

us whatever it may be for our good to receive. Just as Carlyle¹ declares it to be flatly inconceivable that intellect, conscience, will, affection, could have been put into man "by an Entity that had none of its own;" so we may affirm it to be flatly inconceivable that God should have given men so great a power over the laws and forces of the material world and yet be incapable of exerting any such power Himself.

CARPUS.

ST. JOHN'S VIEW OF JESUS ON THE CROSS.

ST. JOHN xix. 28-37.

II.—BEFORE speaking of an important point in *Verse* 30, we turn to *Verses* 36 and 37, to the passages of Scripture quoted there, and to the circumstances in which it is said that these Scriptures were fulfilled. The two passages quoted are introduced with the words, "For these things took place that the Scriptures might be fulfilled;" and we may take for granted, what is admitted by most commentators, that in "these things" we have a reference to the two circumstances mentioned in *Verses* 32-34, that the bones of Jesus were not broken, and that a soldier pierced his side with his spear. The question with which we are concerned is that which has occupied us hitherto, What is the point in the history of the paschal lamb to which these things refer?

The first text quoted in *Verse* 36 is, "A bone of him shall not be broken." It is taken, if not from Psalm xxxiv. 20, either from Exodus xii. 46, or from Numbers ix. 12, where, in connection with the ritual

¹ "History of Frederick the Great." Book xxi. chap. 9.

of the paschal lamb, the Divine commandment is given, "Neither shall ye break a bone thereof." To what stage in the ritual was this injunction applicable? The answer is unquestionable and clear. It had nothing whatever to do with the *killing* of the lamb. It referred only to the care with which the lamb was to be prepared for the table, and the meat, during the process of carving, separated from the bones. Without urging unduly the order of the clauses in the two passages of the law from which quotations are made by St. John, it will readily be granted by all who look at them that they are favourable to this view. In both, directions as to the mode of eating *precede* mention of the not breaking of the bones: "In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof:"—so runs the passage in Exodus, and to a similar effect in Numbers. But what is at once conclusive upon the point is this, that there was no risk of breaking the bones in the act of killing. The lamb was killed in the same manner as all other animals intended for sacrifice, not by stabbing in the breast, but by cutting the throat,¹ so that the bones were safe. It was *afterwards* that the danger existed, partly, perhaps, in transfixing for the fire, chiefly in carving at the table. The danger of then breaking a bone was to be guarded against with the utmost care, with a care so great that the Rabbins found it necessary to interpret the precept as applicable, not to all the bones, but only to such as had marrow in them, or were covered with flesh of the size of an olive,² and every

¹ Comp. Bochart, Hieroz. lib. ii. c. 50.

² Ibid. lib. ii. c. 59, p. 609.

precaution was to be taken that the skeleton should leave the table entire.¹ In addition to this, it may be noticed that, if the words quoted by the Evangelist are taken, as seems most probable, from Psalm xxxiv. 20, they are not an image of what meets us most directly in the *death* of Jesus. They are rather an image of the care with which He is watched over by his heavenly Father: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. He keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken." Nothing can be more certain than that this first passage from the Old Testament has no reference whatever to the lamb at the moment of its death, but only at that when it was distributed to the guests at the paschal meal.

The second of the texts quoted, that in *Verse 37*, "They shall look on him whom they pierced," is taken from Zechariah xii. 10. Omitting all notice of many interesting particulars connected with the words of the prophet in this verse, we call attention to the fact that these words are associated by him with the passover solemnities. This is clear from his words immediately following those quoted by St. John, "And they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for his first-born." It is the mourning of Egypt on the night when the passover was instituted that is in the prophet's eye. Can we doubt that when he says, "They shall look on me whom they have pierced," he had reference to the Paschal Lamb? Thus at least he is interpreted by St. John, and all that we have to ask is, To what

¹ Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," ii. 725.

stage in the history of the lamb does the "piercing" refer?

It cannot be to the killing of the lamb, for, as we have seen, this was accomplished by cutting the throat, and the action of drawing the knife backwards and forwards has not the slightest resemblance to what is described by ἐκκευτεῖν, a word invariably used in the sense of piercing or stabbing (Judges ix. 54; Numb. xxii. 29; Isa. xiv. 19). It must therefore refer to another moment altogether, either to that at which the lamb was pierced by the knife for carving, or that at which it was pierced for roasting. When we remember the manner in which it was roasted, suspended in a close vessel full of holes through which the heat of the fire penetrated; more especially if we accept, and there seems to be no reason why we should not, the statement of Justin,¹ that a double spit in the form of a cross was employed for the purpose, the latter supposition will probably appear to us the more likely one. It is not indeed clear that it is so. Unfortunately we do not exactly know what St. John means by the πλευρά which he tells us in *Verse* 34 the soldier pierced, but if it was the breast near the heart it hardly corresponds with the point at which the spit was inserted. On the other hand, one carving the lamb would naturally insert his knife in the breast, so that the symbolism might lead to the thought that this was the moment of the ἐκκευτεῖν. No decision upon the point is necessary to our argument. Whichever of these two moments be referred

¹ *Dial. c. Tryph.* sec. 40. Comp. modern usage of Samaritans in Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," ii. 715.

to, it is enough to observe that it is *subsequent* to the act of killing, that it is a moment when the lamb is thought of either as making, or as made, ready for the family meal. Nor only so; it is of importance to notice that the main act of the ἐκκεντεῖν in the case of Jesus is distinctly placed by the Evangelist *after* death. At *Verse* 30 we are informed that He "delivered up his spirit;" at *Verse* 33 that, when the soldiers came to Him for the purpose of breaking his legs, they found that He was "already dead;" and that then, thereafter, one of them "pierced his side with his spear, and straightway there came forth blood and water." The spear-thrust has thus nothing to do with the cause of death, as little as it has to do with any proof that Jesus was dead. It is simply the means by which that blood and water came forth in which the Evangelist sees the blessings of redemption symbolized. Apart, therefore, from all other reasons, and simply following the direct teaching of the narrative, we must connect the piercing not with the moment of death, but with some later stage when the victim that has died is to be partaken of as food. In other words, St. John must see Jesus, when He hangs upon the cross as the Paschal Lamb, not in the instant of death, but then when it is prepared for the paschal meal.

III.

We turn now to *Verse* 30, to words of which we have hitherto said nothing, and which at first sight may appear inconsistent with the view of the scene before us taken in these pages. A closer consideration of that verse will, it is hoped, dispel this impres-

sion, and instead of contravening, powerfully confirm the conclusion that has been drawn. The words of *Verse* 30 run : "When Jesus had received the vinegar he said, It is finished ; and he bowed his head, and delivered up his spirit." Here it may be said is death. At this moment the Evangelist sees Jesus, as the Paschal Lamb, die by the power and malice of his enemies. He cannot, therefore, be regarded as already in any sense dead. The point is one of the deepest interest and importance, and the following considerations are submitted in regard to it.

In the first place, if, as is unquestionably the fact, Jesus on the cross is the Paschal Lamb, the incongruity of supposing that his death endured there is the only death to be spoken of in connection with Him can hardly fail to strike every reader. The paschal lamb was not put to death by enemies, but by friends ; by Israel itself in one of its high solemnities, and by express command of the Almighty.

In the second place, the words in which the fact of death is mentioned are of so marked a kind as to compel the thought of something else, whatever it may be, than a death brought about only by the violence of foes. The force of this consideration is indeed lost in the English Version, owing to its inadequate rendering of the last clause of the verse with which we are now dealing, "He gave up the ghost." The original is *παρέδωκε τὸ πνεῦμα*, and the imperfection of the Authorized Version will be allowed when it is remembered that the phrase of the second and third Evangelists, *ἐξέπνευσεν*, is rendered by precisely the same words (Mark xv. 37; Luke xxiii. 46), and that that of the first, *ἀφήκεν τὸ πνεῦμα*, is only varied

to the extent of "yielded up" instead of "gave up" (Matt. xxvii. 50). The true rendering is, "Delivered up his spirit." Can this expression mean that at that instant the enemies of Jesus triumphed by accomplishing his death? It is far too peculiar to permit us to rest satisfied with such an explanation; nor does it meet the exigencies of the case to interpret (with Lücke) as if we had here only a manifestation of the filial piety of Jesus; as if the meaning were simply that of Psalm xxxi. 5, "Into thine hands I commit my spirit." It evidently implies a deliberate act on the part of Jesus, something done by Him, and not to Him, in which He Himself is the agent instead of being passive in the hands of others. We must agree, therefore, with the many distinguished commentators who see in the remarkable words of St. John an intimation that it was not owing merely to the power and malice of his enemies that Jesus died, but that He died, to use the language of Doddridge (*in loc.*), "by the voluntary act of his own mind."¹ The language of Alford is particularly clear. "Our Lord's death was *his own act*—no feeling the approach of death, as some, not apprehending the matter, have commented—but a *determinate delivering up of his spirit to the Father*" (on Luke xxiii. 46. The italics are his.). No other interpretation does justice to the text. The death of Jesus was "free, personal, spontaneous" (Godet). It was the carrying out of his own words in Chapter x. 17, 18, "Therefore doth the Father love me, because I lay down my life

¹ Comp. McKnight, Luthardt, Alford, Lange, Meyer, Godet, Tholuck, the latter saying, with the greatest divines of the Lutheran Church, that the death of Jesus was "nicht ein Leiden sondern eine That."

that I may take it again. No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This charge I received from my Father." The attendant circumstances corresponded to this view. It was not in weariness and exhaustion that Jesus died. St. Matthew tells us, that "when he had cried again with a *loud voice*, he yielded up his spirit;" and the statement of St. John that, immediately before doing so, "he bowed his head," is a proof that up to that instant his head had been erect, not drooping under his burden of sorrow and pain. It is not the Jews, then, who at this instant accomplish the death of Jesus. Such at least cannot be the *whole* explanation of the scene. There is another thought in the mind of the Evangelist. To him the moment is not that of long-continued persecution and mockery culminating at last in a cruel death at the hands of wicked men now completely successful in their aims. It is a moment in which the victim of their rage escapes, deliberately frees himself, from their power; a moment similar in spirit to that of Chapter v. 13, though more marked, as was fitting, in degree. "Jesus withdrew himself, a multitude being in the place."

In the third place, there is at least one passage in the Gospel which distinctly implies that at a time several days anterior to this the death of Jesus had already, both in his own view and in that of the Evangelist, been accomplished. Adopting the later and best attested reading of Chapter xii. 7, we find Jesus saying there of Mary, "Αφες αὐτήν, ἵνα εἰς τὴν ἡμέραν τοῦ ἐνταφιασμοῦ μου τηρέσῃ αὐτό—that is, "Suffer

her to have kept this against the day of my preparation for burial,"¹ against *the day which has now come*. In other words, "Blame her not for having so kept this, and having so used it now." Mary had *emptied* her vial of precious ointment on the person of Jesus; there was nothing left to keep for any future day; and Jesus interprets her act as a *preparation for his burial*, for *ἐνταφιασμός* never means burial itself. The Saviour thus brings Himself before us as *already dead*, not indeed actually so, but dead in the accomplishment of a death which He came to die, and which, therefore, in some most essential characteristic of death, must have taken place before He could be embalmed and the house filled with the odour of the ointment. St. John enters into this aspect of the case; and, *long before* Jesus hangs upon the cross, he represents Him, explain it how we may, as one who has already died. When, at a later period, Jesus "delivers up his spirit," it is his own free act of return to his Father.

In the fourth place, the aorists of Chapter xvii. 4 can only be thoroughly explained upon this supposition, "I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do."

In the fifth place, the suffering of death upon the cross by Jesus is always in this Gospel (comp. especially Chap. xii. 32) not defeat at the hands of enemies, but a victory, a "lifting up."

¹ Comp. McClellan *in loc.* McClellan is right in his criticism there directed against the writer of these pages, who, fixing his attention upon another point, had too hastily adopted a translation of these words which fails to bring out the sense.

In the sixth place, the sacrificial nature of the death of Christ in which St. John certainly believed, the thought of which is indeed involved in the very idea that Jesus is the Paschal Lamb, is not associated in the mind of the Evangelist with blood shed *in the moment of dying* by the Redeemer. The blood which he sees in connection with Jesus crucified issues from his side *after* death (Chap. xix. 33, 34). What the meaning of this may be we are not now called upon to ask. It is the fact alone with which we have to do.

In the seventh place, is there anything unnatural in the supposition that, in the deeper meaning of the word, Jesus had really died before the moment when breath left his body on the cross? So far from that, the whole tone of the Fourth Gospel militates against the idea that breathing out of life was the main element of the death that Jesus died. His rather was a continual dying. In the suffering and sorrow rendered necessary by his heavenly Father's will, He "died daily." His offering of Himself was not confined to the cross, is not even mainly to be sought in the physical pain and agony of that departing hour. It is to be sought in the whole work which He accomplished on behalf of man. It was finished when his work was finished; and the delivering up of his spirit on the cross was but the final step in which St. John sees Him return to his heavenly Father. The Evangelist draws a distinction between death in its deeper sense and what we call death. The latter takes place in the verse now under consideration. The former, in the idealism of our Gospel, had taken place before; and so

far, therefore, is *Verse* 30 from being opposed to the view now advocated of our passage as a whole, that it is rather a most striking confirmation of it.

We add only one further consideration. To the Jewish method of conception the paschal lamb inevitably suggested not the thought of its death alone, but that of its being placed upon the table for food after death. The sacrificial killing was no doubt an essential element in the complex thought: we urge only that no Jew could rest in this. To him the necessary complement of "our passover is sacrificed for us," was "therefore let us keep the feast." He could not think of it in the killing only; the eating also was always present to his mind. "*Fundamentum Paschatis*," says Bartenora in his comment on the Mishna, "*est ut comedatur ab hominibus;*" and to a similar effect Maimonides, "*Fam tibi constat quod Pascha tantum veniebat ut comederetur.*"¹

It remains only to sum up what has been said, and to draw the inference suggested by it.

Every part of the passage before us, then, it will be observed, directs our thoughts to Jesus as the Paschal Lamb. That is admitted. Our contention is that, this being so, Jesus is here the Paschal Lamb, not in the moment of death, but at a subsequent stage, when it was prepared for the paschal meal and eaten at it. Mention is made of the vinegar, of the hyssop, of the putting these to the mouth, in such a peculiar manner that, only on this supposition, are they adequately explained. The quotations from the Old Testament, together with the circumstances fulfilling them, lead, in a way hardly admitting of controversy,

¹ Surenhusius, *Pesachim*, vii. 5.

to the same conclusion. The striking singularity of the language in which the death of Jesus is described confirms, instead of weakening, the impression. Repugnance may indeed be felt, and objection made, to what has been said as to the Evangelist's seeing in the conduct of the Jews the partaking of an inverted and contorted passover. Further reflection may shew that this is not so objectionable as it seems, that in reality it throws a fresh and, if true, a striking light upon the whole conduct and fate of those who were now crucifying their Messiah and their King. At Chapter xviii. 28 they had not entered into the judgment hall of Pilate "lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the passover." They had not eaten it then. Amidst the tumult and stormy passions of that dreadful morning, when had they an opportunity of eating it? St. John does not tell us that they found one. Rather is the whole narrative so constructed, so full of close, rapid, passionate action, that it is impossible to fix upon any point at which we can insert their eating until it was too late in the day to make it legal. *May it not be that they found no opportunity?* They lost their passover. Lost it? Nay, the Evangelist seems to say they found a passover. Follow them with me to the cross; and there, in their cruel mockeries of the true Paschal Lamb, let us see the righteous dealings of God as He makes these mockeries take the shape of a passover of judgment, a passover of added sin and deepened shame. There is nothing in the conception more strange than that, in Hosea iv. 15, the Almighty should say to Israel, "Neither go ye up to Beth-Aven," when He means Beth-el.

But whether this be correct or not, it does not affect the main result of our investigation, that throughout the passage, Chapter xix. 28-37, Jesus is the Paschal Lamb prepared for the Paschal Supper.

We have yet to speak of the inference suggested by what has been said, one of a critical and exegetical, not of a dogmatic, kind.

The importance of one passage in modern controversy with regard to the authenticity and authority of the Fourth Gospel is well understood. It may be justly characterized as the leading passage depended on for the view of that Gospel which makes it not a historical but an ideal composition. Jesus, it is said, is the Paschal Lamb; in order that He may be so He must die at the moment when the lamb was killed; therefore, to shew that He actually did thus die, St. John must make Him eat the passover with his disciples twenty-four hours before the legally appointed time. He does so; in the interests of his idealism he perverts the facts of history; here, as through an *experimentum crucis*, we determine the unreliable nature of his Gospel.

By what has been shewn to be the true bearing of the narrative, this whole fabric falls at once to the ground. So far from its being required by the symbolism that Jesus should die at the hour when the paschal lamb died, the symbolism would be destroyed were that the case. While He hangs upon the cross He is already the Lamb *upon the table*. His death, at least in thought, in the true ideal of the scene, is over. He is now food for the guests invited to his supper. A perversion of history in the direction indicated would have blotted out the most distinctive

features of the picture which the Evangelist is concerned to present. The most powerful motives that could guide his pen, even if an ideal one, were precisely such as would lead him to say that Jesus did *not* die at the hour when the Paschal Lamb was sacrificed, and to accept those facts of history which he has been too hastily supposed to do his best to overthrow.

WM. MILLIGAN.

A CHAPTER OF GOSPEL HISTORY.

8.—THE GRACIOUS INVITATION. (*St. Matt.* xi. 28, 29.)

THIS word of gracious invitation to labouring and burdened men appears to have been uttered in immediate connection with the word which we considered in our last paper, and fitly closes a remarkable Chapter, which tells how Jesus was subjected to doubting interrogation by his own forerunner; how He was thereby led to characterize the Baptist in his strength and in his weakness, and to reflect on the unworthy treatment which both Himself and John had received from a fickle and foolish generation; and how bitter thoughts of the contemptuous unbelief of the wise, and of the unstable belief of the multitude in Capernaum and the other cities by the shores of the Galilean lake, threw Him back for consolation on his consciousness of Divine dignity as the Son and the Revealer of the Father. How natural, how characteristic, that the despised and rejected One, having first by an act of religious devotion sought solace in the bosom of his Father, should next seek further consolation to his wounded spirit by turning to needy human beings, whose