

cannot enter into the breadth of the new revelation; two to the Gentile Christian who impatiently refuses to see anything in the old Covenant but an effete national superstition; but that they are one if we will only rise to the serener heights where they meet, where, that which is perfect being come, that which is in part is done away; where there is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, but Christ is all and in all.

R. E. BARTLETT.

### A CHAPTER OF GOSPEL HISTORY.

#### 7.--THE SELF-ESTIMATE OF JESUS.

(*St. Matthew xi. 27.*)

THIS outstanding text, to which Keim has given the not inappropriate title of the Great Sonship Confession of Jesus, has from the earliest times attracted the attention of students of the Gospel history; and it was never an object of greater interest to theologians than it is at present. The saying of our Lord here recorded, and found also in the Third Gospel,<sup>1</sup> is invested with exceptional importance, both on doctrinal and on critical grounds. The striking resemblance between this Synoptical word and the utterances put into the mouth of Jesus by the Fourth Evangelist has already been adverted to in the first paper of this series. In view of this resemblance it seems natural to think that here, in this one precious text, we have a hint of a doctrine concerning the Person of the Speaker, rising above the general Synoptical level into the high mysterious region of truth in which John soars on eagle wing.

<sup>1</sup> Luke x. 21.

Then it happens that the text before us is one of those about which much diversity of opinion has prevailed as to the correct reading. Not that the available critical authorities, in the shape of ancient MSS. of the Greek text, are at variance here. The source of dubiety lies nearer the fountain-head than the date of our oldest uncials, even among the Fathers of the second and third centuries. There is a very great unsteadiness in the form in which the text is quoted, as any one may see by consulting the work of Dr. Westcott on the "Canon of the New Testament."<sup>1</sup> All the varieties may be reduced under two types, one being the form in which the passage is given in all modern editions of the Greek Testament, and the other that which may conveniently be distinguished as the form in favour with, though not confined to, the Gnostic heretics. The latter ran thus: "All things have been given unto me by my Father, and no one *knew* the Father except the Son, and the Son except the Father, and he to whom He (the Son) reveals;" the outstanding points of difference being the use of the past tense "knew" (ἔγνων) instead of the present "knoweth" (γινώσκει or ἐπιγινώσκει), and the inversion of the second and third clauses of the sentence, the knowledge possessed by the Son of the Father being placed before the knowledge possessed by the Father of the Son.

The critical question is, Which of these two types is to be preferred? Patristic authority can be quoted in favour of what we have distinguished as the heretical reading. Justin Martyr, *e. g.*, in his first "Apology," gives the text in Greek exactly as the

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* p. 134 (fourth edition), note, where is given a table of variations.

above rendering requires it to be,<sup>1</sup> though elsewhere coming a little nearer our canonical text by the use of the present tense of the verb To know. The same form occurs in the writings of Clement of Alexandria and of Origen. The relation of Irenæus to the question is peculiar and important. He quotes the text in one place substantially as it occurs in our Greek Testament, and then goes on to refer to some who, thinking themselves wiser than the apostles, read the text the other way ("No man *knew* the Father," &c.); assigning as their reason for altering the words a desire to draw from them the inference that before Christ's time no one knew the Father, that the doctrine of God's Fatherhood was not contained in the Old Testament, and that Jesus Christ first made it known, which is the well-known view of Marcion.<sup>2</sup> In another place Irenæus indicates that those he had in view as corrupters or false interpreters of the text were the Marcosians.<sup>3</sup> It is in this way we know that the reading in question was in favour with Gnostic heretics, and the use they made of it. But the curious thing is that the same Father, in a passage in the same chapter in which he animadverts on those who would be wiser than the apostles, again quotes the text in the form preferred by the heretics, with the exception that he uses the present tense of the verb To know.

From the facts just stated, and others of similar import, certain inferences have been drawn. The author of "Supernatural Religion" avails himself of

<sup>1</sup> *Apologia*, i. 63. Οὐδείς ἔγνω τὸν πατέρα εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱός, οὐδὲ τὸν υἱὸν εἰ μὴ ὁ πατήρ, καὶ ὅς ἂν ἀποκαλύψῃ ὁ υἱός.

<sup>2</sup> *Contra Hæreses*, lib. i. c. xx.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* lib. iv. c. vi. 3.

the facts relating to Justin's way of quoting the text as an argument in support of his position that the famous Apologist of the second century was not acquainted with our canonical Gospels, but quoted from earlier forms of the Gospels, no longer extant. Keim, on the other hand, from the whole facts regarding early patristic usage in reference to this text, draws the inference that the "heretical" type, as we have called it, comes nearer the original form of the saying as recorded in the early copies of our Gospels than the one with which we are familiar, which he thinks owes its origin to an increasing desire in the Church to glorify Jesus as a superhuman Being, and to remove from the words whatever had been used by heretics in support of their obnoxious opinions. His view on the question in dispute, in his own words,<sup>1</sup> is as follows. "All is given over to me by my Father, and no one knew thoroughly the Father except the Son, and the Son except the Father, and to whom He reveals it.' So must the oft-quoted, but also the, through reflection, much corrupted, word of Jesus, originally have sounded. The present prevailing text of our Gospels is the remotest from the original: it contains a word of Jesus artificially altered for his glorification." He goes on to say that the other reading, well attested by the Fathers of the second century, and down even to those of the fifth, is to be preferred to the current one, because the latter became current in the close of the second century through the desire to honour Jesus and to obviate the hated inferences of the Gnostics with respect to the knowledge of the true

<sup>1</sup> *Ein künstliches Verherrlichungswort Jesu.*

God. He does not, however, think that even the early patristic reading is quite correct. The true reading, though little supported, he holds to be: "No one knew the Father except the Son, nor did any one know the Son except the Father, and he to whom He (the Father, not He the Son) will reveal it." <sup>1</sup>

This view of Keim's seems based on dogmatic prejudice. It may be true, as he says, that the whole question as to the right reading is a comparatively small one; but it is manifest, from the reasons which he assigns for his preference of the antiquated reading, that the question is not a small one to him. He tacitly admits that the text, as it now stands, involves, when naturally interpreted, very remarkable pretensions on the part of Jesus; and it is on the ground of these pretensions that he regards the approved text with suspicion and aversion. To an unbiassed consideration it must appear that the text as it stands fits in most naturally to the circumstances amidst which the words were spoken. Jesus, rejected of men, falls back upon the comforting consciousness that his Father in heaven thoroughly knows Him, though the wise and prudent do not. It is natural that He should speak first of the Father's knowledge of Him, and of that knowledge in the present tense. It is equally natural that He should next speak of his knowledge of the Father, and of his importance as the medium through whom that knowledge comes to other men. It belongs to the situation that the despised One should not only comfort Himself with the thought, "My Father knows me," but

<sup>1</sup> *Jesu von Nazara*, ii. 380, 381.

that He should assert his own importance as the medium through whom God is made known to the world. We therefore cordially concur in the opinion expressed by another German theologian, who is as free a critic of the Gospel history as Keim himself, and who expresses his view to the following effect. "The canonical text of the word in Matthew xi. 27 has its guarantee, not only in its being found in the earlier Fathers alongside of the then current transformed reading, but very specially in its historical character. The word of Jesus contains, not a history of revelation, but a mirror of his own experience; and because He starts from this, He begins with the thesis, No man knoweth the Son except the Father. So soon as men began to use the whole text for doctrinal purposes, the changes which adapted it to that purpose began to be made. The clauses were inverted and the tense changed, and the result was a word indicating Christ's position in the history of revelation."<sup>1</sup> It is only needful to realize the position in which Christ found Himself at the moment, to feel the justness of these observations. If, however, some additional evidence be desiderated to shew the naturalness of the turn Christ's thought took at this point, when He gratefully reflected on the Father's intimate knowledge of Himself in presence of the unbelief and ignorance of men, we might refer to a somewhat parallel instance. Recall the word spoken by the Son of Man when He was blamed for receiving publicans and sinners, and eating with them. "Joy shall be *in heaven* over one sinner repenting, more than over ninety and nine just persons, that

<sup>1</sup> Weizäcker, *Untersuchungen über die Evangelische Geschichte*, p. 433, note.

need no repentance.”<sup>1</sup> Why say, *In heaven?* why not rather say, *I have peculiar joy in seeing even one obscure insignificant sinner repenting?* That was what his position as one whose conduct was misunderstood required Him to say: why, then, instead of saying that, does He make this didactic statement about the way in which Heaven regards the penitent? Just because He is misunderstood, completely and hopelessly misunderstood. With his back to the wall, so to speak, He asks Himself, Where shall I go in quest of beings who feel as I feel? Pharisees simply despise the degraded, and are incapable of conceiving so much as the possibility of a love like that I cherish toward the sinful and the miserable. Sadducees think it does not matter whether men repent or not; it will be all the same how men live, seventy years hence. If they think they make themselves happier by indulging in vice, why then let them. Nowhere on earth can I find beings that feel as I feel, or can understand or conceive my feelings; but in heaven, yes, in heaven, they understand me; in heaven they feel as I feel. There is joy in heaven, I tell you, over sinners repenting; and the joy of heaven is mine. In the case before us, Jesus is similarly situated, and seeks similar consolation. Conscious that He is despised and rejected by the wise and prudent, by all his contemporaries with the exception of a few babes, He lifts his thoughts upward, and says, There is One that knows me thoroughly, One whom the wise and prudent wish to know, and think they know, but whom no one knows who rejects me; for, despised though I

<sup>1</sup> Luke xv. 7.

be, I am the medium through whom He is made known to the world.

With these observations on the critical question as to the correct text, we pass to the more important question, What is the doctrinal import of this very remarkable utterance of Christ? A full history of the interpretation of the passage cannot here be given, but it may be instructive to notice briefly two of the most recent attempts to explain the words on the part of writers who either deny altogether the Catholic doctrine concerning Christ's person, or refuse to admit that that doctrine has any footing in the Synoptical Gospels—Keim and Ritschl. Adopting the reading approved by the Gnostics, Keim expounds it as follows:—"Whichever form of the text we adopt, we find therein the glory of Christ, and a great testimony, and personal testimony, in reference to his whole position. All is given to Him by his Father, that is, the God whom He here for the first time distinctly calls his Father in contrast to all other men. The all things given are primarily those babes, the kernel of the people to whom the Father has shewn the Son; but likewise all Messianic rights among men, which the faith of the people legitimizes, and the unbelief of the wise avails not to frustrate. But what precisely are those mysterious intangible Messianic rights? He tells us plainly in the sequel. No one knew the Father except the Son, and the Son except the Father, and he to whom He reveals. His right, his privilege, his singularity lies, above all, in the through Him for the first time completed knowledge of the Father, in his being known by the Father, and in his becoming known to the humanity



whom the Father gives Him, whilst He gives to it the knowledge of the Son. It is, in short, the representation of the highest spiritual truths, as the exclusive mediator of which He, at once Revealer and Revealed, is appointed for a believing obedient world of men. In this mighty thesis lie three mighty utterances. He is the first and only One who through Himself and through God has reached the knowledge of God the Father; that knowledge which no Abraham, no Moses, no David, no Solomon, no Isaiah, no Daniel, not to say no wisdom of the contemporary wise, had discovered. In the second place, as He knows God, so God has known Him. He has known God as Father, as Father of men, and yet more as his own Father. God has known Him as Son, as Son among many, and yet more as the One among many, and exclusively related to each other. Each to the other a holy, worthy to be known, searched out, discovered secret, they (Father and Son) incline towards each other with love, to discover each other, to enjoy each other with self-satisfying delight, resting on equality of spiritual activity, of being, of nature. In the third place, this self-contained world of Father and Son opens itself to the lower world, to men, only by a free act, because they are pleased to open themselves up and to admit whom they choose to fellowship; and because the Father is even still greater than the Son, even when the Son upon earth speaks to the ears of men, so it is finally not the Son but the Father who is the decisive Revealer, interpreting to the spirits and hearts of men the Son, and in the Son Himself admitting the babes, excluding the wise and knowing."<sup>1</sup> As if

<sup>1</sup> *Jesu von Nazara*, ii. 381.

feeling the need for a simpler statement, the author remarks further on: "This place is, as no other, the interpreter of the Messiah-thought of Jesus. If we desire to reduce it to its simplest expression, it may be said that Jesus sought his Messiahship in his world-historical spiritual achievement, that He mediated for humanity the highest knowledge of God and the most complete blessed life in God."<sup>1</sup> It is clear from all this that the writer we have been quoting is wading in waters beyond his depth. How mystical, how unintelligible, the second of the three thoughts he finds in the text, *on the assumption made by Keim, that the Speaker is no more than man, and is distinguished from other men only by his more intimate knowledge of God, and more intimate confidential fellowship with God, a knowledge and a fellowship not even in his case absolutely perfect.* Christ, we are to understand, was entitled to speak as He does here because He first taught men to regard God as Father, and first Himself entered fully into the spirit of the relation between God and men expressed by the terms Father and Son. That is what all his mystic phraseology comes to, as the author admits when he says that we may homologate all Christ here claims if we acknowledge only the general fact that He was the Inbringer of a higher, more satisfying religion, the religion of Christians—the worship of the Father in spirit and in truth. Thus by big words and inflated phrases do writers of this school endeavour to affirm, while denying, all the supernatural phenomena in Christ's history—his divine nature, his miracles, his resurrection. If any one desires to see another

<sup>1</sup> *Jesus von Nazara*, ii. 384.

sample, let him peruse the account of the resurrection of Jesus given by another member of the same school, Ewald, in his "History of Christ and his Time," concerning which account Strauss remarks with characteristic frankness and with perfect truth, that it does not contain a fragment of an idea which he himself had not uttered in his *Leben Jesu*, though "certainly with far less unction." Strauss, not Keim or Ewald, is the truest exponent of naturalism, and if one is not allowed by his philosophy to find more in our text than Keim finds in it, it would be far better, with the first-named writer, to deny the genuineness of the saying on the ground of its mystic, pretentious, and superhuman character, than with the second to retain it as the unnatural extravagant utterance of one who was neither more nor less than the first teacher of a new and comparatively excellent religion.

Ritschl's interpretation of the text is even more unsatisfactory than the one just considered. While in Keim's paraphrase we recognize in the very straining and elaboration of the style an involuntary testimony to the truth that the words of Christ contain more than his philosophy can receive; in Ritschl's we have some difficulty in discovering more than the perverse whim of a man bent on achieving distinction by singularity in his exegetical views. The first clause of our text, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father," according to this author, points simply to that power over the world which comes through spirituality of mind, and which is evinced by patience under the various ills of life. These words of Jesus are parallel to those of Paul,

“All things are yours,” and He claims for Himself no more than is true in measure of every Christian man. The peculiarity of the Christian religion consists in this, that the man whom God knows, and who in turn fully knows God, maintains power over the world. He has overcome the world, He is independent of the world: the world, its ambitions, its rewards, its threats, have no power over him. Christ’s personal service consisted in inaugurating such a religion, a religion in which the dominion of the supra-mundane God is set free from national and political limits, as well as from the expectation of material well-being, and God is set forth as a purely spiritual being, and as the object of love and worship to spiritual beings. And because in this service of his life He was at once the Revealer of God in the full sense, and the Man who honoured God and served God up to the full measure of his knowledge of God, it was only natural that He should claim for Himself a position towards the world corresponding to the idea of the one true God, and to the worth of the spiritual kingdom of God. This being the import of the text, according to Ritschl, we are not surprised by the interpretation which he puts upon the gracious invitation to the labouring and heavy laden with which the Chapter closes. The two theologians whose views we have expounded at this point present an instructive contrast. Keim gives to the section commencing with the words “Come unto me,” the heading, *Humility in the midst of Elevation*, and indicates the drift of the passage thus: Jesus, notwithstanding all his high claims, still looks on Himself as the equal of men,

and along with them as a subject of God. Ritschl, on the other hand, regards the twenty-seventh verse and those which follow as standing in a relation not of contrast but of sequence. In calling Himself the meek and lowly One, Jesus does not, as it were, make his humility a set-off against his lofty pretensions. On the contrary, the fact of his being the meek and lowly One is the proof that He is entitled to say, "All things are given unto me." By the epithets meek and lowly, He identifies Himself with the suffering righteous man of the Old Testament, with this difference, that the latter was not reconciled to his affliction, but complained of it, whereas Jesus was meek and lowly in *heart*, took his afflictions patiently, cheerfully, and so triumphed over them. And this very patience or meekness in heart was just the proof that He was Master of the world, that is, that all things were given unto Him. "To bear, is to conquer our fate;" and Jesus was a king and a conqueror, as none before or after, because He bore all the ills of life, the contradictions of sinners, the contemptuous unbelief of "the wise and prudent," with perfect equanimity. Such a bald interpretation has, we think, small chance of being accepted permanently as the key to the meaning of this incomparably gracious word of Christ; an interpretation which reduces that word to a pathetic assertion of the moral truth that resignation is the source of peace, that patience is the way to victory over the world and to tranquillity of mind. That truth no doubt is involved in the word of gracious invitation, but it is far enough from exhausting its meaning.

But to come back to the self-asserting word in *Verse 27*. We have considered the interpretation put thereon by two modern German theologians, and have expressed dissatisfaction with both. How then are we to understand this saying?

1. In accordance with our view as to the authentic form of the saying, we hold that Christ does not here lay claim to importance on the ground of his being the Introducer of a new spiritual religion, the Setter-forth of a new idea of God in his relation to men, the Teacher of the doctrine that God is a Father. All this He might have said of Himself in a true sense, but it is not this which He does in fact say. It is not so much what He teaches men concerning God as what God is to Himself, that is the foremost in his thoughts. What He teaches is second, not first in importance. And even when He comes to speak of what He teaches, what He means to claim for Himself is not that He, first among religious teachers, has taught men to regard God as a Father. The words, "Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son," &c., are not to be paraphrased, "Neither knoweth any man that God is a Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal this truth." The name Father, applied to God, is not to be emphasized, as if the Speaker's chief aim were to assert that that is God's proper name: the title is used instinctively, as a matter of course, in accordance with the habit of the Speaker.

2. The text contains these two things: (1) First a declaration concerning the relation in which the Speaker stands to the God whom He habitually calls Father, and here with emphasis *my* Father; (2) an

assertion of his claim to be the exclusive Revealer of the Father, the Speaker herein appreciating Himself at his full value in presence of a world that sets no value on Him at all. As to the former, it embraces two particulars: an affirmation by Jesus that He is the object of a perfect knowledge (implying a perfect love) on the Father's part, and a further affirmation that the Father shews his love to Him as his son by treating Him with all possible honour, and conferring upon Him all a son's privileges, giving all things into his hands. It is as if the Speaker had said: "My Father is the only Being who knows me thoroughly;<sup>1</sup> many know me not at all; my disciples know me but partially; even the Baptist's knowledge of me is very one-sided. My Father alone knows me altogether. He is entirely acquainted with all my thoughts and ways. And in this his perfect knowledge I find rest to my weary heart in this uncongenial world. It is the pillow on which I lay my head when vexed by the blindness of unbelief, and by the misapprehension of my own followers and well-wishers. And not only does my Father know me as his son, but he treats me as a son with all due honour. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and in this fact also I find consolation amid the disappointments of life. For this delivery of all things into my hands is the result and expression of the Father's infinite affection for me. The Father loveth me, his Son, and therefore hath given all things into my hands."

But where is the evidence of the gift expressive of infinite love? The Speaker has just admitted

<sup>1</sup> ἐπιγινώσκει. The ἐπι implies thoroughness.

that He has received from his Father as yet only a few babes. Whence then this vast leap from the few babes to all things? Shall we say it is the utterance of One who looks with a prescient eye into the future, and foresees the time when the kingdom, now embracing only an insignificant number of still more insignificant persons, shall be world-wide; and when the new religion, the worship of the Father in spirit and in truth, shall be universally prevalent, as it is intrinsically fit and worthy to be? We may say this with truth; but when we have said it, we have not said all. There is not only prescience of the future here, but knowledge of the past, intimate acquaintance with the Father's eternal purpose. The Speaker says, "All things were given<sup>1</sup> me of my Father." The words suggest the mystery of pre-existence proclaimed by the Fourth Evangelist. Does it not seem as if this strange Man had some other source of knowledge as to the Father's intentions besides that of earthly experience, so that He is under no temptation to judge of his Father's love by present appearances? Whence this unearthly serenity under the penuriousness and meanness of the Father's present gift in Providence—these few babes? Is He not enabled to bear the smallness of the apparent gift through his secret knowledge of the Father's eternal purpose to put all things into his hands, to make the destiny of all depend on the attitude they shall ultimately assume towards Himself? and does not that secret knowledge point to a being in the bosom of the Father,

<sup>1</sup> παρεδόθη, aorist. Cf. Luke xii. 32, "Fear not, little flock; for it pleased the Father (ἐνδόξασειν) to give you the kingdom."



such as that whereof the Fourth Evangelist speaks when he says, "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him"?<sup>1</sup>

It may be said that this way of interpreting this Synoptic text converts it into a Johannine saying. And why not? Why should not Jesus speak as the Fourth Gospel makes Him speak, when He is placed in circumstances similar to those in which the Fourth Gospel for the most part places Him, viz., in presence of the unbelief, gainsaying, and contempt of the cultivated class of Jewish society? Such, as we now well understand, are the circumstances in which we find Jesus here placed; and, as pointed out in our first paper, it is remarkable that the Synoptical Christ, when mentally confronted with the unbelieving wise, should speak so very like the Johannine Christ. It shews that there would have been more of this sort of utterance in the Synoptical Gospels had the writers not confined themselves in their narratives mainly to the Galilean ministry, in which Jesus had much more frequently to do with simple folk, the babes, than with the men who considered themselves in knowledge and culture superior to the multitude—in Greek phrase, with the *οἱ πολλοί*, as distinguished from the *οἱ χαριέντες*.

3. Besides asserting such an intimate transcendental relation between Himself and his Divine Father, Jesus further, as we said, claims for Himself absolute importance as the Revealer of God the Father. "Neither knoweth any one the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son shall

<sup>1</sup> John i. 18.

reveal him :” thus does the meek and lowly One assert his importance, not in vanity or egotism, but with the calm dignity becoming the Mediator between God and man. He claims two distinctions for Himself, perfect knowledge of God, and the privilege of being the exclusive medium through whom God becomes known to men. In advancing the former of these claims He says, in effect, “ Men may despise me, but I have a secret worth possessing—the knowledge of God. This secret the wise and knowing do not possess, their very conceit of wisdom shuts out the light of this knowledge; and their spiritual blindness is evinced by their manner of treating me. For judgment am I come, so far as they are concerned, that those who see might be made blind.”

But it is not the Speaker’s wish to have an absolute monopoly of this knowledge. He is willing, nay anxious, to communicate it. His spirit is even now grieved because so many are indifferent to his secret. He recognizes it as his vocation to introduce men to the true knowledge of God. He regards Himself as sent into the world for this very end, and He lets his light shine so that men may know the true God, his Fàther, through Him the Son. Yet, while thus faithfully fulfilling his vocation as Revealer, He thinks it right, in presence of proud contemptuous unbelief, to lay stress on two things : that the knowledge of God is attainable only through Him, and that in revealing the true God He exercises his own freedom. He declines to rank Himself among the lights of the world, as one of many co-ordinate in rank, or differing only in degree,

He being possibly, by general consent, *primus inter pares*. He claims to be the light of the world, the Sun—all other illuminators being but shining lamps, deriving their light from the central luminary. He does not mean that men who through want of opportunity know not Him, the historical Christ, must on that account be without such knowledge of God as is necessary unto salvation. He could mean no such thing; and the fact that He nevertheless claims to be the sole medium through whom God is known, is only another proof that this high mystic utterance takes us out of the historical incarnate life of the Speaker into the sphere of the eternal and divine. Jesus means to claim for Himself the position towards God, and the function towards the world, of the Johannine Logos, who is the light of every man in any land or in any age who has light, and through whom every one is saved that is saved, even though he be not possessed of a knowledge of the historical Christ.

Then as to the other point, the freedom of the Son in revealing, which is markedly emphasized,<sup>1</sup> that is insisted on in the same spirit in which Paul said to the men of Israel in Antioch, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."<sup>2</sup> We are not to imagine that because Jesus uses this word "will," He means that He may possibly in an arbitrary manner refuse the needful light to any one earnestly seeking it. Oh, no! Let us not mistake the severity

<sup>1</sup> ὃ ἐὰν βούληται ὁ υἱὸς ἀποκαλύψαι.

▪ Acts xiii. 46.

of Christ's tone for wilfulness or misanthropy. How far the Son of Man and the Son of God was from these vices we may see from what follows. "Come unto me." Where can we find, even among the words of Jesus, anything more humane, more tender, more gracious, more philanthropic? Jesus may be disappointed, sad, even stern; but He has not ceased to be the well-wisher of the ignorant, the sorrowful, the mentally perplexed, the guilty. He has not even grown weary in well-doing, or yielded in the smallest degree to the temptation to abandon the task of illuminating the dark world in despair. He utters the affectionate, most moving, invitation with which the Chapter closes, as if for the purpose of letting that be seen. In spite of prevailing unbelief, He proclaims aloud to the world his unabated desire to be the Friend of man in every possible way; giving light to those in spiritual darkness, rest to the weary, peace to the guilty, comfort to the afflicted.

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