

is always with us—loving us because we love Him, ministering to us because we serve Him, blessing us because we worship Him in all we do—we are settled and stablished in a peace which none of the chances and changes of time can disturb; at a single stroke we are freed from the stings of vanity, and the frets of care, and the torments of fear, and the pangs of loss. We are one with God in a growing fellowship, in a growing yet always satisfying peace; and what harm can time and change do to those who are one with the Lord of change and time? what harm can death itself do us when even death is, for us, only a messenger sent to call us to some ampler mansion of the House and Temple in which we already abide, and to conduct us to a place still more exquisitely prepared for us?

S. Cox.

THE HISTORICAL CHRIST OF ST. PAUL.

IV. THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

GALATIANS ii. 9. “James, Cephas, and John, who are held to be pillars.” We have selected this portion of the verse in order to mark the fact that a new apostolic name is here introduced to our notice. We have already heard in this Pauline Gospel of a Cephas, and a James, and have been able to identify the one certainly, and the other probably, with men bearing the same names in our own historical Gospels. Here there is brought before us a third disciple, named John, who is said to have occupied in the primitive Church a position of equal authority with the other two. When we turn to our Gospels we find there also the record of a specially favoured disciple whose name was John. It is interesting to mark the fact, because, if St. Paul had

not recorded the name of this disciple, there would, in all probability, have been found some mythical reason for explaining its insertion in our Gospel narrative ; the beloved disciple has made a narrow escape.

Is what we know of these Apostles from the Epistles of St. Paul consistent with what we are told of them in the Gospels which have come down to us? Concerning James these Gospels are almost silent ; but, if he were identical with the son of Alphæus, he must, even in the lifetime of the Christian Founder, have been held in some esteem. He does not however become a *pillar* until we meet with him in the Book of Acts ; and there we find him at the head of the Jerusalem Church. As the Book of Acts is properly the sequel of St. Luke's narrative, it may, in this light, be regarded as a part of our third Gospel. So far, therefore, the testimony of St. Paul may be said to be in harmony with the Evangelical record. Regarding Cephas there is more revealed in our narratives ; he is the most prominent figure of all the apostolic band. He is evidently the most prominent figure to the eye of St. Paul also ; for we have seen how the Gentile Apostle, before entering on his active ministry, went up to Jerusalem to make the acquaintance of Peter. We are told, in our Narratives, that Peter was favoured in being specially singled out as a witness of Christ's resurrection ; and we are told by St. Paul that in his time he stood forth as the earliest of its witnesses. The fact of such prominence and the selection to such privileges would alone be sufficient to prove that the character of Cephas was that of a bold and strong man. Yet, in admitting this, our Narratives recognize in him a seemingly contradictory element, a certain weakness and vacillation of spirit which faints in the sea of trouble and deserts its Lord in the judgment-hall. St. Paul gives us a picture in every sense harmonious. He shews us a man evidently given to command, and selected as the fittest

to guide the deliberations of the early Church. Yet he shews us in this man the same element of weakness which our Gospels shew, the same vacillation of purpose, the same inability to adhere to the natural convictions of his mind. The man whom St. Paul had to rebuke at Antioch is precisely that Peter whom our Christian tradition portrays.

From the meagreness of the reference which St. Paul makes to John we cannot gather much as to his character; and therefore it is more difficult than in the case of Peter to determine the harmony of the Epistle with the narrative of the Gospel. We see here, indeed, that John was the man of a party; and from our Synoptic Gospels we learn that there was in him somewhat of the spirit of a partizan. The tendency to separatism appears in his request to sit in the kingdom at his Lord's right hand; and the fire of party zeal is manifested in the desire to call down destruction upon the village of Samaria. The same strongly polemical bias is manifested in the Apocalypse, which has come down to us as the reputed work of his hand; and, strange to say, it breathes not less strongly in that fourth of our present Gospels which Christian tradition has associated with his name. It is averred, however, that the John of the fourth Gospel is the advocate of a different party from the John of the Apocalypse; the former is the opponent of the Jews, the latter is the adversary of the Gentiles. In that sentiment we cannot concur. The writer of the fourth Gospel is indeed the constant opponent of a party whom he calls the Jews; but he does not mean by that name to designate the Jewish theocracy: he is rather, as it seems to us, describing a particular sect in the religious commonwealth of Israel, who had probably, *par excellence*, arrogated to themselves the name of Jews, just as a party in the Corinthian Church arrogated to themselves the name of the Messiah. There is, indeed, to our mind a very strong analogy between the theological spirit

of the fourth Gospel and the theological spirit of the Apocalypse ; both are eminently theocratic, and both express their theocratic tendency through the medium of types and symbols. The central thought of the Apocalypse is the advent out of heaven of a new Jerusalem ; in other words, of a theocracy which is to revive the past under new conditions of being. The central thought of the fourth Gospel is also the institution of a new and higher Judaism, in which the ladder between earth and heaven shall be the Son of Man, and in which the manna shall be replaced by the bread of life. There is contemplated the rise of a new theocratic Jerusalem in which the head of the theocracy shall be not the distant Father, but the human Son : "The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into his hand." There is contemplated the institution of a new passover, in which the Son of Man shall break the bread of life and distribute it to his followers. There is contemplated a new condition of admittance into the theocratic kingdom, and the element of circumcision fades away in that second birth which it foreshadows. The John of the Synoptics, of the fourth Gospel, of the Apocalypse, and of St. Paul, must alike be regarded as the representative of Christian Judaism.

There is one point, however, which is worthy of a moment's attention. St. Paul here declares that John was esteemed a *pillar* in the Church. The question is, Why? There were twelve Apostles ; and apostleship itself in its original aspect implied that he who bore the office had been a personal witness of the Master's life and work. But here is an apostleship within an apostleship ; three of the Twelve are singled out from their fellows. St. Paul is here in perfect harmony with the narrative of the Synoptists ; for there also we find a favoured three. In each case the names are the same—Peter, James, and John ; only, the James of St. Paul's Epistle is not the

James of the Synoptists. We have accounted for the pre-eminence of this Pauline James by the fact that he was supposed to have received a special communication from the lips of the risen Lord. We can account for Peter's pre-eminence on the ground that he was regarded as the first personal witness of Christ's resurrection; and that he was so regarded we can gather from St. Paul irrespective altogether of our Gospel testimony. The point to be observed in each of these cases is the fact that the apostleship within the apostleship was constituted according to the comparative nearness which the disciples had borne to the person of the Master; those who had seen most of Him, heard most of Him, and known most of Him, were esteemed the pillars of the Church.

Now, with this fact in view, we can somewhat amplify the meagreness of the Pauline reference to John; or, rather, we can find in that reference the implication of more than is expressed. When John is said to have been esteemed a pillar, it is clearly indicated that he was regarded as having enjoyed a very close degree of fellowship with the Christian Founder; he was revered as one whom men believed to have seen and heard and handled the Word of Life. We need not say that, in this, St. Paul is amply corroborated by our present Narratives. In the first three Gospels John accompanies the Master alike to the transfiguration and to the garden; in the fourth he is not obscurely indicated as the disciple whom Jesus loved, and receives, along with Peter, a special manifestation of the risen Lord. We are able, therefore, to trace in this faint Pauline reference to the life of John another point of meeting between the Christ of St. Paul and the Christ of the Evangelists. We see that, by a coincidence evidently undesigned, the Apostle of the Gentiles has struck out a path in harmony with our present biographies of the Christian Founder. Had he never

mentioned the name of John, men might have asked why the beloved disciple should have been held so insignificant by his contemporaries; when he mentions him as a pillar of the Church, we become warranted, even apart from the fourth Gospel, in concluding that in some sense he must have been a beloved disciple.

Galatians iv. 4. We have now come to what we may call the Pauline Gospel of the Infancy. We are arrested at the outset by the fact that, to the mind of St. Paul, the advent of Christianity was not a phenomenon isolated from the stream of history; it was itself the result of a previous development: "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." The expression "fulness of the time" indicates that, to the Apostle's mind, Christianity was no accident, but that, on its human side at least, it had its origin in the past and had been developed by antecedent circumstances. We may compare St. Mark i. 15, "When the time was fulfilled." The connexion of Christianity's advent with the laws of human history is implied in all the narratives of our Gospels—in St. Matthew's star of the east, in St. Luke's portrait of earnest souls waiting for the consolation of Israel, and in St. John's bold announcement that the Word who was made flesh had been from the beginning of time the light which had lighted every man. In this latest reference, indeed, we are brought very near to the Pauline conception. The writer of the fourth Gospel attributes to the incarnate Word a pre-existent life; St. Paul also attributes pre-existence to the Son of Man. It is vain to say, in the light of such a passage as this, that the doctrine of the fourth Gospel is a development of the second century. The pre-existence of Christ is as broadly stated by St. Paul, in the immediate apostolic age, as it is by the writer of the fourth Gospel, whoever he may have been, and

at whatever time he may have written ; nay, we have no hesitation in saying that it is more broadly stated by St. Paul in the passage before us than it is in the prologue to the fourth Gospel. The writer of that prologue says that the Word *was made* flesh ; St. Paul says that God *sent forth* his Son. In the former case the language might suggest to us the idea of a transformation in the Divine essence ; in the latter, there is no possibility of such a mistake. The pre-existent state of Christ is, with St. Paul, a pre-existent humanity ; before his human birth He is still the *Son*. His birth is not a transformation of his nature ; it is a *sending forth* of his nature into an earthly sphere. St. Paul is not afraid to conjoin those elements so repulsive to one another in the view alike of Jew and Gentile—the element of weakness and the element of Divinity. In the true spirit of that third Gospel, with whose composition in the opinion of many he had something to do, he boldly connects the weakness of the human birth and the frailty of the human infancy with the strength and the majesty of the pre-existent Sonship.

Let us look, now, at the facts to be gathered from this Pauline Gospel of the Infancy. The first point which deserves our attention is the phrase, "*Born of a woman.*" In reading that phrase we must be careful to avoid two extremes—that of making the words mean too much, and that of making the words mean nothing. On the one hand, it would be imparting too much to St. Paul's words to see in them a reference to the virginity of Mary ; and the more so as the special object of St. Paul in this passage is to direct attention rather to the humiliation than to the exaltation of the Messiah, to withdraw the mind from his miraculous environment to the contemplation of his lowly circumstances ; he wants to shew that He was really born. But, on the other hand, it would be equally erroneous to conclude that, in using the phrase "*born of a woman,*" St. Paul is

guilty of a redundancy. It is sometimes said, for instance, that he only meant to employ a colloquial form of expression, as in St. Matthew xi. 11, where Christ is represented as saying, that of those who have been born of woman there had not risen a greater than the Baptist, though the least in the kingdom was greater than he. It is assumed in this reference that St. Matthew's phrase, "Born of woman" is redundant. We do not think it is. It is to our mind perfectly clear that there was present to the Evangelist the contrast between the earthly and the celestial birth, between the child-life that enters into the kingdom of this world and the child-life that enters into the kingdom of heaven; the former is *born of woman*, the latter is born of the Spirit. The Evangelist means to say, or means to record the saying, that John the Baptist had reached as high as any man could reach who had been born of a purely natural lineage, but that a race of men was coming who, in the language of the fourth Gospel, should be born not of the flesh, but of the will of God.

Now if we approach St. Paul's words from this point of view, we shall see them in a new light. We shall find that the phrase, "Born of a woman," so far from being redundant, is designed to mark a contrast. The question is, what is the contrast intended? What is the idea which in the mind of St. Paul is opposed to the human birth of Jesus? It is clearly a *superhuman* birth; or, to speak more correctly, a superhuman mode of entering into the world. It will be remembered that in our Section on 1 Corinthians xv. we had occasion to point out that, shortly after the writing of that Epistle, there appeared the famous Cerinthian heresy which denied that Christ had been born an infant, but declared that He had entered the soul of the man Jesus at the moment of his baptism. We said there was reason to think that, at the time when St. Paul was writing these Epistles, this heresy of Cerinthus was already

in the air. If the conclusion at which we there arrived be accepted, it will furnish a key to the passage before us. It will enable us to see in St. Paul's words a protest against the incipient tendency to explain away the Christ of the manger. We shall interpret him as saying that this Being whom Christendom adored had not entered into the world by an altogether superhuman channel, but on one side of his nature had been borne into it by a natural stream. The Christ is not an emanation which descends upon the Jesus at his baptism; He enters into the Jesus in his infancy; He breathes along with Him his first breath of life; He is "born of a woman."

The second point suggested by this Pauline Gospel of the Infancy is contained in the words, "*made under the law.*" Strictly speaking, it should read, "*born under the law,*" as in the previous clause. But in this case the English rendering, although verbally less accurate, seems to us ideally the more true; it expresses more nearly the thought which is animating the Apostle's mind. St. Paul wishes to emphasize the fact that the life of the Christian Founder was a life of humiliation; and he tells us that one great source of the humiliation lay in the subjection of the Divine Nature to the authority of that law which had originally been designed only for the restraint of sinful beings. He does not merely mean to state that Christ was born under the law; to say so would have been no more than to say that he was a Jewish child. What St. Paul wants to state is that the life of the Christian Founder was brought, by the circumstances of his human birth, into close and intimate relationship with the law of Judaism; and that although, by the Divine energy of his own nature, the Messiah was able to be good and to do good spontaneously, He yet evinced the humility of his character by consenting to be good and to do good in obedience to the command of God.

Looking at the matter in this light, we are supplied with a key to many details of the early life of Jesus. The phrase, "made under the law," is a comprehensive one; in one sense it embraces the whole education of a Jewish youth. It shews us in brief compass what, in the view of St. Paul, was the history of Christ's infancy and boyhood. We have here only to do with the points in which the phrase covers the statements contained in our Christian tradition. It will be found that it covers many of these. It tells us that on the eighth day the child Jesus was circumcised, and that after forty days he was presented by his parents in the temple. It tells us that his life of childhood was one of subjection to authority, one of growth and development in the two spheres of the Divine commandments—the duty towards God and the duty towards man. It tells us that at twelve or thirteen years of age He began to enter upon that period of responsibility in which an individual soul takes upon itself the vows which others have made for it, began that course of personal study and that process of individual questioning which revealed the dawning fact that He had business in the house of his Father. It even suggests the probability that the Messiah waited till his thirtieth year before entering on his earthly ministry; for we know that to have been the age at which the Levites assumed their official duties. Upon the whole it is not too much to say that, in this utterance of the Gentile Apostle, we have as clear a revelation of the early life of Jesus as that which our Gospels profess to unfold. We see the Messiah born of Jewish parents, and therefore circumcised into the Jewish polity. We see Him submitting to a human growth, and passing through a human development in which He is instructed in the traditions of the fathers, and trained in the precepts of the Jewish law. We see Him at twelve years of age emerging into the self-consciousness of religious responsi-

bility, and appropriating those Judaic privileges to which others had made Him the heir. We see Him at last, when the fulness of the time was come, coming forth to the exercise of his royal priesthood, and inaugurating his opening manhood by the initiation into his ministry of love. We have only further to remark that, in thus associating, in proof of Christ's humiliation, the idea of his spontaneous holiness and the thought of his submission to moral command, St. Paul is in full agreement with the tone of our Synoptic narratives. There, too, there occurs to the mind of the Baptist the sense of an incompatibility between the native greatness of the Messiah and his desire to submit Himself to that baptismal ordinance which had been instituted for sinful penitents: "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" There, too, the incompatibility is solved by the Son of Man's voluntary humiliation: "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."

Galatians vi. 2. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." These words are remarkable as a direct illustration of that principle to which we have frequently adverted—the basing of all Christian morality upon the authority of the Christian Founder. To bear the burdens of others might well have seemed to St. Paul a dictate of the intuitive moral consciousness, and might well have been commanded by him on the ground of that inward intuition. But this is not the ground on which St. Paul commands it; he appeals to a positive historical authority, which he calls "the law of Christ;" and he asks men to bear the burdens of others, not because that precept was written in their hearts, but because it had been given by Him who was the object of their worship. In writing to these Galatians, wavering as they were between Christianity and Judaism, he evidently speaks of

the law of Christ in contradistinction to the law of Moses. It is as if he had said, "Do not think that, in coming from Judaism to Christianity, you are passing from a region of positive certainty into a world of mystic obscurity; we too have a historic Lawgiver who has uttered his voice from the mount of God, and who speaks with an authority which Moses never wielded. You have received from Moses only the negative precept—the command not to hurt your brother; we offer you a law of Christ which commands you to identify your brother's interests with your own: 'Bear ye one another's burdens.'"

Our Gospels distinctly represent Christ as bearing the burdens which He relieved (St. Matt. viii. 17); they not less distinctly represent Him as laying down for man the burden-bearing law of love (St. John xiii. 34). In the passage before us, however, the idea suggested by St. Paul is not so much that of burden-bearing in general, as that of a particular kind of burden-bearing. When he says, "Bear ye one another's burdens," he is evidently referring us back to the words spoken in the previous verse; and when we refer to these words, we find that St. Paul was speaking of the burdens of moral temptation: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye who are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted." He is asking his fellow-Christians to take up the moral infirmities of sinful souls, and to lift up those who have fallen by the way; and he makes this demand on the ground that, in so doing, the Christian is fulfilling the law of his Lord. Here, then, is a different light thrown on the passage before us, and a light which reveals to us a connexion yet more close and striking between the Christ of St. Paul and the Christ of the Gospels. In reading the first verse of this Chapter one almost imagines that he is listening to a refrain of the narrative in St. John viii. 3. That narrative, as it stands in our Gospels, has undoubtedly been

inserted in the wrong place; but we know from the testimony of Papias that it constituted a very early Christian tradition. It seems to us highly probable that the tradition had reached the ears of St. Paul. The parallel between them is very marked. In Galatians vi. 1, St. Paul is speaking of those who had been *overtaken* in sin, that is to say, surprised or detected in the very act; the alleged circumstances of St. John viii. 3 are precisely the same. In Galatians vi. 1, St. Paul appeals to the spiritual to restore the carnal; the narrative of St. John viii. 3, is absolutely built on this idea. The woman who had been a sinner is rejected by sinners, and received by the sinless One. In Galatians vi. 1, men are commanded to restore the fallen on the ground of their own proneness to fall: "Considering thyself lest thou also be tempted;" in the narrative of St. John viii. 3, the accusers are prevented from carrying out their vengeance by the sharp question addressed to the conscience: "He that is without sin among you let him cast the first stone at her." The teaching of this narrative pervades in spirit the whole Gospel, and forms an essential feature in the portraiture of the Christian Founder. It appears again before the gates of the Samaritan village, and is seen in an almost identical aspect in the house of Simon the Pharisee.

When we turn to the third verse of this Chapter of Galatians, we find ourselves still on the lines of the Christian tradition. St. Paul there declares that the reason why men refuse to bear the moral infirmities of others is their blindness to the fact that they have moral infirmities of their own: "If a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself; but let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another." Here, again, we are forcibly reminded of a striking parallel in the teaching ascribed to the Christian Founder. It is found in the parable of the two men who went up into the temple to pray (St. Luke xviii. 9). The

Pharisee and the publican are distinguished by the relative degrees of their self-consciousness. The Pharisee does not seek to *prove his own work*; in other words, his aim is not to view his character by itself, but simply to view it in its contrast to the character of others. His rejoicing is not *in himself alone*; his rejoicing is in the fact that he is a saint in comparison with a multitude of his fellow-men, and, as a representative of that multitude, he takes the publican who has gone up to the temple along with him. His entire boast lies in the relative superiority of his life to the lives of others: "Lord I thank thee that I am not as other men." The publican, on the other hand, is oppressed by the weight of sin; he beats upon his breast and cries, "Lord be merciful unto me a sinner." He is not content to measure himself by the standard of worse men; he proves his own work; and, though the immediate effect of that proof is not to bring him rejoicing, the Master Himself tells us that he went down to his house justified rather than the other. The parable is expressly spoken as a warning to those "who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others;" and it will be seen that the law which it promulgates is precisely identical with that law of Christ which St. Paul here enunciated to the man who esteemed himself to be something when he was nothing.

If we compare, finally, the seemingly contradictory statements of the second and fifth verses of this Chapter, we shall find another very striking parallel between the law of St. Paul's Christ and the law of the Christ whom our Gospels portray. "Bear ye one another's burdens; . . . for every man shall bear his own burden." It seems at first sight as if, in the mind of the Apostle, there were a struggle between self-consciousness and self-abnegation. A deeper study dispels such a thought. What St. Paul means to say is, that the man who with greatest lowliness has stooped to lift his own load will, with greatest pity, stoop to lift the

burden of his brother ; and, conversely, that he who has most sympathetically lifted the burden of his brother will most heroically endure the burden of his own soul ; the personal strength to wrestle with temptation will come in the act of personal self-forgetfulness. We recall those words attributed to the Christian Founder : " If any man shall come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross." The self-denial is the bearing of others' burdens ; the taking up of the cross is the bearing of our own. There is, at first view, the same seeming incongruity between the coupling of an act of self-forgetfulness with an act which demands self-reference and self-examination. But here, too, as in the Pauline case, the contrary elements meet in union. The power to lift our own cross is itself a power of self-abasement, an ability to stoop from the consciousness of personal superiority ; and the power of self-denial is the fruit of that personal conviction which has found its own weakness in the effort to bear its cross.

G. MATHESON.

CHRIST ON THE CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES.

ST. JOHN xiv. 8-21.

PHILIP'S request, "*Lord, shew us the Father,*" was a most serious matter for the cause of Christ, especially at this juncture, and as coming from one of his earliest disciples, and withal a man so earnest and so simple-minded. For it virtually challenged Christ's whole position before men, his entire relation to God the Unseen on the one hand, and to the dark and fallen world on the other. If this appeal really needed to be made, if He had not shewn us the Father, then He had done nothing ; his claims were illu-