

is *a doubt* about the reading, and that possibly this Jonathan was a son (or descendant) of Gershom, the son, not of Moses, but of Manasseh. Nor was it long before some bolder "liar for God" took down this "suspended *Nun*," as it was called, from its gallows, and dishonestly interpolated it into the body of the word, to save Moses from the reproach of being the progenitor of an apostate. "Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of MANASSEH," is accordingly the received reading both of the English Version and of many manuscripts of the Septuagint; and it is from the Samaritan Version, the Latin Vulgate, and other quarters that we discover the true reading and detect the fraud into which the Masoretic scribes were gradually tempted. A dishonest manipulation of the text, a baseless Kabbalistic exegesis of it, were the natural rebound, the almost necessary reaction of the spirit revolting from the impossible and injurious bondage to its mere written or articulate vocables.

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THE CHRIST OF THE RESURRECTION.

THERE have been times in our life when, first awaking from a deep and heavy sleep, we have seemed for the moment to have lost the thread of our consciousness; and we have asked ourselves the strange questions, "Who am I?" "Where am I?" Between the yesterday and the opening to-day, there has rolled the silent oblivious stream we call sleep, and for the time the operations of the mind have been suspended. But soon, as consciousness returns,

memory puts into the chain of our existence the missing link, and our thoughts, our desires, our affections, go rolling on in the old and well-worn channels. With all these lapses and blanks of sleep our identity remains; and with all these daily stoppages of the loom, the to-days take up the shuttle and the pattern just where the yesterdays left them, as they go on weaving the mysterious web of life. So between the two lives of Jesus there has come a blank, not, however, of sleep, but of death. Three days has He lain in the perfumed chamber of the grave; the "temple" of his body cold as the glistening marble of that other Temple to which He Himself compared it; while his spirit has been in Paradise. But He wakes; He lays by the garments of the grave; He opens the stone door of his chamber; and through the swooning soldiers He steps forth into the same world He left a while ago. Changed He is, for the mission of Redemption is completed. Like that illustrious type of his, He is no more the sufferer, the prisoner; He is the King, riding in the royal chariot of heaven, whose chargers are the winds and whose track is the sky. But yet it is "this same Jesus," and it is for *the marks of resemblance and identity* that we are now to search.

1. *We will take first his Work, his Mission.* Christ came to fulfil the law and the prophets; and we cannot read the story of the Gospels without observing how frequently He was referring to the Scriptures. Though He brings with Him into the world a New Testament—of which He Himself is the Alpha and the Omega—yet we find Him ever speaking with reverence of the Scriptures of the Old

Testament. He appeals to them that they may verify his words. They are the common ground on which He can combat the prejudice and animosity of his enemies; and He foils their cavils as He once foiled that prince of cavillers, the devil, with an "It is written." Do they hold up their traditions as a kind of super-scripture? He takes them back to Moses' seat, and shews them how with their traditions they "have made the commandment of God of none effect." Do the men of his boyhood's Nazareth taunt Him with the obscurity of his parentage? Do they smile at his bold interpretation of Isaiah's prophecy, and seek to cast Him out? He takes them to the books of their "Kings," and reminds them how Elijah, once driven out of Israel, found a refuge in Syro-Phœnicia, and a home beneath the widowed roof of Sarepta. He tells them how once Elisha threw a marvellous miracle over the heads of the Samaritan lepers who were cringing just outside the gate, and dropped it within the chariot of the *Syrian* leper. Do the priests of the Temple request Him to stop the boisterous shouts of the children? He gives a gentle rebuke to the men who can prefer the discordant cries of the hucksters in the Temple court to the "hosannahs" of the children, by taking them back to their own Psalms, and asking, "Have ye never read?" Jesus seemed to live in the Scriptures; they were the quiver from which He drew his keenest arrows. In his words you see the centuries rolled back; the old again becomes new, as He threads into his discourses the fires of Sodom, the flood of Noah, the songs of David, the laws of Moses, the glories of Solomon. And how

often is He opening out the Scriptures, polishing the "dark sayings of old," until they flash and sparkle like crystals of congealed light! And how He brings the coloured scattered rays of prophecy, and turns them full upon his own life, that men may see in Him the Christ "of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write!" That is the Christ of the Gospels; now let us seek for the Christ of the Resurrection.

The first lengthened conversation the risen Jesus had with any of his disciples was on the way to Emmaus. The purple shadows were falling on the distant hills, while the darker shadows of a bitter grief hung around the hearts of the two travellers. Jesus "drew near" to them—coming up from behind and hurrying to overtake them—and joined in their conversation. Their hearts are full of just one topic—the strange sad things that have happened at Jerusalem. What is Scripture to them now? Only a shrine whose pillars are fallen, and through whose ruins the winds of disappointment rave! Their thoughts are transfixed to the cross; and the whole current of their speech goes circling, eddying, around Calvary. But Jesus opened his lips, and, bringing them away from the cross and the tomb, He takes them back to the Scriptures, "and beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them the things concerning Himself." And as from the temple of prophecy He takes lamp after lamp, and hangs them up in the darkened temple of their souls, lo! the shrine glows with a light more sacred than that of day. And when the Saviour disappears, and they break the sweet spell of silence that is upon them, it is to express their joy and

wonder, "Did not our heart burn within us while he . . . opened to us the Scriptures!" So was it that evening when He found his disciples assembled at Jerusalem. After eating before them of the broiled fish and honeycomb, He takes them directly to the "Thus it is written" (Luke xxiv. 46); and leading them up to the "high mountain" of prophecy "apart by themselves," the disciples see their Lord transfigured before them, amid the blaze of a thousand converging lights, while they hear Moses and Elias—the law and the prophets—talking of the deace He has accomplished at Jerusalem!

But Christ came *to establish a kingdom*. The startling cry of the Baptist was, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" and when Jesus appeared He took up the same cry of "the kingdom." He tells of the *nature* of this kingdom; it is "not of this world," *i. e.*, not founded with carnal weapons; it "cometh not with observation"—men cannot map out, as in earthly empires, its silent but swift advances. He tells of the *symbols* of this kingdom, that they are not externals such as meat and drink, but inward graces rather—righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Ghost. He tells of the *privileges* of this kingdom, that he who is accounted worthy of citizenship within it finds a treasure richer than any "treasure hid in a field," yea, richer than "goodly pearls." He tells of the *progress* of this kingdom, how it grows by contact, by a process of assimilation, as "leaven" hid in meal; and how its growth is ever silent, and ever upward, as "seed" sown in a field. Over a hundred times is this word "kingdom" (*βασιλεία*) mentioned in the four Gospels; and many of the

Lord's parables are beautiful crystallizations around "the kingdom of God" and "the kingdom of Heaven." Nay, up to the very last, we hear Him speaking of his "kingdom;" and even when within a few hours of the cross, surrounded by Roman helmets, and forsaken of his friends, He stands erect amid the clamorous mob, and speaks of "my kingdom," so repeatedly and so boldly, that Pilate half trembles upon his lofty seat.¹ Now where is the Christ of the Resurrection? Does He forget the old theme, and turn to subjects more momentous? Nay, it is still "the kingdom." When He tells Cleopas and his companion of the "glory" that should crown his sufferings, that "glory" is but the aurora which shoots up and plays around his "kingdom." When He bids the Seven, "Cast the net on the right side of the ship," it is but the echo of his own parable coming from the rippled waters of Galilee—"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, . . . which when it was full they drew to shore." Just before his ascension He tells his disciples how they must conquer a world for Him. They cannot extend his kingdom on earth by might nor by earthly power, but by his Spirit; and they must "tarry" until they receive this "power from on high." It is still "the kingdom" that is the one central thought of the risen Christ; and all his desires, all his words flow on in the channel of his earlier years. And when the stories of the Evangelists are finished, and St. Luke begins to write out the "Acts of the Apostles," he pauses to give us one

¹ See John xviii. 36, where the phrase *ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ* is three times repeated.

glimpse of the risen Christ—"being seen of them forty days, and *speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God*" (Acts i. 3).

2. But this identity may be traced out *in the Disposition and Character* of the Christ of the Resurrection. We take as one point of comparison (*a*) *his gentleness*. Those prophetic utterances, "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street: a bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench" (Isaiah xlii. 2, 3)—were exact delineations of the character of Jesus. He could be stern and severe, especially in the presence of a hollow hypocrisy. Then Christ, the "rock," was a Sinai, rolling forth thunders, while "woes" flashed as lightnings from his lips. But that was an exceptional mood. His nature was mild, loving, gentle; and instead of the rugged features of a Sinai, we have a gentle slope, some flower-clad Mount of Beatitudes, on which the lambs could gambol and a child might lie. Even when He has to administer a rebuke to his disciples, how tenderly He does it! He uses a whip of small cords when teaching the traders of the temple honesty and reverence; but when He chastises his disciples, it is as with a rod of frankincense—the smart lost in the fragrance. That last sad night when Philip, too inquisitive, asks, "Shew us the Father," how mildly does Jesus reprove him: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" What a world of tenderness is in these words! And how this scene in the upper room reminds us of another, when the Christ of the Resurrection spake! It was that morning by the shore, as the Seven sat by the

fire of driftwood, partaking of their early repast. Peter is here, calmed and humbled by the memories of his desertion and his denials. The Lord has met him once before, but what passed at that secret interview when He "appeared unto Simon" we do not know. His denials of Christ were made openly, loudly; and the reproof must also be open and public. But how gentle is it! Jesus simply asks, "Simon, lovest thou me?" and, as in after years the vision of the sheet was three times let down from heaven to teach Peter to forget his Jewish prejudice, so now the Lord three times drops a simple question down into his heart, to teach him to remember how weak are human boasts, and how all-forgiving and all-conquering is the love of Jesus.

Then (*b*) take the *authority* of Christ. They called Him "Lord," and such indeed He was. The Apostle "born out of due time" used to call himself the "slave (*δούλος*) of Jesus Christ," and that enthusiasm of devotion was shared by all his brethren. Christ was their leader, their autocrat—if we may borrow a word from despotism; and they were happy willing vassals. His will was their will, his word their law. Nor was their obedience once withheld from Him. Let Jesus but speak the word, and Peter and John hurry forward to untie an ass—strange and unmeaning though the request might appear; and Peter drops down his hook to fish for a stater! So, too, the Christ of the Resurrection. He takes the same place as before. At Emmaus He is but the "stranger," the *guest*, but He takes the place of the *host*. He takes the bread, He blesses it, He breaks it, and then He

hands it to the very men who a little while before were inviting and constraining Him to "abide" with them. Or take the message which the angel brought to the tomb. "And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth *before* you into Galilee" (Matt. xxviii. 7). In that "before" (πρὸ-) we recognize the likeness of Him who called Himself the "Good Shepherd," and who always *leads*, and never follows his flock.¹ And what a majesty and authority rang in his tones! He speaks as from the upper heavens; and that last command of his, "Go ye into all the world," falling among the disciples, scatters them to the farthest ends of the earth, as leaves are scattered by the gale.

Or, take (c) the *considerateness of Christ*, his thoughtful care and anxiety for others. How He seemed to anticipate their wants, even the common wants of every-day life! So, too, we find Him, who can dispense beatitudes, who can utter prophecies, who can pour from his lips truths high as heaven, deep as hell, and vast as eternity—stooping down to the comprehension of a child, as He talks of flowers, and grass, and sparrows; while to his apostles He speaks of such common things as srips, and staves, and coats! And what a considerateness there was about all his actions and words! The disciples would send the multitudes away when the westering sun tells of a day far spent. But the compassionate considerate Jesus cannot send them fainting round the circuit of the lake, in face of a storm too. So making them sit down

¹ Comp. the ἐμπροσθεν αὐτῶν πορεύεται of John x. 4.

on the grass, He works a stupendous miracle just to satisfy their bodily wants; and altogether forgetful of his own weariness, He breaks the bread for his five thousand guests! And by the shore of this same sea we have an exact counterpart of this, though it is the Christ of the Resurrection who now appears. Just as a mother spreads the table and prepares the meal for her sons as they come home wearied with their bread-winning, so does He who comforts "as a mother comforteth." And as the Seven pull ashore, faint, weary, and disappointed, they see the smoke rising from the beach. Is it the smoke of the morning sacrifice? Yea, verily, but a sacrifice of a new order. The beach is the altar, the burning coals the fire, while the bread and fish are the sacrifice that the risen Christ is offering upon it to the needs of humanity.

The cross did not change the nature of Christ; it did not end his mission; it only lifted it up into a higher sphere. The outer dress, the humanity, was transformed, but the inner soul remained, as it will do through the æons of eternity—"this same Jesus.

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A CHAPTER OF GOSPEL HISTORY.

5.—COMPLAINT AGAINST THE CITIES OF THE PLAIN.

(*St. Matt.* xi. 20-24.)

THE complaint of Jesus against the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done probably owes its place here to the First Evangelist's habit of grouping his materials topically. We cannot determine precisely when these words of upbraiding were