

in the same language faithfully committed to writing, while they literally experienced a fulfilment of the gracious promise, — “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

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### THE GOSPEL IN THE EPISTLES.

*I believe that Jesus Christ rose again from the dead, that he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, and from thence shall come to judge the quick and the dead.*

ON these doctrines of the Christian faith the Epistles with which we are dealing are quite as explicit in their statements as the Gospels, and we therefore propose only to quote one or two passages from them, for to cite all their expressions on the resurrection of Jesus, the greatest theme of Christian teaching, would be to quote whole chapters of the Epistles *in extenso*. But that there may be no doubt about what St. Paul understood by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, it will be well to cite a few of his expressions on the subject before we proceed further. In the Epistle to the Romans (vi. 8-10) he writes: “Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.” There is no question that in the first clause of this passage the Apostle is speaking of the mortification of evil within the heart of the

believer, and of his death unto sin. And on this the opponents of the doctrine of the resurrection dwell as one of their strongest positions. They admit that, through the circumstances under which he lived and the teaching which he had received, St. Paul speaks of the Resurrection of Jesus in much the same terms as those used by the Evangelists. But they strive to shew that, in the lessons which he derives from the Resurrection, he is constantly shaking himself loose from the historic view of that event, and putting an interpretation upon it which speaks almost solely of the elevation and purification of the souls of men while they live, and leaves out of sight that miraculous side of the story to explain away which so much diligence is at the present day expended. But if we follow the argument of the Apostle, we shall find that, though the death of the sinner unto his sins is a spiritual death, yet the death of Christ is not spoken of except as a natural one, and his resurrection as the real return of Christ from death unto life. St. Paul reasons thus. Do you not know that we who have been baptized into Jesus Christ have been baptized into his death? That is, the covenant into which we have entered has made us sharers in his death, and so the burial of our bodies is made by immersion in the waters of baptism unto death; that as through the Father's glory Christ was really raised from the dead, so we also after our death and burial and resurrection by baptism, which the Lord ordained as a means whereby we should be made one with Him, need not suffer for sin as He suffered, but may have strength through Him to walk in newness of life. For as we are planted

together with Him in the likeness of his death, so also shall we be in the likeness of his resurrection. For if we are dead with Christ (*i. e.*, if our mortification of sin through his grace be a reality) we believe that we shall also live with Him. And then he adds, as an evidence of the reality of our resurrection, the statement that Christ having been once raised dieth no more, death hath no more lordship over Him; and having conquered death in his own person, He has won life for all who truly die unto Him. But there is no figure when the Apostle comes to speak of Christ's death. He has really been among the dead (*νεκροὶ*), and has been raised (*ἐκ νεκρῶν*) from the dead. Men are to *count or reckon* themselves *νεκροὶ* while in life, if they have mortified their evil nature; but Christ's was no mere figurative dying and figurative revival, but a real and true death and a real resumption of life. In like positive terms does the Apostle in the same Epistle speak of Christ (Chap. viii. 34) as having died and come to life again. "Who is he that condemneth? Is it Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God?" And in the Epistle to the Corinthians he is even more explicit (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4), giving as not only what he taught, but what others had delivered unto him, the statement "that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again according to the scriptures," and was seen of many persons during the forty days which immediately succeeded his resurrection. We need hardly quote more. On the resurrection and ascension of Christ St. Paul taught and believed

exactly what the writers of the Gospel set forth as the statements of the earliest Christian teachers and eye-witnesses of all those scenes to which they give their testimony.

And on the subject of the judgment to come he is also in harmony with all that the Evangelists have recorded as the teaching of Christ while He was on earth. In a remarkable passage (Rom. ii. 5, *et seq.*) he speaks at length on the righteous judgment of God, and says that He "will render to every man according to his deeds in the day when he shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." We forbear to quote the passage at length, but it is worthy of comparison with many statements of Jesus in the Gospels, and is in tone and in some of its words very close to that verse of St. Matthew (Chap. xvi. 27) in which He spake of the judgment to his disciples. "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works." And the words of this passage may well remind us how constant is that expression in the Gospels for the judgment-day, *the coming of the Son of Man*. True to this phraseology, St. Paul writes many years before the composition of the Gospels (1 Cor. i. 7), "Come behind in no gift, waiting for the *coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*;" and in the following verse, "that ye may be found blameless in the *day of our Lord Jesus Christ*." And again (1 Cor. v. 5), "That the spirit may be saved in the *day of the Lord Jesus*;" and so (2 Cor. i. 14), "Ye also are ours in the *day of the Lord Jesus*." And in like manner of the general nature of the judgment (Rom. xiv. 10), "We shall all stand

before the judgment seat of Christ." And with great fulness (2 Cor. v. 10), "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." We are sure as we read words like these, relating as they do to matters which could only come to men by revelation, that the preaching of Christ, as recorded in the Gospels, had been made known at Rome and Corinth by oral teaching before such language could have been written to them by St. Paul, as testimony which they were bound to receive and in the light of which it was their duty to live. They must have heard of that discourse of Jesus on the last judgment which St. Matthew records (Chap. xxv. 31, 32): "The Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats"—a discourse the continuation of which tells of the deeds done and the deeds neglected, for which some shall go away into punishment, and others be received into life. It is needless to go further with evidence that we can find in these early Epistles of St. Paul proof enough that all which the Gospels teach us, on the subjects with which we are now dealing, was familiar to those for whom St. Paul wrote; that they had been taught the substance of our Gospel history by their first missionaries; and that, though not yet in books, the gospel was in the mouth and in the heart of all the Churches in such wise that there was no chance that when the Evangelists began to com-

mit their works to writing anything should be circulated or accepted for gospel except what was known in all the Churches as the substance of that which they had heard from the lips of those who had been with Jesus in his life.

But the Resurrection is the great miracle of the life of Jesus, and those who discredit the Gospel story, because of the miraculous element which it contains, have stumbled most of all at this, and in various modes have attempted to explain it away; not, as we have before said, to explain that the apostles did not believe it (for none have been found bold enough to say that James and Peter and Paul died for that which they did not themselves believe), but that in some sort or other they were mistaken. Now there is one feature in the way in which the Epistles speak of miracles which is in great harmony with Christ's conduct in reference to the mighty works which He wrought, as that conduct is described in the Gospels, and which if duly considered may answer some of the questions which have been raised upon the subject. We know that in our Lord's life nothing was more remarkable than the earnestness with which He, on almost all occasions, charged those for whom He had wrought any work of power to be silent about what had been done. "See thou tell no man," is the constant supplement to any miraculous act which He had performed. It is in singular accord with this feature of the Gospel history that in the Epistles which we are now considering St. Paul says little or nothing of any miracle wrought by Jesus or by himself, except the one miracle of the Resurrection. We can see from many passages the motive of Jesus :

it was a desire that men should not follow Him merely because of the miraculous evidences which his deeds shewed. When He had fed the five thousand, we read that the men who had seen that miracle followed Him, but met with rebuke, because their following was only the craving for more wonders and for the bodily sustenance which was thereby supplied, and not because they believed on Jesus. Christ did not want followers except such as were anxious to shew their love to Him by keeping his commandments. He did not wish men to be won by his works of power, but by the attraction of his love; that they should love Him because He first loved them. In singular accord with this is all that these Epistles say of miracles. St. Paul does not ignore the working, through God's Spirit, of mighty deeds for the spread of the gospel, but he refrains from dwelling upon them, as if they were not the motive power which God desired should be most operant in the hearts of men. Thus (Rom. xv. 18) he says, "I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God." Mighty signs and wonders had been wrought, the Apostle well knew; but, like his great Master, he felt that these were not the things whereby men would be most surely won to Christ. And in a like tone in the Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xii. 9, 10) he speaks of miracles as things which were done by the power of the Holy Ghost, as that "the gift of healing" was given to one man by the Spirit, and to another "the working of mir-

acles ;” but we have only to read a few verses on in the Chapter, and we come to an estimate of the importance of these gifts which is not that which most men would expect. St. Paul is urgent that no man should repine over his place in the Divine economy of salvation. All cannot have the same gifts (Chap. xii. 29-31). “Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all workers of miracles? have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet,” says he, “I shew unto you a more excellent way”—a way more excellent than all these mighty powers; and then follows the sublime Chapter on charity. This is the more excellent way. Mighty works which would remove mountains are nothing without this. So likewise in the following Chapter (xiv.), prophesying, *i.e.*, the power to preach the gospel simply and plainly, is better than the more marvellous gift of speaking with tongues, as the apostles did on the day of Pentecost. “I would,” he says, “that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied; for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues.” The Apostle alludes to his own powers and gifts of this kind, but never puts them into prominence. Thus (2 Cor. xii. 12) he says, “In nothing am I behind the very chiefest of the apostles, though I be nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, in wonders, and mighty deeds.” He had the gift of doing wonders, but he desired, like his Master, not to be known thereby, but by the setting forth of the love of God, and the grace of Jesus Christ. We can see from these Letters that, exactly



as we read in the Acts of the Apostles, miracles were wrought by the other apostles, and that the Christian Churches had been witnesses thereof. For to the Galatians (Chap. iii. 5) St. Paul asks, as though the matter were of common fame, "He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?" We see then that in the Epistles, just as in the Gospels and the Acts, the working of miracles both by Christ and his apostles is recognized as an agency in the spread of the Christian faith, but yet that this manifestation of supernatural power is constantly kept in the background. It is not that on which the Christian religion most depended for its support. It is not that by which its most earnest adherents were brought to accept it. There were no miracles wrought at the calling of the apostles, if we except the draught of fishes in Simon's case; and it seems, from the ready acknowledgment of our Lord's authority, that Simon was no unwilling listener to the new Prophet even before this mighty work. This fact may give an answer to some remarks which have lately appeared, in which it has been suggested that it was from the tone of the popular mind in Christ's day that the idea of miracles became so prominent a feature in the history of early Christianity. Everybody believed in miracles, and therefore events which were not strictly miraculous were spoken of and accepted as such by reason of the popular credulity. And we are asked to believe that St. Paul was only led by the current of the thoughts of all men in his time to believe in the historical character of the Re.

surrection, and that his keen mind has after all put the right construction upon the teaching of the resurrection of Christ, when he writes (2 Cor. v. 15, *et seq.*), "If one died for all, then all died: and he died for all, that those who live should henceforth no longer live for themselves, but for him who died and rose again." From this passage we are expected to draw the conclusion that St. Paul did not press as most important the truth of the resurrection of Christ's body, but dwelt most upon the spiritual raising of the souls of living men. And as a "psychological parallel"<sup>1</sup> to this mistaken belief of St. Paul, we are invited to contemplate the case of the good judge, Sir Matthew Hale, who, in a time when a belief in witchcraft was widely prevalent, was a sharer in the popular error, and condemned to death two old women, on the evidence given by a couple of rickety and hysterical children, who declared that they were bewitched, and that these unfortunate women were the cause thereof. But the writer of the article to which we allude has not balanced the two cases very carefully. St. Paul may have been a man of no higher character and no greater acumen than Sir Matthew Hale, but St. Paul had at one time of his life been suddenly struck blind, and had continued blind for three days. And concerning the occasion when he was thus deprived of sight, he testifies over and over again that Jesus appeared to him and spake to him, and thus gave him assurance of the fact that He was alive again; and this became so prominently the teaching of St. Paul, that when he was in the hands of Festus it was

<sup>1</sup> See an article with this title in the "Contemporary Review," Nov. 1876.

the only point on which the heathen magistrate could speak positively to Agrippa. The accusation brought against Paul shaped itself in the main into a question about "one Jesus who was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive." Here is no case of a man led by the popular voice, but by a voice which he himself declared that he had heard from Heaven; and it is not *with* but *against* the credence of the multitude that he affirms Jesus to be alive. Then in the matter of the evidence external to the Apostle, can the diseased fancies of two children, such as are described in the article before us, be compared to that list of testimony which St. Paul quotes in the beginning of that famous Chapter (1 Cor. xv.) in which he treats at full on this solemn subject? Hearken to the catalogue. "He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also." Can these fairly be called only a parallel to such witnesses as were brought forward in this trial of witches at Lowestoft? Can the testimony of men, who were ready to die, and many of whom did die, for the verity of that resurrection of which their own eyes had been witnesses, be for a moment set beside such second- or third-hand statements and hypotheses as are laid before us in the accusation of these Lowestoft witches? Peter and the twelve who had known Christ for years! Five hundred brethren, who were many of them alive to contradict the Apostle's statement had it been unfounded! Nor was the belief in the resur-

rection of the dead at all the popular turn, as is represented in this article. Herod it is true spoke of John as having come to life again, but the Sadducees were a large section of the Jewish community, and they discarded utterly the belief in a rising again from the dead. We are told also (Mark ix. 10) that the disciples of Jesus had no comprehension of such a belief. When Jesus after the Transfiguration had charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen till the Son of Man were risen from the dead, we read: "They kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean." So, too, over that discourse recorded by St. John (Chap. xvi.), in which the Lord spake to the twelve of his departure, and repeatedly said to them, "A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again a little while, and ye shall see me;" and explained these words in some degree by adding, "Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy"—we find the same wonder expressed by them, a wonder which would hardly have come upon them had they been possessed with the idea of a resurrection from the dead. They said among themselves, "What is this that he saith unto us, . . . a little while? We cannot tell what he saith." And that the resurrection from the dead was not a part of the popular creed in the way which is here presumed, may be seen from the question of St. Paul when he pleads before Agrippa (Acts xxvi. 8), "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" The parallel which has

been instituted is therefore one which cannot hold. Neither the principal actors, nor the witnesses, nor the tone of popular thought, are alike; and nothing can be clearer than that St. Paul believed in the truth of the resurrection of Jesus against the popular opinion, and that he had evidence which was of the highest value, and, beside this, had a personal conviction from a manifestation made to himself, which removes his belief in the Resurrection into a very different sphere from the credence which even an upright judge in the time of the Stuarts may be seen to have given to witchcraft.

Thus have we, following as nearly as possible the order of the Apostles' Creed, traced the Gospel history which is to be found in four of St. Paul's Epistles. It may be well in another article to adopt the historic method, and set down in the order in which they are found in the Evangelists all the facts which we have been able to discover in the Letters. Thus the reader will be made conscious how much of the Gospel story we should still possess even if we had not a single Gospel. *Sed hæc hæctenus.*

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ANOTHER NEW BIBLE.

WHILE the Committees have been meeting at Westminster, to revise the Authorized Version of the Holy Bible, smaller companies of scholars, more or less self-appointed, have taken the same work in hand; and, as smaller bodies are apt to move more rapidly than larger ones, are already giving us the results of their labours. It is but a few months since Mr.