

And, when the stream  
 Which overflowed the soul was passed away,  
 A consciousness remained that it had left,  
 Deposited upon the silent shore  
 Of memory, images and precious thoughts,  
 That shall not die, and cannot be destroyed.

Job's soul had been submerged by a flood of sorrows and doubts till it had well nigh been overwhelmed; but when that flood passed away, among the precious and imperishable thoughts it left behind it were these;—that an Arbiter, a Mediator, between God and man, might be looked for, who should lay his hands on them both and bring them together in judgment; and that though man must die, he may live again when touched by the quickening breath of God. And to win such gains as these, who would not be content to wade through a very sea of sorrow?

S. COX.<sup>1</sup>

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### THE GOSPEL IN THE EPISTLES.

*I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.*

WE have already seen that the first-founded Churches, to which St. Paul addressed his Epistles, must have known concerning Jesus Christ that He claimed not only to be man, but at the same time the Son of God, and that those who became his followers must prove themselves fit to be such by a firm belief in this claim to Divinity. They must have also known (as we have shewn) that in his life on earth his teaching

<sup>1</sup> And now I must make way for my betters. I have so many papers in hand, and so many more are faithfully promised me by faithful men, that for a season I must intermit my Commentary on Job, in order to find room for these contributions. In the course of a few months I may be able to resume it.

EDITOR.

was addressed first of all to his own nation, the Jews, and that before his ascension the mission of his Apostles had been extended to the Gentiles. But we can gather from the Epistles that a knowledge far larger than this of the human life of Jesus and its surroundings had been communicated to them. For had it not been so, how could the Corinthians have comprehended the words which the Apostle addressed to them (2 Cor. viii. 9), "Our Lord Jesus Christ, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" ? The words occur in an exhortation to self-denying liberality that thus the Corinthian Church might help the poor Christians at Jerusalem. And hence it is plain that the poverty in the text refers not to the emptying Himself of his Godhead in becoming man, but to real temporal necessity. The argument of the Apostle is of this nature. Ye abound in faith and other virtues: see that ye abound in kind deeds and charity, and thus prove the sincerity of your love. These words could only be fully significant to men who had heard the account of Christ's lowly life on earth. Yet St. Paul speaks to the Corinthians as if they were such men, as if they were fully instructed in all this history. "*Ye know*," he says, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ." Ere he could thus speak to them they must have been taught concerning the lowly condition of Joseph and Mary, must have heard of that humble birthplace in the stable at Bethlehem, of the youth spent amidst hardships and poverty, perhaps even of the family friends who, at a marriage-feast, where every effort would be made that there should be no lack, had not wine enough

for the assembled guests; and certainly how the Lord had said of Himself at a later time, "Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." And with this poverty they must have known that Christ had other sufferings to bear. For hear how the Apostle speaks to the Corinthians (2 Cor. i. 3-5), "Blessed be God . . . who comforteth us in all our tribulations, . . . for as *the sufferings of Christ abound in us*, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." And afterwards in the same Epistle (Chap. xi. 23-27) he draws a picture of these abundant sufferings, which he calls here the sufferings of Christ. In our own times we all feel that everything a Christian endures while struggling with the world, and all that he bears for righteousness' sake, may be thus called sufferings of Christ, because they are borne for his sake. But to the Corinthians the real similarity of physical suffering was suggested we cannot doubt, and St. Paul actually makes mention of his bodily sufferings soon afterwards in *Verse 8* of the same Chapter, as if to leave no doubt of his true meaning. And in his description of these sufferings which abound in him he tells his converts of stripes, of stoning, of frequent journeyings, of perils in the city and in the wilderness, of weariness and painfulness, of watchings, of hunger and thirst, and perils among false brethren, to which he had been subjected. Can we believe that the one passage was not read by these disciples in the light of the other? must they not have understood the abundance of *the sufferings of Christ* in the life of St. Paul because they knew that Jesus while on earth had suffered in like manner? They had been taught how

Pilate had delivered Jesus to be scourged, how men had threatened Jesus for his teaching, and how He hardly escaped being hurled from the brow of the hill on which one of the Jewish cities was built; how it was only by flight that He escaped the blows of stones which already the angry hands had grasped and were ready to throw; how He had felt impelled constantly to be labouring, because the cities of Israel would otherwise not hear the voice of his word; how He was constrained to be working day and night the work of Him that sent Him, for to do this was his meat; how He had suffered in the wilderness perils from wild beasts as well as devils; how He durst walk no more in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill Him; and how at last it was one of his own chosen disciples who gave Him up into the hands of the enemy. They must have listened to the story of the long night watches which the Lord kept on the mountain-tops of Syria; and how, worst grief of all, the works of power which He wrought to testify that He was in truth the Son of God were evil spoken of and attributed to Beelzebub.

But they must likewise have been told of the spirit in which all this sorrow and opposition of evil men had been borne. It must have been well known to them that, amid all the temptations and malevolent questionings, though Jesus had given the most cogent, yet He had always given the most gentle, answers to his opponents; and that even in his last trial his strongest word was a simple "Thou sayest:" while most frequently, even against the provocation of false witnesses, He did not open his mouth. For had such acts as these not been known to them, how

could the Apostle have written (2 Cor. x. 1), "I, Paul, beseech you *by the meekness and gentleness of Christ*"? Nay, may we not feel almost sure that they had been told of his benediction on this character of meekness in the Sermon on the Mount, and of his own gracious testimony concerning Himself, as it was afterwards recorded by the First Evangelist (Matt. x. 28, 29), "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am *meek and lowly in heart*, and ye shall find rest for your souls"? It is precisely in the spirit of this language of the Evangelist that the Apostle, after having made the meekness of Christ the ground of his entreaty, proceeds (2 Cor. x. 5) to speak of "casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and *bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ*." Could there be any more practical expansion of the Lord's precept, "Learn of me," and could any appreciate such exhortations but those who had learnt, from the setting forth of the gospel in the facts of Christ's life, how truly He had shewn Himself meek and lowly unto all?

There is another feature of the life of Christ which pervades and gives tone to the Gospel history. This is the manner in which He completely surrendered Himself in his earthly life to do the will of his Father. At twelve years old He asked, in answer to the inquiry of his mother, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business" (Luke ii. 49). To Salome, when she petitioned for a post of honour in his kingdom for her two sons, He ex-

plained that gifts like this could not be bestowed by Him, even though the beloved disciple were one of those for whom the request was made, but were to be given to those for whom they were prepared of the Father (Matt. xx. 23). The whole Gospel of St. John is full of the tone contained in that answer of Jesus to his disciples (John ix. 4), "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day." And long before the crowning act of submission which was contained in the concluding words of the struggle on Gethsemane, "Nevertheless not my will but thine be done," Christ had begun "to teach his disciples that the Son of man must suffer many things" (Mark viii. 31), and "must be delivered into the hands of men, and they should kill him" (Mark ix. 31). But when St. Paul wrote to the Roman Church, they had heard from some one's lips the substance of this self-denying history. They knew to what events in Christ's life the Apostle was alluding when he said (Rom. xv. 3), "Even Christ pleased not himself." The words are few, but how entirely they bespeak, in those who were addressed as if they fully understood them, an acquaintance with the whole story of the "Son of man who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many," and breathe the spirit of that other sentence which St. John has recorded (John v. 30), "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." And yet they tell us of the conflict which the human nature of the Lord experienced, and make us certain that those for whom they were written knew as much as we know of the life which from beginning to end

had shewn no trace of self-pleasing. But St. Paul employs this mention of Christ's resignation in such wise as to shew us that his audience understood even more of the Gospel than this. When Christ had washed the feet of his disciples that work had been an acted lesson, which he enforced at the close with the words, "If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet." And a like use does the Apostle make of his allusion to the submission of Jesus. He points out to them that this life of resignation was intended to be a pattern to all who call themselves by Christ's name, for he continues, "Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification." As we read these words we feel that all this part of the history of Christ's actions had been made clear to the Roman Christians, as the Gospels make it clear to us, that they knew they were no longer to live unto themselves, but to live for one another. Without such previous training the exhortation is too brief to have been effective, but when the history of Jesus has been heard every action of his life becomes an illustration of the brief text, "Even Christ pleased not himself."

But not only were these converts instructed with regard to the tone and spirit of the life of Jesus: we may glean from the Epistles that they knew a great deal concerning the personal circumstances of the Lord and of those among whom He lived. How much more, for instance, must the Corinthians have been told about the history of that vexed question, the brethren of the Lord, than is even explained to us in the Gospels, we can understand when we find

St. Paul alluding to these very persons in the most passing way, to illustrate the lawfulness of preachers and even their families claiming a maintenance from those whom they instructed in things spiritual. "Have we not power," he says (1 Cor. ix. 5), "to lead about a sister or wife (*i. e.*, as a companion in the work of our ministry), as the other apostles and as *the brethren of the Lord?*" No other word is here said about them, we are not told whether it be to sisters or wives that the reference is made in the particular case of the Lord's brethren; but we can be sure at once that the whole of the circumstances connected with these persons, their families, their apostolic labours, and the greater privileges which they had claimed beyond what St. Paul asked for himself, were thoroughly comprehended by those to whom the Apostle addressed these words.

They evidently knew, too, more than we know of the family history of "the other apostles." We can only gather indirectly from the Gospel history that St. Peter was a married man, and of the rest of the band we know nothing in reference to this question. But it may well be that the Corinthians had seen and heard some of those who were "scattered abroad everywhere preaching the word;" yea, it seems almost certain from the tone in which St. Paul appeals to them that this was the case. And if it be so, they had learnt from the lips of the very actors in the events of Christ's life all the slight details for a recital of which the Evangelists have seen no need, and knew for themselves who of the apostles was aided in his work by the attention of a wife or sister. And if they knew these things how surely would they



have heard all the more important history of Him whose messengers these preachers were. In like manner, in the Epistle to the Galatians (Chap. i. 19), we find a brief but somewhat more precise allusion to the family of the Lord. St. Paul is speaking of his visit to Jerusalem three years after his conversion, a visit undertaken that he might see Peter, and in his narrative he says, "Other of the apostles saw I none, save *James the Lord's brother*." We know from the accounts of the Evangelists written at a later date (Mark vi. 3) that the names of these brethren of Jesus were "*James and Joses and Judas and Simon*;" but we see here that long before St. Mark had put this on record the Galatians knew of these men from the lips of St. Paul and others, and comprehended fully this part of the historic outline of the life of Christ. And it should be noted here that this whole passage from the Epistle to the Galatians, in which St. Paul's visit is described, and which was written before the Gospels, bears out exactly the historic details which we trace in every page of the writings of the Evangelists. There, with one and all, even with the beloved disciple, Peter is the prominent member of the apostolic band. He was leader in every act and in every conversation when Christ was alive, and who else would be likely to be the chief man among them, but he, when Christ was taken away? St. Paul's mention of his visit made to see Peter, without containing one syllable directly concerning the pre-eminence which is assigned to that Apostle by all the historians, substantiates in the most forcible way the truth of what they have recorded, that Peter was the great leader among the

Twelve. It was the ruling spirit with whom the newly called Apostle would most naturally desire to hold converse, and it was Peter whom Paul came to visit at Jerusalem. We see too that these infant Churches knew the same Apostle by that name which Christ had solemnly assigned to him when he was first chosen of the Lord. "Thou shalt be called Cephas," Jesus had said (John i. 42), and by this title he is spoken of over and over again (1 Cor. i. 12; iii. 22; ix. 5; xv. 5; Gal. ii. 9) in these letters of St. Paul. We can hardly think that they knew this other name of him who was so much more constantly called Peter, and that they had not been told of the circumstances of the early calling of the Galilean fisherman, and in what manner this new name had been conferred on the leader of the apostles.

But many more details concerning the apostles of Jesus may be gathered from our Epistles. Their number St. Paul records in the most natural manner, as though every circumstance connected with them was present to the minds of those to whom he was writing. Speaking of Christ's appearances after the resurrection, he says, "He was seen of Cephas, then of the *twelve*." He does not feel that he need say that these twelve were the persons whom Christ had especially selected as his companions. No, all that will be fully understood; it has all been repeated by oral teaching over and over again, and it is as well known to the Corinthian Church as to St. Paul what persons were comprised in this band of twelve. They knew all this part of the Gospel history. Yet this is not all. In the Epistle to the

Galatians (Chap. ii. 9) we have a more complete piece of evidence on the same point. St. Paul is speaking of the condition of the Christian Church at Jerusalem at the time when he paid his first visit to the brethren, and he mentions incidentally that "James, Cephas, and John seemed to be pillars." He says no more, but seems to take it for granted that all these particulars needed no explanation for the Galatian Christians. They had heard the whole history, and all the Apostle has to do is to appeal thereto. But the picture which these few words set before us is exactly that which every one of the Evangelists has drawn without directly pointing out that these three men were the pillars of the Church in Jerusalem. The undesigned coincidence which is found here is of sufficient importance to ask for a somewhat longer notice. When Christ began to gather round Him a band of disciples from whom his apostles were hereafter to be chosen, we read that Peter, Andrew, James, and John were the four who were first called; and, though in somewhat varied order, these four names stand at the head of all the lists of the apostles which are given in the New Testament. It appears from St. John's Gospel (Chap. i. 40, 41) that, of the sons of Jonas, Andrew was the first called, and he afterwards invited his brother Peter to come and hear the new-found teacher, whom the Baptist had just pointed out. But as the histories proceed Andrew becomes less and less prominent: though no notice is taken of the circumstance by any of the Evangelists, the fact alone makes itself felt. We see that although he had been prompt in his testimony to Jesus, and had said at

first, "We have found the Messiah," yet for some reason unassigned he falls into the background, and when the Lord has need to choose disciples who should be with Him so as to be his special witnesses to the world concerning his Divine glory, his mighty works, or painful sufferings, as at the Transfiguration, the raising of the daughter of Jairus, and in the agony of Gethsemane, the three persons selected are always Peter, James, and John; and when the last mention of the names of the apostles is made (Acts i. 13), the order of their names has become Peter, John, James, and Andrew. When, therefore, St. Paul calls James, Cephas, and John the pillars of the Church, he is recording that which the Gospels shew us—though without design, throughout the whole of their story—was growing to be the condition of the Christian society in Jerusalem; and when he feels that so brief an enumeration of the names and position of these men would be intelligible to his converts in Galatia, we are convinced that he knows they have been thoroughly instructed in the history of the newly founded Church, and need no further explanation: and thus a slight touch like this is more effective than more elaborate narrative could be in proving to us how faithfully and completely the story which is contained in the Gospels had been set forth by the missionaries to the Churches of Galatia.

There is yet one more allusion in these Epistles connected with the history of the Twelve which we must notice here. When St. Paul is giving to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xi. 23) an account of the institution of the Lord's Supper, he says, "The Lord

Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread." We see as soon as we read these words how large an acquaintance they presuppose with the history which we have in the Gospels. That the Lord's Supper was instituted at night; that Christ's death was brought about by an act which deserved the name of a betrayal. How many questions arise at once on only these two points. Where was the act perpetrated? Who was the guilty person? Why did his act deserve this awful title? What had been his previous history? All these and many like inquiries had been fully satisfied for the Corinthians ere it became possible for St. Paul to write to them simply, "Jesus in the same night in which he was betrayed took bread." They had an acquaintance with the facts of Christ's life which only years of familiarity could produce. They had heard the substance of the Gospel story a long while before St. Paul sent them this his first Epistle. They had, it may be, no written Gospel; but the deeds and words and surroundings of Jesus were deeply impressed on their memories and in their hearts.

When we turn to the Nicene Creed we find that this first article on the divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ is expanded by clauses which state that Jesus was very God of very God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, that He was of one substance with the Father, and by Him all things were made. We know from the Gospels how these points of doctrine are set forth; how Christ testifies of Himself, "I and my Father are one" (John x. 30); how He speaks of "the glory, which he had with God, before the world began" (John xvii. 5); and

how St. John tells us of the "Word which was in the beginning with God, and that all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made" (John i. 1-3). But more than a quarter of a century before St. John's Gospel appeared, from which all these passages are taken, this teaching, which many persons have called a later development of Christian doctrine, was familiar at Rome, at Corinth, and in the Churches of Galatia. To the Romans (Chap. viii. 32) the Apostle writes that it was "God who spared not *his own Son*, but delivered him up for us all;" and having made this wondrous sacrifice for our redemption, "will he not with him also freely give us all things?" And to the Corinthians (2 Cor. v. 19) he testifies in language closely akin to that of St. John in the Gospel, "*God was in Christ* reconciling the world unto himself." Of whom, too, but a Divine person could words like these (1 Cor. viii. 12) be used? "When ye sin against the brethren and wound their consciences, ye *sin against Christ*." Through the whole of the New Testament sin is an offence against God, sin is the transgression of his law; so that there could be no doubt in the minds of the Corinthians about St. Paul's meaning when he thus wrote: it was Christ the God, as well as the man, of whom he was telling them. And to shew how thoroughly the pre-existence of Christ before his birth of the Virgin was understood in these earliest days of the Church, we need but to refer to the way in which He is spoken of as the "Rock which was with the Israelites in the wilderness" (1 Cor. x. 4); and in the same Chapter (*Verse 9*) how the temptation offered to God in

the desert is declared by the Apostle to have been offered to Christ. "Neither let us tempt *Christ*, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents." Hardly in any way that we can conceive could the divinity of Christ, and his unity and consubstantiality with the Father, be more emphatically set forth than in words like these. Jesus is likewise called (once more in language which cannot fail to remind us of St. John's Gospel) "*the image of God*," that whereby God is manifested to the world. These are the Apostle's words (2 Cor. iv. 4-6), "The god of this world" (a phrase much akin to that familiar "prince of this world" so frequent in the Gospels) "hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of *Christ who is the image of God* should shine unto them. . . . For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the *light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*." Was St. John giving anything but a repetition of this teaching when he spake more than a quarter of a century after (Chap. i. 4-14) of Christ and said, "In him was life, and the life was *the light of men*; and the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. . . . That was *the true light which lighteth every man* that cometh into the world. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld *his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father*"? And of the creation of all things by Jesus Christ, those to whom St. Paul wrote could be in no doubt. To the Corinthians he speaks (1 Cor. viii. 6) of "Jesus Christ, *by whom are all things, and we by him;*" and to the

Romans (Chap. ix. 5) of "*Christ, who is over all, God blessed for ever;*" and again to the Corinthians (i Cor. i. 24) of "*Christ as the power of God and the wisdom of God.*" So much has been said about the late origin of the Fourth Gospel, and that it contains doctrinal developments (and the passages alluded to in these charges are exactly those which speak of the divinity of Jesus) which belong to the second century, that too much attention can hardly be given to these quotations from St. Paul, which anticipate the thoughts, and in many cases the very expressions of St. John, and thus prove that both thought and language date back to a time much nearer to the death of Jesus than the earliest date which has ever been assigned to St. John's Gospel; they shew us that the Gospel teaching, even in its sublimest phases, was communicated everywhere where Christian preachers came, long before it became needful to put down in writing an account of such points in the history of Christ "*as were most surely believed*" among the early disciples.

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*THE MARRIAGE IN CANA OF GALILEE.*

GREAT harm has been done to the cause of truth by an imperfect apprehension of the nature and object of our Lord's miracles. They have too often been regarded as arbitrary violations of natural order, and have been looked at in a hard and mechanical way, so as to present the strongest possible contrast to experience and the testimony of the natural reason. And the narrative of our Lord's beginning of signs in Cana of Galilee is rather an instance in point