

which He draws; but, as He draws, the means are forthcoming and the end is produced. And certainly it is evermore in a like way that the water of this world becomes the wine of the kingdom. There is no visible antecedent supply to which we may resort; but as we take of the gifts provided for us, however meagre and insufficient or inadequate they may seem, the cup is found to be full, and that which we only knew as water has, by being received from the hands of Christ, become new wine, even the wine of the kingdom, of which it may ever be said, "Thou hast kept the good wine until now."

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*THE CHRIST OF THE RESURRECTION.*

FOR eighteen centuries the garden of the Arimathæan has been well trodden, and around the door of its "new sepulchre" the Saracens of Unbelief have made their fiercest onsets. As to that other Garden, again and again have bands of Doubters come, and carrying before them the glimmer of Reason's "lanterns," they have sought to bind the Christ and to lead Him away. But Faith seeks that sepulchre with soft and reverent foot, and bringing in her hands the sweet unguents of love and trust, she pours them out on the feet of her Lord and God.

Of the fact and the manner of the Resurrection, it is not our purpose to treat in this paper. We wish rather to follow the footsteps of the risen Lord from the tomb to the Ascension, and to trace out the points of difference between the Christ of the Resurrection and the Christ of the Gospels.

1. *There was a change in the Humanity of the Risen Christ.* The union of the two natures in the one person of Christ we may never understand. There was the Divine, "for in him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead," and ever and anon this divinity went flashing forth in signs and wonders; and there was the human, for the Word who in the beginning "was with God," yea, and "was God," is now "made flesh and dwells among us." The two natures are here, distinct in their operations, yet blending harmoniously together; but where to draw the dividing line between them as they interlace with, and frequently overlap, each other, is beyond the mind of man or angel. The body of Christ was perfectly human. The same tides of feeling ebbed and flowed around his heart that lift our own. He hungered; He thirsted; He slept; He grew weary; He sighed; He wept. Now it is evident that the body which Nicodemus so carefully enwrapped in his hundred pounds of spices was the same body as that which rose from the grave; for when Peter and John entered the sepulchre they found the linen clothes and the folded napkin, but the body had vanished, nor was any part of it left behind. But that it was a changed body, (*a*) *in form and feature*, I think we may infer from the difficulty his disciples had in recognizing it. The first appearance was to Mary in the twilight of Easter morning. And, if any one could have recognized the Lord, it would have been Mary of Magdala. But even she mistakes; and though she has long found her heaven in the smile of Jesus, she now takes Him for the "gardener," until his voice floats like music through the open

windows of her soul. Then, again, up by the beach of Gennesareth, Jesus stood within hail of the seven fishermen; but St. John tells us (Chap. xxi. 4), "The disciples knew not that it was Jesus." And when He asked them, "Children, have ye any meat?" they answered Him with an abrupt and half-petulant, "No."<sup>1</sup> It was not until they saw the "hundred and fifty and three" fishes floundering in their net that the thought flashed through their mind, "It is the Lord!" So, too, upon the Emmaus journey, Christ joins the two disciples, walks on mile after mile between them, talks with them, and yet neither Cleopas nor his companion can tell who is this "stranger in Jerusalem." St. Mark, in narrating the incident, gives us one of those artistic touches so peculiar to his Gospel. "After that he appeared *in another form* unto two of them, as they walked and went into the country" (Chap. xvi. 12). Here then we seem to have the fact distinctly stated. It is "another form" (*μορφῆ, not τρόπω*) to that they have known so well; the same body, but with altered features.

But not only were the features of the resurrection body changed; it would also appear that the risen humanity of Christ (*b*) *was no longer subject to human needs*. I refer to such needs as sleep and food. Before, during the years of his self-imposed ministry, Christ suffered from the exhaustion of the vital powers. The flame burned so intensely that the oil of human strength was often spent. He sits "weary" on the well of Sychar; worn down with incessant labours, He drops asleep in the stern of the boat, and sleeps

<sup>1</sup> Οὐ. Comp. this with the *Nai, Κύριε*, of Matt. xiii. 51.

so soundly that the noisy winds and boisterous waves do not wake Him. He goes out to Bethany to lodge there, and night after night that storm-tossed bark slips away from the turbulent waters of Jerusalem to find the calm sweet haven of Olivet. But all this is changed now. The risen Christ needs neither repose nor rest. No longer does Bethany find Him a couch, no longer does the furled sail yield Him a pillow. Forty days and nights He lingers in the world—now in Judæa and now in Galilee—but He tarries not in earthly homes; and as time after time He appears unto his disciples, He comes upon them suddenly, giving them no warning of his coming, and then as suddenly vanishing out of their sight.

True we read that He partook of food, and it is somewhat singular that on each of the three recorded appearances he ate bread with his disciples. At Emmaus the “breaking of bread” was their clue to his identity. Possibly they saw the nail-prints on his uplifted hands; or if not, the breaking and blessing of the bread would be to them a familiar sight, reminding them of other days. In the grey dawn by the shore of the Lake He had actually prepared the breakfast for the seven disciples, as they came home after a night of fruitless netting; and we may suppose—though it is not distinctly stated—that He shared with them the bread and the broiled fish. Again, when He appeared so strangely in the room at Jerusalem, we read that He partook of food, not *with* them this time, but *before* them. This preposition is important, for it seems to imply that when Jesus partook of food, it was not to satisfy the needs of his risen body, but rather to prove to his disciples that it was a real

body that was present with them, and no spirit, no vision. St. Luke tells us (Chap. xxiv. 37), "They were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit." "Why are ye troubled?" asks the Saviour. "Behold my hands and my feet: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." And then, as a further and a convincing proof of the reality of his bodily presence, He says, "Have ye any meat?" (*τι βρώσιμον* — "anything eatable.") Then, as they hand Him "a piece of a broiled fish and (a piece) of an honeycomb"—and these pieces are the remnants of their own repast, shewing that their evening meal is over—"He took and did eat *before* them" (*ἐνώπιον αὐτῶν*); standing in front of them, that they might watch Him, and see that there was no deception. And leaving out these three occasions, where else did Christ sit down to eat bread? If anywhere, we may suppose it would be amongst his own; at the lavish table of Simon the grateful leper, or at the more frugal, but more welcome, table which Martha served. But no! The disciples drink of the pure juice of the grape, but the risen Lord will never more drink of the fruit of the vine until the day when He shall drink it new with them in the kingdom of God. His resurrection-body was then a real body; it could be seen; it could be handled; the disciples could clasp his feet, and Thomas could thrust his doubting hand into his side: but yet it was a body that was lifted above human needs.

Yea, more; (*c*) *it was lifted above Nature's laws.* When St. Luke describes the Emmaus incident, he tells us (Chap. xxiv. 31), "And he vanished out of

their sight" (*αὐτὸς ἄφαντος ἐγένετο*) ; or, as the marginal reading is, "He became invisible." And what is the idea conveyed by the singular word *ἄφαντος* ? for this is the only occasion of its use in the New Testament. It does not describe any ordinary departure, any sudden slipping out of sight ; but as a mist dissolves in the air, or as a cloud dries up and vanishes in the sunlight, so the form of Jesus fades out of sight. One moment He is before them, his hands uplifted in blessing the bread, his lips flinging off gracious words as a harp flings off its music, his eyes gleaming with a supernal light. The next moment all is gone. Silently as the fragrance steals from the rose the form of Jesus vanishes ; even while they are gazing the sweet singer is flown, and nought is left them but the entrancing cadence of his song. So, too, when He appears in the room at Jerusalem, his appearing is as supernatural as was his departure from Emmaus. He comes upon them swift and sudden as a flash of light. St. John tells us (Chap. xx. 19) that "the doors were shut for fear of the Jews ;" and we may suppose that the same fear that shut them would securely lock them.<sup>1</sup> But the body that can mock Pilate's seal is not to be kept out by bolts and bars. Through the fastened door He makes his way, and when his strange appearance wakes in his disciples a storm of fear and awe, He stills that tempest, as He calmed the waves of Galilee, with his omnipotent "Peace!" So again when the Saviour rose to heaven, Nature's laws were pushed on one side. Even gravitation is set aside ; and as the Lord ascends up from the stony crest of Olivet, up above palms, and clouds,

<sup>1</sup> Comp. the *τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων* of ver. 26.

and skies, lo! Nature falls down and worships her ascending God! It was our humanity the Christ of the Resurrection wore; but it was our nature spiritualized, sublimated. No longer is it subject to Nature's laws; untrammelled as Mind, it moves swiftly, strangely, silently, as thought itself.

May we pause here just for a brief digression? How often do the questions cross our minds, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" And how earnestly have we wished that some answer might be given! Nay, it is given. We may read it, if we will, upon the stone of the emptied sepulchre, or upon the robes of the risen Lord. The harvest differs from the first-fruits only in the time of its ripening, and the resurrection-body of Christ was but the wave-sheaf of humanity. "Like unto his own glorious body," says St. Paul, speaking of the final transfiguration, when, down in the low vales of death, this mortal shall put on immortality. Changed, indeed, will *that* body be, when all the lines of care are smoothed out, the furrows of grief rounded, and all deformity is left behind! Changed, indeed! for Nature's laws are superseded as "they that are Christ's" are caught up to meet Him in the air! Changed, and yet the same! for beyond the grave there will be for us, as well as for our Lord, the joyful recognitions, the "All hail!" of eternal bliss.

2. We may discover traces of a further change, *in the Relationship existing between Christ and his Disciples.* Between the Christ of the Gospels and the disciples there was a most intimate union. They lay aside all reserve in his presence. They live.

together as a band of brothers, and Jesus is the elder brother, the centre and inspiration of the circle. They mention their plans and wishes to Him; they offer Him their advice; they ask their simple artless questions; they carry to his ear the bits of rumour that are flying about in the air; they walk together; they sing together; they recline together: and such is their perfect freedom—we might almost say familiarity—that John leans his head on the very bosom of Jesus, and mothers come and lift their children to his arms. But, now, mark the change! For forty days He no longer dwells among them. True, there were other appearances of Christ beside those recorded in the story of the Evangelists; but in each of the cases mentioned He comes upon them suddenly, and as suddenly retires; and whence He cometh or whither He goeth no one can tell. And see what new emotions are stirred in their hearts when He now stands amongst them;—wonder, fear, reverence, and awe! It is as though they would shrink from Him, if they only dare, and only could. And why this change, that they should seem half afraid of their Lord? It is because a new and startling truth has dawned upon their minds—the *Godhead of Jesus*. Travellers who have sailed up the Lake of the Four Cantons will remember seeing, near the famed field of Grutli, a huge scar up on one of the heights that overhang the lake. So massive was the piece of rock dislodged from that spot, it fell into the lake with the crash of an avalanche, and, flinging the whole lake into commotion, it sent the huge wave lapping over the banks, and washing the hamlets that stood upon the shore. So now in the still calm deeps



of the disciples' hearts a great truth has dropped—the Divinity of Jesus—and all is commotion where all was rest before ; while higher and still higher rise the successive waves of fear, reverence, and awe. He was *the man* before, mingling with men ; they never called Him “God.” He was, indeed, “a Teacher sent from God ;” He was a “Prophet mighty in deed and word ;” yea, He was the “Son of God ;” but higher than that their adoration never reached. At times they had felt a strange wonder laying hold of their hearts, as they saw winds and waves cringing at their Master's feet, but even then they only asked, “What manner of *man* is this ?” But now the Humanity fades, and half disappears. The Divinity of Jesus rises as a resplendent orb over the horizon of their faith, filling their souls with a new and awe-inspiring brightness ; and it is as the mouthpiece of all the rest that Thomas cries out, “My Lord and my God !” Never had their faith reached so high before. “My Lord and my God :” that truth became the central truth of all their after lives ; the truth for which they lived, for which they died. It *was* Jesus, the perfect Man ; it *is* Jesus, the perfect God !

3. There is still another change in the Christ of the Resurrection, *in his apparent Relationship with Heaven*. In studying the life of the Christ of the Gospels one cannot fail to observe how very largely prayer enters, as one of the elements, into that life. How He needed the help that prayer affords we cannot tell ; but we find Him—whose are all the treasures of wisdom and power—kneeling as a suppliant at his own door. The solitude of the moun-

tain side, the wilderness, the garden, shew us the praying, pleading, agonizing Saviour. But no more does prayer come from his lips: *that* is one of the swaddling clothes of humanity, which the risen Christ lays aside. When last among his disciples, how tenderly, how earnestly, He prayed for them! "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me;" "Sanctify them through thy truth" (John xvii. 11, 16). And when his prayers for his disciples were ended, then came the agony of the Garden, with its plaintive cry, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." But see the risen Christ. When first He meets his disciples He bids them, "All hail!" (*Χαίρετε.*) It is a salutation He has never given them before. It is the greeting that Herod's soldiers gave Him in mockery a short while ago, and Christ takes it and wraps it round the broken hearts of his disciples. That *χαίρετε* ("joy") is the key-note of the after life. The lips that once trembled in prayer are now flinging benedictions all around. They open to pour light upon hidden Scriptures (Luke xxiv. 27, 45); to speak "Peace" upon timorous disciples (John xx. 19), or to breathe upon them the power of the Holy Ghost (John xx. 22); and the last time those lips are opened upon earth, before his ascension, they join with his uplifted hands as they let fall a last benediction (Luke xxiv. 51). Jesus has assumed again the robes of his royalty. He taught as our Prophet, He died as our Priest, He rose again as our King. The clouds, the stars, are but steps up to his throne; the Christ of the Resurrection climbs them, and through the everlasting doors He passes in to his heaven and ours.