

ST. JAMES ON THE INCARNATION.

It is often said that the Epistle of James contains but little that is distinctively Christian in the way of doctrine ; and it is quite true that by far the greater part of the Epistle is much more occupied with morality than with theology. This is the meaning of Luther's hasty and much to be regretted saying, that this Epistle is not Evangelical—an epithet which is as true and as false of the Epistle of James as it would be of the Sermon on the Mount.

But though James does not refer in express words to the distinctive doctrines of Christian theology as taught by Paul and John, namely, the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Atonement ; nor even to the historical facts which constitute the witness of God to those truths, namely, the Resurrection and the Ascension of Christ ; yet he uses one significant expression which implies all these. I mean *the Lord of Glory*. It will be admitted by all, that a writer of the first age of Christianity could not have applied that title to Jesus, unless he meant to assert, and to assert with all possible emphasis, his belief that Jesus was the Christ, and had risen from the dead and ascended into heaven. But it is equally true, though not equally obvious, that in this title all Christian theology is implied. All Christian theology is contained in the Deity of Christ, and a pious Israelite could not have applied that title to any being, however exalted, whom he did not regard as Divine.

Such expressions as *the glory of God* and *the glory of the Lord* are very common in the Holy Scriptures, but, for whatever reason, the converse expressions, *the God of Glory* and *the Lord of Glory*, are comparatively uncommon.

“The God of Glory” occurs only twice in the Scriptures. First in that sublime description of a thunder-storm on Lebanon, in the twenty-ninth Psalm : “The God of

Glory thundereth ;” and again at the commencement of Stephen’s defence, Acts vii. 2, “The God of Glory appeared to our father Abraham.” St. Paul (Ephesians i. 17) speaks of “The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory.”

“The King of Glory” occurs twice in the twenty-fourth Psalm, and nowhere else. The latter part of this Psalm is generally believed to celebrate the bringing of the Ark of the Covenant in triumph to Zion ; and it is one of the most magnificent examples in the whole of the Old Testament of the peculiar rhythmical structure of Hebrew poetry. I subjoin it, divided, as it ought to be, into lines.

“Lift up your heads, O ye gates ;  
And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors ;<sup>1</sup>  
And the King of Glory shall come in.

“Who is this King of Glory ?  
The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.

“Lift up your heads, O ye gates ;  
Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors ;  
And the King of Glory shall come in.

“Who is this King of Glory ?  
The Lord of Hosts : He is the King of Glory.”

In writing thus of “Jehovah of Hosts,” the psalmist had no conscious thought of a Divine Son ; nevertheless the Christian Church has generally regarded this Psalm as “prophetical, or rather typical,” to quote Dean Perowne’s words, of Christ’s Ascension.

“The Lord of Glory” is an expression that occurs only

<sup>1</sup> This is a strange expression. It would appear more natural to say

“Swing wide open, O ye gates ;  
And be ye swung back, ye everlasting doors.”

But does it not seem probable that the allusion is to a portcullis, or lifting gate, such as was formerly universal in European castles ? I do not know whether there is any evidence of this kind of gate having been in use in the East.

twice in the Holy Scriptures; once in Paul and once in James. The passage from Paul is as follows: "We speak God's wisdom in a mystery, even the wisdom that hath been hidden, which God foreordained before the worlds unto our glory; which none of the rulers of this world knoweth; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory." (1 Cor. ii. 7, 8.) This title, which occurs nowhere else in Paul's writings, is evidently suggested by the mention, immediately before, of the glory which God has foreordained for us. Christ, through whom we receive this and every other blessing, is called the Lord of Glory, in order to imply that the glory which is, in the heavenly life, to be conferred upon us as a privilege, belongs to Christ by right of nature. Compare the words of Christ, "As the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son to have life in Himself." (John v. 26.) We have life, but we have not life in ourselves. Only a Divine Being can have life or glory in himself; only a Divine Being can be the Lord of Life or the Lord of Glory.

The same expression occurs in the Epistle of James, but in a very different context. "If any man thinketh himself to be religious, while he bridleth not his tongue but deceiveth his heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. My brethren, hold not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, with respect of persons." (James i. 26, 27; ii. 1.) Here follows the well known passage in which the Apostle condemns the making of distinctions between the rich and the poor in the congregation assembled for the worship of God.

The Epistle of James is not on the whole a difficult book, and what difficulties there are in its exposition are mostly the result of want of connexion between the sentences, which succeed each other without anything to mark the

way in which one thought arises out of another. In this James differs from Paul and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who habitually mark the logical connexion of the successive thoughts; and also from John, with whom one thought arises so naturally and obviously out of another that it would add nothing to their clearness if their connexion were marked in the structure of the sentences.

Nevertheless I think the connexion of ideas in the passage just quoted may be made out with tolerable distinctness. It appears to be a consecutive passage; and, if so, it is to be regretted that one Chapter ends and another commences in the middle of it, and that the Revisers have made a division of paragraphs coinciding with the old division of Chapters. This passage may be thus paraphrased: "True religion is not a matter of creed and observances, but of heart and life. The true service of God consists in charity and purity—purity both of life and heart. Now, if you shew any offensive respect of persons—respect for the rich and contempt for the poor—in the ordinary intercourse of life, you sin against both charity and purity; you act in a way consistent neither with the charity that condescends to the lowly and seeks out the afflicted, nor with the purity that keeps itself unspotted from the world. But how much worse are such distinctions when they are brought into the congregation where you meet in the name, and in the presence, of the Lord Jesus Christ. Before Him all such distinctions ought to disappear. Remember that He is the Lord and King of Glory, for whom the everlasting doors were lifted up that He might enter into the Heavenly Zion, and sit down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. He is 'the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, who dwelleth also with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit.'" (Isaiah lvii. 15.)

*The Lord of Glory*, as a title of Christ, does not appear to have become current or proverbial in the Apostolic age;

---

if it had been, it would have occurred oftener in the New Testament. But this makes it the more significant that the title should be applied to Christ by two such very different writers as Paul and James. Both of them, however, were thoroughly familiar with the Old Testament; and with the twenty-fourth Psalm before them, where Jehovah is called *the King of Glory*, and knowing that He will not give his glory to another, it would have been impossible for them to apply such a title as *the Lord of Glory* to any being of inferior dignity to God.

JOSEPH JOHN MURPHY.

---

### BRIEF NOTICES.

SUNDAY MORNINGS AT NORWOOD, *by Rev. S. A. Tipple.* (London: Kegan Paul & Co.) These striking and able sermons are not for everybody. "Orthodoxy" will bend its brows and shake its head over them, and many even of those who do not claim to be orthodox in any exclusive sense will shrink from such an assertion as that the Book of Judges contains highly coloured legends as well as a sober basis of historical fact. But, whatever their defects, all who read them fairly will find much in these discourses to instruct and delight them. They bear on their very face the marks of a refined, original, and devout mind. There is not in Mr. Tipple's work that fatal similarity to the work of other men which makes it so hard to discriminate one from another in the great company of preachers (or, indeed, of writers), and renders most sermons as indistinguishable from each other as peas of the same pod. He has left his own stamp or impress on each of these discourses, the impress of an unique and delicate, if not a very profound, individuality. It is impossible to attribute them to any but their "true begetter." Always clear and bright and suggestive, they are occasionally—*e.g.* "Joshua's Vision"—very fine. His main fault is perhaps that, with a mind naturally of a select and original type, he seems at times not to leave it, as he well might do, to its natural bent, but