

the absolute *reality* of both natures in one Person is indisputably taught in the New Testament, and to me the *indirect* evidence of both makes a deeper impression than the explicit expression of either.

DAVID BROWN.

THE SELF-DISCLOSURE OF JESUS WHEN ON EARTH.

FEW candid thinkers will now deny that the primitive Church adored Christ as divine, and that it had New Testament authority for doing so.

But with changes in the popular view of inspiration, this fact, even when conceded, ceases to be as convincing as once it would have been. Might not the disciples have misunderstood their Master? Does the tenor of the whole narrative coincide with the utterance of the proof-texts? If there is any value in the modern doctrine of the immanence of God in humanity, might not this immanence, keenly apprehended by the Perfect One, explain what He really said about Himself, and about the urgency of His claims?

Whatever we may think of such questions, and of the mental and spiritual position to which they are possible, they are questions widely asked. And they give special importance and urgency to another inquiry, which is in itself of a paramount interest, namely this, What was the nature of Christ's testimony to Himself on earth? He said, "I am one that beareth witness to Myself." But the Jews complained, "How long dost Thou hold us in suspense? If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly . . . Whom makest Thou Thyself?" From such interrogations this much at least is clear, that they were conscious of more implied than was uttered, that Messiahship seemed even

to their dull apprehensions to be not exactly what Jesus claimed, but something different and larger, something which made them exclaim, To what art Thou aspiring? whom makest Thou Thyself? Perhaps we may recognise the same consciousness of mystery, the same dim surmising, in the readiness of many witnesses of the greater miracles to cry, What manner of man is this? The surmise appears to be deeper than if they said, To what office is He entitled? Is not this the Christ? Now such questions are not put concerning the holiest of the saints, in whom the immanence of God has been most apparent, nor concerning any who have learned of Christ.

One is often asked by thoughtful young persons, "Why, on the orthodox supposition, did not Jesus distinctly avow His own proper deity? Why is it only by an inference, however strong, that we deduce this doctrine from His own discourses?"

The answer to this question ought to bring satisfaction to a candid mind, in exact proportion to the clearness and strength of the inference in question. Unless it can be shown that Deity is the natural explanation, and indeed the only adequate explanation, of a great many of the words and acts of Jesus, the following argument will scarcely produce conviction. But if a broad and comprehensive examination should make it apparent that the whole manner of Christ's thought, His bearing toward God and man, is harmonized and explained by that doctrine of His person which is accepted in the Church, if it should be found that (instead of the difference which is too frequently asserted) there is in this matter a perfect concurrence between the Synoptic Gospels and the Fourth, and if this harmony prove to extend over the miracles, the parables, the simplest of His discourses to the multitude and the subtlest of his controversies with the rulers, what then? From such harmonious and broad deductions spring our

best assured convictions. Neither fraud nor fanaticism produces material which can stand a test so searching.

If, as the Church believes, Jesus were a truly Divine Person, wearing the totality of human nature in a union as intimate as that wherein our own spiritual personality wears flesh and suffers fleshly pangs (His Person, like our own, being sensitive through all His complex nature), then His life on earth must of necessity have been a gradual and slow manifestation of His glory, not an abrupt announcement of His rank, but a careful preparation of men for the time when they could honour Him aright, because the lesson was learned at last. Neither could He Himself share the conditions of our lowly life, if already recognised as God Incarnate, nor could men be asked to accept so wonderful a dogma before the revelation was complete. It would have been every way premature for Jesus when on earth to put forth too naked an announcement of His Deity. But if we find Him from the first making claims which logically involve His Deity, which even at the moment must have startled and perplexed His hearers, and which did provoke both challenge and remonstrance—if we find such implications growing clearer as His ministry advances—if they are most frequent (though perhaps not strongest) in that Gospel which records least of His teaching of the masses, but most of His avowals when pressed in controversy, most also of His confidential discourses with His true disciples—is not all this both harmonious and convincing? Is it unreasonable to read these hints, these pregnant and mysterious utterances in the light of the Epistles as a commentary? And if it must always be the despair of scepticism that it has to explain not only the origin of certain doctrines, and the belief in certain prodigies, but also the sharp and clear delineation of a character more vivid and more difficult than any of Shakspeare's, how is the futility of every sceptical theory

aggravated when we observe that what the Gospels have dramatized, with a success which has revolutionized the world, is not only a blameless or even a perfect Man, but such a Man in the act of training his brethren to regard Him as Almighty God.

What is to be looked for, then, is a claiming of attributes and functions which prove, when examined, to be inconsistent with any rank lower than the supreme. We expect to find the disciples supplied with ideas which they "understood not at the first"; but which, like a writing upon sensitized paper, assumed a new import when their minds were raised to a higher temperature.

Let us begin with the Fourth Gospel, and ask afterwards how the Synoptics sustain its testimony. At the very outset, we are arrested by a remarkable fact. St. John (who never puts any such categorical phrase into the lips of Jesus) does for himself assert that the Word was God, and not only God by derivation of nature from the Father, but in such a reciprocity of communion, that whereas the Nicene Creed contents itself with saying *ἐκ θεοῦ*, he says, *πρὸς τὸν θεόν*. Now the Fourth Gospel contains passages concerning which criticism asserts, loudly enough, that at least the phraseology is Johannine, although commended to the Church as the utterances, sometimes of the Baptist, and sometimes of His Lord. How comes it that no such sanction of a deeper voice has been claimed for this mighty utterance? Myth and legend rather overstate their case: John never ascribes to Jesus the expression which he himself has no scruple in employing; which however we have seen reason for holding to be impossible, as yet, for the Jesus of our Christian faith.

In the First Chapter He accepts the title of the Son of God: Nicodemus, who uses it, "believes" aright. But he is to learn greater things. Jacob, long ago, deeming himself an exile from the presence of God, learned that God was in

this place by the vision of a ladder on which angels came and went. Now Jesus is the true bridge between earth and heaven; upon Him all intercourse between God and man is carried on; even the angels cannot dispense with this "way." The vision which spoke to Jacob of a Divine Presence is a permanent reality in Him (49, 51).

In the Third Chapter, He is the "only begotten" Son of the universal Father (16, 18). The phrase is not reported by the Synoptics, but we shall find that it is justified by them. But it is impossible that a phrase so exclusive should only express an immanence of Deity such as others might share, or indeed anything less than participation in the essence of the Godhead.

As if this were not enough, in the face of the plain assertion that the faith which justified Abraham was belief in God, He offers, twice over, eternal life to every one who believes in Himself (15, 16, and cf. 18). And while it is written that "Jehovah is my Light and my Salvation," He does not scruple to make Himself "the Light" absolutely and without qualification, and not only the Light of the World, but the Light entering the world from some mysterious home beyond τὸ φῶς ἐλήλυθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον (19).

The Fourth Chapter treats of instruction given to a simple and ill-informed disciple. It is therefore, as we are prepared to expect, entirely free from that stronger self-assertion which would here be so premature and unhelpful. Nothing in the Synoptics could be simpler. And yet it is His province to give the water of life, which shall be, in all who drink it, an unfailing fountain. In the seventh chapter we meet this claim again.

But the testimony of the Fifth Chapter is certainly more surprising from explicitness than from defect. Here it almost seems that all reserve is laid aside; and if (as we have contended) reticence was both becoming to Himself in the flesh, and necessary for His hearers, this extra-

ordinary clearness of assertion needs to be explained. But an explanation is at hand. It has sometimes happened that a mutiny of subordinates forced their leader to make public his secret orders, because the evils of further silence would outweigh its theoretical advantages. Every one of us, perhaps, has sometimes said, of things which our kindness was concealing, "Well, if you must hear the truth, it is this——." And this same necessity is the true explanation of much that perplexes modern readers of St. John. He records formal controversies. In these, the guarded expressions of Jesus were caught up, and pressed by hostile logic. Then they had either to be disavowed (which was impossible) or followed to their amplest consequences. From these consequences He did not shrink. And so He could reply to His judge at last, "In secret I have said nothing . . . Ask them that heard Me." Now the Fifth of John is a remarkable justification of this claim to a perfect frankness. When Jesus healed the impotent man, and was accused of breaking the Sabbath, He answered, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work" (17). And this was emphatically such a phrase as we have reason to expect, charged with latent significance, as a cloud with electricity. The Jews themselves could say, "God is our Father" (viii. 41), and Jesus taught us all to say "Our Father." But He Himself uniformly rejected this claim, common to all, and asserted His unique and solitary sonship. Throughout the narrative, He never said Our Father, even though it became necessary to evade it by such a phrase as My Father and your Father, and My God and your God. And the Jews detected the speciality of His expression. Their sacred writings asked, "Have we not all one Father?" (Mal. ii. 10), and the phrase "My Father" startled them with its implied monopoly. Moreover God was His Father in so real a sense that what God did, in His secular Sabbath, Jesus also might do, in each of His

Hebrew Sabbath days. The disciples might hesitate what inference to draw, but hatred was surely justified in concluding that He made Himself equal with God. They took up stones in their passion, but recoiled from hurling them, in awe.

Now the point to be observed is Christ's treatment of this their inference. If it was erroneous, He would surely have corrected it. If they were right in supposing that He made Himself equal with God, He would maintain His position, but if necessary guard it against misunderstanding. What He actually did was to teach an imparted equality, for ever derived and yet for ever equal, and this was the equality of an Eternal Son, since it is from the relation of Father and Son that the whole dispute arises. First, and with solemn emphasis, He declares, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but only what He seeth the Father doing. This makes all the work of the Son to be achieved by virtue of His relation to the Father: there is no dualism in such a doctrine. Next He asserts that "whatsoever the Father doeth, that doeth the Son, after the same manner" (*ὁμοίως*, 19). This tremendous allegation did indeed make Himself equal with God. And therefore He guards it against any suspicion of vainglory by repeating that He neither does nor can do anything independently, but only what He seeth the Father do. This however means everything; for the Father showeth Him all things that He doeth Himself. Thus whatsoever He seeth the Father do, He also doeth and doeth likewise. And if the Father showeth Him all, this means both omniscience and omnipotence: it is not in knowledge or power that such a Being is inferior to God. Can it be in essence? is it conceivable that a being of a lower nature is entrusted with power to do, after a like fashion, all that is done by God? This doubt also is met. Inherent life is no attribute of the creature. In God we live and move and exist. Now He who only hath immor-

tality gave by one definite act of His volition to the Son to enjoy life as inherent as His own, ὡσπερ γὰρ ὁ Πατήρ ἔχει ζωὴν ἐν ἑαυτῷ, οὕτως καὶ τῷ υἱῷ ἔδωκε ζωὴν ἔχειν ἐν ἑαυτῷ (26). In the 23rd verse He bids all men to honour the Son even as (καθὼς) they honour the Father. Now if the Father will not give His glory to another, who is this who shares equally His power, His knowledge, His inherent life and His glory?

He also claims the place which they gave, in superstitious reverence, to the inspired Scriptures. These they searched, thinking they had life in the record, which was in fact a witness to Him. If they would only come to Him, they should really possess that life which they supposed to be involved in their Scriptures. Who is this to whom the function of the Scriptures is to witness? Who can minister to men a life which is erroneously supposed to be in them? Surely such words (and especially in such a context) can mean no person but the Highest.

We pass to the Sixth Chapter. In Isaiah lv. it is Jehovah who says, "Come ye to the waters . . . hearken diligently unto Me and eat that which is good." Nor will there be found in the Old Testament a claim by any mortal bearing God's commission to be himself the giver of bread to the inheritance, or to make their cup run over. That error was not repeated after the punishment of Moses and Aaron for asking, "Must we bring you water out of the rock? But this, it seems, is no reason why Jesus should avoid such phrases. The Carpenter of Nazareth claims that His flesh is meat and His blood is drink indeed, and it is His to give them. If Jehovah "prepareth a table before me," Jesus announces "the meat which endureth unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall give" (27). If Abraham believed on God, yet the whole "work of God" (sharply contrasted with their notion of many "works") is that men should believe on Jesus Himself

(29), and this duty of belief in Him is reiterated again and again (40, 47) besides being expressed throughout in the image of eating and drinking His flesh and blood, which is so all-important that whoever does this has eternal life already, and whoever fails to do it has not life (53, 54). At this stage one naturally reflects that every one is cursed who trusteth in man and maketh flesh his arm (Jer. xvii. 5). Shall we escape from this difficulty by urging that a man may be trusted as a teacher guiding men to God? On the contrary, it is the Father who draws men to Jesus (44, 37), and it is Jesus who will raise them at the last day (39, 44, 54); and what is more, it is because of Him that they shall live (57).

We who are so accustomed from childhood to such phrases that we fail to observe their stupendous egoism, should occasionally try the effect of applying them to another. What if we read of the Father drawing men to Paul? of men living because of John? and of Peter raising men up at the last day?

In the Seventh Chapter we find that Jesus, when next after these high claims He confronted the people of Jerusalem, disavowed all seeking of His own glory (18), just as in the Synoptics we shall find Him joining together the utmost self-assertion with precepts of humility, and with the claim that He is Himself most humble. He knows God not by a revelation but by virtue of His origin (29). And as God has said, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters . . . Incline your ear and come unto Me" (Isa. lv. 1, 3), this Jesus, who seeks not His own glory, says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink"; and even improves on the offer of Jehovah, by promising that whoever trusts in Him shall himself become a water-spring (37, 38). This offer He had already made to the Woman of Samaria, yet we know who it was who claimed to be the one Fountain of living waters, and

how great was the evil of forsaking Him for another (Jer. ii. 13). Or if a man could himself resemble a fountain, it was Jehovah who made him as a watered garden, and as a spring of water whose waters failed not (Isa. lviii. 11). Jesus now offers to do as much.

Here then is an excellent example of what we shall find equally frequent in all the Gospels : a manner of appropriating as His function what the Old Testament ascribes to God alone, than which nothing can be more suggestive and significant.

In the Eighth Chapter, again, He is the Light of the world. Now every Jew had learned to say, "Jehovah is my Light and my Salvation"; "Send forth Thy light and Thy truth, let them lead me"; "Jehovah shall be thine everlasting Light" (Ps. xxvii. 1, xliii. 3; Isa. lx. 20). Further, the Psalmist having said, "They walk, O Jehovah, in the light of Thy countenance" (lxxxix. 15), and Isaiah, "Let us walk in the light of Jehovah" (ii. 5), Jesus now says, "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (12). It is now, but with special reference perhaps to the mysterious expression "I am," that they exclaim, "Who art Thou?" And the answer is quite as startling: all other teaching leads men away from the teacher to his Master, but Jesus is Himself the substance of His revelation: He is the same as His teaching from the first (25).¹

It is the same thing to say that "the truth shall make you free" and that "the Son shall make you free" (32, 36). Lastly, the phrase which startled them already recurs with unequivocal significance, when He says, "Before Abraham was born, I am" (58).

¹ It would be unfair to use this verse for coercive disputation, since it is open to another rendering. Yet it can help the candid inquirer, for the explanation above, which is that of Bengel, Godet, and the Revisers, is surely better than to take it as an impatient cry ("Why do I even speak to you?" which, however, he continues to do), in spite of the great authority of Westcott.

In the Ninth Chapter He is again the Light of the world (5). And as spoken in connection with the healing of the blind, it throws into stronger relief the fact that all His miracles, without exception, are wrought by an inherent and not a borrowed power. He invokes no help: He simply says "I will." Men to whom He delegates the power to heal, instead of invoking God, invoke Him. Elisha said, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" But Peter and John said, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth"; and this was the natural result of His example. Thus here, having opened the dark eyes, He says, not "Jehovah shall be My sun," but "I am the Light of the world."

In the Tenth Chapter the whole discourse about the Shepherd and the sheep implies a boundless claim.

The sheep are His own (4, 12, 14) and He is their sole owner—"There shall be one Shepherd" (16). Could either He or His hearers have forgotten the twenty-third Psalm? Who is this, who says not like David, "Jehovah is my Shepherd," but "I am the Shepherd, the good *one*"; not "He leadeth Me in green pastures," but "by Me if any enter in he shall find pasture"; not "When I pass through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me," but "I (with an emphatic *ἐγὼ*) am come that they may have life"?

Such an utterance has to reckon with the ninety-fifth Psalm as well as the twenty-third. "Let us kneel before Jehovah . . . We are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand," which surely recalls the words, "No man shall pluck them out of My hand." And there is also the thirty-fourth of Ezekiel, where the sheep are scattered and become a prey to every beast (5), as the wolf, in John, scatters the sheep. But there it is Jehovah who says, "I Myself, even I, will both search My sheep and seek them out; as a shepherd seeketh out his flock . . .

so will I seek out my sheep and feed them ; . . . I will feed them in a good pasture " (11, 12, 14). In the face of such passages Jesus is the Shepherd, the good *one*, and the sheep are His own. And when the Jews ask Him for an explanation, they get it. All this is indeed true of His Father, but then He and His Father are one (30). None shall pluck them out of His hand, because none is able to pluck them out of the Father's hand. And here it is to be observed that Jesus never says, "I and God are one *thing*," a phrase which, however daring, would interpose some thin partition between Himself and Godhead: it is "I and the Father are one *thing*." Hereupon they will stone Him as making Himself God. Does He deny the charge by quoting the eighty-second Psalm, in which the Hebrew judges were called Elohim because a divine commission had come to them? Does He endeavour to reduce His claim to the same level with theirs? On the contrary, He takes pains to separate His claim from theirs. The argument is from the conferring of a divine title upon those mere vicegerents of one divine function to something vastly greater. These judges were only the recipients of a revelation, it was unto them that the word of God came; but He was the very revelation itself, God's message, sent into the world. Well, then, if the title of Elohim is given to those, to whom the word of God came finding them on the common level of mankind, what is there incredible any longer in the vastly greater claim of Him whom the Father sanctified in some awful region, and sent Him thence into the world? His claim is vastly greater; it is not to assume the title of Elohim (which, in fact, He never once assumed), it is to say, "I actually am Son of the very God" (*τοῦ θεοῦ* as distinguished from those *θεοί*) (35, 36).

The argument is profound and decisive, and rests on this basis, that whoever is repelled by the condescension involved in the Incarnation ought to recoil from much that is

asserted even in the Old Testament; and in truth if God had stooped, we can easily believe Him to stoop absolutely, so that all His condescension affirms the principle of the Incarnation. And Jesus goes on to affirm that as truly as He is in the Father, so truly is the Father in Him (38).

In the Eleventh Chapter, He is free from the pressure of controversy, but even here "the glory of God" is the same thing as "that the Son of God may be glorified" (4), and He embodies in Himself "the Resurrection and (as before) the Life" (25). Again, too, we find Him claiming such boundless results from faith in Him that no room is left for larger blessings to result from faith in the supreme God. "In Thee is the fountain of life," said the Psalmist (Ps. xxxvi. 9): Does Jesus say one whit less about Himself? "He that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die" (26).

Or pass to the Twelfth Chapter and consider how this would sound as the aspiration of any minister of God or any angel: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself" (*ἐγὼ . . . πρὸς ἑμαυτόν*, 32). It was not to himself that St. Paul would fain espouse the Church as a pure virgin.

In the Thirteenth Chapter we find Him, who forbade others to be called Master, calling Himself Master and Lord (13), and this in the very act of teaching them lowliness by His example. He also claims authority to add another to the commandments (34).

In the Fourteenth Chapter He strangely yokes together belief in God and in the Carpenter of Nazareth (1): He receives men into "My Father's house" in order that they may be—with whom? Even in that presence their joy is to be with Him, and it is "unto Myself" that He receives them (3). To know Him is to know and to have actually seen the Father (7, 9). The Father abiding in Him doth

His deeds (10). When they ask anything in His name, it is He Himself who answers; and in this, in Him, the Father is glorified (13). The Eternal Spirit and He Himself are equally Paracletes, and one replaces the other (16). He, equally with the Father, will inhabit the bosom of all who love and obey Him (23). We have said that His miracles differ from all others in that they are not done "in the name of" God; but in His own name prayer may be offered, and in His name the Father sends the Paraclete (13, 26). He can give peace, and it is His own peace which He gives (27).

It is not inconsistent with all this that the Father, the *Fons Divinitatis*, is greater than He; for He was the Son of Man and had emptied Himself; but it is profoundly suggestive that this fact needed to be mentioned (28).

In the Fifteenth Chapter He is capable of a love of man which is parallel with the Father's love for Him (9), and to hate Him is to hate the Father (23). He is the Sender of the Spirit of Truth from the Father (26).

In the Sixteenth Chapter it is again He who sends the Comforter (7), and the world-wide conviction of sin will be "because they believe not on Me" (9). There is no truth of God for the Comforter to reveal which is not a declaring of what is Christ's, and a glorifying of Him (14, 15).

In the Seventeenth Chapter He is to be glorified with God Himself; and this will be no new attainment, but only what He possessed along with the Father before His incarnation (5). All things which belong to the Father belong to Him, and He thinks it right to add, "and Mine are Thine" (10). His conception of the bliss of heaven for His people is that they may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory (24). But can we think of Paul as praying that converts may reach heaven, in order that they may behold (in the presence of God) Paul's glory (τὴν δόξαν τὴν ἐμήν)? After the resurrection He

causes His own breath to pass upon them with the words, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost"; and He accepts the formal adoration of Thomas, "*Thou art* my Lord and my God." [*ὁ κύριός μου*, not the vocative (xx. 22, 28)].

Such is the testimony of St. John's Gospel: how does it compare with that of the Synoptics? A difference has already been pointed out in the fact that they report His popular addresses rather than private conversations in which He could be confidential, and controversies in which He was forced to be outspoken. With due allowance for this difference, the resemblance will be found to be startling, and is not only an evidence for one doctrine, but also for the identity of the figure which is consistently portrayed by all.

In all the Gospels there is the same easy taking of the supreme place, assuming rather than formally claiming it, and the same habit of appropriating offices and titles which every Jew knew to be divine.

Even more striking than in St. John is that teaching with authority, and with authority commanding the unclean spirits, which from the very first made men ask, What is this? (Mark i. 22, 27; Luke iv. 36). While every prophet alleged that "Thus saith Jehovah," Christ says, "Verily I say," and while for their miracles they cried to heaven, "Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that Thou art God" (1 Kings xviii. 37), He says, "I will, be thou clean," and even works with intention "that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins" (Mark ii. 10, etc.). Even to the dead, His word is, "I say unto thee" (Luke vii. 14; Mark v. 41). Thus all that has been written about the ninth chapter of St. John applies to every one of the Synoptic miracles as well. Throughout the Sermon on the Mount He places Himself on the same level as the Giver of the Decalogue. "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou

shalt not kill, but I say unto you" (*ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν*, v. 21). Now it was God who "spake all those words."

After a miraculous draught of fish, when Peter is so overwhelmed with a sense of his sinfulness as to propose to renounce his vocation, the pardon which was burned upon the lips of Isaiah with fire from the altar and angelic ministrations, came to the Apostle simply in the words Fear not, and the acceptance of his services by Jesus (Luke v. 8, 10). Nor does it ever occur to Jesus to appeal, for the pardon of sins, to any higher authority than His own.

He is greater than the temple and Lord over the Sabbath day (Matt. xii. 6, 8). As in the first chapter of St. John, so here He does what only God ever does beside, in bestowing a new name to indicate a higher vocation or a deeper character (Mark iii. 16, etc.).

In the Sermon on the Mount, after the Beatitudes pronounced upon great moral qualities, and upon suffering for righteousness (of which blessings the greatest is to inherit the kingdom of heaven), comes the crowning beatitude of suffering "for My sake." For this the reward is not only to inherit but to be great in heaven. To suffer for Him is to be on a level with the prophets who suffered for Jehovah in His controversy with false gods (Matt. v. 11, 12). We are not fit to judge lest we be judged, but He judges the world; and this is beyond doubt a divine act in the Old Testament (vii. 22, 23). It is true that in Matthew xix. 28 the disciples also sit upon twelve thrones and judge the tribes of Israel. But every good commentator since Bengel has pointed out that the difference in the phrase implies that they receive then their dignity. (It is the middle voice, and the accusative shows them moving to their thrones, *καθίσεσθε ἐπὶ θρόνους*, while He *καθίση . . . ἐπὶ θρόνου*.) Thus He is not merely judged worthy to be assessor; He is, as in Matthew xxv., the Judge of the whole earth. After this sermon, we are again told of the

amazement caused by His assumption of authority (Matt. vii. 29).

Both Matthew and Luke (xi. 10 and vii. 27) have recorded, in connection with the Baptist's message, a curious example of the quietest possible appropriation of what is unquestionably divine. "This is he of whom it is written, I send My messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee." But in Malachi (iii. 1) the messenger is sent "before Me," Myself, and the Septuagint has it *πρὸ προσώπου μου*.

Nothing in St. John is stronger than the words of Matthew xi. 27, and they are accentuated and thrown into relief by the claim which immediately follows, that He is "meek and lowly of heart." The words "all things are delivered unto Me of My Father" are quite parallel with the assertion that the Father showeth Him all things, and what He thus sees He Himself doeth *ὁμοίως*. But there is more. "And no man knoweth the Son save the Father, neither knoweth any the Father save the Son"—at this moment the scales of mystery hang level between the nature of God and of the Carpenter. But here we are not allowed to stop: the nature of God is in some sense the more comprehensible of the two. For while none knoweth the Son save the Father, the Father is known of two classes—(1) the Son, (2) any one to whom the Son willeth to reveal Him. How these words could ever have been spoken except on the Christian hypothesis of such added complexity as we find in the doctrine of eternal sonship and of incarnation, baffles the imagination. And the only refuge of scepticism is to attack a text, which is however perfectly well authenticated.

Again He forgives sins without any mention of a higher authority behind Him; and His followers so learn the lesson that when Paul forgives sins, the higher authority behind is not that of the Father but of Christ (Luke vii. 47; Matt. ix. 2; 2 Cor. ii. 10).

When He has formally declared that all sins and blasphemies except that against the Holy Ghost shall be forgiven, manifestly including sins against the Father as such, He finds it necessary to add that sin against Himself is not unpardonable (Matt. xii. 32).

In the parable of the tares and wheat, His position is utterly apart from that of the best sons of humanity. They are the good seed, but He is the sower of them in a field which is His own; to Him the angels appeal, and at His bidding they abstain from pulling up the tares, until at the harvest He shall send them to gather out of His kingdom all things that offend (Matt. xiii. 37-41). And in the following verse this kingdom of His is described as the kingdom of their Father.

All the Synoptics have recorded the remarkable discourse in which He first calls Himself the Physician, and then the Bridegroom, in whose presence the guests cannot fast (Matt. ix. 12, 15; Mark ii. 17, 19; Luke v. 31, 35). The first epithet by itself might pass, but throughout the Old Testament Jehovah is the Bridegroom of the Church, and in Hosea, where this image is most elaborated, He is also the Physician: "King Jareb . . . is not able to heal you . . . Let us return unto Jehovah, and He will heal us" (v. 13, vi. 1).

Christ, however, is continually the Bridegroom. If the Father makes a marriage supper, it is for the Son. When He returns, the cry is, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh. And indeed nothing but His own habitual use of the title can explain the transfer of it to Him throughout all the New Testament; so that while Isaiah says, "Jehovah hath called thee as a wife . . . thy Maker is thy husband" (liv. 6, 5), and Jeremiah and Ezekiel re-echo the same thought, when St. Paul speaks of marriage as a mystery it is concerning Christ and the Church; or if he is jealous, it is to present her as a pure virgin to Christ; and if in the

Apocalypse the Bride is ready, it is for the marriage supper of the Lamb.

He whom they call Beelzebub is the Master of the house in which all others are the household (Matt. x. 25); and this is Christ's own assertion of the place which is so powerfully made good for Him in the second of Hebrews. He claims the same title in Luke xiii. 25 and Matthew xxiv. 45.

To lose life for His sake is to enjoy the reality of life, and to receive Him is to receive the Father (Matt. x. 40).

The Church is His, and He builds it; and He can give away the keys of the kingdom of heaven (Matt. xvi. 18, 19).

Although God will not give His glory to another, yet He shall come in the glory of His Father with the holy angels (Mark viii. 38). Presently this glory is His own (Matt. xix. 28), and so are the angels (Matt. xxiv. 31).

When the Seventy return, with a not unnatural joy, to say that the power of His Name had reached beyond the letter of their commission, and the devils were subject to them (who had not, like the Twelve, been authorized to cast them out, but only to heal diseases), Jesus takes advantage of their faithful and receptive frame of mind to tell them that He beheld long ago the war and the victory of heaven, and that the authority which He has already given them is over all the power of the enemy (Luke x. 18, 19).

When Moses thought of God protecting His people, it was as an eagle spreading her wings over her young. Christ puts Himself into the same relation toward them; and so little is He flushed or elevated at the thought, that it is for Him an office of condescension, and the fitter emblem is the humble but equally faithful care of the hen over her chickens (Deut. xxxii. 11; Luke xiii. 34).

The effect produced upon His disciples by His teaching is such that they pray to Him for what was never asked of

mortal, Increase our faith (Luke xvii. 5). The time is coming when He shall flame like the lightning across all the sky, and His day shall be like that of the flood, and of the overthrow of Sodom (Luke xvii. 24, 26, 28). But this means that He shall visit the world as God did; so that, immediately afterwards, God's avenging of His own elect is the same as the coming of the Son of Man (xviii. 7, 8). He goes away to receive the kingdom, and the wicked are His own enemies whom He orders to be cut in sunder (Luke xix. 12, 27). In the parable of the vineyard, His sonship is wholly unlike the relationship between the owner and any of the servants. He is the only Son, the Beloved, the Heir, and the husbandmen might be expected to reverence Him, even though they had already outraged all beside (Mark xii. 6, 7). In subtle harmony with this parable, when the blood of all the righteous comes on this generation, which shall kill prophets, and wise men, and scribes, His own blood is not reckoned with the rest. *That* crime is on another level, for indeed it is He who sends all these (Matt. xxiii. 34, 35). But this, at least, is a function plainly divine.

Men shall endure the final troubles for His Name's sake, and He, in return, shall inspire them as God inspired the prophets (Luke xxi. 12, 15).

In the Twenty-fifth of Matthew, so near the end, His self-disclosure is most emphatic. He is the Bridegroom, and we have seen what this involves (ver. 1). The servants are "His own servants," and He admits them into the final joy, or dooms them to despair (14-30). He returns in His own glory, and sits on the throne of His glory: He who elsewhere was the King's Son is now the very King: He has felt all the neglect inflicted, and all the kindness bestowed upon the least of His followers, and to say this is to say all. There is no mention of their connection with any Higher One behind. It is said of the people of Jehovah,

“He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of His eye” (Zech. ii. 8). Now it is the Nazarene who was cared for or neglected in His people.

There is more to say about this remarkable passage. In the tenth of John we saw Jesus appropriating the title of the Shepherd, whose own the sheep are. Now Ezekiel says, “O my flock, thus saith the Lord God, behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he-goats”; and more emphatically still, “Behold I, I will judge between the fat cattle and the lean cattle” (xxxiv. 17, 20). Jesus makes this also His own, judging all nations “as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats.”

At His trial He would give no unjust advantage to His foes; but when solemnly adjured, He claimed not only the title of Christ, but also that of Son of God, and declared that “henceforward” He should be visibly and for ever enthroned, and also for ever coming in the clouds (Matt. xxvi. 63, 64).

Finally, when His work on earth was done, and we found Him in St. John identifying sacramentally the Holy Spirit with His own breath, He is equally outspoken in St. Matthew. The time was now come of which Zechariah prophesied (xiv. 8, 9), when living waters should go forth from the temple to the east and west, when the LORD should be one and His name one, who should be King over all the earth. The disciples are now bidden, as they evangelize, also to baptize all nations into one Name. But this is equally the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

It is not only the companionship in which the Carpenter places Himself, but the absolute equality with Father and Spirit which is implied by a Baptism into their common Name, into the privilege of relationship equally with the Father, and the Nazarene, and the Holy Spirit, which makes the evidence of this text decisive. But it must be

repeated that the argument rests upon no one passage, but on the concurrence of all.

The testimony is vast, incidental, and undesigned, it is concurrent in the four Gospels, and it is accumulative. It is not a question of how much or how little this verse or that can be forced to mean, but of the tenor and drift of His teaching as a whole, and what theory is possible concerning Him whose whole teaching looked this way.

Can anything less resemble the proper attitude toward God of His loftiest creature than this habitual and characteristic attitude of Jesus? Can any attitude better befit Him who should soon be adored as God, manifest even while veiled in flesh?

G. A. CHADWICK.

THE PARABLE OF THE UNJUST STEWARD.

WHAT is the real meaning of this very curious parable, and of the lesson our Lord draws from it? As usually taught, it is something like this:—A steward, threatened with dismissal, and unable to find any other means of support, resolves to use his remaining time in office for his own advantage. For this purpose he conspires with his masters' tenants to cheat that master, trusting to their gratitude, or fear, for his future maintenance. This he does so cleverly as to earn the praise of his master, who, though himself the loser by the man's dishonesty, cannot but admire the "shrewd and successful wickedness" by which the steward has turned his position of trust to his own personal profit. So (says our Lord, as generally interpreted) I advise you to use the good things of this world: "make friends" by their means, who shall receive you, when these good things fail you at death, into the everlasting habitations of God.

This is the interpretation of the parable usually given