer and more certain by an appeal to his own example, and to that as the highest possible enforcement. The Son of man himself, who was of men and yet more than they, had come for a great purpose. But that was to serve, not to be served.

**and to give his life.** Not only to serve, but to do so to the last degree of self-sacrifice.

**a ransom.** The word expresses deliverance by paying a price, or the price paid for deliverance. It is used, e.g. for the price paid for the redemption of a slave (Lev. xix. 20) or a captive (Isa. xliv. 13); the ransom paid for a life (Exod. xxi. 30, xxx. 12; Num. xxxv. 31). The word occurs frequently in the O. T. In the N. T. this is the only instance of it in this particular form. But we find it again in a compound form in 1 Tim. ii. 6, where also it is applied to Christ himself as the sacrifice.

**for many.** One life for the lives of many, and ‘for’ them in the sense of ‘instead of them.’ The preposition used by our Lord is one that in its most proper sense conveys the idea of *exchange* or *substitution*. It means ‘in place of,’ and occurs in such sentences as these—‘an eye for an eye,’ ‘a tooth for a tooth’ (Matt. v. 38);

**46** And they come to Jericho: and as he went out from

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'for a fish . . . a serpent' (Luke xi. 11); 'Archelaus was reigning over Judæa in the room of his father Herod' (Matt. ii. 22); 'render to no man evil for evil' (Rom. xii. 17); 'Esau, who for one mess of meat sold his own birthright' (Heb. xii. 16). The life that is spoken of here, therefore, is a life which it was Christ's to give, and he was to give it, he tells us, in the character of a ransom for the lives of many—a ransom, further, which was to take the place of or to be given instead of those others. The word 'for,' following on the word 'ransom' here, 'can only be understood,' says Meyer, 'in the sense of substitution in the act of which the ransom is presented as an equivalent to secure the deliverance of those on whose behalf it is paid—a view which is only confirmed by the fact that in other parts of the N. T. this ransom is usually spoken of as an *expiatory sacrifice*, Matt. xxvi. 28; John i. 29; 1 John iv. 10; Rom. iii. 25; Isa. liii. 10; 1 Pet. i. 18 ff., iii. 18.'

This great declaration was made incidentally, not for doctrinal or dogmatic purposes, but with a purely practical object—the checking of unworthy, selfish feeling in the disciples and the illustration of what *greatness* is in the kingdom of God. Yet it is impossible to over-estimate its importance or to fathom all that it means with regard to the nature and scope of Christ's mission. It is one of the select number of sayings which give us an insight into his own view of his life and death. It is fundamental to any just conception of the purpose and the efficacy of his death. It contains the principles of that doctrine of sacrifice and atonement which is taught in the Epistles of the N. T., and which has been stated and developed in the Creeds of the Church.

**x. 46-52. The Restoration of blind Bartimæus.** Cf. Matt. xx. 29-34; Luke xviii. 35-43. In connexion with this incident, immediately after it, Luke introduces the case of Zacchæus, which is given neither by Matthew nor by Mark. In the three Synoptical accounts of this instance of the healing of the blind there are also certain minor differences in the details of time, place, and person.

**46. And they come to Jericho.** It is not stated whence they came. It may have been the 'city called Ephraim' (John xi. 54), the secluded place about sixteen miles from Jerusalem, to which he retired after the raising of Lazarus and the counsel taken by the chief priests and Pharisees consequent on that great work. 'By publicly entering Jericho he places himself in the power of the Procurator and the great Sanhedrin' (Swete). On previous occasions, in going up to Jerusalem or returning from it, Jesus must have passed by or through this city. But there is no record of these approaches or visits. With the present occasion it is different; for it marks an important stage in his ministry. With

Jericho, with his disciples and a great multitude, the son

the exception of the reference to it in the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke x. 30 ff.), it is only in connexion with this narrative that mention is made of Jericho in the Gospels. It is noticed also in Heb. xi. 30.

**and as he went out from Jericho.** Both Matthew and Mark report the miracle as if it was done as Jesus left the city. Luke gives it as if it was done when he drew near to the city. If Jesus came by the direct road from Ephraim he would 'enter through a gate on the north side of the city, and in order to proceed to Jerusalem he would cross to the west gate' (Swete).

The ancient Jericho, the famous 'city of palm-trees' (Deut. xxxiv. 3), in the Jordan valley, over against Nebo (Deut. xxxii. 49), lay some sixty stadia or 'furlongs' west of the river, and about 150 from Jerusalem. It is represented by the modern *er-Riha*, a cluster of wretched hovels containing about 300 inhabitants, and lying some 600 feet below the level of the Mediterranean. Its glory is utterly gone, and of its great palm-groves there remains only a tree here and there—perhaps a dozen in all. The old Canaanitish city seems to have occupied a site about a mile and a half or two miles from *er-Riha*, at Tell-es-Sultan, above Elisha's fountain. That it was a rich town in ancient times appears from the story of Achan (Josh. vii. 21). It is associated with many notable passages in the story of Israel, e. g. the first observance of the Passover after the crossing of the Jordan (Josh. v. 10); the vision of the captain of the Lord's host (Josh. v. 13-15); the first stand made against the children of Israel, the siege, the destruction of the city, and the saving of Rahab for the spies' sake (Josh. vi.); and later, the translation of Elijah (2 Kings ii. 4); the capture of Zedekiah when he fled from Jerusalem and the forces of Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings xxv. 5; Jer. xxxix. 5), &c. A solemn curse was uttered by Joshua on the man who should rebuild it (Josh. vi. 28), which was fulfilled in the case of Hiel the Bethelite in Ahab's time (1 Kings xvi. 34). In our Lord's time it had become again an important place, enjoying the favour of the Herodian family. The fact that it lay on the caravan route from Damascus, and occupied a strong military position, made it a place of great consequence. It was also one of the chief residences of priests. After the capture of Jerusalem by Pompey, it was made one of the five seats of assembly by Gabinius the Roman general (Joseph. *Wars*, i. viii. 5). Herod the Great fortified a citadel above the town, and built to the north of it a city which he called Phasælis after a brother (Joseph. *Wars*, i. xxi. 9). In Jericho also Herod died. The royal palace was burnt down after his death, but was splendidly rebuilt by Archelaus. Our Lord's baptism took place not far from it, and

of Timæus, Bartimæus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the  
 47 way side. And when he heard that it was Jesus of  
 Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou son  
 48 of David, have mercy on me. And many rebuked him,  
 that he should hold his peace: but he cried out the more  
 a great deal, Thou son of David, have mercy on me.  
 49 And Jesus stood still, and said, Call ye him. And they

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Quarantania, the probable scene of his temptation, was also near it. Josephus speaks in glowing terms of its climate, its fountain, its well-watered and fertile plains, its gardens full of trees, yielding balsam and myrobalsamum, its palms of different kinds, its luxuriant vegetation (*Wars*, iv. viii. 2-3).

**with his disciples and a great multitude.** Jesus entered the city and left it now not as an unknown visitor, but in the style of a great Rabbi attended by his pupils, and followed by a crowd of curious spectators made larger than usual by the number of pilgrims from many different quarters who met here on their way to Jerusalem.

**the son of Timæus.** This is a translation for the sake of Gentile readers of the Aramaic name *Bartimæus*.

**a blind beggar.** Two blind men were there, according to Matthew (xx. 30). Mark and Luke, for some reason left unexplained, refer only to one, the former by name, the latter in general terms. Beggars abounded in the ancient East, and gathered in large numbers at the times of the great feasts at the chief points along the pilgrimage routes. In many cases blindness, that fell and frequent malady of the East, added to the misery of utter poverty.

**47. when he heard that it was Jesus.** Luke tells us that the blind man heard the noise of the multitude passing and *inquired* what it meant (xviii. 36). Thus he learned from others what he could not discover for himself; that it was Jesus passing by, and instantly he besought his mercy. Perhaps he had heard of the cure of the blind man at Jerusalem (John ix), or of some similar case among the healing deeds of Jesus.

**son of David.** A Judæan title of Messiah, found already on the lips of the multitude who witnessed the miracle on the possessed man who was both blind and dumb (Matt. xiii. 23). The present is its only occurrence in Mark's Gospel, and in Luke also it appears only in the narrative of this miracle.

**48. rebuked him.** Many would have had him silenced. But he became only the more urgent as the opportunity seemed to be slipping.

call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good cheer : rise, he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, 50 sprang up, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered him, 51 and said, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee ? And the blind man said unto him, Rabboni, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way ; 52 thy faith hath made thee whole. And straightway he received his sight, and followed him in the way.

And when they draw nigh unto Jerusalem, unto 11

**49. Jesus stood still.** The piteous appeal could not be withheld: There is a pause in the movement; the suppliant is called by the command of Jesus, and the word of encouragement, 'Be of good cheer,' is spoken to him by those who knew what the Master's call meant.

**50. he, casting away his garment, sprang up.** This is noticed only by Mark. How it adds to the impressiveness of the scene, and to the picture of an insistent, anxious eagerness that could not tarry !

**51. What wilt thou that I should do unto thee.** All three Evangelists notice the question with which Jesus prefaced the healing act.

**Rabboni.** An Aramaic word for *Master* or *Lord*; which came also to the lips of Mary when in her dead sorrow she suddenly recognized her risen Lord (John xx. 16).

**52. Jesus said unto him.** According to Matthew Jesus touched the eyes of the two blind men. But according to Mark and Luke the restoration of the one sufferer whose case they notice was effected simply by the sovereign word. All three Evangelists notice that this miracle, one of the last done by Jesus, was wrought on the ground of faith in the subject.

**followed him in the way.** The healed man at once joined the company and went with them on their way to Jerusalem.

**xi. 1-11. Public entry into Jerusalem and visit to the Temple.** Cf. Matt. xxi. 1-11; Luke xix. 29-45; John xii. 1, 12-19. There is considerable difficulty here as to the order of events, and as to the time and circumstances of the entry into the city. The miracle at Jericho was followed probably by the incident of Zacchaeus, and the parable of the Pounds. But the question is as to the point at which the supper at Bethany took place, and the exact date of the arrival of Jesus at that village. According to John xii. 1 he came to Bethany six days before the Passover.

Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he

These six days, however, may be computed in different ways, and hence the date is variously fixed. Most, however, conclude that he arrived at Bethany on Friday the eighth Nisan, and that he rested at the village. The statements in Matthew (xxi. 1) and Mark (xi. 1) might seem to imply that he went on direct to Jerusalem. But this does not necessarily follow from their accounts, and it would be inconsistent with John's record. But when did the supper and the anointing at Bethany take place? Matthew and Mark do not introduce their reports of these incidents till later (Matt. xxvi. 6-13; Mark xiv. 3-9). But John brings it in before the Triumphal Entry, and this is accepted by most as the actual order. If this is right, it will appear that the first two Gospels postpone their accounts of the supper; that Jesus came to Bethany on the Friday, on the eve of the Jewish sabbath; that he spent the last sabbath before his crucifixion in quiet in the home of his friends there; and that he made his entry into Jerusalem on the following day—the traditional Palm Sunday.

**1. And when they draw nigh unto Jerusalem.** It appears that they came direct from Jericho to the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. Mark, however, does not say distinctly that they went on to Jerusalem. He notices simply that they came to the villages near it. The distance from Jericho to these villages was about fifteen miles, and it lay through a wild and dreary country, the scene of the parable of the Good Samaritan, associated with danger and difficulty. Rest would be welcome after such a journey, and opportunity would be needed by Jesus to prepare himself in privacy and quiet for the painful events of the next week.

**unto Bethphage:** a village bearing a name which means probably 'the house of figs.' It is never mentioned in the O. T., and cannot be identified. All trace of it has disappeared, and all is uncertain about it. Some take it to have been a village over against Bethany, as is suggested by the Synoptical records. Others think it was a district rather than a hamlet—an 'ecclesiastical suburb of Jerusalem.' See Andrews, *The Life of our Lord*, p. 430.

**and Bethany.** Matthew refers only to Bethphage. Mark and Luke mention both Bethphage and Bethany.

**Bethany:** a village lying on the slope of the mount of Olives, fifteen furlongs, or a little less than two miles, from Jerusalem (John xi. 1, 18, xii. 1). Its name is of uncertain etymology, being supposed by some to mean 'a low place,' by others 'house of dates.' In it was the house of Simon the leper. It was also the home of Lazarus and his sisters, and the resting-place of Jesus on his way to and from the great feasts in Jerusalem. It is never mentioned in the O. T. Since the fourth century its

sendeth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go 2

site has been identified with that of the village known as *El-Azariyeh*, 'the place of Lazarus,' a cluster of some twenty houses inhabited by Bedouin Arabs. Dean Stanley speaks of it as 'a wild mountain hamlet, screened by an intervening ridge from the view of the top of Olivet, perched on its broken plateau of rock, the last collection of human habitations before the desert hills which reach to Jericho' (*Sinai and Palestine*, p. 186). On the basis of an ancient tradition the people point out the tomb of Lazarus, but in a most unlikely place, which is described as 'a wretched cavern in the limestone rock, like a cellar with about twenty-five steps, to which we descend by the dim light of a taper' (Schaff, *Bible Lands*, p. 27).

**the mount of Olives.** In the O. T. we read of 'the mount' (Neh. viii. 15), 'the mount that is before Jerusalem' (1 Kings xi. 7), 'the mountain which is on the east side of the city' (Ezek. xi. 23), 'the mount of corruption' or 'destruction' (2 Kings xxiii. 13), 'the ascent of mount Olivet' (A. V.) or 'the ascent of the *mount* of Olives' (R. V., 2 Sam. xv. 30). The particular form 'the mount of Olives' in the O. T. occurs only in Zech. xiv. 4. In the N. T., on the other hand, this is the usual name, although it is occasionally given with some small variations (Luke xix. 29, xxi. 37; Acts i. 12). The whole ridge of limestone hills lying on the east of Jerusalem, and separated from it by the valley of the Kidron, seems to have been spoken of as 'the mount of Olives.' More properly the name is given to the middle of the three chief eminences of that ridge, the one on the north being known as mount Scopus, and the other on the south as the mount of Offence (see Robinson, *Biblical Researches*, i. 274). The 'mount' rises to the height of about 200 feet above the temple, and over 2,600 feet above the level of the Mediterranean. 'No name in Scripture calls up associations,' says Dr. Porter, 'at once so sacred and so pleasing as that of Olivet. The "mount" is so intimately connected with the private life of our Lord, that we read of it and look at it with feelings of deepest interest and affection. Here he sat with his disciples, telling them of the wondrous events yet to come; of the destruction of the Holy City, of the sufferings, the persecutions, the formal triumph of his followers.' Dean Stanley speaks of 'the vision, too great for words, which it offers to the Christian traveller of all times, as the most detailed and the most authentic abiding-place of Jesus Christ' (*Sinai and Palestine*, p. 189).

**sendeth two of his disciples.** John's narrative defines the time when the young ass was found more particularly as 'the morrow' after his arrival at Bethany (xii. 1, 12, 14). The two disciples are left unnamed. It is suggested with some reason

your way into the village that is over against you : and straightway as ye enter into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon no man ever yet sat ; loose him, and bring him.

3 And if any one say unto you, Why do ye this ? say ye, The Lord hath need of him ; and straightway he will 4 send him back hither. And they went away, and found a colt tied at the door without in the open street ; and 5 they loose him. And certain of them that stood there

that Peter was one of them, the account given by Mark here pointing to the recollections of one who had been present on the occasion.

**2. the village that is over against you.** Probably Bethphage, especially as it is the only village noticed by Matthew (xxi. 1).

**a colt.** To a Greek this would mean a young horse ; to a Jew, a young ass (cf. Gen. xxxii. 15, 10, xxix. 11 ; Judges x. 4, xii. 14, and especially Zech. ix. 9). Matthew quotes the passage in Zechariah, and finds its fulfilment in the present event. John also quotes the prophecy, with some modification of its terms (xii. 15). Matthew speaks of an ass and a colt, that is, the colt with his mother.

**whereon no man ever yet sat.** An unbroken colt, as was appropriate in the case of one meant for a sacred service. See the provisions in the Mosaic Law (Num. xix. 2 ; Deut. xxi. 3). Everything was foreseen by Jesus, the presence of the colt, the precise place where he should be found, the fact that he was tied, and even the ready compliance of those in charge ; and all happened exactly as he had said.

**3. and straightway he will send him back hither.** In Matthew it is 'and straightway he will send them,' with reference to the man's readiness to send the animals. Mark's words, according to the R. V., express the undertaking that the colt will not be kept longer than is required, but will be returned.

**4. in the open street.** This is better than the rendering of the A. V.—'in a place where two ways met.' The word means 'the way round' the house, and so the open street or lane.

**5. certain of them that stood there.** This might mean those hanging about, as people were accustomed to do in idle hours about the townships and lanes. But Luke speaks of the owners as the persons who put the question to the two disciples. We may reasonably suppose that those in whose hands the animal was, and who required no other persuasion to let him go than the

said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt? And they 6 said unto them even as Jesus had said: and they let them go. And they bring the colt unto Jesus, and cast on him 7 their garments; and he sat upon him. And many spread 8 their garments upon the way; and others branches, which they had cut from the fields. And they that went before, 9

simple mention of the Lord's need, were themselves disciples. If not, they must at least have known Jesus and his disciples sufficiently well to make them at once trust them.

**7. cast on him their garments.** An unused colt, not yet separated from the mother, would not be provided with trappings. The disciples put some of their own garments on the creature, which would serve as a saddle.

**He sat upon him.** Jews who looked for Messiah and had respect to the prophecy of Zechariah (ix. 9) expected that the promised king would make his entry in this way into Jerusalem. The ass, too, was the symbol of humility and peace, in contrast with the horse which was the symbol of war. In seating himself on the colt Jesus left behind him the time of silence or reserve, and publicly affirmed his claim to be the Messiah. 'No act,' says Dr. Geikie, 'could be more perfectly in keeping with the conception of a king of Israel, and no words could express more plainly that the king proclaimed himself the Messiah' (*The Life and Words of Christ*, ii. p. 395).

**8. And many spread their garments upon the way.** Others followed the two—not the Twelve only, but many more who were followers in different degrees of loyalty. The act was one of homage such as was done to kings as they entered cities. See the case of Jehu (*2 Kings ix. 13*).

**others branches:** or better, as in the margin of the R. V., 'layers of leaves.' The word is applicable to leafy twigs, long grass, reeds, rushes, and the like. So the enthusiasm spread, and took the form of carpeting the way for him with a litter of green stuff.

**which they had cut from the fields.** The road from Bethany to Jerusalem, winding as it did by cultivated fields and gardens, or plantations of olives, palms, and various fruit trees, would readily provide material which they could cut for the purpose in view.

**9. they that went before, and they that followed.** John tells us that 'a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of the palm trees, and went forth to meet him' (xii. 12, 13). It appears, therefore, that Jesus was in the centre of two great streams of

and they that followed, cried, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Blessed is the kingdom that cometh, *the kingdom* of our father David: Hosanna in the highest.

acclaiming and expectant people—one that came from the villages on the mount of Olives, and another that came now to meet him from the sacred city itself.

**Hosanna.** In Matthew it is ‘Hosanna to the son of David’ (xxi. 9). This is properly speaking a prayer, and the invocation was made not once, but repeatedly, as the verb implies. It is the ‘save now,’ of Psalm cxviii—a Psalm long and closely associated with the national hope of Israel, and written to celebrate some great occasion in the national history, the dedication of the Second Temple in 516 b.c., or the Passover following that event (Ezra vi. 15, &c.), or the Feast of Tabernacles reported in Nehemiah viii, or, as some think, the triumph of Judas Maccabæus and his purification of the temple in 165 b.c. (1 Macc. iv. 37–59). During the period of the Second Temple, the twenty-fifth verse of this Psalm formed ‘the festal cry with which the altar of burnt-offering was compassed in solemn procession, once on each of the first six days of the Feast of Tabernacles, and seven times on the seventh day. This seventh day was called “the Great Hosanna” (*Hosanna Rabba*), and not only the prayers of the Feast of Tabernacles, but even the branches of willow and myrtle bound up with palm-branch (*Lulab*) were called *Hosannas*’ (Delitzsch).

**Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.** From Ps. cxviii. 26. Luke gives ‘Blessed is *the king* that cometh,’ thus making the Messianic reference more definite. In the Psalm the sentence is a word of greeting to the pilgrim who comes to the temple at the feast. Here it is a greeting addressed to Jesus as the promised king, and it is possible that a Messianic interpretation or application had been given before this to the Psalm, or to this part of it. Luke also adds the words ‘peace in heaven, and glory in the highest’ (xix. 38).

**10. Blessed is the kingdom that cometh.** An expansion of the words of the Psalm, recognizing that in the entry of Jesus on the colt into Jerusalem the kingdom that was promised to come was being inaugurated. And this ‘kingdom’ is called ‘*the kingdom* of our father David,’ as it is the fulfilment of that regal, Divine order of things of which David’s kingdom was a type.

**Hosanna in the highest.** Cf. the angels’ song (Luke ii. 14). A prayer for salvation or blessing in the highest heaven where God reigns. The salvation is conceived of as prepared or reserved there, and as descending thence upon the new kingdom,

And he entered into Jerusalem, into the temple; and when he had looked round about upon all things, it being now eventide, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

And on the morrow, when they were come out from Bethany, he hungered. And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find anything

Matthew records the impression made by the event. He tells us that 'all the city was stirred' (xxi. 10). When he adds that the people asked, 'Who is this?' he indicates that little interest had been taken by the mass of the citizens of Jerusalem in the reports of the work of Jesus. Luke completes the picture of this great passage in our Lord's ministry by introducing the incidents of the remonstrance of the Pharisees, the tears of Jesus as he saw the city, and his lamentation over its impending doom (xix. 39-44).

**11. into the temple.** Passing into the city he moved on at once to the place which gave it all its significance. By the 'temple' here is meant not the shrine itself, the 'house of God' proper (Matt. xii. 4), but the precincts of the temple, the sacred enclosure. He would enter by the eastern gate and come into the court of the Gentiles. The traffic which desecrated the place, incongruous as it was, had not penetrated into the 'sanctuary' itself, but was carried on in the outer courts.

**looked round about.** As it was late he did no more than this, but withdrew to Bethany. He cast a keen, searching, sorrowful glance around, which took in the whole scene and prepared him for the action of the morrow. In Matthew the account of the cleansing of the temple follows immediately on that of the entry into the city. Mark's account is the most exact and circumstantial.

**xi. 12-14. The Barren Fig-tree:** cf. Matt. xvi. 18, 19. This incident is left unnoticed by Luke. It is reported by Matthew and Mark in the same connexion.

**12. on the morrow.** That is, Monday, 11 Nisan (John xii. 1, 12).

**he hungered.** He had eaten nothing, we infer, and the labours and anxieties of the day were before him. He had the desire to satisfy his hunger, and thought the opportunity of doing so was offered by the appearance of a solitary fig-tree, which he saw at a distance by the roadside.

**13. having leaves.** The sight of the tree in leaf suggested that

thereon : and when he came to it, he found nothing but  
 14 leaves ; for it was not the season of figs. And he  
 answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit from thee  
 henceforward for ever. And his disciples heard it.

15 And they come to Jerusalem : and he entered into the

there might be fruit on it. For, in the case of the fig-tree, the leaf succeeds the fruit.

**nothing but leaves.** On approaching the tree he discovered that it was abnormally in foliage, and that nothing but leaves was on it.

**for it was not the season of figs.** An explanation of the fact that no fruit was found on the tree. In Palestine, figs are gathered late in May, or more usually in June. But it was yet only about the season of the Passover, which was from late March to the middle of April. The point here is the association of *leaf* and *fruit*. It is possible, indeed (though it can scarcely be said to be more than that), that some figs of the previous year might be left hanging on the tree through the winter. But the possibility of such remnants of a previous crop being found on the tree is not limited to the case of trees in leaf. What is in view here is the fact that where the green foliage is seen there fruit is to be expected. But in this case no fruit of any kind, ripe or unripe, was discovered. A fig-tree in *leaf*, unless its appearance was a deception, should have *fruit* on it, green fruit at least, if not mature. But this tree had nothing except leaves. It belied its profession, and this was its condemnation. So Jesus made it an object-lesson by which he might convey to the minds of his disciples a serious idea of the moral attitude of the Jewish people, and the doom involved in a religion of pretension and barrenness.

**14. No man eat fruit from thee henceforward for ever.** In the parable of the Fig-tree Jesus had already dealt with the matter of unfruitfulness (Luke xiii. 6-9). Here he speaks of an unfruitfulness which is aggravated by vain, deceptive profession. The fault which he found with the tree was that it failed to make good in any way the promise which it displayed to the eye. The sentence which he pronounced upon it was with a view to the moral instruction of his disciples, and the warning of the Jewish nation. Mark alone notices the fact that 'the disciples heard it.'

xi. 15-19. *The Purging of the Temple* : cf. Matt. xxi. 12-17 ; Luke xix. 45-48. The Fourth Gospel also reports a cleansing of the temple (John ii. 13-17), but places it at the beginning of the ministry of Jesus. The three Synoptical Gospels agree in recording a purgation of the temple at the close of his ministry. The acts were similar, yet there are certain differences in the

temple, and began to cast out them that sold and them that bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold the doves ; and he would not suffer that any man should 16

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details as well as in the times. Nor is there anything incongruous or unreasonable in the supposition that Jesus may have asserted the holiness of his Father's house, and given token of the necessity of a radical change in the religion of the Jews by a solemn and authoritative act of this kind, both at the outset of his ministry and at its close. The difference in the plans of the Gospel narratives accounts for the difference between the Synoptists and John in this matter.

**15. he entered into the temple.** His purpose was to do what his brief inspection on the previous evening shewed him to be necessary. Things had settled into the old, profane ways in spite of the impression made by the previous cleansing. The evil traffic was again in full swing, and had become even worse than before. He repeated, therefore, his act of condemnation and expulsion, and did it with still greater thoroughness and authority.

**cast out them that sold and them that bought.** Sellers and buyers were alike dead to the sense of what the temple was, and were equally involved in his condemnation. The market in question had been allowed a place within the temple precincts on the plea of public convenience. It dealt only with things required for the temple services, victims for the various offerings, wine, oil, salt, and the like, and it had the sanction of the chief priests. It saved pilgrims the trouble of bringing the various requirements with them from their distant homes, and enabled all to obtain on the spot what they needed for sacred use. But it had become the subject of great abuse. The sordid, mercenary spirit turned all to desecration, profanity, greed, and fraud.

**tables of the money-changers.** Every Jew had to pay a tax of a half-shekel annually for the support of the temple, and it had to be paid in Jewish money (Matt. xvii. 24; Exod. xxx. 13, &c.). Pilgrims who brought Gentile money had to get Jewish coin for it. The money-changers reaped large profits by their transactions at the time of the great festivals. They were allowed to charge a sum of from a third to a fourth of a *denarius* for each half-shekel exchanged.

**them that sold the doves.** It was provided by the Levitical law that doves might be offered on the occasion of the purification of women, in the case of those who were unable to purchase lambs (Lev. xii. 8; cf. Luke ii. 22). Doves were also the offerings prescribed in some other cases, such as the cleansing of lepers, &c. (Lev. xiv. 22, xv. 14, 29).

17 carry a vessel through the temple. And he taught, and said unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations? but ye have 18 made it a den of robbers. And the chief priests and the scribes heard it, and sought how they might destroy him:

**16. carry a vessel through the temple.** This, too, is peculiar to Mark. The word 'vessel' here is applicable to any kind of implement or any article of household use—pots, tools, and the like. People had got into the habit of taking a short cut through the precincts of the temple, and had made a business thoroughfare of the sacred enclosure. This had been forbidden by the Jewish authorities. But the prohibition had fallen into neglect, and Jesus enforces it anew.

**17. taught.** The crowds hanging about him there, so deeply moved by what he did in the temple, gave him an opportunity not to be neglected. The great subject of his instructions, as the next words shew, was the Divine purpose of the temple, and the way in which it had been perverted.

**a house of prayer for all the nations.** The quotation is from Isa. lvi. 7. The law provided for the presentation of offerings in the temple on the part of 'strangers' in Israel (Lev. xvii. 8, &c., xxii. 18, &c.; Num. xv. 14, &c.). The prophecy in Isaiah spoke of such strangers—those 'that join themselves to the Lord, to minister unto Him'—as being brought along with the chosen people from exile to God's 'holy mountain'; as made joyful in His 'house of prayer'; and as laying their offerings and sacrifices with acceptance on his altar. Mark alone introduces this mention of the heathen nations, appropriate as it is to a discourse which has its occasion in a desecration proceeding in the court of the Gentiles.

**ye have made it a den of robbers.** Better than the 'den of thieves' of the A.V. This sentence takes us back to the words of another prophet—Jeremiah (vii. 11). Two great evils attended the traffic which the Jewish authorities had allowed. The temple had been turned from its proper purpose as a house of prayer. The chaffering of traders, the noise of the sacrificial beasts, the din of men tramping through the sacred place with their vessels, made prayer incongruous or impracticable in the very place set apart for the use of the Gentiles. But there was a second evil and a worse. The secularity had turned into dishonesty. The place of worship had become a place of robbery, in which greedy and unscrupulous traders enriched themselves at the cost of those who came to offer their oblations to God.

**18. chief priests and the scribes.** In John's Gospel two

for they feared him, for all the multitude was astonished at his teaching.

And every evening he went forth out of the city.

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previous instances of a combination between the chief priests and the scribes are noticed (vii. 32, &c., xi. 47, 57); this is the first occasion of the kind mentioned in the Synoptical Gospels. Luke adds ‘the chief of the people,’ that is, prominent representatives, probably the elders (xix. 47). All classes, therefore—the professional orders and the general body of the people in the person of their outstanding men—now went hand in hand, contriving how to get rid of Jesus.

**they feared him.** The difficulty was how they could effect their end. They saw that he had still multitudes of the common people with him, and that they continued under the spell of his teaching. This made them afraid to interfere with him openly.

**19. out of the city.** Matthew is more explicit, and tells us it was to Bethany. It was our Lord’s habit, therefore, during these fateful days, to spend his active hours in the city, and when he could no longer teach, to retire to the quiet hamlet on the uplands.

Matthew adds some interesting particulars. He mentions how the blind and the lame came to Jesus after the cleansing, and were healed by him—the only instances of healing works done within the temple. He also tells us how the *children* (perhaps members of the temple choir, as has been suggested), caught by the general enthusiasm, took up the Hosannas which they had heard the previous day, and re-echoed them; that the chief priests and scribes were ‘moved with indignation’ at this; and how Jesus rebuked their mistaken displeasure by the testimony of the eighth Psalm (xxi. 14–16).

This narrative, it will now be seen, differs from that in John (ii. 13–17) in not a few points. It does so in respect of time and historical connexion. The incident it reports belongs to the close of the ministry, and is related to the triumphant entry; whereas the occurrence recorded by John belongs to the outset of the ministry, and is placed in relation to the marriage in Cana of Galilee and the visit to Capernaum. There are differences also in the particulars. The scourge of small cords appears in John’s narrative, but not in that of the Synoptists. The prohibition regarding the carrying of vessels through the temple appears in Mark, but not in John. In the Fourth Gospel the Father’s house is described as having been made a *house of merchandise*; in the Second Gospel the charge is a heavier one—‘ye have made it a *den of robbers*.’ In John’s Gospel the purgation ends with nothing more serious than a challenge to Jesus to give proof of his authority; in the Synoptical Gospels it excites the spirit of murderous enmity, and

20 And as they passed by in the morning, they saw the  
 21 fig tree withered away from the roots. And Peter calling  
 to remembrance saith unto him, Rabbi, behold, the fig  
 22 tree which thou cursedst is withered away. And Jesus  
 23 answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. Verily  
 I say unto you, Whosoever shall say unto this mountain,  
 Be thou taken up and cast into the sea ; and shall not

is followed by vengeful co-operation on the part of the professional classes and the heads of the people. There is good reason, therefore, to say that the narratives refer to two distinct events, similar in character and significance, but each with its special appropriateness in its own connexion.

*xii. 20-25. The Withering of the Fig-tree.* Cf. Matt. xxi. 19-22.  
**20. as they passed by in the morning.** As we gather from Matthew (xxi. 19), the tree was not private property, but planted, as was often the case, by the side of the public road, and in a position where any one could see it.

**they saw the fig tree withered away.** What a change ! A change, too, of a kind which they could not fail to notice. Yesterday the tree attracted attention by its unwonted foliage, so fresh and green and abundant. To-day it draws wondering eyes upon it by its shrivelled, blasted look.

**from the roots.** By morning, then, the blight had penetrated it through and through, branch and root. Matthew speaks of the tree as withering *immediately* after Jesus spoke the words, 'Let there be no fruit from thee henceforward for ever.' And the process of decay, which was complete by morning, may well have set in then.

**21. Peter calling to remembrance.** The words of Jesus uttered the previous evening leaped at once into Peter's memory, and in astonishment he called the attention of the Master to the result.

**22. Have faith in God.** The answer might seem little to the point. Yet it was a direct reply to the wonder expressed in Peter's utterance. It referred him to faith and its possibilities as the explanation.

**23. Whosoever shall say unto this mountain.** Jesus had spoken in similar terms to his disciples on the occasion of their failure at the foot of mount Hermon (Matt. xvii. 20; cf. also Luke xvii. 6). This was a favourite figure of speech for things passing ordinary capacity. Rabbis of exceptional influence were described as *removers or pluckers up of mountains*.

doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he saith cometh to pass ; he shall have it. Therefore I say unto you, All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye have received them, and ye shall have them. And whosoever ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any one ; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

**but shall believe.** In the power of his faith in his Father Jesus did his own works ; this strange and startling one no less than others of a different kind which they had often witnessed. The same trustful dependence on God would be for them the source of a power which would make them capable of accomplishing what was impossible to other men.

**24. Therefore I say unto you.** The fact that faith has such power is his reason for proceeding to speak also of prayer.

**All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for.** Prayer, too, will bring them power and make things clear to them. But prayer without faith in God can have no efficacy.

**25. whosoever ye stand praying.** *Kneeling* or entire *prostration* was the form in which prayer was offered on occasions of exceptional public importance or national trouble, as in the case, e. g., of the dedication of the temple (1 Kings viii. 54), Ezra's confession (Ezra ix. 5), Daniel's petitions in the face of the decree (Dan. vi. 10), our Lord's agony (Matt. xxvi. 39), Stephen's death (Acts vii. 50), Paul's prayer at Miletus and at Tyre (Acts xx. 36, xxi. 5). But the ordinary posture seems to have been *standing* (cf. 1 Kings viii. 14, 22 ; Neh. ix. 4 ; Jer. xviii. 20 ; Ps. cxxxiv. 1 ; Matt. vi. 5 ; Luke xviii. 11, 13).

**forgive.** By another natural transition he passes on to inculcate the forgiving spirit. For that is a second condition to the efficacy of prayer, and it is God's order that forgiveness on His part is linked with forgiveness on our part. Of this Jesus had already spoken when he unfolded the nature of prayer in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. vi. 14, 15).

**your Father.** The only occurrence of this highest name of God in Mark. Our Lord had already made his disciples familiar with it (Matt. vi. 12, 14, &c.).

**your trespasses.** A word meaning literally 'lapses,' and so misdeeds.

These declarations on faith, prayer, and forgiveness were appropriate, as Meyer points out, 'to guard against a false conclusion from the occurrence with the fig-tree.' The incident itself has its explanation in its symbolical meaning. The lesson

**27** And they come again to Jerusalem: and as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief **28** priests, and the scribes, and the elders; and they said unto him, By what authority doest thou these things? or **29** who gave thee this authority to do these things? And Jesus said unto them, I will ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do **30** these things. The baptism of John, was it from heaven,

it was intended to teach was the same as that given in the parable of the Fruitless Fig-tree (Luke xiii. 6-9). The fig-tree by the roadside with its shew of leaves was a natural parable of the religious condition of the Jewish people; and the withering to which it was condemned was an acted parable of the doom of the nation. The tree was condemned, as Archbishop Trench remarks, 'not for being without fruit, but for proclaiming by the voice of those leaves that it had fruit; not for being barren, but for being false.'

Verse 26, inserted by the A. V., is omitted by the R. V. as of doubtful documentary authority.

**xi. 27-33. Challenge of the Authority of Jesus:** cf. Matt. xxi. 23-27; Luke xx. 1-8.

**27. walking in the temple.** The third visit, as it appears, at this time. He was again probably in the court of the Gentiles, perhaps in Solomon's porch (John x. 23).

**the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders.** All the three classes now confederate approach him with a challenge. The party included the custodians of the temple, who might reasonably claim to know by what right Jesus asserted jurisdiction where they were in charge, and interfered with customs which they sanctioned.

**28. By what authority.** Their first demand was that he should inform them of the *kind* of authority he had.

**or who gave thee this authority to do these things?** Their second and alternative demand was that he should tell them the source of his authority. To do as he had done, overturning and ejecting in the temple, surely required a sanction that could be produced.

**29. I will ask of you one question.** Before he will say anything about his own authority, he, too, has a matter to settle with them. It is about John's authority to baptize as he did.

**30. was it from heaven, or from men?** The question placed them on the horns of a dilemma. If they said it was a Divine authority, they exposed themselves to the retort that they had

or from men? answer me. And they reasoned with 31 themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him? But should we 32 say, From men—they feared the people: for all verily held John to be a prophet. And they answered Jesus 33 and say, We know not. And Jesus saith unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

And he began to speak unto them in parables. A man 12 planted a vineyard, and set a hedge about it, and digged

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neglected or repudiated it. If they said it was a purely human authority, they feared they would have the people against them; for the people held John to have been a prophet indeed.

**33. We know not.** They took refuge in a cowardly profession of ignorance, and could not further press their own question.

xii. 1-12. *The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen*: cf. Matt. xxi. 33-46; Luke xx. 9-19.

**1. he began to speak unto them in parables.** To this period belong also the parables of the *Two Sons*, and the *Marriage of the King's Son*, which are recorded only by Matthew (xxi. 28-32, xxii. 1-14). Though silenced for the time, the Jewish authorities did not quit the scene, and Jesus resumed his parabolic teaching, giving it a new form specially addressed to those officials and representatives of the people. Luke tells us that this parable of the *Wicked Husbandmen* was spoken to the people themselves, while Matthew and Mark state that it was directed to the official classes in particular.

**a vineyard.** The foundation of the parable is the O.T. figure of Israel as the Lord's vineyard, of which we have instances both in the Psalms and in the Prophets (e.g. Ps. lxxx; Isa. v. 2, &c.; Jer. ii. 21)—a figure peculiarly appropriate in a land in which the vine was tended with such care and yielded such a return (Deut. xxviii. 8, &c.). The passage in the fifth chapter of Isaiah is most in view here.

**set a hedge about it.** The 'hedge' might be a hedge in our sense of the word, a hedge of thorns. The prickly wild aloe is said to be used for such purposes, and to make a very serviceable defence (cf. Ps. lxxx. 12, 13; Song of Songs, ii. 15). Or it might rather be a stone wall of a rough kind, such as may be seen in Palestine to-day. Dean Stanley says that 'enclosures of loose stone, like the walls of fields in Derbyshire or Westmoreland, everywhere catch the eye on the bare slopes of Hebron, of Bethlehem, and of Olivet' (*Sinai and Palestine*, p. 421). Thus

a pit for the winepress, and built a tower, and let it out  
 2 to husbandmen, and went into another country. And at  
 the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he  
 might receive from the husbandmen of the fruits of the  
 3 vineyard. And they took him, and beat him, and sent  
 4 him away empty. And again he sent unto them another  
 servant; and him they wounded in the head, and handled  
 5 shamefully. And he sent another; and him they killed:  
 6 and many others; beating some, and killing some. He  
 had yet one, a beloved son: he sent him last unto them,

was the valuable possession to be protected against wild beasts, boars, jackals, foxes, and the like (Ps. lxxx. 13; Num. xxii. 24; Song of Songs, ii. 15; Neh. iv. 3), and against robbers.

**dugged a pit for the winepress.** The grapes were placed in a vat, in which they were trodden by the feet of the servants—a joyous operation accompanied with song (Judges ix. 27; Isa. lxiii. 2; Jer. xxv. 30). This was the ‘press,’ in most cases a trough dug in the solid rock or in the earth, in which latter case it was lined with masonry (cf. Num. xviii. 30; Prov. iii. 10; Isa. lxiii. 3; Lam. i. 15). At a lower elevation was the ‘pit,’ a smaller cavity, also often excavated out of the rock, into which the juice of the trodden grapes ran.

**built a tower.** For purposes of observation and defence, as also for the shelter of the servants in charge, and for storage. So everything was done that care could do, and the owner who, as was often the case, let the vineyard to tenants, here called ‘the husbandmen,’ was entitled to look at the end of the season for his rent. That rent was paid in the form of a certain portion of the fruits.

**2. he sent to the husbandmen a servant.** First one slave is sent to gather the rent, then another, then many more; but, instead of receiving what was due to their master, they were beaten, or wounded, or killed. In Matthew’s version of the parable the servants are sent in two successive bands. In this Jesus doubtless had in view the treatment of the messengers of God by those in power in the evil times of Jewish history, the menaces levelled at Elijah by Jezebel, and at Elisha by Jehoram (1 Kings xix. 2; 2 Kings vi. 31), the imprisonment of Micaiah (1 Kings xxii. 24-27), the prophets slain in Ahab’s time (1 Kings xviii. 13), the stoning of Zechariah by the order of Joash (2 Chron. xxiv. 21), and the like.

**6. He had yet one, a beloved son.** Not a slave now, but one

saying, They will reverence my son. But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours. And they took him, and killed him, and cast him forth out of the vineyard. What therefore will the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others. Have ye not read even this scripture;

of more account by far than many slaves. But when the husbandmen became aware that the son was coming, they took cruel counsel one with another and decided to put him to death, thinking that they might make the inheritance their own. This great title 'heir' in the N. T. is the stated name for the adopted of God (e. g. Rom. iv. 13, viii. 17; Gal. iii. 29, iv. 1, 7; Tit. iii. 7; Heb. vi. 17, xi. 17; Jas. ii. 5). Christ is the 'heir' in the unique sense in which also he is the 'Son,' the 'heir of all things,' made such by God (Heb. i. 2).

**9. What therefore will the lord of the vineyard do?** This is the question to which the terms of the parable are meant to lead up. Here it is put and answered by Jesus himself. In Matthew those addressed are made to give the reply, which condemns them out of their own mouth. In Luke those who hear betray their consciousness of what Jesus meant by crying out, 'God forbid.'

**10. Have ye not read even this scripture?** '*Even* this scripture'; for the passage was a familiar and oft quoted one. It is taken from Ps. cxviii, which, under the figure of a stone cast aside by builders, but afterwards recovered and made the key-stone of the fabric, speaks of Israel as set aside and despised by the world-powers, but finally restored to the place of honour designed for it by God among the nations. This Psalm appears to have received a Messianic interpretation among the Jews. Here it is applied by Jesus to himself, the true representative of Israel, rejected indeed by the ruling classes of a perverted Judaism, but the elect of God, appointed to be the head of a new Israel, the point of unity of the people of God, both Jewish and Gentile. By 'the head of the corner' is meant not the cope-stone, but one of the stones set in the corners of a building so as to bind the walls together—the chief of these, the one laid with public ceremony. Peter makes use more than once of the words thus doubly consecrated by the Lord's application of them (Acts iv. 11; 1 Pet. ii. 4-7). Paul also introduces it more than once into his high argument (Rom. ix. 32; Eph. ii. 20), attaching it to the word of Isaiah (xxviii. 16).

The meaning of the parable could not be mistaken. In its clear terms leaders and people both were shewn themselves in their

The stone which the builders rejected,  
The same was made the head of the corner :

11 This was from the Lord,  
And it is marvellous in our eyes ?

12 And they sought to lay hold on him ; and they feared the multitude ; for they perceived that he spake the parable against them : and they left him, and went away.

13 And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, that they might catch him in talk.

privilege, their sin, and their doom ; in the grace given them by God, their misuse of the gift, and their disregard of His prophets. It was a prophecy of the judgement of God on them and their nation for their final guilt—the rejection of the speaker himself, their Messiah.

**12. they sought to lay hold on him.** A second time they would fain have laid hands on him here and now, but dared not in face of the sympathy of the masses.

xii. 13-17. *Questions by the Pharisees* : cf. Matt. xxii. 15-22 ; Luke xx. 20-26.

**13. they send unto him.** This refers to the chief priests, scribes, and elders already mentioned. Matthew represents the Pharisaic party as the senders, and the persons sent as certain of their own ‘disciples.’ If they were young pupils the selection would be cunningly made, so as to give the impression of sincerity and guilelessness on the part of the questioners. The authorities change their tactics. Instead of confronting Jesus in a body, they now send separate companies of emissaries, all with the purpose of getting Jesus to compromise himself by something he might be tempted to say in reply to some apparently innocent question. A series of three such questions follows.

**and of the Herodians.** The Pharisees take the lead, but associate with themselves some of the Herodians. By these we are to understand members of the Herodian party, of which mention has already been made in Mark’s Gospel (iii. 6) ; not, as some imagine, some of Herod’s soldiers (Luke xxiii. 11). This combination of *Herodians* with the Pharisees is noticed only by Mark. It is of a piece with the crafty character of the policy as a whole. For these two parties were sharply divided in their sympathies with regard to the matter at issue, the one being intensely opposed to the foreign rule of the Roman, the other

And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, **14** we know that thou art true, and carest not for any one: for thou regardest not the person of men, but of a truth teachest the way of God: Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not? Shall we give, or shall we not give? **15** But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see it. And **16**

accepting it and profiting by it. In his reply, therefore, Jesus could not avoid, as they thought, giving offence to one or other.

**catch him, or 'ensnare' him.** It is a hunter's term.

**14. we know that thou art true, and carest not for any one.** A cunningly contrived address, using his truthfulness and fearlessness as inducements to make him answer. Surely he was not the man to shirk awkward and dangerous questions. He would meet their difficulties at any cost, without regard to fear or favour, and so they came to him.

**Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar?** The 'tribute' is the capitation-tax or poll-tax (as distinguished from the ordinary customs on merchandize), levied on individuals and paid yearly into the *imperial* treasury. It was an offence to the patriotic Jew, as it was the token of his subjection to foreign rule, and because the coin in which it was paid bore the emperor's effigy. This was not the case with the copper coins current among the Jews locally, as distinguished from the imperial coinage. In deference to Jewish feeling these were stamped with other devices—leaves of the native trees, and the like.

**15. Shall we give, or shall we not give?** The former question touched only the *legitimacy* of paying the tax under the provisions of the Jewish law. This one brought the matter to the practical point of actual payment or refusal. The rising of Judas of Galilee, the Gaulanite as he is called by Josephus (*Antiq.* xviii. i. 1), which is referred to in Acts (v. 37), had its occasion in the odium attaching to this tax. In the second administration of Quirinius (cf. Luke ii. 1, 2, with respect to the first), when Judæa had been made a part of the Roman province of Syria, a census was ordered (A.D. 6-8), 'the great census,' as it was termed, which was taken according to the Roman methods of enumeration and valuation. It meant the exaction of tribute, which was fiercely resisted by Judas and his followers. To pay tribute to a heathen ruler was to be unfaithful to Jehovah whom alone they owned as king.

**bring me a penny:** rather, a *silverling* or a *shilling*. The tribute had to be paid in the imperial silver coinage. Matthew

they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, 17 Cæsar's. And Jesus said unto them, Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's. And they marvelled greatly at him.

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and Luke say '*shew me.*' But Mark's 'bring me' expresses the exact position. It was Jewish coins that were required for the temple, and the men now about Jesus, Pharisees and others, might not have a *denarius* in their purses. The coin had to be procured, probably from the money-changers, and the bystanders would wait for it wondering all the more what was to happen.

**16. image:** the figure of the head of Tiberius, encircled by laurel.

**superscription:** the legend or device on the other side of the coin. A figure of Livia, the emperor's mother, seated, the sceptre in one hand and a flower in the other, is shewn on a *denarius* which has come down from the time.

**they said unto him, Cæsar's.** Thus were they made to answer their own question. The Jewish Rabbis taught that 'wheresoever the money of any king is current, there the inhabitants acknowledge that king for their lord.' (See Abbot's *Commentary on Matthew and Mark*, p. 242.)

**17. Render.** The word is the one used for the *giving back* of the book to the attendant in the synagogue at Nazareth, and of the healed boy to his father (Luke iv. 20, ix. 42). It means the discharge of a debt, the giving back of something that is due. Benefits received under a government imply corresponding obligations to it. Acceptance of the government of Cæsar, as indicated by acceptance of his coinage and enjoyment of the privileges secured under his rule, meant acceptance also of responsibilities, and among these the payment of what was Cæsar's due, what was required for the support of his administration.

**unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.** There are duties to civil government, then, and duties to God. They are entirely compatible with each other, and are to be faithfully discharged each in its own proper sphere. But there is also a distinction between them, and the one class is not to be confused with the other. There is further a limit to the former. 'The *powers* that be are ordained of God' (Rom. xiii. 1); Cæsar himself is of God, and his commands are binding so far as they are consistent with that relation. Submission and loyal obedience to civil rule are enforced repeatedly in the N.T., especially by Paul and Peter (Rom. xiii. 1-7; 1 Cor. vii. 21-24; Eph. vi. 5-8; Col. iii. 22-25; 1 Pet. ii. 13-17). The duty of refusing obedience

And there come unto him Sadducees, which say that 18

when the requirements of civil authority conflict with the supreme law of duty to God is recognized both in the O. T. (Dan. iii. 18, vi. 10) and in the N. T. (Acts iv. 19, v. 29).

**marvelled greatly.** A strong word, found in the N. T. only here, and meaning that they were utterly amazed, so that they had nothing to say (they ‘held their peace,’ says Luke) and were glad to quit the scene. They ‘left him, and went their way,’ says Matthew. They had hoped they were to ensnare him one way or other. If he said they should pay the tax, he would turn the people against him, who expected their Messiah to rid them of the Roman yoke and the hated Roman taxation. If he said they should not pay, he would expose himself to the charge of not being Cæsar’s friend, and have the Roman authorities against him. The accusation of perverting the nation and ‘forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar,’ for which the reply desired by these Pharisees would have given ground, was afterwards made against him in spite of their defeat on this occasion (Luke xxiii. 2). Here their own action is made to refute and silence them.

xii. 18-27. *The Question of the Sadducees.* Cf. Matt. xxii. 23-33; Luke xx. 27-38.

**18. there come unto him Sadducees.** The emissaries of the Pharisees being discomfited, certain members of the opposite party take their place. This is the first and only direct introduction of the party of the Sadducees in Mark’s Gospel, and the same is the case with Luke (xx. 27). The Sadducees indeed are seldom mentioned by name in the N. T. In the Book of Acts they come thrice upon the scene (iv. 1, v. 17, xxii. 6, 7, 8). As to the Gospels, it is mainly in Matthew that they appear, and not often even there (iii. 1, 7, v. 17, xvi. 6, 11, 12, xxii. 23, 34). In John’s Gospel they are never noticed directly by name. Josephus speaks of them as a small minority of the Jews, and as consisting only of the rich and those of highest station (*Antiq.* xiii. x. 6, xviii. i. 4). The word *Sadducees* is now generally understood to be derived from the proper name Zadok. The Zadok in view is probably the faithful priest of David’s time (2 Sam. xv. 24, &c.; 1 Kings i. 32, &c.). The sons of Zadok had a conspicuous place among the priestly families after the return from exile. They represented the old priestly party, who sought to bring the Jewish people over to Greek ways. They are first heard of as a distinct party in the reign of John Hyrcanus (135-105 B. C.). They enjoyed most power during the times preceding Pompey’s capture of Jerusalem. After the destruction of the city in A. D. 70 they are no more heard of. They belonged to the priestly aristocracy, the party being made up indeed of chief priests and their families. Hence when

there is no resurrection ; and they asked him, saying,  
 19 Master, Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and  
 leave a wife behind him, and leave no child, that his  
 brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his  
 20 brother. There were seven brethren : and the first took  
 21 a wife, and dying left no seed ; and the second took her,

the 'chief priests' are mentioned along with the Pharisees, the Sadduceaic party may be understood to be in view. They counted for little with the people, and they do not seem to have taken any notice of Jesus till late in his ministry. When he accepted the title 'son of David,' and interfered with the jurisdiction of the great council by changing things in the temple, the Sadducees joined with others in the opposition which aimed at his life.

which say that there is no resurrection. So, too, in the parallel passages in Matthew and Luke. So also Josephus (*Antiq.* xviii. i. 3, &c.). In Acts it is added that they held also that there is 'neither angel nor spirit' (xxiii. 8). From Josephus we learn further that they denied future rewards and punishments ; that they thought of the soul as perishing with the body ; and that they disavowed the doctrines of *fate*, or absolute *foreordination*, and *providence* (*Antiq.* xviii. i. 3, &c. ; *Jewish War*, ii. viii. 14).

**19. Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die.** The reference is to the Levirate law as given in the Deuteronomic code (Deut. xxv. 5, 6), which was a provision to prevent the extinction of families. This law of Levirate marriage was to the effect that, if a man died without a son to succeed him, his brother should marry the widow, and that the first-born son of this second union should be registered as the child of the deceased husband. It is to be observed, however, that it did not apply universally, but only to cases where the brothers *dwelt together*. The law is quoted freely, so that the terms vary somewhat in the several records.

**20. There were seven brethren.** They put an imaginary case and an extreme one, which might seem to reduce the doctrine of a bodily resurrection to absurdity. Not unlikely it was a familiar puzzle with which the sceptical Sadducee was accustomed to vex the soul of the orthodox Pharisee ; and to the Pharisee with his crude, materialistic ideas of the future life it would be a great difficulty. Would this new teacher be able to meet it without committing himself to their sceptical doctrine, or to a position which could be ridiculed ? The doctrine of a bodily resurrection and the word of the law in the matter of Levirate unions were things that could not, as they thought, be reconciled. Could he answer so as to make them consistent ?

and died, leaving no seed behind him ; and the third likewise : and the seven left no seed. Last of all the woman also died. In the resurrection whose wife shall she be of them ? for the seven had her to wife. Jesus said unto them, Is it not for this cause that ye err, that ye know not the scriptures, nor the power of God ? For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage ; but are as angels in heaven. But as touching the dead, that they are raised ; have ye

**24. Is it not for this cause that ye err ?** He declares the questioners themselves at fault. The difficulty which they propounded had no foundation. It was in error they made of it what they did. He gives two reasons also for their mistake—their misunderstanding of the very scriptures to which they appealed, and their ignorance of the power of God. In the following verses he explains these reasons further, taking the latter first.

**25. they neither marry, nor are given in marriage.** These Sadducees, clever as they judged themselves, and ill-content with the popular doctrine, were yet as incapable as others of rising above the ordinary notions of things. They thought of life only as it was known to them under its earthly conditions. They had no conception of a life that could be both lived and continued under higher conditions and with different relations. But God's power was not to be limited, as they imagined, to one order of existence. He could provide a life in which there was no death, and, therefore, neither birth nor marriage. So in Luke the statement is given in these express terms—‘They that are accounted worthy to attain to that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage : for neither can they die any more’ (xx. 35, 36).

**are as angels.** Not ‘*are* angels,’ but ‘*are as* angels.’ The difference between human existence and angelic remains ; but in the resurrection-life men will be like angels, as the possessors of an undying life, independent of the marriage relation.

**26. have ye not read in the book of Moses ?** Jesus now passes to the other reason for their mistake—their misunderstandings of scripture. They had appealed to Moses. He now confutes them by Moses, convicting them of ignorance of the very authority they had adduced. The ‘book of Moses’ is the law ; which gets that name in the O. T. (2 Chron. xxxv. 12), but in the N. T. is usually known as ‘Moses’ (Luke xvi. 29) or ‘the law of Moses’ (Luke xxiv. 44; Acts xxviii. 23; cf. John i. 45).

not read in the book of Moses, in *the place concerning* the Bush, how God spake unto him, saying, I *am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of  
 27 Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living: ye do greatly err.

**in the place concerning the Bush:** lit. ‘at *The Bush*’; that is, in the paragraph of the Torah or *Law* which gives the story of the Burning Bush (Exod. iii. 1, &c.). So in Rom. xi. 2 we have ‘*in Elijah*’ (R. V., *marg.*) for ‘*in the section relating to Elijah*.’

**how God spake unto him.** In Luke, Moses is made the speaker (xx. 37.)

**I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.** Cf. Exod. iii. 6. The repetition of the terms points to the distinct and individual relation in which God stands to each.

**27. He is not the God of the dead, but of the living.** God spoke of Himself as still the God of the patriarchs, still in relation to them though they were departed. But the living God can be in actual, living relation only to the living. Hence these departed fathers must be in existence. The point of the statement turns on two things. Of these the first is the O. T. conception of the *divine fellowship*. The condition of life, of all life worthy of the name, is the fellowship of God, and that fellowship ensures the life (cf. e. g. Ps. xvi. 8-11, xl ix. 13-15, lxxiii. 23-26.) The second is the O. T. conception of *man*. The Hebrew Scriptures think of man as a unity, in the integrity and oneness of his corporeal and incorporeal nature. They do not distinguish sharply, as modern thought does, between soul and body, and speak simply of the immortality of the latter. It is the *man* himself, the whole living, breathing man, that passes at death unto Sheol, the unseen world, and continues to exist there. It was on these foundations that the O. T. revelation of life, immortality, and resurrection rose and grew from stage to stage in definiteness and clearness. So the argument from the words ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,’ which might seem to us not to carry us beyond the idea of an immortality of soul, meant to the Hebrew mind the continued existence of the *man* himself in the integrity of his substantial, living being, and so contained the idea of a resurrection. Luke adds ‘for all live to him,’ extending the scope of the statement beyond the patriarchs named. To us men seem to die; to God they live. ‘Death is a change of relation to the world and to men; it does not change our relation to God’ (Swete).

**ye do greatly err.** Peculiar to Mark. Their lack of insight into scripture had led them far astray. Matthew notices the effect

And one of the scribes came, and heard them question- 28  
ing together, and knowing that he had answered them  
well, asked him, What commandment is the first of all?  
Jesus answered, The first is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord 29  
our God, the Lord is one: and thou shalt love the Lord 30  
thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and  
with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. The second 31  
is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There

upon the people and upon the questioners. The multitudes 'were astonished'; the Sadducees were 'put to silence' (xxii. 33, 34).

xii. 28-34. *The Question of a Scribe*: cf. Matt. xxii. 34-40.

**28. one of the scribes came.** This scribe, a 'lawyer' as Matthew calls him, had been present when the question of the resurrection was under discussion, and had been impressed by the reply of Jesus. He belonged to the party of the Pharisees (Matt. xxii. 34, 35), and when the opposite sect withdraws silenced, he comes forward with a question of a different kind. Matthew speaks of him as 'tempting' Jesus (xxii. 35). Mark represents Jesus as recognizing the discreetness of his words (xii. 34). Luke introduces his account of the question of a lawyer regarding the way to inherit eternal life at an earlier stage, after his report of the mission of the Seventy, and in connexion with the parable of the Good Samaritan (x. 25-29).

**What commandment?** The words may refer to the *quality* of the commandment rather than to its place among the ten. What is the *kind* of commandment that is entitled to rank first? What must be its distinguishing quality? The question was one often debated in the schools.

**29. The first is, Hear, O Israel.** Jesus at once points the scribe to the words of the Deuteronomic version of the decalogue (Deut. vi. 4, 5), and to that part of it which not only had the foremost place in the code, but was repeated twice every day by all Jews, and was carried about by the strictest of them in their phylacteries—the two small leather boxes worn, the one on the forehead and the other on the left arm (Matt. xxiii. 1, &c.). Our Lord may have pointed, as he spoke, to such a phylactery on the person of the scribe himself as a visible witness to the supremacy of the commandment which enjoined love to God, and that with all the capacities of our being—'heart' and 'soul' and 'mind' and 'strength,' the whole force of our intellectual, emotional, and moral nature.

**The Lord our God, the Lord is one.** Better than the rendering of the A.V., 'the Lord our God is one Lord.'

**31. The second is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as**

32 is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Of a truth, Master, thou hast well said that he is one; and there is none other but he: 33 and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.

**thyself.** The words are from Leviticus (xix. 18); cf. Rom. xiii. 9; Gal. v. 14; Jas. ii. 8. In Leviticus the word 'neighbour' is used with reference to fellow Jews. In the N.T. it has the widest possible extension of meaning. Jesus lifted it at once and for ever out of its more limited application by his parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke x. 29-37). This precept, therefore, expresses the *principle* of the second table of the moral law as the former does that of the first table. This mention of a *second* foremost commandment is made unsolicited, and this precept is said by Jesus expressly to be 'like unto' the first (xxii. 39), of the same character, with the same claims, and equally essential. The sum and substance of all duty are in these two requirements, and the second is the test of the first. Than these there can be none 'greater.'

**34. answered discreetly.** Jesus saw that the scribe recognized the moral duties to be far more than ceremonial performances and material sacrifices in any of their forms. 'Burnt-offerings' is the more specific term, applicable to offerings expressive of thanksgiving or, it may be, of dedication. 'Sacrifices' is the more general term, covering all kinds of sacrificial victims or offerings. In the Epistle to the Hebrews we read of 'sacrifices and offerings, and whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin' (x. 8).

**Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.** The scribe had at least this qualification for the kingdom, that he understood its requirements to be *moral* requirements, the fundamental duties of love to God and love to man, and not ceremonial observances. Having this insight into spiritual things and this sympathy with them, he wanted little to make him a disciple.

**durst ask him any question.** The policy of entangling questions had failed. In each case the captious questioners had been refuted out of their own mouths, and in each case the difficulty had been solved by being taken down to the underlying principle. None had the courage to proceed further in this way.

And Jesus answered and said, as he taught in the <sup>35</sup> temple, How say the scribes that the Christ is the son of David? David himself said in the Holy Spirit, <sup>36</sup>

The Lord said unto my Lord,

Sit thou on my right hand,

Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet.

David himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he his <sup>37</sup> son? And the common people heard him gladly.

xii. 35-40. *The Counter-question of Jesus*: cf. Matt. xxii. 41-45; Luke xx. 41-44.

**35. answered and said.** As if in what he now said he had still questions in view, those questions which had been put to him. He will now dismiss them once and for all by a counter-question, and one which these men could not answer.

**as he taught in the temple.** When courage failed his interrogators to continue their course, he was able to resume his instructions in the temple which had been interrupted.

**How say the scribes?** In Matthew the question is addressed to the Pharisees. Both parties seem to have been present again.

**that the Christ** (i. e. the Messiah) **is the son of David.** That the Messiah was to come of David's line was inferred from important passages in the Prophets (Isa. xi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5) and the Psalms (lxxxix. 3, 4, cxxxii. 11). It was the general belief of the time (cf. Matt. xxi. 9, 15; Mark xi. 10).

**36. David himself said in the Holy Spirit.** That is, by inspiration, or in the character of a prophet. So Peter, quoting the sixteenth Psalm as David's, says of him that 'being a prophet . . . he foreseeing *this* spake of the resurrection of the Christ' (Acts ii. 25, 30, 31). The mention of his inspiration here gives the greater authority to his words. The Psalm in question, the sixteenth, was interpreted as a Messianic Psalm, and in that character it is quoted in the N. T. more frequently than any other Messianic passage of the O. T. (Acts ii. 34, 35; 1 Cor. xv. 25; Heb. i. 13, v. 6, vii. 17, 21). It is quoted here with very little modification from the Greek version of the O. T. Jesus does not pause here to occupy himself with any questions of Biblical criticism. He accepts the current view of the authorship and the interpretation of the Psalm, and on that basis proposes his question, by which he is at once to silence these crafty adversaries finally, and to expose the insufficiency of their ideas of the Messiah.

**37. David himself calleth him Lord.** The Psalm speaks of a prince who is also priest, and of him as one who is exalted to equality with Jehovah and makes subjects of all his enemies. This

38 And in his teaching he said, Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and *to have* salutations 39 in the marketplaces, and chief seats in the synagogues, 40 and chief places at feasts: they which devour widows'

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prince is addressed by Jehovah and is called by him *Lord*. This is said by 'David himself,' the Psalm being written by him, and it is said prophetically of the Messiah whom these scribes and Pharisees speak of as the *son* of David. So there arises the difficulty which is expressed in the next sentence.

**whence is he his son?** How comes it then that he is his son? How can this Messiah, who is the subject of David's prophecy, be at once David's *Lord* and David's *son*? To this question neither scribes nor Pharisees could reply, because their ideas of the Messiah were limited and insufficient. The conjunction of Lordship and sonship meant, what they did not recognize, that the Messiah was more than a royal descendant of David the king—that he had a higher relation still, a peculiar relation to God which made him Lord even of David.

**And the common people:** rather, the 'great multitude' of the common people.

**heard him gladly.** In the connexion in which they stand here the words seem to mean that they heard gladly what he said of Messiah's Lordship as well as his Davidic sonship.

xii. 38-40. *Warning against the Scribes*: cf. Matt. xxiii. 1-39; Luke xx. 45-47.

**38. And in his teaching he said.** He was able now to continue his teaching. It was directed both to his disciples and to the people (Matt. xxiii. 1), to the disciples in the first instance, but also in the hearing of the people (Luke xx. 45). It took the form now of denunciation of the professional classes and warning against them. Of this teaching Mark and Luke give but a few representative fragments. In Matthew we have it recorded at greater length.

**which desire to walk in long robes.** Stately, flowing robes like those of kings and priests. The sign of ostentation.

**salutations in the marketplaces.** High-sounding titles, *Rabbi*, *Master*, and the like (cf. Matt. xxii. 7-10), addressed to them in the most public way.

**39. chief seats in the synagogues.** Probably the benches or stalls reserved for the elders, in front of the ark and facing the people.

**chief places at feasts.** Not 'the uppermost rooms' as in the A. V., but the places reserved at table for the most eminent guests. What these were is not quite certain. Probably custom was not

houses, and for a pretence make long prayers; these shall receive greater condemnation.

And he sat down over against the treasury, and beheld 41

constant. But in the Rabbinical books the seat of honour is said to have been the central place, when three persons reclined together. Three couches, it is said, used to be arranged along three sides of a table (the fourth side being left open for the purpose of service), and of these the middle one was the place of the chief guest. These scribes craved, therefore, to be treated as the personages of the greatest importance on social occasions as well as on religious.

**40. they which devour widows' houses.** Widows were under the protection of the Law (Exod. xxii. 22), and the scribes, as the custodians and interpreters of the Law, were specially bound to care for them. The guilt of these scribes in enriching themselves, no doubt under legal forms, at the cost of the solitary and defenceless ones who trusted them, was all the greater.

**and for a pretence make long prayers.** They hid their real character under a profession of extraordinary piety, and under colour of being men more given to prayer than others practised their greedy and dishonest arts.

Ostentation, ambition, pride, avarice—these were the sins that brought judgement on the scribes, and the heavier judgement because all was done under the cloak of hypocrisy. The man who lives for avarice and ambition has his condemnation. The man who does this under the cover of a loud religious profession has the greater condemnation.

xii. 41-44. *The Widow's Offering*: cf. Luke xxi. 1-4.

**41. he sat down.** Jesus had left the court of the Gentiles in which he had been teaching and answering ensnaring questions, and had passed into the court of the women. Here he seated himself, weary no doubt with what he had had to do, on the steps or within the gate (where alone it seems to have been allowable; see Edersheim's *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, ii. 387), and watched the people as they brought their gifts. Mark's narrative is characteristically graphic all through. It shews us Jesus *seating* himself, the exact position which he took, the interest with which he *watched* the multitudes of various classes passing him, the solitary figure of the widow catching his attention, and his call to the disciples.

**over against the treasury.** In the Apocrypha mention is made of the sacred treasury—a depository for the safe keeping not only of treasure, but of public records, and also of the property of widows and orphans (1 Macc. xiv. 49; 2 Macc. iii. 6, 10, 28, 40, iv. 42, v. 18). Josephus also speaks of 'treasuries in the court

how the multitude cast money into the treasury: and  
**42** many that were rich cast in much. And there came a poor widow, and she cast in two mites, which make

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of the women in Herod's temple (*Jewish War*, v. v. 2, vi. v. 2), and of 'the treasury' (*Antiq.* xix. vi. 1). Here the name 'treasury' appears to be given to that part of the court of the women (a court large enough, it is said, to accommodate more than 15,000 people) in which provision was made for receiving the contributions of the worshippers. Under the colonnades were placed thirteen boxes, which were called the 'trumpets,' because of their trumpet-shaped mouths, into which offerings in money were dropped. (Cf. Luke xxi. 1, and also John viii. 20.) Of these, according to Lightfoot (*Horæ Hebr. et Talm.*, p. 536, &c.), 'nine chests were for the appointed temple-tribute, and for the sacrifice-tribute, that is, money-gifts instead of the sacrifices; four chests for free-will offerings, for wood, incense, temple-decoration, and burnt-offerings.'

**beheld how the multitude cast money.** The money would be mostly the copper coins which 'the masses' handled. Luke says Jesus 'looked up' (xx. 1), that is, from the floor of the court or the steps where he had sat down, his attention being caught by the moving figures, and the dropping of the coins into the boxes.

**many that were rich cast in much.** It became so much the fashion to give lavishly that a law had to be enacted, we are told, forbidding the gift to the temple of more than a certain proportion of one's possessions. And the amount of such contributions may be inferred by 'recalling the circumstance 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.' (Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, ii. p. 388.)

**42. And there came a poor widow.** 'One poor widow,' as the margin of the R. V. puts it. A single, solitary, sorrowful, poverty-stricken figure, lost in the passing crowds, but filling the Master's eye.

**two mites, which make a farthing.** The 'mite' was a small copper coin, the smallest Jewish coin indeed, in value making half a Roman *quadrans* (as Mark explains to his Gentile readers), the eighth of an *as*, or the eightieth part of the *denarius* or shilling, which made the day's wage of a labourer. It would take about ten of these mites to make one of our pennies. The widow had but two of these trifling coins, and she parted with *both*. There was

a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and 43 said unto them, Verily I say unto you, This poor widow cast in more than all they which are casting into the treasury : for they all did cast in of their superfluity ; but 44 she of her want did cast in all that she had, *even* all her living.

And as he went forth out of the temple, one of his 13 disciples saith unto him, Master, behold, what manner

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a Rabbinical rule forbidding an offering so meagre as a single mite. But that referred to the case of almsgiving, and is not in point here.

**43. called . . . his disciples.** He would have them together again and near him, so that all might hear the lesson suggested by this incident. And he gives them to understand its importance for themselves by prefacing it with the solemn words, ‘Verily I say unto you.’

**cast in more than all they.** In this case the poor giver, he wished them to understand, was the princely giver—a more liberal contributor than the whole multitude of the others.

**44. of their superfluity . . . she of her want.** The circumstances of the case explain the judgement. All the others gave out of their abundance, and their gift was limited to what they could easily spare. She gave out of her penury, and her gift consisted of all that she had—‘*even* all her living,’ all that she had for her support at the time. The giver, not the gift; the measure of the self-sacrifice, not the amount of the contribution—that is the Divine standard of appraisement.

xiii. 1-2. *Announcement of the Destruction of the Temple*: cf. Matt. xxiv. 1-2; Luke xxi. 5-6.

**1. as he went forth out of the temple.** The work of another day being finished, he was again leaving the temple courts, and, as we may infer, turning towards Bethany. It is probable that the visit of the Greeks recorded by John (xii. 20-36) took place immediately before this departure from the temple. These Greeks could not enter the court of the women. This explains perhaps their request to see Jesus. In the outer court they might see him ; but they could not pass beyond that.

**one of his disciples.** He is not named, but he may have been Peter, the usual spokesman, or Andrew.

**behold, what manner of stones and what manner of buildings!** The Herodian temple was of extraordinary magnificence and architectural grandeur. The blocks of which it was built were of a magnitude that staggers the modern Western mind. Josephus

2 of stones and what manner of buildings! And Jesus said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left here one stone upon another, which shall not be thrown down.

3 And as he sat on the mount of Olives over against the

speaks of the stones of part of it as being ‘each in length twenty-five cubits, in height eight, in breadth about twelve’ (*Antiq.* xv. xi. 3), and of some of them as being ‘forty-five cubits in length, five in height, and six in breadth’ (*Jewish War*, v. v. 6). It was not strange that the disciples, as they were leaving it now and looked upon its glories, called the Master’s attention to its mass and splendour, the stupendous blocks of marble of which it was built, the grandeur of its various parts, its courts and gates and colonnades and the votive offerings (the ‘gifts’ of Luke xxi. 5), such as the golden vine presented by Herod the Great, with which it was enriched. Their action may have been prompted by something just said by Jesus, perhaps by his lament over Jerusalem and the words about the *desolation* of the house with which, according to Matthew’s Gospel (xxiii. 37-39), he closed his denunciations of the scribes and Pharisees.

**2. Seest thou these great buildings?** Did the speaker’s eye rest with pride and wonder on the structure that made Jerusalem famous over the world? It was to gaze upon a different spectacle shortly.

**there shall not be left here one stone upon another.** Some of the great stones of the underbuilding yet remain. But of the structure on which the disciples now looked nothing is left standing. The destruction that has overtaken the great temples of ancient Egypt is less utter by far than is the case with the temple of the Jews. When Titus captured Jerusalem he left the work of demolition to be completed by the tenth legion, and it was done so thoroughly that ‘no one visiting the city,’ says Josephus, ‘would believe it had ever been inhabited’ (*Jewish War*, vii. i. 1). Jesus took up the announcement of ancient prophecy which declared that Zion was to be ‘plowed as a field,’ and Jerusalem to ‘become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest’ (Mic. iii. 12), and in forty years after he spoke his word was fulfilled to the letter.

xiii. 3-13. *The Questions of four of the Twelve, and the Answer of Jesus:* cf. Matt. xxiv. 3-14; Luke xxi. 8-19.

**3. as he sat on the mount of Olives.** On his way to Bethany Jesus had now crossed the Kidron and got to the top of the steep path up the mount of Olives. Here he paused and sat down to

temple; Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign when these things are all about to be accomplished? And Jesus began to say unto them, Take heed that no man lead you astray. Many shall come in my name, saying, I am *he*; and shall lead many

rest, with the temple full in his view. Seen from this position the magnificent structure so splendidly placed must have been a grand and glorious spectacle.

**asked him privately.** Four of the Twelve come up to him as he sits (whether acting of themselves or chosen for the purpose by their brethren is not explained), and apart from the rest address certain questions to him. They are the two pairs of brothers who were the first called, and they are named in the order in which they appear in the record of the selection and ordination of the apostles.

**4. Tell us, when shall these things be?** The questions were suggested by what Jesus had just said of the overthrow of the massive buildings on which they had been looking. The first of the two questions was about the *time* when 'these things' (that is, the predicted destruction of the temple) were to come about. The second question was about 'the sign,' some visible portent or signal which they expected to be given and by which they might know the events in question to be near. They speak as if only one sign, a definite and unmistakable token, was in their thoughts. Matthew represents the questions as touching not only the destruction of the temple, but Christ's own 'coming' and the 'end of the world,' or 'consummation of the age' (xxiv. 3). The nearer event is thus taken as coincident with the remoter, and the one is regarded as included in the other.

**5. Take heed that no man lead you astray.** In his reply, Jesus has regard first to the question about the *sign*. But he mentions no single sign such as the four spoke of. And before he addresses himself to either question he delivers a solemn caution, one which he also repeats as he proceeds, to the questioners themselves. Their first necessity was to look to themselves and their own peril—a peril against which they might be helpless if their minds were taken up by questions about times and signs. That was the danger of being beguiled and 'led astray' by pretentious, religious impostors.

**6. many shall come in my name.** The possibility of being seduced from their faith—that is the first thing on which they require instruction and forewarning. And the danger was great, because in these searching and calamitous times there would be

7 astray. And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be not troubled: *these things* must needs come 8 to pass; but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: there shall be earthquakes in divers places; there shall be famines: these things are the beginning of travail.

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many false teachers, who would come ‘saying, I am *he*,’ that is, claiming to be the Messiah. Josephus speaks more than once of such false prophets and impostors, and mentions one by name—Theudas (*Antiq.* xx. v. 1; *Jewish War*, ii. xiii. 4). The case of Simon Magus, who gave himself out to be ‘some great one’ and was taken by the Samaritan multitude to be ‘that power of God which is called Great’ (Acts viii. 9, 10), is also in point.

**7. wars and rumours of wars.** Times of unrest and political commotion were before them. In point of fact, during the thirty or forty years preceding the fall of Jerusalem the Holy Land was in a peculiarly unsettled condition. It was a period of risings, riots, and deepening conflict with the Roman power.

**be not troubled:** these things **must needs come to pass.** They were not to take these things as the sign of the end or become disquieted by them. Such commotions were only in the natural course of things—things that in the Divine purpose have to come, and things that may come at any time in the present condition of the world.

**8. for nation shall rise against nation.** In spite of these wars and rumours of wars the end will not be yet, and for the reason that there are other things which must happen before that—struggles among the nations, earthquakes, famines. Luke adds ‘pestilences,’ and ‘terrors and great signs from heaven’ (xxi. 11). Notice the sententiousness of Mark’s statement, ‘there shall be earthquakes in divers places; there shall be famines.’ Compare the terms in which both in O. T. prophecy and in the non-canonical Apocalypses announcements of judicial visitations of God are given (e. g. Isa. viii. 21; Jer. xxiii. 19; Ezek. v. 12: *Book of Enoch*, i. 6; 4 Esdras xvi. 36-40). In Acts xi. 28 reference is made to the prophecy of famine ‘signified by the Spirit’ by Agabus, and its fulfilment in the time of Claudius.

**these things are the beginning of travail.** Such political convulsions and national disasters are not to be taken for the ‘end’ itself. They are, however, ‘the beginning of travail’—the pangs by which the new order of things, ‘the regeneration’ (Matt. xix. 28) will be ushered in. This word ‘travail’ is of rare occurrence in the N. T. In its literal sense it is used in 1 Thess,

But take ye heed to yourselves : for they shall deliver you up to councils ; and in synagogues shall ye be beaten ; and before governors and kings shall ye stand for my sake, for a testimony unto them. And the gospel must first be

v. 3 ; in a figurative sense it is found here, in Matt. xxiv. 8, and (with reference to *death*) in Acts ii. 24. Cf. also Paul's description of the whole creation as *travailing in pain together until now*, waiting for the event by which it shall be 'delivered from the bondage of corruption' (Rom. viii. 21, 22). In the Rabbinical literature mention is made of the 'pangs' or 'travails of Messiah'—the name given to the calamities by which the Advent of Messiah was to be heralded.

**9. But take ye heed to yourselves.** A repetition of the caution already given (xiii. 5), but with reference to another kind of peril. False teachers, wars, disasters, portents—others might busy themselves with these, and try to discover 'signs' in them. But it should not be so with his disciples. Their first care should be directed to themselves and the trials that may shake their own faith.

**councils:** *lit.* 'Sanhedrins.' Not only the great council of Jerusalem, therefore, but also the *local* councils, the bodies which had the power of discipline in Jewish towns, judicial courts consisting of the elders of the synagogues. Whether in the case of the Twelve or in that of others, this announcement had not long to wait for its fulfilment (Acts iv. 5, 13, v. 21, 27; vi. 12, Stephen; xxiii. 1, Paul).

**and in synagogues shall ye be beaten:** or, 'and into synagogues, ye shall be beaten.' The ecclesiastical courts proper. In each synagogue there was a subordinate official called the 'minister,' the *Chazzan* who was the servant of the congregation. This official had not only to see to the production of the copy of the Scriptures at public worship and to its removal again, but was also charged with the duty of maintaining order, and had the power of scourging. See Paul's case (2 Cor. xi. 24).

**governors:** that is, rulers less than royal, the name being given in the N. T. to the official representatives of the Imperial power in the provinces—procurators, proconsuls, and the like (1 Pet. ii. 14), and specially to the Roman Procurator of Judæa (Matt. xxvii. 2).

**kings:** supreme rulers, whether kings of particular states or Roman Cæsars. Paul had to stand before the *governors* Felix and Festus, before the *king* Agrippa (Acts xxvi. 1-32), and before the emperor Nero (2 Tim. iv. 16).

**for a testimony unto them.** To bear witness for Christ—

11 preached unto all the nations. And when they lead you  
*to judgement*, and deliver you up, be not anxious beforehand what ye shall speak: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that  
 12 speak, but the Holy Ghost. And brother shall deliver

there was the Divine purpose of the providence which permitted them to be dragged before these various tribunals, Jewish and Roman. Luke gives the other side of this purpose—'It shall turn unto you for a testimony' (xxi. 13).

**10. And the gospel must first be preached unto all the nations.** The world-wide extension of the 'glad tidings' must precede the 'end.' This, too, is in the Divine purpose—it 'must,' there is a moral necessity for it. Even before the destruction of Jerusalem, Paul could say that 'from Jerusalem, and round about even unto Illyricum' he had 'fully preached the gospel of Christ' (Rom. xv. 19), and that his mission took him next to the far west, into Spain (Rom. xv. 24, 28).

**11. anxious beforehand:** an expressive word, of which this is the one occurrence in the N. T. It conveys the idea of the distraction caused by anxiety about what may happen or what ought to be done. The Master knew how his disciples would be filled with natural fears when they were called to answer for themselves before these judicial tribunals, especially the unfamiliar courts in which the dreaded Roman authorities sat. He arms them against these distractions by giving them the assurance of Divine help to meet exceptional trials of their mental resources and their courage.

**it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.** When the time to make their defence came, the Spirit of God would be their spokesman or give them what they ought to say—the matter and the words alike. In Luke this assurance is given in more particular terms, recalling the ancient promise to Moses (Exod. iv. 11, &c.)—'I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to withstand or to gainsay' (xxi. 15). This promise of special help is given not with a view to ordinary circumstances, but with reference to the exceptional case of appearances before governors and kings. Their Inspirer and Advocate is alternatively Jesus himself, as in Luke, or 'the Holy Ghost' as in Mark. In ancient Jewish prophecy the possession of the spirit of God, the spirit of the Lord, was one of the tokens of the Messiah and the Messianic age (Isa. xi. 2, xlii. 1, lix. 21, lxi. 1; Mic. iii. 8; Joel ii. 28). The term 'holy spirit' occurs in the O. T., but rarely (Ps. li. 11; Isa. lxiii. 10, 11). It is also found in the *Book of Wisdom* (i. 5). In the O. T. the 'spirit' is

up brother to death, and the father his child; and children shall rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.

usually represented as a power proceeding from God and communicated by Him. In the two instances in which the particular term 'holy spirit' occurs, the meaning is larger and more definite. In Ps. li. 11, the 'holy spirit' appears as the principle or power of sanctification; in Isa. lxiii. 10, 11 the 'holy spirit' is a spirit in which God acts in some way personally, and that is on the way to be conceived of as a *personal* power. But we have not in the O. T. the full and definite doctrine of the personal Spirit of God that is contained in the great N. T. phrase 'the Holy Spirit' or 'Holy Ghost,' and has so large a place in the distinctive teaching of the N. T.

**12. brother shall deliver up brother.** Terrors of constituted authorities are not the worst they have to face. They will suffer from the more bitter and insidious persecution of friends, from the cruel treacheries even of those related to them by the closest ties of nature.

**and cause them to be put to death:** the margin of the R. V. puts it simply and directly, 'put them to death.' But the idea seems to be 'shall work their death,' and it is well expressed by the Rhemish Version. In the Jewish councils they had scourging to fear. But when they came into the hands of the Roman authorities they should have to look for the death penalty.

**13. ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.** These words are given in all three Gospels, and without variation. They mean not only that the disciples shall be hated, but that they shall *continue* to be hated. Their first and last offence, the thing that shall constantly count against them beyond all else, will be the fact that they are *Christians*. In Peter's Epistle to the scattered Asiatic churches we already hear of suffering 'as a Christian' (1 Pet. iv. 16). The early Christian writers speak, one after another, of suffering 'for his name' (Polycarp, *Epistle to Philippians*, 8), of 'the name' being taken as sufficient evidence against one (Justin Martyr, *Apol.* i. 4), of 'the confession of the name' being the one thing needed to bring public odium on one (Tertull. *Apol.* 2).

**he that endureth to the end.** The phrase 'to the end' here does not refer to the crisis of the *end*, the destruction of Jerusalem or the end of things, of which the four had spoken. It describes the completeness of the endurance—an endurance

**14** : But when ye see the abomination of desolation standing

sustained all through. The *endurance* in question also is not the passive virtue of patience, in our sense of bearing things without murmur or resistance, but the manlier and more positive grace of *perseverance* or *steadfastness*. This grace has a large place in the N. T., most especially in the Epistles of Paul and the Book of Revelation (Jas. i. 3, 4; 1 Pet. ii. 20; Heb. xii. 1; Rom. v. 3; &c., viii. 25; 1 Thess. i. 3; 2 Thess. i. 4, iii. 5; Rev. i. 9, ii. 2, 3, iii. 10, xiii. 10, &c.). Josephus uses it of the indomitable constancy of the heroes of the Maccabean struggle (*Antiq.* xii. vi. 7). Luke gives this part of our Lord's caution a notable turn—'In your patience ye shall win your souls' (or, 'lives,' xxi. 19).

xiii. 14-23. *The Sign of the Fall of Jerusalem*: cf. Matt. xxiv. 15-25; Luke xxi. 20-24.

**14. But when ye see the abomination of desolation.** From these personal warnings Jesus proceeds to speak next of the event in which they may see the real 'sign' of the end. Wars and rumours of wars in connexion with other parts of the earth are not to be made too much of. But when these touch the Holy City they become significant. The 'abomination of desolation' is 'the abomination that causes desolation.' This expressive term 'abomination' occurs some half-dozen times in the N. T. (Matt. xxiv. 15; Mark xiii. 14; Luke xvi. 15; Rev. xvii. 4, 5, xxi. 27). In the O. T. it is used specially of things belonging to idolatrous worship, e. g. to idols (Deut. xxix. 17), to false gods (Ezek. vii. 20), to Milcom in particular, 'the abomination of the Ammonites' (1 Kings xi. 5), to the horrid rites of the heathen practised by Ahaz (2 Kings xvi. 3). The precise phrase 'the abomination of desolation' here used by our Lord is one that occurs thrice in the Book of Daniel (ix. 27, xi. 31, xii. 11); and that the Danielic passage is in view here is expressly stated by Matthew, who adds the words 'which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet' (xxiv. 15). What is to be understood by the phrase? In the prophecy of Daniel it probably refers to the outrages of Antiochus Epiphanes, the Syrian conqueror, and particularly to the desecration of the temple by placing a heathen altar upon the altar of burnt-offering. In the Apocryphal literature it is quoted in connexion with the erection of an altar to Jove in the temple (1 Macc. i. 54). But here it is applied to the desecration of the Holy City and the temple by Rome. For Luke gives this as an equivalent statement—'when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that her desolation is at hand' (xxi. 20). The Roman eagles were objects of detestation as well as terror to the Jew, because they bore the effigy of the emperor and had sacrifice offered to them by the soldiery. The Roman armies holding the Holy City in their grasp, the Roman eagles

where he ought not (let him that readeth understand), then let them that are in Judæa flee unto the mountains: and let him that is on the housetop not go down, nor 15 enter in, to take anything out of his house: and let him 16 that is in the field not return back to take his cloke. But 17

listed over the site of the temple itself—these were ‘the abomination of desolation.’ The R. V. adopts the reading ‘standing where *he* ought not,’ instead of ‘where *it* ought not’—a reading which represents the ‘abomination’ as *personal*—concentrated in the Roman soldiery or in the Roman leader. When this personal embodiment of idolatrous, heathen power was seen there, ‘standing where he ought not,’ that is, within the precincts of the temple, the ‘sign’ of the rapidly approaching ‘end’ was to be recognized, and the disciples could not too soon prepare for it. Josephus states that the Romans brought their ensigns into the temple, and placed them over against the eastern gate, and he adds that ‘there they offered sacrifices to them, and with the loudest acclamations proclaimed Titus emperor’ (*Jewish War*, vi. vi. 1).

**let him that readeth understand.** This parenthetical sentence is thrown in by the Evangelist himself, or it may be by the compiler of a collection of the Lord’s words used by Mark in the composition of his Gospel, with the view of calling special attention to this significant sentence of the prophetic discourse—the sentence that indicates the ‘sign’ required.

**let them that are in Judæa flee.** Flight, instant flight without tarrying or looking back, would then be the first duty of the whole Judean people, not of the apostles only. The Christian Jews, we know, did take flight to Pella in Peræa, one of the towns of Decapolis, between Gerasa and Hippos. That was a flight of about 100 miles, which took the fugitives across the hills of Judæa and Moab. Eusebius says that this step was taken in accordance with the warning of a prophetic oracle given to the Christians of Jerusalem before the war began (*Eccles. Hist.* iii. v. 3).

**15. on the housetop.** The roofs of Eastern houses, which were much frequented by the family, being used for purposes of sleep, watching, prayer, worship, &c. (cf. 1 Sam. ix. 25; Neh. viii. 16; Isa. xxii. 1; Jer. xix. 13; Zeph. i. 5; Acts x. 9), were reached by a flight of steps from without. In quitting them there was no need to go within the house, and the fugitive in this great peril was not safe to do so—not even with the view of taking any of his goods with him.

**16. to take his cloke.** The labourer might be overtaken by this desolation when he was at work in the fields, and if he would

woe unto them that are with child and to them that give  
 18 suck in those days ! And pray ye that it be not in the  
 19 winter. For those days shall be tribulation, such as there  
 20 hath not been the like from the beginning of the creation  
 which God created until now, and never shall be. And  
 except the Lord had shortened the days, no flesh would

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escape he could not risk the loss of time involved even in the simple act of picking up his outer garment, which he had taken off when he set himself to his task.

**18. not in the winter :** when rain and cold and storm would make escape so much more difficult. Matthew adds 'neither on a sabbath' (xxiv. 20). The Jew was forbidden to travel on the sabbath beyond a prescribed limit, a sabbath-day's journey, a distance of about 2,000 ells. Even if Christian Jews overcame their scruples in that matter, they would suffer from the opposition of their strict fellow countrymen. When the crisis came in A.D. 69-70 the Romans encircled the city in October—a season sufficiently good for travel. The decisive operations of the siege were carried through some six months later, in a part of the year which was still more favourable.

**19. For those days shall be tribulation.** A strong and significant description of the terrors of that fateful time—the days themselves would be one long tribulation. Josephus speaks of the miseries of the siege of Jerusalem as surpassing the 'misfortunes of all men *from the beginning of the world*', and draws a harrowing picture of the densely crowded city, smitten by the engines of war, rent by sedition, scourged by pestilence and famine ; of its houses and streets filled with multitudes of the dead too vast to be removed ; of the barbarities daily enacted in it, the atrocities of remorseless assassins who stalked through it ; of its miserable and famished inhabitants ground to the dust by cruel hunger and all manner of violence and wretchedness, until they became so dead to the instincts of humanity that mothers snatched the food out of the mouths of husbands and children. Six hundred corpses were thrown over the wall (Josephus, *Jewish War*, vi. ix. 3).

**20. except the Lord had shortened the days.** That is, in His own Divine counsel. We know from history that the siege began early in the year 70 A.D. ; that decisive operations against the section of the city containing the temple were commenced in May ; that the tower of Antonia was taken on June 11 ; that the temple was fired on July 15 ; that Titus entered the city about September 12 ; and that the destruction of life during these months

have been saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he chose, he shortened the days. And then if any man 21 shall say unto you, Lo, here is the Christ; or, Lo, there; believe it not: for there shall arise false Christs and false 22

was so great that if the time had been prolonged none would have been left alive. According to Josephus 97,000 of the besieged actually survived all these horrors. But over 1,100,000 perished (*Jewish War*, v. iii. 1, vi. viii. 4, vi. ix. 3).

**but for the elect's sake, whom he chose, he shortened the days.** Josephus speaks of Titus as fired with a great eagerness to bring the siege to an end, and tells us how in three days he surrounded the city with a wall five miles long and planted with strong garrisons. By these human instrumentalities, the vast energy of the besiegers and the infatuations of the besieged, God fulfilled His counsel in the shortening of the days, and did this for the elect's sake. This great term of grace 'the elect' is not to be thinned down into a mere equivalent for the *righteous*. The 'elect,' indeed, are the good men in the nation, but they are more than that—they are those whom God 'chose'—the objects of His choice and recognition in His eternal purpose. The word has a great history in Scripture and a great place in the vocabulary of grace. In the O. T. it designates those whom God has placed in a peculiar relation to Himself, the covenant-people generally, or the true Israel who are according to His purpose (Ps. cv. 6; Isa. xlvi. 1; xlvi. 20, lxxv. 9). In the N. T. it means God's chosen ones, the select ones from among the 'called,' as in the Gospels, or, as in the Epistles, those *foreknown* and *predestinated* by God and therefore *called* (Rom. viii. 29, 30), those elect absolutely (Rom. viii. 33), the 'elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,' that is, the elect whose choice out of the world has its foundation in the Divine foreknowledge (1 Pet. i. 1, 2).

**22. false Christs and false prophets.** The warning against false teachers (xiii. 6) is now repeated in fuller and more definite terms. The time of the 'end' is to be marked by the emergence of religious impostors and deceivers assuming to be prophets and Messiahs. The 'false Christ' or pseudo-Messiah is one who pretends to be Messiah, as distinguished from the 'antichrist,' the enemy of Christ, of whom John writes (1 John ii. 22, iv. 3; 2 John 7). The 'false prophets,' not unknown in O. T. times (Zech. xiii. 2; 2 Pet. ii. 1), were a more frequent phenomenon than the 'false Christs' in N. T. times, as we see by the case of Bar-jesus (Acts xiii. 6) and the statement of John (1 John iv. 1). That they existed and constituted a source of danger and confusion in the primitive Church appears from what is said in the earliest

prophets, and shall shew signs and wonders, that they  
 23 may lead astray, if possible, the elect. But take ye heed: behold, I have told you all things beforehand.

24 But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall

Christian literature (*Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, 11). In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus had already charged his disciples to 'beware of false prophets,' and had described them in scathing terms as coming to the unwary 'in sheep's clothing' while inwardly they were 'ravening wolves' (Matt. vii. 15).

**shall shew signs and wonders.** This is an element of greater danger, not noticed in the case of the impostors previously referred to (xiii. 6). 'Signs and lying wonders' are also mentioned as part of the working of Satan in the 'lawless one' who is to come before the Second Advent of Christ (2 Thess. ii. 1-12). 'Signs' are things pointing beyond themselves to something else; 'wonders' are portents, phenomena out of the common order (cf. Exod. vii. 11, 22; also Deut. xiii. 1, xxviii. 46, xxix. 3, xxxiv. 11; Ps. cxxxv. 9, &c.). The miracles of our Lord are sometimes called 'wonders' in the N. T., especially in the Book of Acts (ii. 22, 43, iv. 30, v. 12, vi. 8, xiv. 3, xv. 12), but elsewhere more usually 'signs' and 'powers.' Josephus reports how false prophets arose who persuaded multitudes to go with them into the desert to see them work signs and wonders there.

**if possible, the elect.** Solemn, closing statement of the greatness of the peril from the imposing and insidious efforts of these pseudo-Christians and pseudo-prophets. 'Even the elect!'—beyond that boldness and mad endeavour cannot go.

**23. But take ye heed.** Third delivery of the same personal charge.

xiii. 24-27. *The End and the Coming of the Son of man:* cf. Matt. xxiv. 29-31; Luke xxi. 25-28.

**24. But in those days, after that tribulation.** The 'tribulation,' is the 'sign' of the end. The 'end' itself now becomes the subject, and the vision of the siege and fall of the Holy City passes into that of the close of the existing dispensation and the second Advent of Christ. In Luke there is no note of time to connect the one event with the other. In Matthew the relation of the one to the other is most definitely given as one of immediate sequence—'immediately after the tribulation of those days.' In Mark that relation is given in more general terms. The 'end,' marked by the personal coming of the Son of man, is not to precede the destruction of Jerusalem, but to come 'after that tribulation,' yet 'in those days.' Even in Mark, therefore, the 'end' which is now foretold is described as belonging generally to the same critical and

be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and 25 the stars shall be falling from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall 26 they see the Son of man coming in clouds with great

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momentous period in which the overthrow of the Jewish order takes place. The latter event is given as the prelude of the former, the removal of the old order which prepares for the entrance of the new.

**the sun shall be darkened.** This portent and the others which are mentioned belong, therefore, to the further 'end' and the Advent. The terms are not to be taken literally and particularly, but in a wide and general sense. They are of the same order as the large, imaginative terms of O. T. prophecy, the symbolism of which they follow. The O. T. prophets employed such imagery in their announcements of judicial interventions of God in the history of nations, great political convulsions, the overthrow of kingdoms, and exceptional changes of other kinds, such as the dispensation of the Spirit in the last days (Joel ii. 28-32; Acts ii. 16-21). 'The stars of heaven,' says Isaiah, 'and the constellations thereof shall not give their light : the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine' (xiii. 10). This is the prophet's way of declaring the certain overthrow of Babylon. So with the fall of Edom (xxxiv. 4). In the same way, Amos speaks of the fall of the northern kingdom (viii. 9). And Ezekiel, when he foretells the doom of Egypt, does it in this form—'When I shall extinguish thee, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark ; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord God' (xxxii. 7, 8). In each case extraordinary physical phenomena, eclipses, earthquakes, and the like, are the figures of Divine acts effecting great changes in Church or State, and the terms are to be interpreted as the language of symbolism, not of literal fact.

**25. the powers that are in the heavens.** That is, the heavenly bodies generally, the same as the 'host' of the heavens in Isa. xxxiv. 4. Luke adds a description of the effect produced by these portents on the spectators—'men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world' (xxi. 26).

**26. And then shall they see the Son of man coming.** This announcement of the actual coming is introduced in Matthew's Gospel by the words 'and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven' (xxiv. 30). This has been taken by some to mean that the Advent of Christ will be heralded by a vision of the Cross in the heavens. Others have sought to identify this sign with the

**27** power and glory. And then shall he send forth the angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

**28** Now from the fig tree learn her parable: when her

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appearing of angels, or with the vision of the *star* of the Messiah, as if the reference were to the prophecy of Balaam (Num. xxiv. 17). But this is beside the question. The thing that was to be the signal of the coming is left undefined, and no clue is given by which to identify it.

**in clouds with great power and glory.** The words take us back to Daniel's vision of the coming 'with the clouds of heaven, of one like unto a son of man' (vii. 13). Daniel's vision referred to the advent of the kingdom of God, the imperishable kingdom of saints, the kingdom of the regenerate Israel that was to take the place of the cruel, godless world-empires. The 'clouds' are part of the imagery which expresses the heavenly order of this new kingdom. Elsewhere in the O. T. the 'clouds' are often used as figures of the descent of God, and His intervention on behalf of His people (cf. Isa. xix. 1; Ps. xviii. 11, 12, xcvi. 2). The imagery is to be similarly understood here. But that this *Parousia* or second coming is to be a real, objective event, however difficult it may be to us to conceive it, appears to be indicated with sufficient distinctness in various passages of the N. T. (Matt. xxiv. 3, 37, 39; 1 Thess. iii. 13, iv. 15, v. 23; 2 Thess. ii. 1; Jas. v. 7; 2 Pet. i. 16, iii. 4, &c.). Here, too, Jesus clearly identifies himself with the figure in Daniel's prophecy, and the title 'Son of man' by which he had designated himself with the 'son of man' in Daniel. In him, therefore, the king of Israel and the representative of man, and in his kingdom, was the vision to have its highest and final fulfilment.

**27. send forth the angels.** The 'ministering spirits sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation' (Heb. i. 14). Matthew adds 'with a great sound of a trumpet' (xxiv. 31)—words recalling those used of the giving of the law (Exod. xix. 16).

**gather together his elect.** The 'elect' are now claimed as his own—'his elect,' the elect of the Son of man. The day of his return will be the day of the gathering of all his own, and the open manifestation of his kingdom in its completeness and perfection (cf. 2 Thess. ii. 1).

xiii. 28-37. *Lesson of the Fig-tree and Final Warnings:* cf. Matt. xxiv. 32-42; Luke xxi. 29-36.

**28. Now from the fig tree learn her parable.** The fig-tree,

branch is now become tender, and putteth forth its leaves, ye know that the summer is nigh ; even so ye also, when 29 ye see these things coming to pass, know ye that he is nigh, *even* at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This 30 generation shall not pass away, until all these things be accomplished. Heaven and earth shall pass away : but 31 my words shall not pass away. But of that day or that 32

one of the commonest trees in the country, has already served as the occasion for solemn warnings and counsels (Mark xi. 13, 14, 20-26). He makes a similar use of it again. ‘Her parable,’ that is, the lesson she suggests. The ‘parable’ here is one of the class of minor, partial parables, an illustration or analogy.

**when her branch is now become tender, and putteth forth its leaves.** This is the case of a fig-tree of ordinary growth, not an abnormal specimen with a deceptive shew of leafage before the proper time. The branches have their hard external covering softened or made ‘tender’ by the moistures of spring, and the sap circulates freely through them. Then they begin to shew their greenness, the leaves bursting their sheaths. That is the token of the approach of summer, the earliest token of it. (Cf. Song of Songs, ii. 11-13).

**29. so ye:** the disciples should not be less discerning in their particular sphere of things than the ordinary man is in the matter of the seasons.

**he is nigh:** rather, ‘it is nigh,’ that is, the decisive event referred to, left thus in its unexplained mystery and awe.

**even at the doors.** Cf. Jas. v. 9. His disciples ought to be able to recognize the significance of the events spoken of, and discern in them the beginnings of the consummation.

**30. This generation shall not pass.** The word ‘generation’ is to be taken in its usual sense, the sense which it has in Matt. xxiii. 36 and in the Gospels generally—the body of men then living. Jesus turns at this point from the question of the *sign* to that of the *time*, and intimates that the things, *all* of them, of which he has been speaking, would take place before his contemporaries should all have departed this life. Matthew and Luke also give the statement practically in the same terms.

**31. my words shall not pass away.** Jesus had previously claimed permanence for the law (Matt. v. 18; Luke xvi. 17). He now claims for his own words a permanence more enduring than heaven or earth is destined to have—an everlasting validity and power. Cf. Isa. xl. 6-8, M. 6-8, 1 Pet. i. 24, 25.

**32. But of that day or that hour.** The ‘day’ and the

hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, 33 neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch 34 and pray: for ye know not when the time is. *It is as*

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'hour' here are the time of the Lord's return—the conclusive, judicial day, elsewhere called 'the day,' 'that day' (1 Thess. v. 4; 1 Cor. iii. 13), 'the last day' (John v. 25, vi. 39, 40, 44, 54; xi. 24), 'the day of wrath' (Rom. ii. 5), 'the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ' (Rom. ii. 16), 'the day of our Lord Jesus Christ' (1 Cor. i. 8), 'the day of Jesus Christ' (Phil. i. 6), 'the day of Christ' (Phil. i. 10, &c.).

**knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son.** The precise time of this return is hidden from all but the Father. It is one of the things he hath 'set within his own authority' (Acts i. 7). The negatives here are absolute and exclusive, 'no one, not even the angels, nor yet the Son.' That angelic knowledge is not unlimited is not difficult to understand, and it is indicated elsewhere (Eph. iii. 10; 1 Pet. i. 12). But the peculiarity of the present passage is that the Son himself is coupled with the angels in this declaration of nescience. The declaration is made, too, by the Son himself, and in terms most definite and unqualified. It is the ascription of a real nescience, not of an ignorance operating in one part of his personality and not in the other, nor an ignorance simply assumed for a certain purpose while a real omniscience remained latent, nor yet the pseudo-ignorance which meant that, while he knew this particular thing as he knew all things, he had no commission from his Father to communicate it to others. Nor is there any difficulty in accepting the statement as it stands. The limitation in knowledge was only a part of the larger and more mysterious limitation implied in the Incarnation, and in that subjection of our Lord to the ordinary laws of growth, physical, mental, and moral, which is affirmed of him in the N. T. (Luke ii. 40, 52; Heb. v. 8). Nor is such a nescience as is here attributed to him, a lack of knowledge of matters of times and seasons, inconsistent in any way with his perfect sinlessness. There are multitudes of things that are morally neutral, the knowledge or the ignorance of which makes us neither better nor worse in the moral nature.

**33. Take ye heed, watch and pray.** The disciples, therefore, 'know not when the time is,' and the Master cannot disclose it. But this ignorance has its spiritual purpose and use. It should be an incentive to watchfulness and prayer, and so to the sedulous cultivation of the mind that will be ready for the Lord's presence at any time. The word used here for 'watch' means properly 'keep awake,' 'yield not to sleep,' and is used with reference to work as well as to prayer (Heb. xiii. 17; Eph. vi. 18).

*when* a man, sojourning in another country, having left his house, and given authority to his servants, to each one his work, commanded also the porter to watch. Watch therefore : for ye know not when the lord of the house cometh, whether at even, or at midnight, or at cockcrowing, or in the morning ; lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

**34.** It is as when a man, sojourning in another country. Another partial parable or illustration, like the one taken from the fig, enforcing the need of watchfulness. That this is but one of various parables spoken at this time appears from Matt. xxiv, xxv. This one refers to the case of a man 'away from home,' as the word means, on his travels, and the special charge given to the 'porter' when each of the servants had his own proper work assigned him. In the 'lord of the house,' no doubt, we are to see Christ himself leaving the earthly scene of his ministry, departing to his Father, and returning to earth again after an interval left undefined. But it is to go beyond the simple and immediate object of the parable to draw distinctions between the *servants* and the *porter*, as if by the former Jesus had in view the disciples or the Church generally, and by the latter specifically the apostolate or the Christian ministry as the body 'to whom specially belongs the responsibility of guarding the house, and of being ready to open the door to the Master at his return' (Swete).

**35.** whether at even, or at midnight, or at cockcrowing, or in the morning : that is, 'at any part of day or night.' The Roman distribution of the twenty-four hours into four watches is followed here, only that instead of the usual terms *first*, *second*, *third*, *fourth* watch, popular terms are used. Matthew and Luke use more general language here. But the latter in his report of an earlier declaration represents Jesus as speaking of the 'second watch,' and 'the third' (xii. 38).

**36.** suddenly...sleeping. This is a recurrent note in warnings or instructions relating to the Second Advent (cf. Matt. xxv. 5; Rom. xiii. 11; 1 Thess. v. 6). It is possible that the familiar police arrangements maintained in the temple are in view in the terms of this warning. Watchmen moved about the temple night and day; a body of Levites did the duty of watching by night at twenty-one points, according to the Mishna, and the captain of the temple went his rounds to see that the guards were not asleep ; he might come at any hour and surprise those in charge.

**37.** unto all, Watch. This supreme duty of wakeful vigilance is

**14** Now after two days was *the feast of the passover and*

enjoined once more, and the Master's last word solemnly gives it as a duty applicable not to one class, but to all. Matthew introduces here the great parables of the Ten Virgins, the Talents, and the Judgement, inculcating the same lesson of the need of watchfulness, and with that the need of faithfulness, diligence, and service.

*The Discourse on the End.* The interpretation of this discourse is by no means easy. It is to be remembered, however, that it is given as a reply to two plain questions; that it is to be taken, therefore, as a plain answer conveyed in terms which the interrogators could understand; and that it is to be read in the light of the familiar ideas and forms of expression characteristic of O. T. prophecy and Jewish Apocalypses. In the fuller version given in Matthew it is clear that the questions and the answer were not confined to the one event of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, but embraced the further end—the return of Christ and the close of the whole existing order of things (xxiv. 3). The discourse, as we have it in Mark, appears to have the same scope, and cannot be adequately dealt with on the supposition that nothing more is in view than the fall of Jerusalem. The disciples connected the second coming of Christ and the end of the world or 'the consummation of the age' with the destruction of the Holy City and its temple, and in this discourse these events are placed in relation to each other as antecedent and consequent, although the precise 'day' or 'hour' is left undisclosed. This is in accordance with the genius of O. T. prophecy, which places things in conjunction which are essentially or causally connected, although they may prove to be separated in point of time. The language also in which this discourse runs is of the nature of the large, hyperbolical terms used by the O. T. prophets in their announcements of retributive events, the overthrow of the enemies of the theocracy, &c. The imagery, therefore, is not to be taken literally. Least of all is it to be supposed that the prophecy must have a fulfilment in actual physical phenomena when it speaks of the darkening of the sun and moon, the falling of the stars, the shaking of the powers in the heavens, and the like.

xiv. 1-2. *Schemes of the Ecclesiastical Authorities:* cf. Matt. xxvi. 1-5; Luke xxii. 1-2.

**14. after two days:** that is, 'the next day,' or 'on the second day'; as in Hosea the 'after two days' is distinguished from 'on the third day' (vi. 2). This will make the day the thirteenth of Nisan, Wednesday of Passion Week.

the feast of **the passover.** The word 'passover' means sometimes the *paschal lamb* which was killed and eaten on the

the unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him with subtlety, and kill him: for they said, Not during the feast, lest <sup>2</sup> haply there shall be a tumult of the people.

And while he was in Bethany in the house of Simon <sup>3</sup>

fourteenth of Nisan, the first month of the Jewish year, in memory of the day when the Israelites were bidden to prepare to quit Egypt (Exod. xii; Num. ix; Deut. xvi), as in Mark xiv. 12; Luke xxii. 7; sometimes the *paschal supper*, as in Mark xiv. 16; Luke xxii. 8, 13; sometimes the *paschal festival*, the memorial feast lasting from the fourteenth to the twentieth of Nisan, as here and in Matt. xxvi. 2; Luke ii. 41, xxii. 1; John ii. 13, 23, vi. 4, &c.

**and the unleavened bread.** The term rendered ‘unleavened bread’ is used sometimes of the *unfermented loaves* which the Israelites ate for seven days in commemoration of their departure from Egypt (Exod. xxiii. 15; Lev. xxiii. 6), as in Matt. xxvi. 17; Mark xiv. 12; Luke xxii. 1, 7; sometimes of the *paschal festival* itself, as here. The peculiarity of the present passage is that the festival is designated by the double title, specifying both the introductory meal and the seven days of unleavened bread. This commemorative festival was an eight days’ feast, beginning with the paschal meal and continuing through seven days of restriction to unfermented bread.

**sought how they might take him with subtlety.** Matthew says ‘the chief priests, and the elders of the people’ (xxvi. 3). The meeting, therefore, included all three orders in the Sanhedrin, and its object was to devise some crafty scheme by which they might get Jesus into their hands without awakening popular opposition. From Matthew (xxvi. 3) we learn that this consultation took place in the court of Caiaphas, the high priest.

**2. Not during the feast.** Their plan was to keep clear of the passover feast in any action they might take. They must either act at once, therefore, as the passover began next day, or delay till the seven days of the feast were over.

**Lest haply there shall be a tumult.** This was the reason for their ‘subtlety’ and for their wish to keep clear of the feast. They knew that the mass of the people, mostly from Galilee, who were about him at present were on his side, and they dreaded to raise their opposition. Once let the feast be over and these multitudes of sympathizers scattered to their homes, and the danger of a tumult would be less.

xiv. 3-9. *The Anointing at Bethany:* cf. Matt. xxvi. 6-13; John xii. 2-8. The narratives in Matthew, Mark, and John

appear clearly to refer to one and the same occasion. There is a difference indeed in the chronological connexion, John placing the supper six days before the Passover, and the Synoptists introducing their account of it along with circumstances belonging to a period several days later. Hence, some have concluded that there were two suppers, one given by Lazarus at the earlier date, and another by Simon at the later. But the difference in position can be otherwise explained. In Luke's Gospel we have also a narrative of an anointing by the hands of a woman (Luke vii. 36-50), which has a general resemblance to this, and in which the host bears, as here, the name of Simon. Many have taken the four narratives, therefore, to be simply four versions of one and the same incident. But the differences are considerable. The incident in Luke is introduced at a much earlier point of the narrative, and seems to belong to an earlier period in the ministry of Jesus. The person, too, who performs the lavish act of grateful love is very far from being presented in the same light in Luke's account as in the others. In Luke she is described as 'a woman which was in the city, a sinner'; in the first two Gospels she is designated simply 'a woman,' and has no stigma attached to her; and in the Fourth Gospel she is 'Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus.' And there is no reason for identifying Mary of Bethany with 'the woman which was in the city,' or for attaching to the former the character of the latter.

**3. while he was in Bethany.** Matthew and Mark agree in introducing the report of this incident immediately after the meeting of the scheming ecclesiastical authorities. John brings in his account immediately before that of the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem. John's order has been accepted by most as representing the actual historical relation. Nor do the first two Gospels give any very explicit indication of the time, confining themselves as they do to the general statement that the incident took place when Jesus was in Bethany. The introduction of the anointing in the heart of events belonging to Passion Week might naturally suggest that it also fell within that period. It is possible at the same time that the position given it in Matthew and Mark is due to other than chronological considerations—to the desire, it may be, to place alongside the story of the treachery of Judas the occurrence which brought out his grudging, covetous nature, and perhaps prompted the course he took.

**Simon the leper.** Simon was a common Jewish name. This Simon is distinguished from others by the title 'the leper,' he being probably a cured leper, perhaps one of those healed by Jesus. Nothing more is said of him. Some imagine him to have been the deceased head of the family, or the husband of Martha, or some other relative of the sisters. The terms indeed are so general as to leave it uncertain whether the Simon who is named

the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster cruse of ointment of spikenard very costly;

was the host on this occasion, or even whether he was present or had any connexion with the event beyond that of being owner of the house.

**sat at meat.** That is, ‘*reclined at meat.*’ The historical books of the O. T. indicate that *sitting* was the usual Hebrew posture at meals (Gen. xxvii. 19; Judges xix. 6; 1 Sam. xx. 5, 24; 1 Kings xiii. 20). In course of time the practice of sitting gave way to that of reclining on couches. This latter custom had come in at least as early as the time of the eighth-century prophets, and had already been associated with luxurious habits. Amos delivers woes against those who ‘lie upon beds of ivory and stretch themselves upon their couches’ (vi. 4). In our Lord’s time it was the universal habit. The Greeks and Romans also in course of time gave up the sitting at meals of which we read in Homer (*Ili.* x. 578, *Od.* i. 145) for the recumbent position, except in the case of women and children. The reclining posture was taken over perhaps from the Babylonians and Syrians, who appear to have adopted it in early times.

**a woman.** The Synoptists do not give her name. In John’s account Martha of Bethany serves, and Mary anoints the Master.

**an alabaster cruse.** Or, ‘a flask,’ as in the margin of the R. V. The ‘box’ of the A. V. is less correct. Literally it is ‘an alabaster,’ that name being given to vases used for the holding of unguents, because they were often made of that material. One Egyptian town, famous for its quarries of alabaster, bore the name of Alabastron. The alabaster of the ancients was different from what is known as alabaster among us, not a sulphate of lime, but a stalagmitic carbonate of lime. It was supposed to preserve the aroma of the perfumes.

**of spikenard:** *lit.* ‘of pistic nard,’ a doubtful phrase, taken by some to mean *Pistic* nard, with reference to the locality where it was obtained; by others, ‘bearded’ or ‘spiked’ nard, and so ‘spikenard’ as in the A. V. and the old English Versions; by others, ‘liquid’ or ‘potable’ nard; but by most, *genuine, pure* nard, in contrast with the *pseudo-nard*, an adulterated article which is known to have been sold (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xii. 26). This ‘nard’ was the essential oil of an Indian plant, a species of *Valerian*, known among the Arabs as the *Indian Spike*, and grown, according to Sir William Jones, ‘in the most remote and hilly parts of India, such as Népal, Morang, and Butan, near which Ptolemy fixes its native soil’ (*Works*, v. p. 44). In the O. T. it is mentioned only in the Song of Songs (i. 12, iv. 13, 14); in the N. T. only here and in John xii. 3.

**very costly.** It was perhaps the costliest of all the fragrant

*and she brake the cruse, and poured it over his head.*  
**4** But there were some that had indignation among themselves, *saying*, To what purpose hath this waste of the  
**5** ointment been made? For this ointment might have been sold for above three hundred pence, and given to

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oils of the ancient world. Horace promises Vergil a whole cask of wine for a small onyx of nard (*Carm.* iv. xii. 16, 17). Herodotus tells us it was one of the gifts sent by Cambyses to the Ethiopians (iii. 20).

**brake the cruse.** Some think this means only that she broke the *seal*. But it seems rather to mean that she broke the narrow neck of the flask itself, so that the entire contents might be spent on the Master, and nothing reserved for any commoner use.

**over his head.** In John's narrative Mary anoints the *feet* of Jesus. It may be that the perfume, poured in a lavish gush upon the head, streamed down upon the feet, or that head and feet were anointed in turn. The anointing of the head was a customary act of attention on the part of a host to his guest (cf. Ps. xxiii. 5; Luke vii. 46) or of goodwill to visitors, as in the case of the captives of Judah who were anointed before they were sent back (a Chron. xxviii. 15). To anoint the *feet* was an unusual act, a token of deepest humility and veneration, reserved for the greatest, and said not to have been known even among the Roman emperors till Nero's time.

**4. there were some.** Matthew says they were 'the disciples' (xxvi. 8). John speaks of Judas as the murmur (xii. 4).

**had indignation among themselves.** The feeling of the disciples is expressed by the same strong term as was used of the 'indignation' of Jesus himself in the case of the interference of the disciples with those who brought the children to be touched (x. 14). The *indignation* of these 'some' did not express itself in any formal or public manner. It was confined to grumblings that went from mouth to mouth among themselves.

**this waste.** To use the nard in this prodigal way was in their view simple 'destruction.' The judgement of a calculating utilitarian spirit, blind to the higher values of love.

**5. three hundred pence.** That is, three hundred *denarii* or *shillings*, or from £10 to £12 in nominal value, but much more, from three to six times more, in actual purchasing power. The vase, John tells us, contained 'a pound,' a Roman pound (xii. 3).

**given to the poor.** As we may infer from Mark vi. 37, the sum would have fed some thousands. To think of the hungry poor in Jerusalem, and what the money might have done for

the poor. And they murmured against her. But Jesus 6 said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. For ye have the poor 7 always with you, and whosoever ye will ye can do them good: but me ye have not always. She hath done what 8 she could: she hath anointed my body beforehand for the

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them! So the grudging temper finds specious arguments by which to justify itself and give its meanness the colour of charity.

**6. murmured against her.** They did not venture to say anything of him and his allowance of the ‘waste’; but with her it was different. Their indignation, which at first had been but muttered, now broke out into open and vehement expression.

**a good work.** ‘Good’ in the sense of *excellent, seemly*. It was a deed of moral beauty, made so by the spirit of ungrudging love that prompted it.

**7. For ye have the poor always with you.** The Master himself becomes her apologist, and in vindicating her act he also adjusts duty to duty. Kindness to the poor is a primary duty in his kingdom, and one never to be neglected. Yet there may be duties to which even it must give place for a time. When a conflict of duties arises, it is to be settled by the simple principle that the one which can be done only then shall have precedence over that which can be done at any time. The clause ‘and whosoever ye will ye can do them good’ is peculiar to Mark.

**me ye have not always.** A simple but pathetic reminder of what he had told them once and again—the fact that he was to die. The beauty of the woman’s act, therefore, was seen also in its timeliness. Love has its own insight into the times and seasons for things, and makes its way by unerring instinct through all difficulties of competing duties and the fitnesses of things.

**8. She hath done what she could.** The measure of ability is the measure of merit; this woman had the praise of doing all that either means or opportunity made it possible for her to do. It is ‘utmost love recognizing love’s utmost’ (Clarke). This sentence also is peculiar to Mark.

**anointed my body.** In the case of death it was customary among the Jews to wash the body and then, as was also done by the Egyptians, to apply spices and unguents. It was an external application, and so was distinguished from the Egyptian process of embalming (cf. Mark xvi. 1; Luke xxiii. 56; John xix. 40). That it did not prevent decomposition appears from John xi. 39; for we cannot imagine the ceremony to have been omitted in the case of Lazarus.

**aforehand for the burying:** *lit.* ‘with a view to its prepara-

9 burying. And verily I say unto you, Wheresoever the gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, that also which this woman hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

10 And Judas Iscariot, he that was one of the twelve, went away unto the chief priests, that he might deliver him

tion for burial.' So in Matthew it is—'she did it to prepare me for burial' (xxvi. 12). John gives it somewhat differently—'suffer her to keep it against the day of my burying' (xii. 7). It is not too much to suppose that the woman herself may have done what she did with a conscious anticipation of his death. Love's insight is a prophetic insight, and to this woman's love the words which Jesus spoke regarding his Passion may have had a meaning which they had not even to the Twelve. If her act had no such conscious purpose, Jesus interpreted it for her and put upon it a value beyond what she herself had thought of. His love makes more of his servants' deeds than they themselves see in them.

**9. Wheresoever the gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world.** The world-wide extension of the Gospel had already been declared to be a thing as certain as is the Divine purpose (xiii. 10). As wide as the preaching of the Gospel, so wide should be the fame of this deed; and it is this preaching of the Gospel that secures the fulfilment of that prediction.

**for a memorial of her.** To make her remembered for ever among men. Cf. the memorials which were to make Cornelius remembered by God (Acts x. 4). No deed that has found a place in the Gospel narratives has such a commendation pronounced in it, or such a prophecy spoken of it. Matthew and Mark agree in recording this unexampled announcement. It is not noticed by John in his parallel narrative; nor is any such prediction connected with the similar deed reported by Luke in the case of the woman 'which was in the city.'

xiv. 10, 11. *Compact between Judas and the Chief Priests:* cf Matt. xxvi. 14-16; Luke xxii. 3-6.

**10. Judas Iscariot.** In Mark's Gospel Judas is mentioned only in the list of the apostles (iii. 19), and twice in this chapter (10, 43).

**one of the twelve.** A designation of tragic moment, attached to Judas, not only in the Synoptists, but, in somewhat different terms, in John (xii. 4) and Acts (i. 17), marking him out as the notorious man and sharpening the idea of his guilt.

**went away unto the chief priests.** He knew who were the most influential parties in matters of this kind, the chief priests

unto them. And they, when they heard it, were glad, 11 and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently deliver him *unto them*.

rather than the scribes, and he went off privately to them. He may have found them still in Caiaphas's court where they had been scheming (xiv. 1). From Luke we see that the 'captains,' the heads of the temple police, were also consulted, being probably with the chief priests (xxii. 4).

**that he might deliver him.** He went with the express purpose of betraying Jesus. What is the explanation of this deed of treachery? Some have attempted to soften Judas's guilt by supposing that all he had in view was to hasten the action of Jesus in the establishment of his Messianic kingdom, by bringing on him the compulsion of a popular rising. But of this there is no hint in the narratives. Others think he was prompted by *melancholy*, induced by the disappointment of his carnal expectations, or by *wounded ambition*, or by *shipwrecked faith*, or by *resentment* caused by the rebuke given him and the detection of his true character at the supper in Bethany (John xii. 6-9). But the Gospels themselves point only to two causes—*Satanic temptation* (Luke xxii. 3; John xiii. 2, 27), and *avarice*. He was selected to manage the money affairs of Jesus and the Twelve perhaps for his practical, business capacity. But he abused his trust (John xii. 6), and finally betrayed his Master, the fatal vice of greed having been in him from the beginning, and having been allowed to feed on the opportunities offered it, until at last it made him blind to every other consideration.

**11. they, when they heard it, were glad.** They had reason to be so. They needed no longer either to scheme or to think of delay. The means of giving effect to their fell purpose were put into their hands sooner than they had dreamt of, before the Passover, with all its risks of a popular rising, began.

**promised to give him money.** The exact sum is recorded neither by Mark nor by Luke. Matthew, however, who also represents Judas as asking how much the authorities would give him, mentions that it was *thirty pieces of silver*, and that these were *weighed* unto him (xxvi. 15). Coined money had been in circulation at least from about 143 B.C., the time of Simon the Maccabee; but the ancient custom of *weighing* money seems to have been continued, especially in the case of sums paid out of the temple treasury, and these 'pieces' would be shekels of the sanctuary (see Meyer on Matt. xxvi. 5). The whole sum would amount to less than £4. It is the sum mentioned in Zechariah's prophecy (xi. 12). It was also the price of a slave (Exod. xxi. 32). A small sum truly, if it was the whole and not simply so much

**12** And on the first day of unleavened bread, when they sacrificed the passover, his disciples say unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and make ready that thou mayest  
**13** eat the passover? And he sendeth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go into the city, and there shall

paid down on the spot, to content any one, especially an avaricious man like Judas.

**he sought how he might conveniently deliver him.** Luke adds 'in the absence of the multitude,' or, 'without tumult' (xxii. 6). The risk of a rising on the part of the people was what the chief priests were seeking to avoid. With the price of his treachery in his purse Judas went back to those he had left for the time, and watched his chance. The chief priests needed no longer to scheme. There was one now in the inner circle who had opportunities they had not, and it was for him now to devise the means and find the occasion.

**xiv. 12-16. Preparations for the Passover Meal:** cf. Matt. xxvi. 17-19; Luke xxii. 7-13.

**12. on the first day of unleavened bread.** Luke calls it simply 'the day of unleavened bread' (xxii. 7). That is the fourteenth Nisan, beginning after sunset of the thirteenth. In post-Exilic times it was customary for the head of the family to search the house with a lighted candle on the evening of the thirteenth Nisan in quest of leaven. On the fourteenth the eating of unleavened bread was suspended, the abstention beginning before noon. That day was also called 'the Preparation' (Matt. xxvii. 62; Mark xv. 42; Luke xxiii. 54; John xix. 14, 31, 42).

**when they sacrificed the passover.** This further definition is given (with some slight variation) by all three Synoptists. On certain occasions the Paschal lamb was killed by the Levites (a Chron. xxx. 15, xxxv. 6; Ezra vi. 20), but usually by the head of the family (Exod. xii. 6). It was done in the court of the priests with a considerable ceremonial. The killing and the eating took place on the fourteenth Nisan (Exod. xii. 6; Lev. xxiii. 5; Num. ix. 3, &c.).

**Where wilt thou that we go and make ready?** The preparations that had to be made were considerable, embracing the providing of place, victim, unleavened cakes, wine, water, the bitter herbs—lettuce, endive, chicory, horehound, and the like—the sauce called *Charoseth*, the roasting of the lamb, the setting out of the table, &c.

**13. two of his disciples.** Luke tells us they were Peter and John (xxii. 8). They are sent into Jerusalem.

meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him; and wheresoever he shall enter in, say to the goodman <sup>14</sup> of the house, The Master saith, Where is my guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? And he will himself shew you a large upper room furnished <sup>15</sup> and ready: and there make ready for us. And the <sup>16</sup> disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

And when it was evening he cometh with the twelve. <sup>17</sup>

**a man bearing a pitcher of water.** Probably a servant of the house. To carry water was usually the woman's work. But it was also the slave's task (*Deut. xxix. 11*; *Josh. ix. 21*). It would be easier to recognize a man thus employed, sent no doubt to fetch water from Siloam for the sacred uses of the Passover. On his return he would cross the path of the two disciples who came in from the other side, and as they followed him he 'would act as an unconscious guide through the net-work of narrow and unfamiliar streets to the appointed place' (*Swete*).

**14. The Master saith, Where is my guest-chamber?** 'My guest-chamber,' that is, 'the lodging destined for me.' This was the simple message with which the two were charged, and they were to deliver it to 'the goodman of the house' himself.

**15. he will himself shew you.** The Master of the house was himself to make all things right for them. They were to be shewn a 'large upper room,' a chamber suitable for the occasion and for the number that was to come, and all 'furnished and ready,' that is, provided with the necessary table and carpets or divans. The householder's ready reception of the two messengers, and his shewing them at once the place prepared, are the acts surely of a disciple.

**16. and found as he had said.** This was the second occasion during the Passion Week that the disciples had this experience.

xiv. 17-21. *The Paschal Supper:* cf. *Matt. xxvi. 20-25*; *Luke xxii. 14, 21-23*; *John xiii. 2, 21-30*.

**17. when it was evening.** By the original appointment the Paschal lamb was to be eaten at night (*Exod. xii. 8*). It was to be slain 'at even,' 'between the two evenings,' as the Hebrew puts it (*Exod. xii. 6*). The custom was not to kill it till after the evening sacrifice was offered.

**with the twelve.** The two, therefore, seem to have returned

18 And as they sat and were eating, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you shall betray me, *even* he that eateth with me. They began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, Is it I? And he said unto them,

by this time, and Judas also. All were once more in Jerusalem, Jesus having come again from the mount of Olives, probably as the sun was setting. 'It was the last day-view which the Lord had of the Holy City—till his Resurrection' (Edersheim, *The Temple and its Services*, p. 195). The lamb had to be wholly consumed (Exod. xii. 46). It was provided, therefore, that if any household was 'too little for a lamb' it was to join with another (Exod. xii. 4). It came to be recognized that a Paschal gathering should not consist of less than ten guests (Josephus, *Jewish War*, vi. ix. 3).

**18. as they sat:** or rather, 'reclined.' Originally the Paschal lamb was to be eaten standing (Exod. xii. 11). But the standing posture had long been given up for the recumbent position which was usual at other meals.

**One of you shall betray me.** A new note, and one of darkest meaning, in his announcements. At least on one earlier occasion, indeed, a hint of evil within the apostolic circle itself had fallen from his lips. In the synagogue of Capernaum, on the occasion of the falling away of many disciples, he had put the ominous question to the Twelve—'Did not I choose you the twelve, and one of you is a devil?' (John vi. 70). At the supper, too, according to John, after he had washed the disciples' feet, he spoke the significant words, 'ye are clean, but not all,' and referred to the fulfilment of the Scripture, 'he that eateth my bread lifted up his heel against me' (John xiii. 10, 18). But the most distinct intimation of the terrible fact that other hands than those of hostile Jewish and Roman officials were to be concerned with his delivery and death, is made at this point according to Matthew (xxvi. 21), as well as Mark. The words '*even* he that eateth with me' are given only by Mark. They refer, no doubt, to the Psalm (xli. 9) from which John records Jesus to have quoted a verse (xiii. 18).

**19. began to be sorrowful.** At these dark words the joy of the Paschal meal was turned at once into pain and doubt.

**to say unto him one by one, Is it I?** or rather, 'surely it is not I, is it?' On the instant each thinks of himself, and of the possibility of the words pointing to him—but with the tone of incredulity and in expectation of an assurance to the contrary. None of them, strange to say, thinks of Judas, or says, 'Is it he there?' But Judas himself, as we gather from Matthew (xxvi. 25), was not ashamed to ask as the others had done, 'Is it I?'

*It is one of the twelve, he that dippeth with me in the dish. For the Son of man goeth, even as it is written of him: but woe unto that man through whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had not been born.*

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**20. he that dippeth with me in the dish.** To dip into the same dish with another was a token of intimate friendship, as is seen in the invitation of Boaz to Ruth at meal-time (Ruth ii. 14). The dish in view here was probably the *Charoseth*, the peculiar sauce, made of vinegar, figs, dates, almonds, and spice, used at the Passover. Travellers tell us that the few remaining Samaritans, when they celebrate the Passover on the top of Gerizim, ‘hand to the stranger a little olive-shaped morsel of unleavened bread inclosing a green fragment of wild endive or some other bitter herb, which may resemble, except that it is not dipped in the dish, the very “sop” which Judas received at the hands of Christ’ (Farrar’s *Life of Christ*, ii. p. 290). Comparing John’s account we see that when Jesus spoke of one of the Twelve as betraying him, the disciples cast perplexed looks one upon another; that John, at Peter’s suggestion, asked Jesus directly who was meant; that Jesus, who reclined probably between Peter and John, having the latter nearest his ear, replied that it was he to whom he was about to give the sop. (John xiii. 22, 24–26.) This then was the sign—the selection of Judas to receive one of the pieces of bread which it was customary for the Master of the feast at a certain point to dip into the *Charoseth* and give to the party.

**21. the Son of man goeth.** This simple, solemn word ‘go’ is repeatedly used by John with reference to the death of Jesus (John viii. 14, 21, xiii. 3, 33, xiv. 4).

**even as it is written:** or, as Luke gives it, ‘as it hath been determined.’ The departure of Jesus to his death was no mere accident in his career, nor simply the result of that collision with the world to which all prophets and righteous men are subject, but an event which meant the fulfilment of the purpose of God and His testimony in Scripture.

**but woe unto that man.** The deed of Judas was the work neither of chance nor of necessity. The counsel of God fulfilled itself even in his treachery. But that counsel neither superseded the free action and responsibility of Judas nor relieved him of his guilt. (Cf. Acts ii. 23.)

**good were it for that man if he had not been born.** Words suggestive of a dread condemnation and an inexpressible doom. But words spoken of the traitor only, and of no other.

**22** And as they were eating, he took bread, and when he had blessed, he brake it, and gave to them, and said,

xiv. 22-25. *The Institution of the Lord's Supper*: cf. Matt. xxvi. 26-29; Luke xvii. 17-20; see also 1 Cor. xi. 23-25.

**22. And as they were eating, he took bread.** At what point was this done? On this question opinion has been divided. It is most reasonable, however, to suppose that Jesus would not interfere with the usual ceremonial of the Passover feast, but would follow it out carefully in all its essential parts, and only then make the special institution of the Supper. The order observed in the celebration of the Passover in our Lord's time appears to have been this—first, thanks were offered and a cup of wine was drunk; bitter herbs were next placed on the table, dipped in a sour liquid and eaten with thanksgiving; then the unleavened bread, the sauce or broth known as the *Charoseth*, the lamb and the flesh of the *Chagiga* (i. e. the free-will festive offering which was brought on the first day of the feast) were presented; next the head of the family, after pronouncing a blessing, dipped a portion of the bitter herbs, about the size of an olive, in the *Charoseth* and ate it, the others eating after him; then the second cup of wine was mixed, and an explanation of the meaning of the Passover was given; the viands were then put again on the table, the first part of the *Hallel*, consisting of Psalms cxiii., cxiv., was sung, thanksgiving was again offered, and the second cup was drunk; next the head of the house washed his hands, took two pieces of bread, and breaking one laid the broken parts on the other piece, pronounced again a blessing, rolled part of the broken bread in bitter herbs, dipped it in the *Charoseth*, gave thanks anew and ate it—doing the same also with the part of the *Chagiga* and the lamb; the guests then partook, until the father ate the last portion of the lamb; the father then washed his hands, praise was offered, and the third cup was drunk; then followed the singing of the second part of the *Hallel*, consisting of Psalms cxv.-cxviii., and the drinking of the fourth cup. Sometimes a fifth cup was drunk, and further Psalms (cxx.-cxxvii.) were sung.

In all probability the new repast, to be known as the Lord's Supper and to have a distinctive significance with reference to his death, was instituted by Jesus at the last point in the order of the Paschal celebration, when the last portion of the lamb was eaten and the third cup was drunk, and the ceremonial of the Passover was ended.

**when he had blessed, he brake it.** The 'bread' which he took was one of the loaves put upon the table before the celebrant, but not one of the two which were taken as part of the ceremonial of the Paschal meal itself. Another piece was taken, another

Take ye: this is my body. And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many. Verily

blessing was pronounced, and there was a separate act of fraction. There is nothing to indicate that the 'blessing' was more than a prayer of thanksgiving and setting apart. In Luke and Paul the term is 'when he had given thanks' (Luke xxii. 19; 1 Cor. xi. 24).

**gave to them.** Possibly by handing it round piece by piece, but more probably, as the Twelve were reclining, by simply presenting it as a whole and distributing it.

**Take ye.** The 'eat' which is inserted after the 'take' in the A. V. appears not to belong to the original text. It is found, however, in Matthew's account. Both the 'take' and the 'eat' are omitted by Luke and Paul.

**this is my body.** By the 'this' Jesus undoubtedly means the piece of bread which they were to take. As he was himself there in living, bodily form he could not mean that that piece of bread was in any literal sense his body. What his words expressed was the fact that the bread which had been given them and which had been broken, was symbolically his body—representing the giving of his life for them. In Luke the words are, 'This is my body which is given for you' (xxii. 19). In Paul's account also the definition 'for you' is added—'This is my body, which is for you,' or, according to another ancient reading, 'which is broken for you' (1 Cor. xi. 24).

**23. And he took a cup.** Which cup? Some say the *third* of the four cups taken during the Paschal meal; that cup being known as 'the cup of blessing'; but more probably it was the cup that followed the final participation, the *fourth* cup, especially in view both of the declaration in verse 25 and of the statement made at once by Luke and by Paul that it was 'after supper' (Luke xxii. 20; 1 Cor. xi. 25).

**24. This is my blood.** Wine and blood are often compared (Gen. xl ix. 11). By 'this' Jesus means the wine in the cup which he gave to the Twelve, and this wine, he says, *is* his blood; that is, is symbolical or representative of it. So 'I am the door' (John x. 7), &c.

**of the covenant.** A better rendering, in view of the usage of the word, than the 'testament' of the A. V. So also in Matthew. Paul gives the sentence in this form—'This cup is the new covenant in my blood' (1 Cor. xi. 25). The words take us back to those spoken by Moses of the ancient covenant of God with Israel—'Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord'

I say unto you, I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

hath made with you concerning all these words' (Exod. xxiv. 8). They mean that Jesus was instituting a new and better covenant than the Sinaitic, and that it was to be ratified by the blood of a better sacrifice. They give a *sacrificial* meaning, therefore, to the death which was in his view.

**which is shed for many.** That is, 'which is about to be shed.' So also in Matthew. The point of the comparison is given even yet more distinctly by Luke—'even that which is poured out for you' (xxii. 20). The pouring out of the wine corresponds to the breaking of the bread, and has the same reference to the surrendered, sacrificed life of Jesus. The *sacrificial* meaning of his death and its expiatory relation to the forgiveness of sin are expressed yet more definitely by Matthew, who adds 'unto remission of sins' (xxvi. 28).

**25. I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.** Introduced as they are by the solemn formula, *Verily I say unto you*, these words must be taken to mean much. They express in the first place the fact that this was the last occasion on which Jesus should take part in the Passover celebration. Matthew's more pointed form, 'I will not drink henceforth of *this* fruit of the vine' (xxvi. 29), makes it still clearer that it was the wine of the Paschal meal Jesus had in view, that he had himself been a partaker with others, and that 'henceforth,' from that present occasion, he should do so no more. But they speak in the second place of a future participation—a day when he should drink it *new* ('new,' not in the sense of *recent* or *fresh*, but in that of *another and better kind*). This cannot refer, as some have thought, to anything belonging to the period of his risen life on earth, but, as the phrase 'in the kingdom of God' implies, to the perfected condition of things, the consummation of his kingdom, the world of the future in which all things are to be made new (Rev. xxi. 5). There he will take part in a Passover of a new and better kind, in a fellowship of a new and higher order. See the promise in Luke (xxii. 29, 30), and compare the parables of the great Supper and the Marriage Feast (Luke xiv. 16-24; Matt. xxii. 1-14).

Mark's account of the institution of the Lord's Supper is most concise and clear. It contains no explicit statement either of the *memorial* purpose of the Supper or of its perpetuity. The same is the case with Matthew. But it does not follow from this, as some argue, that Jesus had no intention of instituting a regular ordinance and one to be perpetually observed in his Church, or

And when they had sung a hymn, they went out unto <sup>26</sup>  
the mount of Olives.

that the Lord's Supper as we know it is the creation of Paul. It is in the Pauline account indeed that we have the most express statement of the memorial meaning of the Supper, and of its destination to be observed till Christ comes (1 Cor. xi. 24, 25, 26). But, according to a reading which in any case is of primitive origin and is accepted by the Revisers ('this do in remembrance of me'), the commemorative purpose is indicated also by Luke (xxii. 19). The statement in 1 Corinthians and the practice of the Apostolic Church, shew how the Supper was understood by the apostles themselves. It is also difficult to understand why Jesus should have done what Matthew and Mark record him to have done in so solemn a manner, immediately after the celebration of the Paschal meal, in express connexion with that sacred commemorative ordinance, and in terms of a *new covenant* similar to the old covenant but with a higher meaning, if he had only in view the one occasion and did not intend to institute a regular and enduring rite.

Tradition has fixed upon two spots as the site of the 'upper room' in which the Passover was eaten and the Lord's Supper instituted, namely, (1) on the side of the mount of Olives, not far from the Church of the Virgin Mary; and (2) on the western hill, usually called Mount Zion. In the mosque occupying a position on the latter a room is to be seen which is described as 'a large, dreary room of stone, fifty or sixty feet long by some thirty in width. At the east end is a small niche in the wall, which the Christians use at certain seasons as an altar' (Robinson, *Bibl. Researches*, i. 241). The 'upper room' must have been within easy distance of the Garden of Gethsemane.

xiv. 26. *Departure to the Mount of Olives*: cf. Matt. xxvi. 30; Luke xxii. 39; John xviii. 1.

**26. when they had sung a hymn.** Some have supposed this to have been Ps. cxxxvi. But in all probability it was the second part of the *Hallel*, which it was customary to sing after the meal. This consisted of Psalms cxv-cxviii. Some take it to have been the great *Hallel*, Psalms cxx-cxxvii.

**they went out.** It was provided by a regulation founded on Exod. xii. 22 that the night after the Paschal meal should be spent in the city. But that seems to have fallen into abeyance or to have been but partially observed.

**the mount of Olives.** There would be nothing in this movement to excite surprise. They were going in the direction of their usual retreat for the night.

**27** And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended : for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep  
**28** shall be scattered abroad. Howbeit, after I am raised  
**29** up, I will go before you into Galilee. But Peter said

xiv. 27-31. *Announcement of Desertion by the Twelve and Denial by Peter* : cf. Matt. xxvi. 31-35 ; Luke xxii. 31-34 ; John xiii. 36-38.

**27. And Jesus saith unto them.** Matthew says more definitely '*Then* saith Jesus' (xxvi. 31). The words that follow, therefore, are given by the first two Evangelists as spoken after the party had left the supper-room. Luke and John introduce them as if they had been spoken before that. Some have thought that Jesus spoke thrice of Peter's fall, taking the occasions reported respectively by Matthew and Mark, by Luke, and by John to be distinct. Others suppose that there was but one prediction of that event, namely, that reported by Luke and John, Matthew and Mark being understood to give it in the order of ideas rather than in that of precise time. There is nothing unreasonable, however, in supposing that the announcement was made twice, first when the party were yet in the room, and again when they were on the way. This would be quite in harmony, indeed, both with the circumstances and with Peter's character.

**offended.** Jesus had often spoken of *offences* or *stumblings* (Matt. xxiv. 10 ; Mark iv. 17, ix. 42 ; Luke vii. 23 ; John xvi. 1), and had delivered solemn counsels on the subject both to those hostile to him and to uncertain, unreliable followers (Matt. xv. 12 ; Mark vi. 3 ; John vi. 61). These warnings are directed now to the Twelve themselves. With what feelings must they have heard then, all unconscious as they were of disloyalty !

**for it is written.** The dark prediction is sealed by the testimony of Scripture. The passage that follows is taken, with some modification, from Zechariah (xiii. 7). In the shepherd against whom the sword was called to awake Jesus sees a representation of himself, the true Shepherd of the sheep, divinely appointed, but also devoted to death.

**28. after I am raised up.** Another explicit announcement of his resurrection, turning the darkness of the prediction of his death into the light of a new hope.

**go before you into Galilee.** The Twelve would naturally return to their own northern parts when all was over. The assurance that he would be there before them is meant to relieve them of the gloom into which the thought of his death casts them, and to make the promise of his resurrection more real to them and more certain. Cf. also xvi. 6, 7.

**29. But Peter said unto him.** The eager, impulsive, warm-

unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I. And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, <sup>30</sup> that thou to-day, *even* this night, before the cock crow twice, shalt deny me thrice. But he spake exceeding <sup>31</sup> vehemently, If I must die with thee, I will not deny thee. And in like manner also said they all.

<sup>1</sup> And they come unto a place which was named Geth- <sup>32</sup>

hearted Apostle cannot bear the thought of such cowardly faithlessness. For himself, at any rate, he will have nothing of it, and in the haste of his confident love he breaks out into hot, impetuous words of repudiation. The protestation is given substantially in the same form by Matthew. In Luke the terms are somewhat different, as the forewarning itself is more pointed and circumstantial (xxii. 31-34). The differences in John's narrative, too, are considerable, and point (together with Luke's account) to a different occasion (xiii. 36-38).

**30. thou to-day, even this night, before the cock crow twice, shalt deny me thrice.** Notice the significant 'thou' corresponding to Peter's 'I,' rightly placed at the beginning by the R. V., though omitted by the A. V. In Matthew it is simply 'before the cock crow,' or rather, 'before *a* cock crow,' that is, before day begins to dawn. In Mark the declaration is made sharper and more pointed by the more precise statement of time ('to-day, *even* this night') and the mention of the *twice*, the two successive notes that might make him pause. Cock-crowing is identified with the third of the four night watches. That watch, extending from midnight till about 3 a.m., is called 'the cock-crowing' in this Gospel (xiii. 35). The first cock-crowing, less certain than the second, might be about midnight; the second towards 3 a.m., or at earliest daybreak.

**31. But he spake exceeding vehemently.** The words imply that he went on protesting, and with the greater heat. The Lord's words disconcerted and mortified him, and made him assert himself the more.

**And in like manner also said they all.** This is stated also in Matthew, though not in Luke and John. It is what might have been expected. The rest could have as little idea as Peter of a trial that would turn the devotion of which they were conscious at the time into timid, selfish flight. They would be as ready to deny the possibility as he was, and his passionate assertions would provoke them to speak as he did, if they had not already made their protest.

semane: and he saith unto his disciples, Sit ye here,  
33 while I pray. And he taketh with him Peter and James

Luke xxii. 40-46; also John xviii. 1. The fullest accounts of this momentous scene are given by Matthew and Mark. John does not record the Agony. Luke gives a brief narrative, which says nothing of the choice of the three, and speaks only of one time of prayer. On the other hand he, and he alone, introduces the statements about the strengthening angel and the bloody sweat. The two verses, however, containing these statements (xxii. 43, 44), though they have a place in the text of the R. V. as well as in that of the A. V., are omitted by some of the most important of our ancient documents, and are of uncertain authority here.

**32. And they come unto a place which was named Gethsemane.** It is not stated when the party left the upper room or when they arrived at this place. But as the ceremonial of the Paschal meal began probably soon after 6 p.m., and lasted some hours, it might be about midnight before the Twelve were here. Luke speaks of the place as 'the mount of Olives' (xxii. 39), and John speaks of it as 'a garden' across 'the brook Kidron' (xviii. 1). Matthew and Mark give the name *Gethsemane*, a word meaning 'oil-press,' and indicate by the term they use for 'place' that it was 'an enclosed piece of ground,' as the margin of the R. V. explains. It seems, therefore, to have been an olive orchard; and even if it were a private enclosure or farm it could be entered without difficulty and without attracting notice. For during the Paschal season houses and gardens were open to the public. The traditional site is some fifty yards beyond the bridge across the Kidron. There a plot of ground presents itself, surrounded by a stone wall and having within it eight olive trees. These trees are so ancient that many have imagined them to be the very trees on which our Lord looked, although that is rendered the more doubtful by Josephus's statement that during the siege of Jerusalem by Titus all the trees in the neighbourhood were cut down (*Jewish War*, vi. i. 11). Be that as it may, these trees, standing there in the majesty of their age and the pathos of their decay, are worthy of the words used of them by Dean Stanley—'the most venerable of their race on the face of the earth, their gnarled trunks and scanty foliage will always be regarded as the most affecting of the sacred memorials in or about Jerusalem.' Whether the modern Gethsemane really occupies the site of the ancient garden, however, is doubted by not a few. In any case the former cannot be far from the latter.

**Sit ye here, while I pray.** Prayer, solitary prayer, was the supreme need of Jesus with the cross now in view, and in anticipation, as we may reverently believe, of the conflict which he felt rising within him. For that he sought this

and John, and began to be greatly amazed, and sore troubled. And he saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death: abide ye here, and watch. And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground,

place which, while near the highway, yet gave opportunity of seclusion.

From John (xviii. 1) we gather that the Eleven went with Jesus into the enclosure. But eight of them were bidden stay at the entrance, and only the three who had been chosen before for the most privileged fellowship were taken further within.

**33. began to be greatly amazed.** The inward conflict was immediately upon him, and it was so severe that the Evangelists seem to exhaust the vocabulary of struggle and dread in order to express it. 'Greatly amazed,' says Mark, using a word peculiar to himself in the N. T., and expressing here the pain of a great shock as elsewhere the excess of an awe that surprises or overpowers (Mark ix. 15, xvi. 5, 6).

**and sore troubled.** Another expressive word, occurring only here, in the parallel in Matthew (xxvi. 37), and once in Paul (Phil. ii. 26). It expresses, as it is well put by Swete, 'the distress which follows a great shock, "the confused, restless, half-distracted state" (Lightfoot) which may be worse than the sharp pain of a fully realized sorrow.' Matthew gives 'sorrowful and sore troubled.'

**34. And he saith unto them.** The three are with him, therefore, thus far, seeing all; and to them he utters the sorrow that distracts him within, his human soul craving to unburden itself to others.

**My soul.** Here the word 'soul,' so often used as equivalent to 'life,' has the more definite sense of the seat of the feelings and emotions, the centre of all pleasure and pain. So it is also in John xii. 27, but nowhere else so distinctly in the N. T.

**exceeding sorrowful even unto death.** So also in Matthew. Cf. Ps. xlii. 5, 6, 11, xliv. 5. 'Unto death,' that is, a sorrow that kills, a sorrow that strains life to the point of extinction.

**abide ye here, and watch.** In the agonizing passages of life men crave at once solitude and sympathy. Jesus must be alone, yet he would have these faithful three near enough to be witnesses of his anguish, and he would have their sympathy also, and their fellowship in watchful preparation for the impending trial.

**35. And he went forward a little.** Luke gives it more precisely as 'about a stone's cast' (xxii. 41). There was a deep in this sorrow that even the three could not enter, a stress in this conflict which even they could not share. So Abraham separated himself

and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass away from him. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; remove this cup from me: howbeit not what I will, but what thou wilt. And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto

from his young men, and went alone with Isaac 'yonder' to worship in his dread trial (Gen. xxii. 5).

**fell on the ground.** 'On his face,' says Matthew (xxvi. 39). Luke states simply that he 'kneeled down' (xxii. 41), a natural attitude and a common one in earnest prayer (Acts vii. 60, ix. 40, xx. 36, xxi. 5).

**that, if it were possible, the hour might pass away from him.** The strenuousness, the agony of his petition is in this cry, 'if it were possible.' The 'hour,' that is, the *appointed* hour, the time ordained for him in his Father's counsel, and foreseen by himself. He prayed that, if this must come, it might come and go without its anticipated woe. This phrase 'the hour,' 'his hour' occurs repeatedly in the Fourth Gospel, in more than one application, but usually with reference to his death (John ii. 4, vii. 30, viii. 20, xii. 23, 27, xiii. 1, xvii. 1).

**36. Abba, Father.** Two words; Aramaic and Greek, having the same sense. But the second is not a mere explanation of the first given for the benefit of non-Jewish readers. Rather is the double title the utterance of deep emotion. Strong feeling is apt to express itself in reduplicating terms; and in the case of those accustomed to speak at times an acquired tongue, it is the fond vernacular that springs first to the lips in moments of profound or agitated feeling. See how the new filial feeling towards God expresses itself according to Paul (Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 6). Perhaps the double term had become a familiar form in prayer among the Palestinian Jews. Only Mark introduces this 'Abba, Father,' and the only other occurrences of this twofold name of God are those two in the Pauline Epistles.

**remove this cup from me.** The figure of the 'cup' was used before, but then, too, with reference to his sufferings. See on x. 38.

**howbeit not what I will, but what thou wilt.** The longing, natural to humanity, to escape pain and sorrow yields at once to the superior claim of the Divine will. So Jesus had a real human will capable of a conflict with the Divine. It is the problem of theology to relate this distinct human will to his higher nature, so as neither to take from the integrity of his humanity nor to ascribe to him a double personality.

**37. findeth them sleeping.** After this first crisis of prayer he

Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest thou not watch one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. And again he went away, and prayed, saying 38  
seeks again the fellowship of the three, but finds them asleep, his charge to *watch* all forgotten.

**Simon, sleepest thou?** He selects the one of the three who had been loudest in protestation, and from whom more was expected, and calls him not *Peter*, but *Simon*. There was reproach in the use of the old name of nature instead of the new name of grace and office.

**one hour.** Even so brief a space as that—only the third part of one of the watches of the night. The foremost of the apostles had not the strength even for that! Luke explains the sleep of the three as due to sorrow (xxii. 45); and that is true to nature. Heavy sorrow soon brings exhaustion with it and deadened sensibility.

**38. Watch and pray, that ye enter not:** or, as in the margin of the R. V., ‘Watch ye, and pray that ye enter not.’ According to the former rendering, they are charged (the three being now addressed, and not Simon only) both to be wakeful and to pray, that by these two things, wakefulness and prayer, they may be kept from giving themselves away to temptation. According to the latter they are to be wakeful, and to make deliverance from temptation the subject of their prayers. Watchfulness and prayer are meant to serve each other. So Peter speaks of the former (using for it another term) as having the latter as its end and object (1 Pet. iv. 7). From Luke it would appear that Jesus had already charged this duty of praying against temptation upon them when he came to the garden, and before he went apart into its deeper solitude (xxii. 40).

**temptation.** The great, inclusive term for all those things by which man is tried and proved, whether by God through pain and sorrow, or by Satan through his varied solicitations to sin, or by the evil that is in man himself.

**the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.** The Lord’s apology for human nature even when, in the best, it fails and disappoints. He knows how insufficient the instrument is through which the spirit has to work. To understand all that these two things, *flesh* and *spirit*, mean, we turn to the Epistles of Paul and John. Everywhere the *spirit* is that which gives life and links man with God: a significant term in the O. T., but with a meaning at once deeper and higher in the N. T. Everywhere, too, the *flesh* is the note of man’s limitations, in the O. T. the designation of his dependence, and frailty, and mortality; in the N. T. the designation not only of the weakness of his nature as it now

40 the same words. And again he came, and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they 41 wist not what to answer him. And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: it is enough; the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

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is, but also more definitely of its sinfulness, its opposition to God, its disinclination to good.

**40. they wist not what to answer him.** The second time he finds them faster asleep than before, and less masters of themselves when aroused. They were in a helpless, speechless daze. It was a recurrence of their experience on the Mount of Transfiguration. There sudden fear, here dire sorrow, brought on them a drowsiness against which they could not struggle, and an incapacity of utterance.

**41. Sleep on now, and take your rest.** On the third occasion he says nothing more of *watching*, but bids them sleep and rest; for the time for watchfulness was gone, so far as concerned the present emergency. There is more here than resigned permission of the slumber which had its excuse in the weariness of nature. There is sorrowful irony in the words. Jesus had already employed this weapon of gentle irony (Mark vii. 9). Nor is there anything incongruous in his use of it even at this most solemn moment of conflict, prayer, and dread anticipation. ‘Irony is not inconsistent even with the deepest anguish of soul, especially in cases where such anguish is also accompanied with such clearness of judgement as we find in the present instance; and consider what it was for Jesus to see such overpowering tendency to sleep on the part of his disciples, and to find everything so different from what he needed and might have reasonably expected!’ (Meyer).

**it is enough.** Better simply, ‘enough!’ A singular phrase, peculiar to Mark, and scarcely to be found anywhere else indeed in its present use. Its point is by no means clear. It may refer to the Lord’s ironical address: ‘Enough of such expostulation; the time for that is past; the danger is at hand.’ Or it may refer, as most take it, to the slumber of the disciples; ‘But enough of sleep; it is the time for action.’ So his tone changes. He has caught sight of the body of men wending their way from the city, and the mood of sorrowful irony gives way again to that of deep earnestness. The short, rapid, broken sentences that now fall from his lips—*enough! the hour is come; the Son of man is betrayed; arise, let us be going—express his quick, agitated sense of the crisis.*

**into the hands of sinners.** The members of the Sanhedrin,

Arise, let us be going : behold, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

And straightway, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and those official Jews who had schemed for his life and would have him in their hands now, are specially intended.

**42. Arise, let us be going.** Certainly not with a view to flight, but to meet the decisive hour and face the betrayer. The three disciples were still prostrate on the ground, but awake. He has been standing by them, and now bids them rise and go with him. John states explicitly that Jesus 'went forth' and met Judas and his band (xviii. 4).

The accounts which the Synoptical Gospels give of this profound and painful passage in our Lord's experience have the unmistakable stamp of reality, and differ wholly from what myth or legend might have produced. They record an *Agony*, which did not consist in mere physical suffering, nor yet in mental pain of an ordinary kind. It cannot be explained as due simply to the defeat of his hopes, his disappointment with his friends, or anything of that kind. It is caused by the anticipation of his Passion; but it cannot be understood as the mere recoil of a sensitive spirit from the prospect of death. If that were all, then we should have to say that the Lord himself was inferior to many of his followers in courage, serenity, and endurance. Can those intense supplications, those swayings to and fro in perturbed and sorrowful feeling, be adequately understood unless we see in him of whom they are reported one who stood in a peculiar relation to God and to man, the sinless one realizing as no other could what death and sin are, and himself suffering for others?

xiv. 43-50. *The Betrayal and Arrest* : cf. Matt. xxvi. 47-56; Luke xxii. 47-53; John xviii. 2-12.

**43. straightway, while he yet spake, cometh Judas.** The words, 'Arise, let us be going : behold, he that betrayeth me is at hand,' were yet upon the lips of Jesus, when Judas burst in. He had acted promptly, and had made his way easily and quickly to the spot. He was familiar with the place, as John tells us (xviii. 2), and had no doubt been often in it with Jesus and his fellow apostles.

**one of the twelve.** The tragic note in the designation of the traitor, clinging to his name, and given here again, as already in verse 10, by all the three Synoptists; cf. also John vi. 71.

**with him a multitude with swords and staves.** Judas 'went before them,' says Luke (xxii. 47), acting as guide to a

**44** the elders. Now he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he; **45** take him, and lead him away safely. And when he was come, straightway he came to him, and saith, Rabbi; **46** and kissed him. And they laid hands on him, and took **47** him. But a certain one of them that stood by drew his

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crowd sent by the chief members of the Sanhedrin, armed against resistance with short swords and clubs or cudgels, such weapons as could be hastily collected. It was an irregular body of men, probably made up in the main of the Levitical guards, but supported by a detachment of Roman soldiers from the castle of Antonia. John mentions explicitly the 'band' or 'cohort' of soldiers (xviii. 3), whose services the Jewish authorities may have secured by making a representation to Pilate. These guards and Roman soldiers were accompanied also by servants of the high priest and others, as is implied in verses 47, 51, including, as it appears from Luke (xxii. 52), even members of the Sanhedrin.

**44. had given them a token.** This had been arranged before they started, therefore, and it was Judas's own proposal. The concerted signal was the usual salute given to a Rabbi—a kiss.

**take him, and lead him away safely.** 'Seize him,' or 'arrest him,' 'and carry him off in custody.' So eager was Judas that the capture should be effected immediately and securely.

**45. straightway he came to him.** Judas himself lost no time in carrying out his part of the base contract. So soon as he saw Jesus he addressed him by the usual name *Rabbi*, and gave him the customary salute, perhaps with more than usual fervour; as the word used here, 'kissed him,' may perhaps mean 'kissed him much' (cf. the margin of the R. V.). Mark says nothing of any words directed to Judas. Matthew represents Jesus as saying to the traitor, 'Friend, *do* that for which thou art come' (xxvi. 50). Luke gives the words, 'Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?' (xxii. 48). John omits the incident of the kiss, and reports Jesus as going forth to meet the crowd and putting to them the question, 'Whom seek ye?' (xviii. 4).

**47. But a certain one of them.** John tells us it was Simon Peter (xviii. 10).

**drew his sword.** A short sword or knife. Luke tells us that the eleven had two swords with them (xxii. 38), and also that when they saw what was likely to happen they asked him whether they might not use the weapon to repel the assailants (xxii. 49). Peter, in his impetuous characteristic way, acted on his impulse, and struck at once in his Master's defence.

sword, and smote the servant of the high priest, and struck off his ear. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a robber, with swords and staves to seize me? I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not: but *this is done* that the scriptures might be fulfilled. And they all left him, and fled.

And a certain young man followed with him, having

**the servant of the high priest.** All the Evangelists record this, but only John gives the name, *Malchus*—by no means an unusual name. John, being acquainted with the high priest, may have at once recognized the man, who probably was taking a foremost part in the seizure.

**struck off his ear.** The *right* ear, according to Luke and John. Neither the remonstrance of Jesus nor the healing of the ear is recorded by Mark. The former is given by the other three Evangelists, though in different terms (Matt. xxvi. 52; Luke xxii. 51; John xviii. 11). The latter is reported only by Luke (xxii. 51).

**48. Are ye come out, as against a robber?** A protest against a kind of action which was fitter for a brigand or highwayman than for a religious teacher such as he was; one, too, who had been speaking publicly day after day in the temple, whose character and doctrine were known to all, and who had given them abundant opportunity of apprehending him there, if they had had cause.

**49. that the scriptures might be fulfilled.** Referring probably to such passages as Isa. lxxii.

**50. And they all left him, and fled.** That is, all the eleven, the three and their comrades. Peter, however, soon followed him again, though ‘afar off’ (Mark xiv. 54), and also John (xviii. 15).

xiv. 51, 52. *Incident of the Young Man.* A picturesque and interesting episode, peculiar to Mark.

**51. a certain young man followed with him.** Many vain conjectures have been hazarded as to who this young man was, some, e. g., supposing him to have been James the Just; others, Saul of Tarsus, attracted by curiosity; others, John; others, a youth from some farm in the neighbourhood or from the house in which the Passover meal had been eaten. The most probable conjecture is that he was the Evangelist himself. This would explain, it is thought, why the name is not given, and why an

a linen cloth cast about him, over *his naked body*: and  
 52 they lay hold on him; but he left the linen cloth, and fled naked.

**53 And they led Jesus away to the high priest:** and

incident like this, which has a purely personal interest and stands in no essential relation to the arrest, is introduced in the Second Gospel, and into it alone. The narrative else leaves all uncertain.

**having a linen cloth cast about him.** The word 'cloth' here means a 'wrap' or 'shirt.' It may have been 'a light summer "square" hastily caught up' (Swete), or rather a night-dress. The young man, therefore, may have been a disciple, but he was not one of the Twelve, nor one of those who had been in the supper-room or near the garden. He seems to have been raised out of sleep by the noise of the crowd as it passed, and to have rushed out to discover what the uproar meant. The Evangelist does not tell us exactly where this happened—whether the young man had made his way along with the multitude into Gethsemane, or had met Jesus in the street after the apprehension.

**52. left the linen cloth, and fled naked.** Recognizing the person in the hands of the band to be Jesus, to whose teaching he probably had listened with interest and to whom he had become in a certain measure devoted, he at once joined him and 'followed with him.' But his courage sank when his obtrusive sympathy led to hands being laid upon himself, and he fled as precipitately as he had come. The A. V. designates the partisans who would have laid hold of him 'the young men,' but without sufficient documentary authority.

xiv. 53-65. *The Trial before the High Priest*: cf. Matt. xxvi. 57-68; Luke xxii. 54, 63-71; see also John xviii. 12-14, 19-24.

**53. And they led Jesus away to the high priest.** John mentions that they first 'bound' him. The three Synoptists agree in stating that he was taken straight from Gethsemane to the high priest, or to his house. Mark and Luke do not give at this point the name of the high priest. Matthew says 'to the house of Caiaphas the high priest' (xxvi. 57); John says that they led him 'to Annas first,' and gives as the reason for this the fact that Annas was 'father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was high priest that year' (xviii. 13). The order of events, therefore, would seem to be this—after the arrest Jesus was taken first to Annas; then he was sent by Annas to Caiaphas; and then he was brought before the Sanhedrin, and tried and condemned. Annas was high priest, we know, during A.D. 7-14; and Caiaphas, or Joseph Caiaphas, held the office A.D. 18-36. It was the part, therefore, of Caiaphas,

there come together with him all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. And Peter had followed him afar off, even within, into the court of the high priest; and he was sitting with the officers, and warming himself in the light *of the fire*. Now the chief priests and the whole council sought witness against Jesus

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the actual holder of the office at the time, to conduct any official inquiry. If Jesus, then, was subjected to any examination by Annas, it must have been an informal and preliminary inquiry, and made by Annas on the ground of his experience and influence and special relation to the responsible official. It is possible that he was living at the time with his son-in-law, occupying with him the official residence, if there was such.

**there come together with him.** It was still very early in the morning, but already the whole body of the chief priests and representatives of the other orders in the Sanhedrin had been flocking to the house, and now they came 'with him,' that is, along with Jesus himself, at the very time he was being led in.

**54. Peter had followed him afar off.** Peter had been carried off with the rest in the sudden panic, but had soon turned back, and had followed at some distance.

**into the court.** He had even gone within, into the open court, round which the rooms of the residence were built. He owed his admission to the fact that he was with John, who 'was known unto the high priest' (John xviii. 15).

**was sitting with the officers.** Probably with the Levitical guards, who had brought the prisoner in and were now seeking the welcome heat of the fire. For the nights are cold in Jerusalem, and especially so in the watch preceding sunrise.

**in the light** of the fire. Thus the more exposed to recognition. This touch is peculiar to Mark. While Peter, who had made his way within in his anxiety 'to see the end' (Matt. xxvi. 58), sits there by the charcoal fire (John xviii. 18), which had been lit 'in the midst of the court' (Luke xxii. 55), his Master stood before the Jewish authorities in one of the rooms above (cf. verse 56).

**55. the chief priests and the whole council.** It was, therefore, a full meeting of the great national council, presided over by Caiaphas. Mark, along with Matthew and Luke, omits the particulars of the earlier, preparatory inquiry before Annas, which is recorded by John. There is nothing in the Synoptical narratives, however, to exclude the occurrence of such an inquiry. In like manner John omits the particulars of this trial before the Sanhedrin, though he refers to it (xviii. 24).

56 to put him to death ; and found it not. For many bare false witness against him, and their witness agreed 57 not together. And there stood up certain, and bare 58 false witness against him, saying, We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without

**sought witness.** Comparing the several narratives, we may conclude that Jesus had first been questioned by Annas, in consistency with the nature of a private inquiry, about matters of a more general kind—‘his disciples and his teaching’ (John xviii. 19) ; that when he was brought before Caiaphas, the effort was made to prove him guilty of a capital offence ; that with that object witnesses had been got together, first one set and then another, who were prepared to give false testimony or to turn some of his earlier words against him ; but that their evidence utterly broke down ; and that then Caiaphas questioned him as to his Messianic claims, and condemned him on the ground of these.

**56. their witness agreed not together.** There were many witnesses, but no two of the first set gave the same evidence. According to the Mosaic Law it required the consentient testimony of two witnesses in order to establish a capital charge (Deut. xix. 15).

**57. And there stood up certain.** The court, however, had a second set of witnesses in reserve. They were two in number, as Matthew states (xxvi. 60), and now the court seemed likely to succeed in its object. But again they failed.

**58. We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.** The charge was that he had made a statement in disparagement of the Temple, and as if he would overthrow it. They founded it on the words which he spoke at the beginning of his ministry regarding the temple of his body (John ii. 19). These words were misunderstood at the time. They were now misrepresented by these two witnesses, when they reported him to have said, ‘I am able to destroy’ (Matt. xxvi. 61), ‘I will destroy’ (Mark xiv. 58), instead of ‘Destroy . . .’ and ‘I will raise it up’ (John ii. 19), and to have contrasted the existing temple as one ‘made with hands’ with another which he himself was to build in three days and ‘without hands.’ This, therefore, again was *false* testimony ; and in giving it the two witnesses did not even agree. The statement of the two is given in a briefer form by Matthew. It is omitted by Luke and John. It meant one of the heaviest accusations that could be brought by one Jew against another. Stephen was afterwards charged with speaking against the ‘holy place and

hands. And not even so did their witness agree together. 59  
 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked 60  
 Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which  
 these witness against thee? But he held his peace, and 61  
 answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him,  
 and saith unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of  
 the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see 62  
 the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and

the law,' on the ground that he had been heard say that 'this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered unto us' (Acts vi. 13, 14).

**60. the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus.** Seeing the case as it had been carefully prepared breaking utterly down, and chagrined at the silence of Jesus, Caiaphas wished to get the accused himself to interpose, and 'stood up in the midst' (another of Mark's graphic touches) in order to extract something from him which might be turned to use.

**61. he held his peace.** He had nothing to say to perjured witnesses who refuted themselves.

**Again the high priest asked him.** Caiaphas, in his disappointment and perplexity, makes a second attempt to draw Jesus into speech that might compromise him and help the futile case. Now he asks him directly whether he claimed to be the Messiah.

**Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?** According to Matthew, in putting this second question Caiaphas called upon Jesus to answer it as on oath—'I adjure thee by the living God' (xxvi. 63). 'The living God,' that is, the God who can punish the false and perjured (Heb. x. 31). The terms of the question, 'the Son of God' (Matt.), 'the Son of the Blessed' (Mark), imply the Divine Sonship of the Messiah. The name given by Mark, 'the Blessed,' is used nowhere else in the N. T. in this absolute and undefined way. It heightens, if possible, the idea of the unapproachable majesty of God, and sharpens, therefore, the *blasphemy* involved in the claim made by any man to be in the relation of Son to God.

**62. And Jesus said, I am.** In Matthew, 'Thou hast said' (xxvi. 64). At last Caiaphas succeeds, and Jesus breaks his silence. For now it is not a question of false and discordant evidence, but a direct challenge to declare himself, and the moment has come when his Messiahship, long held in reserve, should be openly asserted.

**and ye shall see the Son of man sitting.** In Matthew the words take the more definite form—'Henceforth ye shall see the

**63** coming with the clouds of heaven. And the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What further need have we **64** of witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be worthy

Son of man,' that is, from that very time onwards (xxvi. 64). Not only is the Messiahship declared, but one of the highest of the prerogatives of the Messiah, that of judgement, is claimed. It is his affirmation of his future exaltation, his note of warning to his judges. His weakness was henceforth to be power; his dishonour was to be glory; and the arraigned one was to be the Judge. The words recall those of Daniel (vii. 13) and Psalm cx, which were interpreted in a Messianic sense. 'By the reference to well-known prophecy respecting the Messiah, Jesus made his claim as bold and plain as words could make it. This was a representation of the Messiah as the Founder of a kingdom that should take the place of the ancient world-powers, and should continue for ever' (Clarke). And they would themselves come to perceive this, for from the time of that death which they designed for him they would see evidences of his Messianic power.

**63. rent his clothes.** Rending one's clothes was an ancient sign of passionate sorrow, as in the case of Jacob (Gen. xxxvii. 29). It also became the sign of horror or extreme vexation, as in the case of Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah (2 Kings xviii. 37). It was provided by the Levitical Law that the high priest should not let his hair go loose or rend his clothes (Lev. x. 6, xxi. 10). But this prohibition had regard only to ordinary mourning, not to official acts (cf. 1 Macc. xi. 71; Joseph. *Jewish War*, ii. xv. 4). 'The pain of the high priest no doubt represented the genuine vexation of one who was deeply moved; but the judgement which he formed regarding Jesus was based on the assumption that *he* was *not* the Messiah, and indicates a predisposition to find him guilty of the capital charge' (Meyer).

**What further need have we of witnesses?** Caiaphas sees his way clear now, all the trouble in securing presentable evidence gone, and the Prisoner incriminated by his own confession.

**64. what think ye?** There is no thought of inquiring into his Messianic claims, as there had been no thought of hearing exculpatory evidence earlier. Caiaphas calls for the vote of the court, and in the Sanhedrin the answer was simply 'for life' or 'for death.'

**they all condemned him to be worthy of death.** Legally the Jewish court had no power to give effect to a sentence of death. That was reserved for the Roman authority. But the

of death. And some began to spit on him, and to cover 65 his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophesy : and the officers received him with blows of their hands.

Jewish court could declare one liable to the death penalty, and have their decision confirmed. The members were at one in their judgement. We may infer that men like Joseph of Arimathea, who 'had not consented to their counsel and deed' (Luke xxiii. 51), and Nicodemus, who at an earlier date had put to the Pharisees the question, 'Doth our law judge a man, except it first hear from himself and know what he doeth?' (John vii. 50, 51), were not present or took no part in the proceedings. The penalty for blasphemy, according to the Mosaic Law, was death, the Jewish mode of carrying it out being by stoning (Lev. xxiv. 16; 1 Kings xxi. 10; John x. 30; Acts vii. 58).

**65. some began to spit on him.** There would be a pause after the giving of the verdict of guilty of death, and the authorities would have to consider further procedure (cf. Matt. xxvii. 1). Some time would elapse before Jesus was removed and steps taken to get the sentence confirmed. During this interval Jesus would be exposed to those outrages which it was customary to inflict on a condemned prisoner in those days. The 'some' who indulged in these indignities must have been certain members of the Sanhedrin or the guards who held Jesus. Spitting was a Jewish way of shewing utmost contempt and abhorrence (cf. Num. xii. 14; Deut. xxv. 9). Seneca notices it as an exceptional thing that a man was found to spit in the face of Aristides the Just at Athens when he was brought to punishment. Luke introduces these indignities as if they had taken place before the meeting of the council (xxii. 63-65).

**and to cover his face.** The Romans were in the habit of covering the heads of condemned criminals. This is omitted by Matthew.

**and to buffet him.** That is, to strike him with the fist. The word is used twice by Paul (1 Cor. iv. 11; 2 Cor. xii. 7), and once by Peter (1 Pet. ii. 20). In ancient times Micaiah the prophet had been smitten on the cheek by Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah (1 Kings xxii. 24).

**and to say unto him, Prophesy.** Matthew makes the meaning of this clearer—'Prophesy unto us, thou Christ : who is he that struck thee?' (xxvi. 68).

**and the officers :** or 'attendants,' those, namely, of the Sanhedrin. They followed the evil example of the members of the council, but had their own way of expressing their passion.

**received him with blows of their hands :** or, as in the margin of the R. V., 'with strokes of rods.' The word means

66 And as Peter was beneath in the court, there cometh  
 67 one of the maids of the high priest ; and seeing Peter  
 warming himself, she looked upon him, and saith, Thou  
 68 also wast with the Nazarene, *even* Jesus. But he denied,  
 saying, I neither know, nor understand what thou sayest :

either strokes with sticks, or slaps in the face with the open hand. The fact that this form of abuse seems to be distinguished from the *buffeting* points to the former. Cf. Isa. 1. 6.

xiv. 66-72. *Peter's Denials*: cf. Matt. xxvi. 69-75; Luke xxii. 56-62; John xviii. 25-27.

**66. And as Peter was beneath in the court.** 'An oriental house is usually built around a quadrangular interior court, into which there is a passage (sometimes arched) through the front part of the house, closed next the street by a heavy folding-gate with a smaller wicket, kept by a porter' (Robinson, *Harmony*, 225); The 'court,' or, as it is variously rendered in the A.V., the 'palace or the 'hall,' is this interior area, open to the sky, and in the present case no doubt paved. Here the fire had been lit by the servants, and here Peter stood, while his Master was before the high priest in the regular council-chamber or in some other audience-room somewhat higher than the central area and looking into it. The palace of the high priest was on the north-east corner of mount Zion. So Peter was 'beneath' as Mark says, and 'without' as Matthew notices.

**one of the maids.** One of the slave-girls employed in the high priest's household ; the term used also of Rhoda (Acts xii. 13), and of the soothsaying girl at Philippi (Acts xvi. 16).

**67. seeing Peter warming himself, she looked upon him.** John speaks of the maid 'that kept the door' (xviii. 17). The portress, therefore, as it seems, had noticed Peter when she gave him admission at John's request; her attention had been attracted to him again as he stood in the light of the fire. Looking observingly upon him, and recognizing him, she crossed from the gate to where he was standing, and charged him with being with Jesus. The words of the maid are given with considerable variation by the several Evangelists, but with the same sense. The form in Mark, 'the Nazarene—Jesus,' admirably reproduces the hasty, broken exclamation of the maid.

**68. neither know, nor understand.** Peter's reply is given in various forms in the four reports, but again with substantially the same sense. The double negation in Mark reflects the precipitancy and absoluteness of the denial. Peter disowns all knowledge of the Nazarene, all consciousness even of what the charge meant.

and he went out into the porch ; and the cock crew. And the maid saw him, and began again to say to them <sup>69</sup> that stood by, This is *one* of them. But he again denied <sup>70</sup> it. And after a little while again they that stood by said

The margin of the R. V. brings this out still more forcibly : ‘I neither know, nor understand ; thou, what sayest thou ?’

**into the porch.** His uneasiness and embarrassment make him change his position from the brightness of the fire to the darkness of the vestibule or passage that led from the street-door to the court.

**and the cock crew.** This clause is omitted by some of the best and most ancient of our documentary authorities.

**69. And the maid saw him.** The four reports differ in the particulars of Peter’s denials, as regards the persons and the positions as well as the terms of the accusations and the replies. It is difficult, therefore, to construct an entirely consistent narrative, or to say with certainty at what point or even in what place the various denials occurred. The second charge or question is stated by Matthew to have been made by ‘another maid’ ; by Mark, by the same maid as is first introduced ; while John’s version is, ‘they said therefore unto him’ (xviii. 25). If we follow Mark’s account, it will appear that the maid who ‘kept the door’ had returned to her post of duty in the porch, and repeated her charge there, directing the attention of the people who stood about there to Peter. ‘But in the several narratives it is plain that it is not deemed important to specify who addressed Peter ; the important point is his denials. The matter may very naturally be thus arranged : the damsel who first accused him, silenced for the time, but not satisfied with his denial, speaks to another maid-servant and points out Peter to her as one whom she knew or believed to be a disciple, and the other maid repeats it. Others, hearing the women, also join with them, perhaps dimly remembering his person, or now noting something peculiar in his manner. That, under the circumstances and in the excitement of the moment, such an accusation, once raised, should be echoed by many, is what we should expect. During the confusion of this questioning Peter returns again to the fire in the interior of the court where most were standing, and there repeats with an oath his denial’ (Andrews, *The Life of our Lord*, p. 520).

**70. But he again denied it.** Matthew tells us that this second denial was uttered ‘with an oath.’

**And after a little while.** So also Matthew. But Luke gives the interval more explicitly as ‘after the space of about one hour’ (xxii. 59).

**they that stood by.** So also in Matthew ; Luke gives simply

to Peter, Of a truth thou art *one* of them ; for thou art  
 71 a Galilean. But he began to curse, and to swear, I know  
 72 not this man of whom ye speak. And straightway the  
 second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind  
 the word, how that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock  
 crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he  
 thought thereon, he wept.

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'another.' John notices that at this point the accusation against Peter was made in the most definite terms by a slave related to Malchus, who could confirm all that had been said by others: 'One of the servants of the high priest, being a kinsman of him whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him?' (xviii. 26).

**for thou art a Galilean.** 'Thy speech bewrayeth thee,' says Matthew. The people of Northern Palestine had peculiarities of speech by which they were easily distinguished from those of Judæa. Their speech had a certain roughness or thickness, and they had difficulty in pronouncing the gutturals and the *th* sounds.

**71. he began to curse, and to swear.** To 'curse,' that is, to call down an anathema upon himself if his denials were not true (cf. Acts xxiii. 12). Caught at his weakest moment, when his moral courage was lowered and confused by surprise and the shock of a dire disappointment, and drawn by the force of circumstances too strong for him at the time from one false step to another, Peter plunges, desperate and reckless, into this last depth of falsehood and disloyalty.

**72. straightway the second time the cock crew.** 'Immediately, while he yet spake,' says Luke (xxii. 60). It was at the very moment of the utterance of his third denial, when the oaths and curses were yet upon his lips, that Peter heard the fateful cock-crow that again changed all for him.

**called to mind.** For the time he had forgotten what Jesus had said in forewarning him. Now it leaps back into his recollection, and breaks him down. Luke alone notices the fact that 'the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter' (xxii. 61).

**when he thought thereon.** The Greek word is of uncertain meaning. It has been variously rendered 'he turned his eyes on Jesus' (but it was Jesus who turned his eye on Peter); 'he began' i. e. to weep; 'he continued weeping'; 'he added weeping to weeping'; 'he flung himself forth'; he 'drew his mantle over his head.' But the most probable rendering is that adopted both by the A. V. and by the R. V., 'he thought thereon.'

**he wept.** The word expresses loud continual weeping. The

And straightway in the morning the chief priests with 15 the elders and scribes, and the whole council, held a consultation, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him up to Pilate. And Pilate asked him, 2

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Master's word of warning which had rushed back into Peter's memory was thought over. As its pathetic circumstances and all that it meant rose upon his mind he was utterly broken, and 'went out,' as Luke tells us, to be alone with himself in tearful, passionate penitence.

xv. 1-15. *The Trial before Pilate*: cf. Matt. xxvii. 1-26; Luke xxiii. 1-5, 13-25; John xviii. 28-40, xix. 4-16.

**1. straightway in the morning.** After being taken from Annas to Caiaphas and subjected to a preliminary questioning by the latter, Jesus was brought before the Sanhedrin in the council-chamber of Caiaphas, probably at one or two o'clock in the morning, and formally tried and condemned. The Sanhedrin, having so far done their work, had adjourned. But they now assemble again at break of day, in order to consult how to bring Jesus before the Roman procurator, who alone had the power of the sword. 'The chief priests,' says Mark, 'with the elders and scribes, and the whole council.' The hierarchy, therefore, took the lead in the proceedings, but the other orders were at one with them, and what followed the consultation was the act of the whole council.

**bound Jesus . . . delivered him up to Pilate.** The Feast had begun. The risk of an outbreak when the adherents of Jesus gathered in their numbers was great. The Jewish authorities, knowing that there was no time to lose if they were to escape such dangers, took instant action, and carried off their prisoner securely bound at once to Pilate. The Evangelists give only general indications of the time—'when morning was come' (Matthew), 'in the morning' (Mark), 'as soon as it was day' (Luke), 'it was early' (John). But as Roman courts did not meet before sunrise, and gave no judgement before 6 a.m., it was probably 5 or 6 a.m. when Jesus was taken before the Roman Procurator. John states that he was led into 'the palace' or *prætorium* (xviii. 28). It is difficult to say whether the place in question was the palace of Herod the Great, a magnificent marble structure on the north side of Zion, occupied for the time by Pilate, or the fortress of Antonia or a residence near that.

**Pilate.** On the deposition and banishment of Archelaus in A.D. 6, Judæa was united to Syria and put under the authority of the Syrian governor or *legate*. But, subject to this overlordship, it was ruled immediately by a procurator sent from Rome (Joseph. *Antiq.*

**Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering saith 3 unto him, Thou sayest.** And the chief priests accused

xvii. xiii. 5, xviii. i. 1, *Jewish War*, ii. viii. 1). The procurator lived at Cæsarea on the Sea (Acts xxiii. 23; Joseph. *Jewish War*, ii. ix. 2), but came up to Jerusalem at the Passover season in order to keep order. The fifth in the series of procurators of Judæa was Pontius Pilate, who succeeded Valerius Gratus in A.D. 25-26, and brought with him into Palestine his wife Procula or Claudia Procula. He is referred to, not only in the narratives of Passion Week, but elsewhere in the N. T. (Luke iii. 1, xiii. 1; Acts iv. 27; 1 Tim. vi. 13), and is named by the Roman historian Tacitus as the 'procurator by whom, in the reign of Tiberius, Christ had been punished' (*Annals*, xv. 44). His character is drawn both by Josephus (*Antiq.* xviii, *Jewish War*, ii. ix. 2 ff.) and by Philo the Jew (*De Leg.* 38). The latter represents him as given over, in his public life, to rapacity, corruption, ruthlessness, and all manner of oppression and wrong. The N. T. indicates the savage cruelty of his rule (Luke xiii. 1). It represents him at the same time as having something of the sense of justice proper to a Roman judge, though vacillating in purpose and not strong enough to give effect to it in opposition to the pressure put upon him by the relentless Jews.

**2. asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews?** Pilate met the Jews outside; as John explains, because they were too scrupulous to enter the palace of the heathen ruler, lest they should be defiled and so prevented from taking part in the Passover. After this first interview with the Jewish authorities Pilate entered the palace again, and summoning Jesus before him (John xviii. 33), put to him the question recorded by all the four Evangelists. How did Pilate come to put such a question to Jesus? The answer probably is that the Jews had charged Jesus with making regal claims, giving the Messianic title 'King of the Jews' a political meaning. This accords with the fuller statement which Luke gives of the accusation as one essentially of sedition: 'We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, and saying that he himself is Christ a king' (xxiii. 2). The question was a private and preliminary one, and its form suggests, as Westcott thinks, 'a feeling of surprise on the part of the questioner.'

**Thou sayest:** an affirmative reply, calmly given. John shews us how Jesus first asked Pilate why he put such a question to him, and then explained in what sense he claimed to be king and what manner of kingdom his was (xviii. 34-38).

**3. the chief priests accused him of many things.** The Jewish officials remain without, and begin to be joined by the

him of many things. And Pilate again asked him, saying, 4 answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they accuse thee of. But Jesus no more answered anything; 5 insomuch that Pilate marvelled.

Now at the feast he used to release unto them one 6 prisoner, whom they asked of him. And there was one 7

mob (Luke xxiii. 4). After the brief, private inquiry, Pilate comes forth again, and gives the Jews to understand, as Luke (xxiii. 4) and John (xviii. 38) tell us, that he found no fault in the accused. This provokes a fresh burst of accusations on the part of the Jews, who clamour with furious insistence about his stirring up the people, 'teaching throughout all Judæa, and beginning from Galilee even unto this place' (Luke xxiii. 5).

**4. Pilate again asked him.** His conviction of the innocence of Jesus being perhaps somewhat shaken by these new and serious charges, Pilate further questions him, but elicits no reply. The governor marvels at the tranquil, dignified silence maintained by Jesus in the face of the fierce storm of accusations. He is embarrassed; and, as Luke suggests, who introduces here his report of the compearance before Herod, he catches at the mention of *Galilee* as the scene of the first teaching of Jesus. He asks more particularly about this, and learning from the accusers themselves that Jesus was 'of Herod's jurisdiction,' he sends him on to that prince. But Herod sent him back to Pilate (Luke xxiii. 6-12).

**6. Now at the feast he used to release unto them one prisoner.** Some have taken this to mean that at each of the great festivals the custom was to release a prisoner. But the reference is to the Passover feast, as John explains (xviii. 39). Of the custom itself nothing definite is known beyond what is stated here. There is no mention of it in the later Jewish writings. It is supposed by some to have originated in the Maccabean age, or even at an earlier period than that. Others think it was introduced by the Romans with a view to conciliating the Jews.

**whom they asked of him.** The point of the concession lay in the fact that the selection of the prisoner was left to the Jews themselves. Pilate's second expedient for relief was to take advantage of this custom. Comparing the several narratives, we see that, when Jesus was sent back by Herod, Pilate called the Jewish authorities and the people together again (Luke xxiii. 13), and seated himself upon the judgement-seat (Matt. xxvii. 19), with the intention of declaring Jesus guiltless and ending the trial. It was the custom for the procurator, when he was to give his judge-

called Barabbas, *lying* bound with them that had made insurrection, men who in the insurrection had committed 8 murder. And the multitude went up and began to ask 9 him *to do* as he was wont to do unto them. And Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you 10 the King of the Jews? For he perceived that for envy

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ment in a trial, to take his seat on a movable tribunal. In the present case, as we learn from John, this tribunal was set up 'at a place called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha' (xix. 13). Here Pilate formally declares that neither he nor Herod found any fault in the accused, and announces his intention to scourge him and then to release him. His idea probably was to set Jesus free under the custom referred to, but without consulting the people. He thought in this way not only to satisfy his own sense of justice, but to please the people by releasing a prisoner whom he imagined they would value, and to propitiate the Sanhedrin by chastising Jesus. But he pleased no one.

**7. Barabbas.** Some ancient authorities give the name as *Jesus Barabbas*. The name Bar-Abba was a common name, at least in later Judaism. Of this Barabbas nothing certain is known beyond what we gather from the Gospels, namely, that he was a robber (John xviii. 40); that he had stirred up a serious disturbance in the city and had been guilty of murder (Mark xv. 7; Luke xxiii. 19); and that at the time he was lying a prisoner along with his fellow insurgents, charged with faction and murder. He was probably one of those fierce and uncompromising patriots, known as the party of the Zealots, who hated the Roman rule with an invincible hatred, and gave constant trouble to the Roman governors and the Roman soldiery. Barabbas was guilty of the very crime, that of sedition, which the Sanhedrin tried to fasten unjustly upon Jesus.

**8. the multitude . . . began to ask him.** The people were not to be balked of their right, and Pilate thought that, as it was obviously envy of the favour and influence Jesus had won with the multitude that had induced the hierarchy to accuse him, the people were likely to choose Jesus for release. He let them have their usual right of choice, therefore, only suggesting by his question, 'Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?' the selection that might please him as well as them. But in this appeal to the people he was defeated by the counter-appeal of the chief priests. We are not told how the people were induced to prefer Barabbas. But there may have been a secret sympathy with the insurgents on which the chief priests contrived to play.

the chief priests had delivered him up. But the chief 11 priests stirred up the multitude, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them. And Pilate again answered 12 and said unto them, What then shall I do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews? And they cried 13 out again, Crucify him. And Pilate said unto them, 14 Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out exceedingly, Crucify him. And Pilate, wishing to content 15

**12. What then shall I do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews?** It was probably when he was thus unexpectedly disappointed of his hopes of a way out of his difficulty that he received the disturbing message from his wife which is recorded by Matthew (xxvii. 19). His uneasiness is increased by this, and he asks in angered perplexity what is to be done with him who was no robber or murderer, but ostensibly their king. Their answer, instigated no doubt by the chief priests, was short and sharp—‘Crucify him.’

**14. Why, what evil hath he done?** Expostulation was the governor’s next device. But its only effect was to make the insensate people clamour the more vehemently for the crucifixion of their King.

**15. Pilate, wishing to content the multitude.** At this point Matthew records how Pilate ‘took water, and washed his hands before the multitude’ (xxvii. 24), an incident which is reported only by him. This was a Jewish ceremony (Deut. xxi. 6; Joseph. *Antiq.* iv. viii. 16), symbolical of one’s guiltlessness in the matter of the shedding of blood. Similar symbolical rites were practised by the Greeks, only *after* a case of murder, not before it (Herod. i. 35; Virgil, *Aen.* ii. 719). It was also the custom for heathen judges when about to pass sentence to protest their innocence of the blood of the person whom they were to condemn to death (see Meyer on Matt. xxvii. 24). His fear of the Jewish mob, working on his fatal irresolution, beats down all the governor’s scruples, and at last extorts from him the irrevocable order. The Fourth Gospel, with its more detailed account, best enables us to understand how Pilate struggled against the meshes that were closing in about him. It shews us how he went once and again into the palace, and once and again faced the people; how he brought Jesus out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple garment, and called on the mob, in a last appeal to their pity, or in fierce mockery of their Messianic ideas, to ‘behold the man’; how he would have had the Jews take Jesus

the multitude, released unto them Barabbas, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.

**16** And the soldiers led him away within the court, which is the Prætorium ; and they call together the whole band.

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away and themselves crucify him ; how at last they declared the real cause of their offence with him—his claim to be the Son of God ; how the judge, the more afraid when he heard this, took Jesus again within and interrogated him in private ; and how the long conflict between the Jewish accusers and the Roman judge ended in triumph for the former when they tried the hesitating governor with the crafty cry, ‘Thou art not Cæsar’s friend’ (John xix. 1-14).

**when he had scourged him.** This particular word is found in the N. T. only here and in the parallel passage in Matthew. Roman scourging inflicted suffering so terrible that often the victim died under it. The scourging before crucifixion was usually done by lictors (Joseph. *Jewish War*, ii. xiv. 9, v. xi. 1) ; but in our Lord’s case it was done by the soldiers. The sufferer was bound to a low pillar. In the Church of the Holy Sepulchre a broken porphyry column, known as the Column of Flagellation, is shewn as the pillar to which our Lord was bound. Another column with similar pretensions is shewn at Rome.

xv. 16-20. *The Mockery of the Soldiers* : cf. Matt. xxvii. 27-31 ; John xix. 2, 3. This incident is omitted by Luke.

**16. the soldiers:** Matthew explains that these were the soldiers of ‘the governor’ (xxvii. 27). Those of Herod had been mentioned by Luke (xxiii. 11). These Roman soldiers had to see to the execution of the sentence. They consisted probably of a few men with a centurion, and formed part of the band or cohort stationed in Jerusalem, no doubt in the castle of Antonia (Acts xxi. 31).

**within the court:** the scourging had taken place, therefore, outside in front of the palace. Jesus is now brought into the open courtyard.

**the Prætorium :** the word is used of the tent or head quarters of a commander in a Roman camp. But in the Gospels and the Book of Acts it means the official residence of a governor (cf. Acts xxiii. 35). Opinion is divided, as we have said, on the subject of the place in view here. Some hold that Herod’s palace was used by the Roman procurator as his official residence for the time. Josephus tells us indeed that it was so used by Florus (*Jewish War*, ii. xiv. 8). Others, pointing to the fact that Herod was himself in Jerusalem at the time, and noticing that the view which the Gospels give of the proceedings in connexion with the

And they clothe him with purple, and plaiting a crown **17** of thorns, they put it on him ; and they began to salute **18** him, Hail, King of the Jews ! And they smote his head **19** with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him. And when they had mocked **20** him, they took off from him the purple, and put on him his garments. And they lead him out to crucify him.

trial best accords with a position near the citadel, conclude with more probability that the *Prætorium* was connected with the fortress of Antonia.

**the whole band.** The word 'band' is of somewhat uncertain application. It may mean a *maniple*, which was the third of a cohort and consisted nominally of 200 men. But, as the 'band' is said to have a *chiliarch* or 'chief captain' (John xviii. 12; Acts xxi. 31), it is supposed to have the sense of *cohort* in the N. T.

**17. with purple:** or, as Matthew gives it, 'a scarlet robe.' Jesus had been stripped of his clothing when led forth to be scourged. His under-garments had been put on again when he was brought back into the court. Now Pilate's soldiers, imitating the mockery practised by Herod and his men when they sent Jesus back 'arrayed in gorgeous apparel' (Luke xxiii. 11), put upon him in place of his upper robes a red cloak, probably the ordinary military cloak, 'possibly a cast-off and faded rag, but with colour enough left in it to suggest the royal purple' (Swete). This they did in ridicule of his kingly pretensions.

**a crown of thorns:** in derisive imitation of the laurel wreath, the badge of victory, worn at times by the Roman emperors in token of military distinction or on festal occasions. This wreath was made of twisted spikes of some sort of thorn, probably the *nabk* tree. The precise species of thorn, however, cannot be determined with certainty.

**18. to salute him.** Matthew notices that a reed was put into his right hand (xxvii. 29), to represent a sceptre.

**19. smote his head with a reed.** The mock homage offered him was accompanied or followed by cruel blows and insults. When the soldiers had enough of outrage and brutality, they took off the red cloak and clad Jesus again in his own garments. See his prediction in chap. x. 33, 34.

**20. they lead him out to crucify him.** The O. T. law forbade the camp to be defiled with blood (Num. xv. 35). Naboth was stoned without (1 Kings xxi. 13). So was it with the Holy City. Stephen was stoned without (Acts vii. 58), and his Lord before him was taken outside the city to be crucified (cf. Heb. xiii. 12).

21 And they compel one passing by, Simon of Cyrene, coming from the country, the father of Alexander and

It is not possible to determine with any certainty the route by which Jesus was led from the judgement-hall to the place of crucifixion. Jerusalem has passed through too many changes to enable us to trace the Lord's course. Tradition defines it as the way called the *Via Dolorosa* running across the city from the fortress of Antonia to the Holy Sepulchre. But the name, if not the tradition itself, can scarcely be traced as far back as the twelfth century.

xv. 21-32. *The incidents on the way to the Cross, and at the Cross:* cf. Matt. xxvii. 32-44; Luke xxiii. 26-43; John xix. 16-26.

**21. they compel one passing by.** Matthew tells us that this happened 'as they came out' (xxvii. 32), probably just as they left the gate. The man was on his way from the country, as Mark and Luke both state, and the soldiers arrested him as he was passing by and forced him to go with them. The word translated 'compel' is better rendered 'impress,' as in the R. V. margin. It is a word of foreign origin, used in particular of the couriers of the Kings of Persia, who were impressed into the monarch's service. It came to be applied to any kind of compulsory service. It is the word that is rendered 'compel' also once in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v. 41).

**Simon of Cyrene.** The name of the person thus impressed by the soldiers is given by all the three Synoptists, though not by John. He belonged to Cyrene in North Africa. We learn from Josephus that a body of Jews settled there in the time of Ptolemy I, and had a considerable position among the people (*Cont. Ap.* 4, *Antiq.* xiv. vii. 2). In the N. T. there are other references to this district. Dwellers in 'the parts about' Cyrene were among those in Jerusalem on the great day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 10): Cyrenians are mentioned in connexion with the synagogue of the Libertines (Acts vi. 9); a Lucius of Cyrene is named among the prophets and teachers of the Church of Antioch (Acts xiii. 1).

**the father of Alexander and Rufus.** Mark alone describes Simon thus by his sons. We infer from the statement that they became persons of some distinction in the Church. But neither of Simon himself nor of these sons do we know anything beyond what we find here. Some endeavour to identify this Alexander with one or other of the Alexanders mentioned in the Book of Acts and the Pauline Epistles, the Alexander who 'would have made a defence unto the people' at Ephesus (Acts xix. 33), the one introduced along with Hymenæus (1 Tim. i. 20), or the

Rufus, to go *with them*, that he might bear his cross. And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which <sup>22</sup> is, being interpreted, The place of a skull. And they <sup>23</sup>

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one known as 'the coppersmith' (2 Tim. iv. 14). But the relations of these men to Paul make this identification extremely improbable.

**that he might bear his cross.** It is stated by Plutarch that it was the custom to make the condemned man carry his own cross, and ancient paintings shew it to have been the belief of the early Church that Jesus bore the whole cross. It is more probable, however, that only a part of it was borne, namely the *patibulum*, the *post* or *upright beam*, to which the transverse beam was affixed when the cross was about to be erected. Some (e. g. Keim), with less probability, think the cross-beam was all that was put upon our Lord's back on the way. John mentions that Jesus 'went out, bearing the cross for himself' (xix. 17). It appears, therefore, that our Lord bore the cross at least to the city gate. There, outside the gate, his strength probably gave way, and Simon was compelled to relieve him of the painful burden. At this point Luke introduces the incident of the women of Jerusalem bewailing Jesus.

**22. the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.** Matthew gives the name without the explanation, writing as he does for Jewish readers. Luke says 'the place which is called The skull,' omitting the Aramaic word Golgotha. John is more precise, 'the place called The place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha.' This 'place of a skull' was rendered *locus Calvariae* in the Vulgate Version. We owe the word *Calvary* to the fact that the Old English versions followed the Vulgate in their renderings of Luke's Gospel here. Wyclif, e. g. gives 'the place of Calvarie.' The name *Golgotha* indicates that the place was a low, bare, skull-shaped knoll or mound. It seems to have been well known. The Gospels indicate that it was outside the city, yet near it (John xix. 20), on a road leading from the country into the city (Luke xxiii. 26), and having a garden in it or, as we may rather suppose, by it (John xix. 41). But its exact position cannot be determined with any certainty. It can scarcely be the traditional Mount Calvary, which is *within* the city. It has been placed on the west bank of the Kidron north of St. Stephen's Gate (so Dr. Thomson); on the hill north-east of Herod's Gate (Sir C. Wilson, &c.); on the hill without the present wall, north-east of the Damascus Gate; on the 'Skull Hill' or 'Grotto Hill,' near the Damascus Gate, above the grotto of Jeremiah, and elsewhere. But there is no general agreement on the subject.

offered him wine mingled with myrrh: but he received  
 24 it not. And they crucify him, and part his garments  
 among them, casting lots upon them, what each should  
 25 take. And it was the third hour, and they crucified  
 26 him. And the superscription of his accusation was

**23. offered him wine mingled with myrrh.** Matthew describes it as wine 'mingled with gall' (xxvii. 34). Both were stupefying potions. It was customary to offer such drugged wine to those about to undergo crucifixion, in order to make them less sensible of pain. Jesus tasted this drink (Matt. xxvii. 34), but refused it.

**24. part his garments.** The clothing of the condemned was the perquisite of the soldiers on duty at executions.

**casting lots.** Probably they had dice with them for their amusement: these would serve the purpose. John, who was an eye-witness of the scene, makes a distinction here. He speaks of the 'garments,' as distinguished from the 'coat,' as being divided into four parts, one for each man in the quaternion of soldiers. This they might do by loosening the seams. But the 'coat' or 'tunic,' which was woven of one piece, was not divided, but assigned in whole to one by lot. John adds that in this way the words of Ps. xxii. 18 were fulfilled (xix. 23, 24).

**25. it was the third hour.** Mark alone gives this particular note of time. John, on the other hand, says it was 'about the sixth hour' when Pilate brought Jesus out and took his seat for judgement (xix. 14). Various explanations of this apparent discrepancy have been given. Of these the most probable is the supposition that Mark and John here follow different modes of reckoning time, the latter having the Roman division of time in view, which would make the 'sixth hour' about six a.m. Dr. Edersheim is of opinion that Jesus was brought forth by Pilate at the sixth hour of the Roman calculation, and that he was led out to crucifixion at the third hour according to the Jewish reckoning, which would be the ninth of the Roman or Western reckoning (*Temple Service*, p. 174). But the question remains an unsettled one. In any case, however, it should be remembered that the ancients did not observe those very exact divisions of time to which we are accustomed, and that of the two statements in view Mark's is the more definite, while John's is the more general.

**26. the superscription of his accusation.** It was customary to have the cause of condemnation inscribed on a tablet, which was fastened to the prisoner or borne before him as he was led to execution. This was afterwards fastened to the cross itself, above

written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS. And with him 27 they crucify two robbers; one on his right hand, and one on his left. And they that passed by railed on him, 29 wagging their heads, and saying, Ha! thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, 30 and come down from the cross. In like manner also 31 the chief priests mocking *him* among themselves with the scribes said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. Let the Christ, the King of Israel, now come 32

the sufferer's head. There were several kinds of crosses—the St. Andrew's cross in the shape of the letter X; St. Anthony's cross, also known as the Egyptian or the Greek cross, with the form T; and the Latin cross, which was of this shape +. The mention of the superscription as 'written over,' 'over him' as Luke gives it, put 'on the cross' as John expresses it, points to the third as the kind of cross to which our Lord was nailed. The terms of the superscription are given with certain variations in the Gospels, but in each the significant words 'the King of the Jews,' which indicated the real cause of offence, are found. From John (xix. 20) we learn that the title was written not only in the official Latin, but also in Hebrew and Greek.

**27. two robbers:** or, according to Luke, 'malefactors.' Not 'thieves,' but perhaps members of the insurgent band of Barabbas, desperate, fanatical patriots, who might be heroes in the eyes of the Jewish mob.

**28.** The A. V. introduces here the verse 'And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.' The documentary evidence in support of it however is doubtful. The quotation from Isa. liii. 12 is given by Luke at an earlier stage (xxii. 37).

**29. Ha!** The exclamation here is one of derision or ironical amazement. This is its only occurrence in the N. T.

**thou that destroyest the temple.** The accusation of the two witnesses before Caiaphas (Matt. xxvi. 61; Mark xiv. 58). It had been made matter of common talk.

**31. the chief priests:** even these dignitaries could not restrain themselves. They too joined in the mockery, not with the crowd indeed, but passing their jeers from mouth to mouth among themselves, the scribes and elders uniting with them (Matt. xxvii. 41). The taunt in which they indulge, 'He saved others; himself he cannot save' (or, 'can he not save himself?'), appears to be an echo of Psalm xxii. 8.

down from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reproached him.

33 And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lama

**32. they that were crucified with him:** so also Matthew. Luke refers only to one of the malefactors as railing on Jesus, and adds the rebuke administered to him by his fellow criminal, his petition to Jesus, and the answer it received (xxiii. 39-43). From Luke we learn also that the soldiers joined with others in the common, savage derision (xxiii. 36).

xv. 33-41. *The Last Hours and the Events attendant on the Death:* cf. Matt. xxvii. 45-56; Luke xxiii. 44-49; John xix. 28-37.

**33. the sixth hour:** so also Matthew. Luke gives it less precisely 'about the sixth hour.'

**there was darkness:** Luke explains that it was due to 'the sun's light failing' (xxiii. 45).

**over the whole land until the ninth hour:** that is, from 12 noon till 3 p.m. This darkness cannot be explained either as the kind of darkness that is known to precede earthquakes, or as the result of an ordinary eclipse. An eclipse at the Paschal full moon is an impossibility. It must be understood, according to the Gospel narratives, to have been a gloom out of the ordinary course of nature, in which all that happened during the last three hours of the Saviour's Passion was shrouded from view. How far this darkness extended is not certain. The phrase 'over all the land' may also mean 'over all the earth.' It is not easy to say, therefore, whether the statement means that the gloom covered all the land of Judaea or extended over the earth. It is most natural to take the more limited application. But on the other hand the phrase, though an indefinite one, is usually employed in a wider sense (Gen. i. 26, xi. 9; Ps. xxxiii. 8; Luke xxi. 35; Rev. xiii. 3), and it may be said that the idea of a cosmic portent suits the tone of the narrative better than that of a local gloom.

**34. at the ninth hour:** that is, the hour for the evening sacrifice; cf. Acts iii. 1.

**Jesus cried with a loud voice:** the cry was rather a shout, the strong note of a conqueror, than the feeble voice of one exhausted. The strength or loudness of the voice of the dying Jesus is noticed also by Luke in the case of his final utterance from the cross (xxiii. 46).

**Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?** The cry is given by Mark

sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And some of them 35 that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elijah. And one ran, and filling a sponge full of vinegar, 36

in the vernacular, with a translation for the benefit of his Gentile readers. At this crisis in his sufferings, when mental agony is more than all his physical pain, Jesus expresses his sense of anguish in the words of the sufferer in one of the great Messianic psalms (Ps. xxii. 1). It cannot be explained simply as the recoil of nature from the pangs of dissolution, or as the bitter feeling of being abandoned by men. It is the cry of one who has lost for the time the sense of fellowship with God—the cry of conscious innocence struggling with this unexampled experience, in utter darkness clinging to faith and trusting itself to God, but unable to say *Father*, bereft for a season of the gladness of realized fellowship. It is the note of an experience too deep for us to fathom, and possible only to one standing in a relation different from ours to man and his sin, and to God and His grace. This is the only cry from the cross that is recorded either by Matthew or by Mark. That there were other six we learn from Luke and John. The most probable order in which these cries occurred is this:—  
 (1) The prayer for the forgiveness of his enemies (Luke xxiii. 34).  
 (2) The promise to the penitent robber (Luke xxiii. 43). (3) The charge to Mary and to John (John xix. 26, 27). These three before the darkness. Then during the darkness: (4) this cry of desertion (Matt. xxvii. 46; Mark xv. 34). And after the darkness these three: (5) the exclamation ‘I thirst’ (John xix. 28). (6) The declaration ‘It is finished’ (John xix. 30). (7) The final commendation of his spirit to God (Luke xxiii. 46).

**35. Behold, he calleth Elijah.** Not an innocent misunderstanding, surely, of his cry, but a fresh insult, a poor, unfeeling attempt at banter, taking advantage of the similarity in Hebrew or Aramaic between the word for *God* and the name of the prophet. The point of the cruel witticism lay in the connexion which Elijah had with the Messiah in popular belief.

**36. filling a sponge full of vinegar.** From Luke we see that a similar drink had been offered earlier by the soldiers in mockery, and had been refused by Jesus (xxiii. 36). Now one of those standing by runs to give him something to relieve his thirst. Deadly thirst added to the awful pangs of crucifixion. The drink offered at this point was ‘vinegar,’ that is to say, the sour wine drunk by the common soldier and the labourer in the field (Ruth ii. 14). John tells us that a vessel of this was ‘set there,’ whether for the soldiers’ use or expressly for the relief of the

put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let be; let us see whether Elijah cometh to take him down.

**37** And Jesus uttered a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

**38** And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the

**39** top to the bottom. And when the centurion, which

sufferers. It is said that not unfrequently a drink of this kind was kept at hand for the purpose. On this occasion a sponge was dipped in the wine, and put upon a reed, a stalk of hyssop to wit, and 'brought to his mouth' (John xix. 29). The hyssop was a wall-plant, perhaps the same as the caper, which was used in certain ritual observances (Lev. xiv. 4 ff.; Num. xix. 6 ff.; see also the references to it in Ps. li. 7; Heb. x. 19 ff.).

**Let be; let us see whether Elijah cometh to take him down.** According to Matthew it is those standing by, 'the rest,' who said this. According to Mark it is the man who ran with the sponge, and on his lips the 'let be,' which expressed mockery as uttered by the others, might mean, 'let me have my way with this.' John says 'they put a sponge,' as if the act was not that of one but of several. The divergences in the accounts may reflect the confusion and excitement caused by the cry in the darkness. It is possible that while one spoke and acted in compassion, the others spoke and acted to the end in derision.

**37. uttered a loud voice.** All the Synoptists notice the loud cry uttered by Jesus when dying. The voice in view here is no doubt the cry, 'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,' as preserved by Luke (xxiii. 46).

**gave up the ghost.** 'Yielded up his spirit' (Matt.), 'bowed his head, and gave up his spirit' (John); terms pointing, along with 'the loud voice,' to a death which was a voluntary laying down of life.

**38. the veil of the temple.** The temple had two veils or curtains, one before the Holy Place, and another before the Holy of Holies. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, speaking of the tabernacle, mentions 'the second veil' (ix. 3). The curtain intended here is no doubt the one before the Holy of Holies, which was made 'of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen' and adorned with figures of cherubim (Exod. xxvi. 31; Lev. xxi. 23). The rending of the veil is reported by all three Synoptists. For the figurative application of the 'veil' see Heb. vi. 19; for the mystical sense of the *rent* veil see Heb. ix. 20. Matthew records the quaking of the earth, the rending of the tombs, and the rising of many saints (xxvii. 51, 52).

**39. the centurion.** Tradition gives him the name *Longinus*. He was the officer in charge of the quaternion of soldiers.

stood by over against him, saw that he so gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God. And there were also women beholding from afar: among whom *were* both Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother

Probably he came from Cæsarea, where also the devout 'centurion of the band called the Italian band' was posted (Acts x. 1).

**that he so gave up the ghost.** The A. V. reads that 'he so cried out, and gave up the ghost'; but on inadequate documentary evidence. The way in which Jesus died was something entirely foreign to all the experience this soldier had had of similar deaths. It made so great an impression upon him that he confessed this sufferer to be no ordinary Jew, but 'a righteous man' (Luke), 'the Son of God' or 'a Son of God' (Matthew and Mark). This confession may not mean the distinct acknowledgement of Jesus as the Messiah; but it expresses the centurion's sense of something out of the ordinary course, something supernatural in the sufferer whose death he had witnessed. The title 'Son of God' may have been taken by the soldier from the report of the accusation laid against Jesus (Matt. xxvii. 40). Matthew notices that 'they that were with him watching Jesus' joined in the confession that this was 'the Son of God,' and adds that this acknowledgement was made under the influence of the fear excited by the 'earthquake and the things that were done' (xxvii. 54).

**40. also women.** According to Matthew, 'many women.' These were the faithful women from Galilee. Apart from the jeering mob, at some distance from the cross, they gazed upon the Sufferer and the scene with deeper feelings by far even than the centurion. Three are mentioned by name in the first two Gospels.

**Mary Magdalene:** so called doubtless from the place to which she belonged, probably the Magdala, now *el-Meydel*, on the western side of the Sea of Galilee and at the southern end of the district of Gennesaret. She had been delivered from seven demons, and had become a follower of the Healer, ministering to him of her substance (Luke viii. 2, 3; cf. Mark xvi. 9). She is introduced here for the first time by Mark.

**Mary the mother of James the less (or, the little) and of Joses.** Matthew and Mark both speak of this Mary as the mother of *James* and *Joses*. John speaks of her as 'the wife of Clopas' (xix. 25). Many take *Clopas* to be the same as *Alphæus*, and so make this Mary the mother of the Apostle James, the second James in the lists of the Twelve. But the identification of *Clopas* with *Alphæus* is doubtful. In ancient Church history mention is made of a *Clopas*, who was the brother of Joseph, the

**41** of James the less and of Joses, and Salome ; who, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him ; and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.

**42** And when even was now come, because it was the

Virgin Mary's spouse, and father of the Symeon who was president of the mother church of Jerusalem after the death of James the Just (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* iii. 11, 22, 32, iv. 22). The term applied to the James noticed here, 'the less' or 'the little,' is taken by some to mean 'the younger.' But usually it expresses the idea of stature, not of age. It is used e. g. to express the fact that Zacchæus was 'little of stature' (Luke xix. 3).

**and Salome.** The name *Salome* was borne by several members of the Herodian house. In this connexion it is given only by Mark, and by him it is left unexplained, probably as being a name well known in the circle of the friends of Jesus and not shared by any other woman in that circle. Matthew describes the person here in view, not by her name, but as 'the mother of the sons of Zebedee' (xxvii. 56). In the Fourth Gospel the women standing by the cross of Jesus are described as 'his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene' (John xix. 25). This leaves it uncertain whether 'his mother's sister' and 'Mary the wife of Clopas' are two distinct persons or one and the same individual. On the whole the probability is that the Mary 'of James the less' and the Mary 'of Clopas' are to be understood as the same person, and that the woman so designated was the Virgin Mary's sister.

**41. many other women.** Looking on the cross were not only these faithful Galilean women who had been constant in their loving attendance upon Jesus, and are mentioned here by name, but also a band of others of less note who had followed him on his last journey to Jerusalem. Of the former band Luke in his earlier narrative mentions other two by name—'Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna' (viii. 2; cf. xxiv. 10). With this group of women Luke mentions also 'all his acquaintance' (xxiii. 49).

xv. 42-47. *The Burial of Jesus*: cf. Matt. xxvii. 57-61; Luke xxiii. 50-55; John xix. 38-42.

**42. even was now come:** that is, the first or early evening, the time immediately before the end of the Jewish day; cf. Deut. xxi. 22 ff.

**because it was the Preparation:** that is, the preparation for the sabbath. It was the eve of the sabbath. The word 'Preparation' had become a technical term, used of Friday.

Preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, there came Joseph of Arimathæa, a councillor of honourable estate, who also himself was looking for the kingdom of God ; and he boldly went in unto Pilate, and asked for

**that is, the day before the sabbath.** Matthew, writing for Jews, gives the term ‘the Preparation’ without note or comment. Mark, having non-Jewish readers in view, gives the meaning of the technical term. The mention of the *Preparation* is introduced in explanation of the action of Joseph. The Fourth Gospel states that the Jews had already taken action with a view to having the body removed before the sabbath entered (John xix. 31).

**43. there came Joseph of Arimathæa.** Ancient Christian writers identified this Arimathæa with the Ramathaim-Zophim in the hill-country of Ephraim to which Elkanah belonged (1 Sam. i. 1); which again is identified by some with *er-Ram*, a place some miles to the north of Jerusalem, though Eusebius, the Church historian, placed it near Lydda. Others identify it with Rama in Benjamin (Matt. ii. 18).

**a councillor of honourable estate.** A member of the Sanhedrin, that is to say, and one of high position in the body, or, as the word may also mean, a dignified councillor, a man of noble bearing ; Matthew speaks of him as ‘a rich man’ (xxvii. 57). The Gospels tell us further that he was a disciple of Jesus (Matt. xxvii. 57), a secret disciple (John xix. 38), and that he was ‘a good man and a righteous’ who had not consented to the ‘counsel and deed’ of the Jewish court in condemning Jesus (Luke xxiii. 50).

**looking for the kingdom of God :** so also in Luke. He belonged to the class of devout, believing, expectant Jews represented also by Simeon (Luke ii. 25), of whom there were not a few in Jerusalem itself (Luke ii. 38).

**boldly went in unto Pilate:** the impression produced by the death of Jesus made the secret disciple, who feared the Jews, courageous enough to face Pilate and ask a favour of him. It made him rise superior also to the risks of ceremonial separation. To take part in a burial meant defilement for seven days, and inability to take part in the Passover feast (Num. xix. 11; Hag. ii. 13; see Geikie, *ut sup.* ii. 576).

**asked for the body of Jesus.** It was the Roman custom to leave the bodies of the executed hanging for a length of time exposed to sun and rain and the attacks of beasts and birds of prey. In the more merciful Jewish law it was expressly ordered that the body of one hung upon the tree should not be left exposed all night, but should be taken down and buried on the day of suspension (Deut. xxi. 23).

44 the body of Jesus. And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he  
 45 asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when he learned it of the centurion, he granted the  
 46 corpse to Joseph. And he bought a linen cloth, and taking him down, wound him in the linen cloth, and laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of a rock; and he rolled a stone against the door of the tomb.

**44. Pilate marvelled if he were already dead.** Usually the crucified died a lingering death, their sufferings lasting from a day and a half to three days. From John we learn that the legs of the robbers crucified with Jesus were broken at the request of the Jews, in order to hasten death before the sabbath began, but that Jesus was found to be dead already (xix. 31-33). The Procurator was so surprised at the intimation of the speedy demise that he felt it necessary to make sure of the fact by inquiring of the centurion in charge.

**45. granted the corpse to Joseph:** the word rendering 'granted' conveys the idea of liberality in giving. It is used only once again in the N. T., in 2 Pet. i. 3. In this case at least Pilate asked neither bribe nor price, but gave freely, impressed, it may be, by the petitioner's character and standing, or having some knowledge of him.

**46. wound him in the linen cloth.** Taking the sacred body down from the cross, in which task he would probably have assistance, he wound it carefully in a piece of fine linen, 'a *clean* linen cloth,' says Matthew (xxvii. 59), that is, linen yet fresh and unused. John adds that Nicodemus, Joseph's fellow councillor, also came, bringing with him 'a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pound *weight*' (xix. 39). Nicodemus, therefore, probably assisted Joseph in the removal of the body from the cross, and the two councillors placed the spices in the folds of the linen cloth, and binding it with strips of cloth made it ready according to the Jewish custom for burial (John xix. 40).

**laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of a rock.** Sepulchral chambers of this kind are found in numbers on the south, west, and north-west of Jerusalem. This tomb had been constructed by Joseph for his own burial (Matt. xxvii. 60); it was new and had never been used (Matt. xxvii. 60; Luke xliii. 53; John xix. 41); and it was situated in a garden near where Jesus had been crucified (John xix. 41).

**he rolled a stone:** it was usual to close the tomb in this way; cf. John xi. 38. Matthew tells us that the stone was sealed

And Mary Magdalene and Mary the *mother* of Joses 47 beheld where he was laid.

And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, 16 and Mary the *mother* of James, and Salome, bought spices, that they might come and anoint him. And 2 very early on the first day of the week, they come to

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at the request of the Jews and had a guard set over it (xxvii. 64-66).

**47. And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses.** Luke speaks generally of ‘the women, which had come with him out of Galilee’ as following (xxiii. 55). They sat ‘over against the sepulchre,’ as Matthew notices (xxvii. 61). Thus they were in a position to see what took place. They ‘beheld the tomb,’ observing ‘where he was laid’ (Mark), and ‘how his body was laid’ (Luke). Knowing where they could find the sacred body when the sabbath was past, they went their way, but only to return with the spices and ointments needed for the performance of the last sad rites (Luke xxiii. 56).

xvi. 1-8. *The Women and the Empty Tomb*: cf. Matt. xxviii. 1-8; Luke xxiv. 1-10; also John xx. 1-18.

**1. And when the sabbath was past.** That is, after sunset on the Saturday. According to Jewish reckoning it was now the third day after the crucifixion, Friday night, Saturday, and Saturday night making three days.

**bought spices.** Luke writes as if the holy women had prepared the spices and ointments before the sabbath (xxiii. 56). The women are those previously mentioned as looking on the cross ‘from afar’; of whom two are also said to have ‘beheld’ where Jesus ‘was laid.’ They had probably observed what was done by Joseph and Nicodemus in preparing the sacred body for burial. They may have seen also that that had been hastily done as the sabbath was so near (Luke xxiii. 54). They procure what was necessary to complete the work—the aromatic herbs and the ointments with which to embalm the sacred body. Compare the account of the burying of King Asa (2 Chron. xvi. 14).

**2. very early on the first day of the week.** The four Evangelists agree in the care with which they note the time. Their terms are remarkably independent; but, while they differ, they all indicate substantially the same part of the day. Matthew gives, ‘as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of the week’; Mark, ‘very early on the first day of the week . . . when the sun was risen’; Luke, ‘on the first day of the week, at early dawn’; John, ‘on the first day of the week . . . while it was yet dark.’ These

3 the tomb when the sun was risen. And they were saying among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from 4 the door of the tomb? and looking up, they see that the 5 stone is rolled back: for it was exceeding great. And

various terms mean that the Saturday night was just dying out, and the first streaks of dawn were rising on the darkness.

**when the sun was risen.** This statement is thought to be inconsistent with John's words 'while it was yet dark.' But Mark himself gives also the note of time 'very early on the first day of the week.' His own two statements, made in one and the same sentence, would thus have to be regarded as discordant, if the terms in either Gospel are pressed too far. The word 'early' is used of the fourth watch, that is, from 3 to 6 a.m.; the phrase 'very early' might point, therefore, to the beginning of that space of time. Mark's first note of time consequently is taken by some to be of a general kind. Others take it to express the time when the women set out, while the second note, 'when the sun was risen,' gives the time when they came to the sepulchre. It is most probable that 'Mark speaks of the sunrise, not as its appearing above the horizon, but as bringing in the day, the illumination heralding its coming.' So it is understood, e. g., by Andrews, who also notices that at the season of year in question 'the sun rose about half-past five, and it began to be light enough to discern objects at least half an hour earlier' (*The Life of our Lord*, pp. 598, 599).

**3. Who shall roll us away the stone?** They appear not to have known of the visit of the Jewish authorities to Pilate and the sealing of the stone and the setting of the watch (Matt. xxvii. 62-66). But they knew the way in which it was customary to secure rock-hewn sepulchres, and they probably had seen the stone put in its place by Joseph. To remove it was far beyond their strength, and they talked of this difficulty one to another on the way.

**4. looking up.** A graphic touch, true to the life. They were now approaching the rock or mound out of which the tomb had been cut, and with such perplexities in their minds they would naturally look up to see how matters stood.

**rolled back.** The word means probably that it was 'not rolled right away, but rolled back so as to leave the opening free' (Swete).

**for it was exceeding great.** This is added in order to explain how they were able to see the stone at some distance, even though it was not quite light yet, and to discern that it was not in the expected position. Mark says nothing of the earthquake or of the rolling away of the stone by 'an angel of the Lord,' which Matthew records (xxviii. 2).

entering into the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, arrayed in a white robe; and they were amazed. And he saith unto them, Be not amazed: ye seek Jesus, the Nazarene, which hath been crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold, the place where

**5. entering into the tomb.** This is not noticed by Matthew. John reports Mary Magdalene as at the sepulchre alone, and gives another train of circumstances (xx. 1-10). Luke agrees with Mark in stating that the women entered the tomb, and adds that 'they found not the body of the Lord Jesus' (xxiv. 3).

**they saw a young man sitting on the right side.** The 'young man' is described as 'an angel' by Matthew. Luke, again, represents the women as 'affrighted' by the sight of 'two men' who stood by them. The angel that appeared to Manoah's wife is described by Josephus as like 'a young man, noble and great.' See also the analogous case in *a Macc.* iii. 26, 33.

**in a white robe.** A long robe or stole. So Matthew says of the angel that 'his appearance was as lightning, and his raiment white as snow' (xxviii. 3); and Luke describes the two men as 'in dazzling apparel' (xxiv. 4).

**amazed.** The strong word which was used also in ix. 15, xiv. 33. Fear was the impression naturally made by the sight. Matthew speaks of the watchers as quaking and becoming 'as dead men'; Luke describes the women as 'affrighted' and bowing down 'their faces to the earth.'

**6. he is risen; he is not here.** So, too, in effect Matthew. Luke reports that the angel addressed to the women the question, 'Why seek ye the living among the dead?' and reminded them of the Lord's words in Galilee about his death and resurrection (xxiv. 6, 7). The Resurrection is stated as a fact accomplished. It had taken place when there was no eye to see it.

**behold, the place where they laid him!** So in Matthew, 'Come, see the place where the Lord lay.' He would have them satisfy themselves as to the fact by looking at the place themselves. Though there had been no human witness of the Lord's rising from the dead, there were evidences all around. The place was empty; the body was gone; Peter and John found it so, somewhat later (John xx. 3-10); and there was no disorder, no sign of violent, disturbing removal. The Third Gospel tells us how, when Peter stooped and looked into the tomb, he saw 'the linen cloths by themselves' (xxiv. 12). The Fourth Gospel states in like manner that Peter saw 'the linen cloths lying' when he looked in, and that, when he ventured within the tomb, he beheld not only 'the linen cloths lying,' but 'the napkin, that was upon his head,

7 they laid him ! But go, tell his disciples and Peter, He goeth before you into Galilee : there shall ye see him, 8 as he said unto you. And they went out, and fled from the tomb ; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them : and they said nothing to any one ; for they were afraid.

not lying with the linen cloths, but rolled up in a place by itself' (xx. 6, 7)—a remarkable statement, from which an ingenious argument has been drawn in support of the reality of the Resurrection.

**7. But go, tell his disciples.** They had a duty to discharge—one that demanded immediate attention, as Matthew's 'go quickly' indicates (xxviii. 7), and made it impossible for them to linger in the wonder and rapture of the occasion. They had a message to carry, all important to the disciples in their darkness, and especially to one of their number.

**and Peter.** The special grace meant for Peter, and of such significance to the man broken by the double shock of his own denials and penitence, and the death of his Lord, is mentioned only by Mark. The strong, restored, thankful apostle could never forget that grace, and may have spoken of it often to his interpreter, Mark.

**He goeth before you into Galilee.** The disciples, if they had understood the Master's former words (Matt. xxvi. 32; Mark xiv. 28), would not have tarried in Jerusalem, but would have gone forward to Galilee, strong in the hope of meeting him again. But in the agitation of these latter days they had forgotten his words, and the message sent by the women was intended not only to give them testimony of the Resurrection, but in particular to remind them of what he had said, and to set them on their way to the appointed place of meeting, where he was to precede them. For the force of the word 'goeth before you' see on x. 32.

**8. went out, and fled from the tomb.** This was the first effect of the intimation, and it is true to nature.

**trembling and astonishment had come upon them.** 'Trembling'—a word used in the Gospels only this once, but four times by Paul (1 Cor. ii. 3; 2 Cor. vii. 15; Eph. vi. 5; Phil. ii. 12). 'Astonishment,' lit. 'ecstasy,' the word used in v. 42, as also in Luke v. 26; Acts iii. 10. It means a *trance* (Acts x. 10, xxii. 17), but also *amazement* or *awe*, a condition in which one loses control of himself. We see from Matthew that this first impression of terror and mental confusion gave place by-and-by to other feelings, so that the women's fear was tempered by joy, and they ran 'to bring his disciples word' (xxviii. 8).

Now when he was risen early on the first day of the 9 week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven devils. She went and told them 10 that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.

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#### APPENDIX.

At verse 9 the regular course of the narrative appears to be broken, and a paragraph is introduced which gives a description of Mary that seems hardly in place in the case of one who has been named only a few verses before. It is very generally held, therefore, that the whole section from the ninth verse to the end did not belong to the original form of Mark's Gospel, but was appended to it, whether taken from some other primitive document or written by the Evangelist himself or one of his company. To this conclusion we are led by a variety of considerations—the state of the historical testimony in ancient manuscripts, versions, and Patristic writings; the number of words and phrases in which the vocabulary and style of this part differ from those of the body of the Gospel; and the nature of the contents. It is, however, a narrative of most ancient date and great historical weight, added to the Gospel very soon after the original draft was composed. See more at length above in the *Introduction*.

xvi. 9-11. *Appearance of the Risen Lord to Mary*: cf. John xx. 11-18.

**9. he appeared.** The word by which the appearance of the Risen Christ is expressed here is one which is also used of the appearance of God to Balaam (Num. xxiii. 4), and of the appearance of Elijah (Luke ix. 8). In Luke (xxiv. 34) and in Paul (I Cor. xv. 5, &c.) the word used is one meaning 'was seen.'

**first to Mary Magdalene.** Mark alone mentions distinctly that the first person to whom Jesus shewed himself was Mary. But it is implied in John's narrative (xx. 1, &c.). On discovering that the sepulchre was empty she ran with the tidings to Peter, and after that she seems to have returned to the tomb and to have had the manifestation of her Risen Lord which is told briefly here, and with rich and touching circumstantiality by John.

**from whom he had cast out seven devils** (or, 'demons'). This deliverance is noticed also by Luke at an earlier stage in his narrative (viii. 2). Her love was supreme, and it had this supreme reward.

**10. told them that had been with him.** This phrase, those 'with him,' has sometimes a more technical sense and sometimes a wider application. It is used of the Apostles in particular (e. g.

11 And they, when they heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, disbelieved.

12 And after these things he was manifested in another

Mark iii. 14; John xvii. 12; Acts iv. 13); but also of the disciples or followers of Jesus generally. Mary found them still lost in sorrow and without hope.

**11. they heard that he was alive.** Mary was able to report plainly not only that Jesus lived, but that he had been *seen* by herself. She was certain it was no vision or apparition that she had looked upon, but the Lord himself, whom she had hailed as Rabboni, and from whom she had received a message for the brethren (John xx. 16, 17). The word for 'seen' here occurs nowhere in the body of Mark's Gospel, though it is found twice (here and in verse 14) in this Appendix. It is an expressive word used repeatedly in a profound, solemn sense by John (e. g. John i. 14, 32; 1 John i. 1, iv. 12, 14).

**they...disbelieved.** So Luke reports that the things told the Apostles by the women 'appeared in their sight as idle talk; and they disbelieved them' (xxiv. 11). A distinction is drawn between 'disbelief' and the positive 'unbelief' into which it may pass (cf. Heb. iii. 12, 18, &c., iv. 11). Sunk in their sorrow as they were, the disciples could not take in the fact to which Mary bore such strong and convinced testimony. It seemed incredible to them, a thing too good to be true.

xvi. 12, 13. *Appearance of the Risen Lord to two of the disciples:* cf. Luke xxiv. 13-32.

**12. after these things he was manifested.** This appearance took place, says Mark, 'after these things.' But how long after he does not explain. The incident appears to be the same, however, as that which Luke records at length in his last chapter, and from him we learn that it took place on 'that very day,' that is, on the same day as the former manifestation. The word used here for 'manifested' is used of the appearances of the Risen Lord once again by Mark (verse 14), thrice by John (xxi. 1, 14). It is also used of the manifestation of Christ at the Second Advent (Col. iii. 4), and of the manifestation of men at the Last Judgement (2 Cor. v. 10).

**in another form.** There had been a change in the Lord's appearance. To Mary he seemed like a gardener (John xx. 15); to these disciples he looked like a wayfarer. He was altered so that he was not recognized at first (Luke xxiv. 16); this was the manner of his appearances in his Risen condition. He was the same and yet not the same; speaking, having the voice that was familiar to the disciples, eating with them, talking with them, and

form unto two of them, as they walked, on their way into the country. And they went away and told it unto 13 the rest : neither believed they them.

And afterward he was manifested unto the eleven 14

yet going and coming in ways they knew not, moving and acting according to laws strange to our experience, appearing only from time to time (Acts i. 3), and shewing himself not to all, but only to chosen witnesses. 'So far as we know none could see him in this new condition of being but those to whom he was pleased to manifest himself' (Andrews, *The Life of our Lord*, p. 590).

**unto two of them.** From Luke (xxiv. 18) we learn that the name of one of them was Cleopas.

**as they walked, on their way into the country.** They were going to 'a village named Emmaus,' as Luke tells us (xxiv. 13), 'which was threescore furlongs,' or about seven English miles, from Jerusalem. In ancient times this village was identified with an Emmaus, afterwards called Nicopolis (1 Macc. iii. 40), and known now as *Anmas*. But that place was away near the plain of Philistia, some twenty-two miles or so from Jerusalem. More recently it has been identified with *el-Kubeibeh*, a small village about nine miles north-west of Jerusalem, or with *Kulonieh* on the west of the city, or with *el-Khamasa* on the south-west. The site remains uncertain.

**13. told it unto the rest.** They recognized their Lord in the breaking of the bread, and when he vanished out of their sight they hastened to their brethren in Jerusalem with the tidings (Luke xxiv. 30-35).

**neither believed they them.** It appears from Luke's narrative that the Lord had already shewn himself to Peter, and that the Apostles were able to report the fact to the two when they came with their glad news. Yet the two were as little believed as was Mary. The slowness of the disciples to credit the report may have been due to their inability to understand this strange, new kind of life and action implied in the Lord's shewing himself now here and now there, now in one form and then in another.

xvi. 14-18. *Appearance of the Risen Lord to the Eleven*: cf. Matt. xxviii. 16-20; Luke xxiv. 30-43; John xx. 19-25; also 1 Cor. xv. 5, &c.

**14. afterward he was manifested unto the eleven themselves.** Only at this stage, after he had shewn himself to Mary, to Peter, and to two disciples, does he manifest himself specially to the Apostolate as a body.

themselves as they sat at meat ; and he upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ; but he that

**as they sat at meat.** This agrees with the more detailed narrative of Luke, which states that Jesus took a piece of broiled fish and ate it with the Eleven ; cf. also John xxi. 9.

**upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart.** Their despondency had sunk into a settled indisposition to believe out of which they had to be roused. Here for the first time definite *unbelief* is charged against the Apostles themselves. Before this they had been rebuked for the smallness, the immaturity, the backwardness and unreadiness of their faith (Matt. vi. 30, viii. 26, xiv. 31, xvi. 8 ; Mark iv. 40, xi. 22 ; Luke xxii. 32). Formerly it had been said of them that they had their ‘hearts hardened’ (Mark viii. 17). Here they are upbraided with a hardness of heart of a pronounced kind, expressed by a different term, and pointing to a condition of mind in which love and the tenderness of penitent feeling die out. Luke tells us that the Eleven were ‘terrified and affrighted’ by this manifestation, and that the Lord sought to convince them that he was no spirit by pointing to his hands and feet and partaking of food before them (xxiv. 37-41).

**15. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation.** The rebuke passes into a commission. During our Lord’s earthly ministry the commission of the Twelve had been limited to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, Gentiles and Samaritans being both excluded (Matt. x. 5, 6). Indications of the world-wide extension which the Gospel was to have in the future, however, had also been given (Matt. xxvi. 13; Mark xiv. 9). The commission to the Apostles obtains now its corresponding enlargement. John records the Lord’s breathing on the Eleven, bidding them receive the Holy Ghost, and giving them powers of order and discipline in his Church (xx. 22, 23).

**16. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.** Baptism is thus coupled with belief, acceptance of the outward rite with the profession of faith. Everywhere in the N.T., in Gospels and in Epistles, belief or faith is connected with salvation and made its condition. Baptism has a place in that connexion, but only a secondary place ; cf. on the one hand, 1 Pet. iii. 21 ; Titus iii. 5, and on the other, John iv. 1, 2 ; 1 Cor. i. 14-17, &c.

disbelieveth shall be condemned. And these signs shall 17 follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they 18 shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no wise hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

**17. these signs shall follow them that believe.** The promise has the widest extension—to all believers, not only to teachers or to the Eleven. The powers referred to were to be ‘signs,’ confirming their word and work, assuring themselves also in their faith. See 1 Cor. xii. 28–30, xiv. 22.

**in my name shall they cast out devils** (or, ‘demons’). This power has already been bestowed on the Apostles (vi. 13) and the Seventy (Luke x. 17). Others, also, who were not declared disciples of Jesus, had been seen casting out demons in his name (Mark ix. 38). The Book of Acts records the exercise of this power by Philip in Samaria (viii. 7) and Paul at Philippi and Ephesus (xvi. 18, xix. 11, 16).

**they shall speak with new tongues.** As is noticed in the margin of the R.V. the word ‘new,’ which is of considerable importance in the interpretation of the gift in question, is of somewhat uncertain authority. This speaking with tongues, with which some difficult questions are connected, is first heard of as in actual exercise in the report of the events of the great day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 4–11), and again in the cases of the men sent by Cornelius to Peter (Acts x. 46), and the disciples at Ephesus (Acts xix. 6). It is dealt with more particularly by Paul in 1 Corinthians (xii. 28, xiv.). It is mentioned also in ancient Christian literature as prevailing towards the end of the second century (*Euseb., Eccles. Hist. v. 7*).

**18. shall take up serpents.** Compare the case of Paul at the island called Melita (Acts xxviii. 5). Jesus had previously given the Seventy ‘authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions’ (Luke x. 19).

**if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no wise hurt them.** Nothing of this kind is recorded in the N.T. Eusebius, the ancient Church historian, reports instances of this immunity in the case of St. John and Barsabas surnamed Justus.

**they shall lay hands on the sick.** The Apostles received the power of healing the sick from Jesus during his ministry (e.g. vi. 13). The ‘gifts of healing’ are referred to both by James (v. 14, 15) and by Paul (1 Cor. xii. 9, 28). In the Book of Acts, too, we see Peter healing the lame man at the temple gate (iii. 7), and Paul restoring Publius (xxviii. 8).

19 So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken unto them, was received up into heaven, and sat down at the

*The Appearances of the Risen Lord.* These had at least two great purposes, namely, to assure the disciples of the reality of the Resurrection and the personal identity of their Lord, and to furnish opportunities for preparing them for their future ministry by instructing them in the things of the kingdom. None of the Evangelists gives more than a selection of these manifestations, and it is not easy to determine, therefore, either their number or their order. They are usually said to be nine ; or, with the addition of that to James (1 Cor. xv. 7), ten. Various arrangements of them have been proposed. One of the best gives this order—(1) To Mary Magdalene ; (2) to the other women ; (3) to the two disciples at Emmaus ; (4) to Peter ; (5) to the Eleven ; (6) to the Eleven again ; (7) at the Sea of Galilee (John xxi. 1) ; (8) to the five hundred ; (9) to James ; (10) on the mount of Olives. Comparing the several accounts, embracing those in Acts and 1 Cor. xv, we conclude that five of the appearances took place on the day of the Resurrection, one on the Sunday following, two at a later period, one at a time unknown (James), and one when he ascended. Thus Jerusalem was the scene of five or six (the latter if we assign that to James to the city), Emmaus of one, Galilee of two, and the mount of Olives of one.

xvi. 19, 20. *The Ascension* : cf. Luke xxiv. 53 ; Acts i. 3-12 ; see also Rom. viii. 34 ; Heb. viii. 1 ; 1 Pet. iii. 22.

**19. So then the Lord Jesus.** This designation ‘the Lord Jesus’ occurs frequently in Acts, and is used at times by Paul (1 Cor. xi. 23). This is the only distinct occurrence of it in the Gospels, with the possible exception of the case in Luke xxiv. 3. (See R. V. margin.)

**after he had spoken unto them.** The note of time is indefinite. It does not necessarily mean, however, immediately after he had spoken the words recorded in the preceding verses. It means generally after Jesus had discoursed to his disciples. Some think that, looking to the character and trend of this Appendix, we may take it to mean ‘after the series of interviews with the Eleven, of which a specimen has been given.’ (So Swete.)

**was received up into heaven.** This is the only occurrence in the Gospels of the word here rendered ‘received up.’ It is used again of the Ascension in Acts i. 2, 11, 22 ; 1 Tim. iii. 16. In the passages in Acts it is rendered ‘taken up’ in the A. V. In the fuller accounts given in the Third Gospel we are told how Jesus led the disciples out ‘until they were over against Bethany’ ; how he lifted up his hands to bless them ; and how, while he was in the act of blessing them, he ‘parted from them and was carried

right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached <sup>20</sup> everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed. Amen.

up into heaven' (Luke xxiv. 50, 51). The narrative of the Book of Acts shews us further how the Apostles interrogated their Lord about the time when he should restore the kingdom, and how, when he had answered their question and had given them his final commission, 'as they were looking, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight' (i. 6-8).

**and sat down at the right hand of God.** This is peculiar to Mark. Christ's session at the right hand of God, in the place of honour and authority and power, is a frequent subject of N. T. teaching, and not by one writer only, but by most (Acts vii. 55; Rom. viii. 34; Eph. i. 20; Col. iii. 1; Heb. i. 3, viii. 1, ix. 12, xii. 2; 1 Pet. iii. 22; Rev. iii. 21).

**20. they went forth.** Not at once, however, as the words, if they stood alone, might mean. From the Book of Acts we learn that they were instructed to tarry in Jerusalem until they should receive 'the promise of the Father,' that is to say, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and that they did wait as they had been told (Acts i. 4, 12, &c.).

**preached everywhere.** Faithful to their commission and in accordance with the universal extension which the Lord had stated to be destined for his Gospel.

**the Lord working with them.** This, too, is peculiar to Mark.

**confirming the word.** This term 'confirming' is also peculiar to Mark here, and occurs nowhere else in the Gospels. It is used repeatedly, however, in the Epistles (Rom. xv. 8; 1 Cor. i. 8; 2 Cor. i. 21; Col. ii. 7; Heb. ii. 3, xiii. 9).

**by the signs that followed.** The 'signs,' therefore, were the gift of the Ascended Lord, the results of the ministry which he continues in heaven, tokens of his abiding work and his continuous interest in his followers.

**The Ascension.** Jesus had spoken repeatedly of his departure, and had explained to his disciples its necessity or expediency. He had given them to understand that unless he went away the Holy Spirit could not come to them, and he had shewn them how great their loss in that case would be by disclosing to them the ministries which the Holy Ghost was to discharge when sent into the world (John xvi. 5-11). The event of the Ascension itself, however, occupies a small place in the Gospel records. Matthew and John give no distinct report of it. Only Mark and Luke relate the circumstances. Even in their case the narrative is

brief. A fuller account of it is found, however, in the Book of Acts. The Gospels report the story of our Lord's ministry on earth. The Book of Acts reports the story of his ministry in heaven discharged through his Apostles, and it begins appropriately with the Ascension. The event is also referred to now and again elsewhere in the N. T. (Eph. iv. 8, 9; 1 Pet. iii. 22, &c.). Various questions have been raised in connexion with the event and with the reports of it. It has been asked, e. g., whether it is placed in the same relation to the Resurrection in the several narratives of it which have come down to us in the canonical writings. It has been thought by many that the appendix to Mark's Gospel leaves no room for the interval of forty days which is spoken of in the Book of Acts, but represents the Ascension as following immediately on the Resurrection. Some have met the difficulty created by this apparent discrepancy in the narratives by supposing that there were several Ascensions, our Lord's existence during the forty days consisting in a series of goings and comings. But it is not necessary to take the brief, summary statement in the appendix to the Second Gospel to mean that the Lord's return to heaven took place immediately after he rose from the dead or immediately after he spoke the words to the Eleven which are recorded in xvi. 14-18. There are many things in the Gospel narratives to make us cautious in supposing that events which are reported one after another without any break actually took place in immediate historical succession.

Another question which has been largely discussed concerns the *scene* of the Ascension. The traditional site is that of the present Church of the Ascension. 'In the centre of the chapel,' says Baedeker, 'which is octagonal in shape with a small dome, is the spot where Christ is said to have ascended.' This is on the mount of Olives, and the tradition regarding it is a very ancient one—as old as the third century at least. But this site is open to the serious objection that it is only about half a mile from the city wall, whereas it is explicitly stated in the Book of Acts that the point from which the witnesses of the Ascension returned was 'a sabbath day's journey off' (i. 12). Other sites, therefore, have been suggested, especially one on a height above Bethany, about a hundred yards from the footpath between that village and Jerusalem. The difficulty which seemed to many to be created by the reading of the A. V., 'as far as to Bethany' (Luke xxiv. 50), which would mean a distance of more than a sabbath day's journey, is removed by the better reading of the R. V. 'over against Bethany.' It is impossible to determine the scene of the Ascension, however, more particularly than that it was on one of the heights far up on the mount of Olives, overhanging Bethany and facing to the east.

# INDEX

[*The Numerals refer to the Pages.*]

- Abiathar, 146.  
Abomination of desolation, 298.  
Agony in the garden, 325, 331.  
Alabaster cruse, 311.  
Alexander, son of Simon, 350.  
Andrews, S. J., 262, 341, 362, 367.  
Annas, 334.  
Anointing, 313.  
Appearances of the Risen Lord, 370.  
Appendix to Mark's Gospel, 30, 365.  
Arimathaea, 359.  
Aristion, 32.  
Ascension of Jesus, 371.  
— scene of, 372.  
Atonement, 258.  
Augustine, 44.
- Baedeker, K., 372.  
Baptism, 198, 368.  
— baptized with, 255.  
— John's, 115.  
— method of, 112.  
— of Jesus, 116, 117.  
Barabbas, 346.  
Baskets, 193, 208, 211.  
Beelzebub, 153.  
Bethany, 262.  
Bethphage, 262.  
Bethsaida, 193, 194, 212.  
Birks, T. R., 20.  
Blasphemy, against Holy Spirit, 155.  
— against Son of man, 155.  
Blessed, Son of the, 337.  
Blindness, 212.  
Brethren of Jesus, 156.
- Cæsarea Philippi, 215.  
Caiaphas, 334.  
Calvary, 351.  
Camel and needle's eye, 249.  
Capernaum, 128.  
Chagiga, 320.  
Charoseth, 316, 319.  
Chazzan, 295.  
Chief places, 288.  
Chief priests, 217.  
Christ, use of term, 107, 238.  
Christian, 297.  
Chrysostom, 22.  
Clarke, Prof. W. W., 233.  
Clement, 10, 21, 24, 26, 31, 41.  
Clouds, 304.  
Cock-crowing, 325.  
Coming of Christ, 220.  
Conder, Col., 109.  
Corban, 199.  
Covenant, 321.  
Cries from the Cross, 354, 355.  
Cross, 219.  
— bearing of, 351.  
— cries from the, 354, 355.  
— forms of, 353.  
Cup, 255.
- Dalmanutha, 209.  
Darkness over the land, 354.  
Dead, anointing of, 313.  
Decapolis, 171.  
Delitzsch, Franz, 268.  
Demon, history of word, 133.  
Demonic possession, 132.  
Denarius, 191, 290.  
Desolation, abomination of, 298.  
Divorce, 243, 244.

- Divorcement, bill of, 242.  
 Dogs, Eastern, 204.
- Edersheim, Dr. J., 289, 290, 318, 352.  
 End, discourse on, 308.  
 Elect, 304.  
 Election, the Divine, 256, 301.  
 Emmaus, 367.  
*Enoch, Book of*, 106, 228, 240.  
 Epiphanius, 20, 43.  
 Eschatological discourse, 308.  
*Esdras, IV<sup>a</sup>*, 240.  
 Eternal life, 246, 251.  
 Eternal sin, 155.  
 Eusebius of Cæsarea, 10, 20, 26, 42, 43, 176, 181, 299, 369.
- False Christs, 294, 301.  
 — prophets, 294, 301.  
 Farrar, Archdeacon, 319.  
 Father, as name of God, 273.  
 Feedings of 5,000 and 4,000, 207.  
 Fig-tree, 268.  
 Fire, unquenchable, 240.  
 Flesh, the, 329.
- Galilean dialect, 342.  
 Galilee, land of, 125.  
 — sea of, 126.  
 Gehenna, 239.  
 Geikie, Dr. Cunningham, 174, 265.  
 Gennesaret, lake of, 118.  
 — plain of, 158, 196.  
 Gerasenes, country of, 166.  
 Gethsemane, 326.  
 Golgotha, 351.  
 Gospel, use of word, 106.  
*Gospel of Nicodemus*, 176, 339.
- Hallel, 320.  
 Heart, 196.  
 Hedge, 275.  
 Hell, 239.  
 Hem of garment, 175.
- Henry, Matthew, 159.  
*Hermas*, 5.  
 Hermon, 223.  
 Herod Antipas, 184.  
 — Philip, 185.  
 Herodians, 149, 185.  
 Herodias, 185, 278.  
 Holy One of God, 131.  
 Holy Spirit, 115.  
 — blasphemy against, 155.  
 — descent of on Jesus, 118.  
 — in the O. T., 296, 297.  
 Horace, 312.  
 Hosanna, 266.
- Iudæa, 150.  
 Immortality, O. T. doctrine of, 284.  
 Irenæus, 5, 10, 21, 26, 40.  
 Iscariot, 152.
- Jaïrus, 173.  
 Jericho, 259.  
 Jerome, 20, 24, 44.  
 Jesus, Agony of, 326.  
 — Appearances of, 370.  
 — Ascension of, 371, 372.  
 — Baptism of, 116, 117.  
 — Betrayal of, 331.  
 — brethren of, 156.  
 — Burial of, 360.  
 — Crucifixion of, 351.  
 — Death of, 357.  
 — descent of Spirit on, 118.  
 — designations of, 107.  
 — limitations of knowledge in, 306.  
 — Resurrection of, 363.  
 — Session of, 371.  
 — sisters of, 181.  
 — Temptation of, 119, 120.  
 — Transfiguration of, 222, 225.  
 John the Baptist, 185, 188.  
 Jones, Sir William, 311.  
 Jordan, 112.  
 Joseph of Arimathæa, 359.  
 Josephus, 125, 135, 185, 186,

- 196, 215, 223, 244, 260, 281,  
282, 290, 292, 294, 298, 299,  
300, 308, 344, 348, 350.  
**Judas Iscariot**, 152.  
 — treachery of, 315.  
**Justin Martyr**, 5, 40, 180,  
297.  
  
**Keim**, Theodor, 351.  
**King of the Jews**, 344.  
**King**, the title of, 183.  
**Kingdom of God**, 124.  
  
**Laidlaw**, Dr. John, 219.  
**Leaven**, 210.  
**Legion**, 169.  
**Leprosy**, 136.  
**Levi**, 141.  
**Levirate Law**, 282.  
**Life**, eternal, 246, 251.  
**Lightfoot**, Dr. John, 174, 290.  
 — Bishop, 327.  
**Locusts**, 113.  
**Lord's Supper**, 320, 322, 323.  
**Lynch**, *Narrative*, 112.  
  
**Macgregor**, J., *Rob Roy on the Jordan*, 170.  
**Machaerus**, 185.  
**Maclear**, G. F., 125, 234.  
**Mark**, ancient testimonies, 39.  
 — authorship, 6.  
 — characteristics, 32.  
 — compass and contents, 12.  
 — date, 25.  
 — destination, 23.  
 — Gospel of, change of sentiment regarding, 3.  
 — integrity, 29.  
 — language and style, 18.  
 — literature, 45.  
 — names of, 6.  
 — object and aim, 27.  
 — Peter's *hermeneut*, 9.  
 — place in ancient Church, 4.  
 — plan, 14.  
 — references to in N. T., 6.  
  
**Mark**, references to outside N. T., 8.  
 — relation to Matthew and Luke, 15.  
 — relation to Peter, 9.  
 — relations to Peter and Paul, 8.  
 — sources, 12.  
**Mary Magdalene**, 357, 365.  
 — mother of James, 357.  
**Matthew**, 142.  
**Medical prescriptions**, 174.  
**Meyer**, H. A. W., 108, 157, 213,  
240, 273, 338.  
**Mill-stone**, 239.  
**Mite**, 290.  
**Money-changers**, 269.  
**Morrison**, Dr. J., 135, 143.  
**Most High God**, 168.  
**Mount Hermon**, 223.  
 — of Olives, 263.  
 — Tabor, 222.  
**Mourning**, Oriental, 177.  
**Mustard**, 163.  
**Mystery**, 159.  
  
**Name**, use of term, 236.  
**Nazareth**, 116.  
 — visit of Jesus to, 179.  
**Needle's eye**, 249.  
**Nescience of Jesus**, 306.  
**Nets**, 127.  
**Nicodemus**, 35, 360.  
 — *Gospel of*, 176, 339.  
  
**Oil**, anointing with, 183.  
**Olives**, mount of, 263.  
**Origen**, 21, 26, 42.  
  
**Palace**, 343.  
**Papias**, 9, 39, 40.  
**Parable**, use of term, 154.  
**Parousia**, 304.  
**Passover**, 308.  
 — site of room of, 323.  
**Penny**, 191, 279, 290.  
**Pharisees**, 278.  
**Physicians**, Jewish, 174.

- Pilate, 343.  
 Pliny, 311.  
 Plumptre, E. H., 169.  
 Plutarch, 351.  
 Polycarp, 5, 297.  
 Porter, J. Leslie, 263.  
 Possession, demoniacal, 132.  
 Prætorium, 343, 348.  
 Prayer, posture in, 273.  
 Predestination, the Divine, 256.  
 Preparation, the, 358.  
 Procurator, 345.  
 Publican, 142, 143.  
 Purging of Temple, 268, 271.
- Ransom, 257.  
 Repentance, 111.  
 Resurrection, doctrine of, 282, 284.  
 Risen Lord, appearances of the, 370.  
 Robinson, Ed., *Biblical Researches*, 158, 263.  
 — *Harmony*, 340.  
 Rufus, 350.
- Sabbath, 146.  
 Sacrifice, 258.  
 Sadducees, 281.  
 Salome, 185, 358.  
 Salome's request, 253.  
 Salt, 241.  
 Salted with fire, 240.  
 Satan, 121, 154.  
 Schaff, Philip, 263.  
 Schöttgen, 140.  
 Scourging, 348.  
 Scribes, 130, 217.  
 Second Advent, 304, 307.  
 Seneca, 339.  
 Shewbread, 146.  
*Sibylline Oracles*, 240.  
 Sidon, 203.  
 Sign from heaven, 209.  
 Simon of Cyrene, 350.  
 — the leper, 311.  
 Sin, eternal, 155.
- Sisters of Jesus, 181.  
 Smith, Prof. G. Adam, 112.  
 Soldier of the guard, 188.  
 Son of David, 260, 287, 288.  
 — of God, 107.  
 — of Man, 227.  
 — of Most High God, 168.  
 — of the Blessed, 337.  
 Sop, 319.  
 Soul, 219.  
 Spikenard, 311.  
 Spirit, 329.  
 — blasphemy against, 155.  
 — descent of on Jesus, 118.  
 — the Holy, 115, 296, 297.  
 Spitting, 339.  
 Spittle, use of, 206.  
 Stanley, Dean, 215, 263, 275, 326.  
 Swete, Dr. H. B., 131, 148, 181, 194, 224, 245, 258, 284, 307, 317, 327, 334, 349.  
 Swine, keeping of, 169.  
 Synagogue, 129, 295.  
 Syrophœnician, 203.
- Tabor, 222.  
 Tacitus, 344.  
*Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, 112, 301.  
 Temple, purging of, 268, 271.  
 Temptation of Jesus, 119, 120.  
 Tertullian, 41, 297.  
 Tetrarch, 183.  
 Thorns, 158.  
 Tower, 276.  
 Tradition of the elders, 198.  
 Transfiguration of Jesus, 222, 225.  
 Travail, 294.  
 Treachery of Judas, 315.  
 Treasury, 289.  
 Trench, Archbishop, 213, 214, 274.  
 Tribute, 279.  
 Tristram, Canon H. B., 114, 123, 185.

- Twelve Apostles, the Teaching of the*, 112, 301.  
Twelve, choice of the, 151.  
Tyre, 202.
- Unleavened bread, 316.  
— — Feast of, 309.
- Van Lennep, H. J., 177.  
Veil of temple, 356.  
*Via Dolorosa*, 350.  
Vinegar, 355.  
Vineyard, 275.
- Warren, Sir C., 118.  
Washings, ceremonial, 198.  
Washing of hands, 347.  
Watches, 195.  
Westcott, Bishop, 344.  
Wilderness of Judæa, 111, 120.  
Wilson, Sir C., 351.  
Wine-press, 276.  
Women at Sepulchre, 358, 361.  
World to come, 251.
- Zealots, 346.  
Zebedee, 253.  
Zidon, 203.

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