

turning more and more round two main centres : the origins of Islam and the Gospel.¹ May we hope for two great books on these supreme subjects? A history of early Christianity from the pen of Wellhausen would be a real event in theology. It would not, indeed, satisfy orthodox standards; but it would be serious, reverent, and full of light.

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THE LIFE OF CHRIST ACCORDING TO ST.
MARK.²

XXXIV. THE ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM, XI. 1-11.

WHEN the blind man had obtained the boon he sought, and had fallen into the train of Jesus, the company moved on, impressed and excited by the fact that the title "Son of David" had been publicly given to Jesus and publicly accepted by Him, and that His claims had been confirmed by a miracle. In time they came within two miles of Jerusalem to the slopes of the Mount of Olives in the neighbourhood of two villages called Bethany and Bethphage. The distance from Jericho to Jerusalem is about

¹ In his own department of Old Testament, his most important recent work is his edition of *Psalms* in the *Polychrome Bible* (1895), with translation in the *Sacred Books of the Old Testament* (1898), and further *Notes in Skizzen u. Vorarbeiten, Heft vi.* (1899). On Islam, after various preparatory studies, he has published *Das Arabische Reich und sein Sturz* (1902)—a vivid sketch of the first great act in the wonderful drama of Islam. To New Testament scholarship he has contributed a *Skizze* on the "Son of Man" problem (in the same *Heft* as the *Notes* on the *Psalms*), and within the last two years characteristic commentaries on Mark, Matthew, and Luke. But we cannot here enter on any just estimate of these works.

² These studies do not profess to be an adequate historical and doctrinal account of Christ, but are an attempt to set forth the impression which St. Mark's account of our Lord would make on a reader whose only source of information was the Second Gospel, and who knew nothing of Christian dogmatics.

eighteen miles; and in view of the many events crowded into this busy day it would seem that Jesus started very early, according to the common Eastern fashion, and rested near Bethany in the heat of the day to prepare for His solemn entry into the Holy City. His preparations were slight and simple; He intended to ride into Jerusalem, and sent two of His disciples to bring Him an animal to ride upon. The incident is told in fuller detail and at greater length than its intrinsic importance would warrant. No doubt St. Mark's authority was one of the two disciples. As the story is given some mystery attaches to the transaction. The disciples were to go to the opposite village, and as they entered they would find tied up by the roadside an ass's colt,¹ that had never yet been ridden. They were to loose it and bring it. If any one challenged them, they were to answer, "The Master needs it, and will send it back at once." Jesus, it seems, had arranged that the colt should be waiting for Him at a fixed spot, and that His messengers should be allowed to take it away on giving a password previously agreed upon. The owner of the colt would be some sympathiser with Jesus who had not publicly identified himself with Him. There must have been many who admired Jesus and appreciated His teaching, and yet did not enrol themselves amongst His avowed followers. Some lacked courage; others were not fully convinced of His right to the unique authority which He claimed. This passage and one or two others bring us into contact with an outer fringe of loosely attached disciples.

The method in which the messengers were to obtain possession of the colt was intended to protect the owner. No one gave the colt; it was taken; neither Jesus nor the

¹ The Greek word, *polon*, is strictly "colt," as B.V., but the occasion, a solemn peaceful procession, and the usage in Hellenistic Greek (Swete) would suggest that the animal was an ass's colt, apart from the other Gospels.

owner was named ; and the disciples were not told to whom the animal belonged. The possible presence of a traitor in their number would naturally occur both to Jesus and to His friend ; and accordingly precautions were taken to prevent the premature betrayal of His plans, and to protect the owner of the colt from punishment for complicity with them.

The two disciples went to the village, and everything happened as they had been told. The colt was brought to Jesus, and His followers provided it with rude trappings and housings by placing their upper garments upon it, and Jesus sat thereon. The arrangements were suitable to the occasion ; the ass was the animal used by dignified persons for peaceable ceremonies ; and the fact that the colt had never before been used would suggest the peculiar sanctity of the present rider, and the sacred importance of His entry into Jerusalem. Meantime the crowd had learned the purpose of Jesus, and His disciples were no longer restrained from declaring Him the Messiah. The enthusiasm of the people had already been kindled by the healing of the blind man ; so that they lent a ready ear to the apostles when they proclaimed Jesus the Messiah, the Redeemer and King of Israel, and announced that He was about to enter the Holy City, to ascend the throne of David, and establish the Kingdom of God. With ecstatic fervour men stripped themselves of their outer garments and threw them on the road to provide a fitting pathway for the Son of David, while others strewed branches in the way.

So the procession moved on to Jerusalem with Jesus in their midst ; and those who went before and those who followed after shouted,

“Hosanna—Grant salvation,
Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord,
Blessed be the Kingdom that cometh, the Kingdom of our
father David,
Hosanna in the highest.”

After this graphic picture the bald sentence which follows is an anti-climax, "And He went into Jerusalem into the temple; and He surveyed everything, and as it was already late, He went out to Bethany with the Twelve." Apparently the actual entry into Jerusalem was not so dramatic as the start of the procession. There were many entering Jerusalem at that time, and Jesus would not be the only distinguished person amongst them; there would be others too who would be received with acclamation. As Jesus approached and entered the city, His following became merged in other companies, and reached the temple without attracting much notice. Otherwise it would be difficult to understand how a procession acclaiming its leader as the Messiah passed the gate of the city without being challenged.

At the temple, then, He looked about upon all things with the curious interest of a provincial viewing the sights of a great capital. Meanwhile the disciples had been expecting some act by which He would assert His Messianic sovereignty; a miracle or sign from heaven; or perhaps public recognition by the priests, the Sanhedrim, and other Jewish authorities, to be followed by a victorious attack upon the Roman garrison. When Jesus passed the gates and nothing happened, except that He directed His steps towards the temple, they would reflect that the temple was the place where the manifestation of the Messiah would rightly take place. But nothing happened at the temple, and as the long and weary day was now drawing to its close, Jesus left the city, and went out to Bethany and spent the night there, either for the sake of being with friends, or to avoid the dangers that beset Him in Jerusalem. He had come to offer Himself a public sacrifice, not to court the dagger of some midnight assassin hired by His enemies; but probably He left Jerusalem simply because He had no accommodation there for Him-

self and His followers and had arranged to return to Bethany, if He were still alive and at liberty at nightfall. The disciples followed Him burdened with hope once more deferred; the great day had come and gone; He had been publicly proclaimed Messiah, but nothing decisive had been done; the evening found them again at Bethany, and the Kingdom of God was no nearer than it had been in the morning.

As to the mind of Jesus at this time, we get most light from His repeated declarations that He would suffer at Jerusalem as a criminal. He, at any rate, did not look for any blazing splendour from heaven, or for any deputation of priests offering Him the keys of the Temple on bended knees. For the moment, indeed, there may have flashed across His imagination a wild fancy of some Divine intervention which would render His sacrifice unnecessary and inaugurate the Kingdom of God in happier fashion. But He would not dwell on such pictures; we must believe that His stern purpose was never abandoned even for a moment and was seldom absent from His mind. Probably when He entered Jerusalem, He did not expect to leave it again a free man, but rather looked for arrest or even for death that very night, and He went out to Bethany burdened because He had more hours to spend under the shadow of the Cross, made more grim by the cheerful hopes and eager excited anticipations of disciples who were looking for dignified posts in the Kingdom.

XXXV. THE SECOND DAY IN JERUSALEM, XI. 12-19.

(a) *The Cursing of the Barren Fig Tree; 12-14.* We are not told how Jesus and His disciples spent the night at Bethany; possibly after the fatigue of the long day all slept soundly through exhaustion; possibly Jesus betook Himself to prayer so solitary that His followers did not suspect His vigils. At last the new day dawned and they

set out again for Jerusalem. After the manner of Orientals Jesus took little or nothing before He started, and while He was yet on His way to the city He became hungry. Seeing a fig-tree, He went to it expecting to find figs, but there were none.¹ Nature herself seemed to have foiled Him when He sought her succour. The tree stood there the very type of a Pharisee ostentatious and barren, or like a disciple lavish of loyal profession but lacking understanding and sympathy. He solemnly cursed the tree in the hearing of His disciples, "May no one ever again eat fruit of thee."

(b) *The Cleansing of the Temple; 15-19.* They went on to Jerusalem, entered the City, and passed on to the Temple, without any noteworthy incident. In the Temple courts they found a busy scene; the feast was the occasion of a great fair, at which the pilgrims could buy birds and animals for sacrifices, and obtain the sacred coins which alone were accepted in payment of the Temple tribute. Tricks of trade were rife: the merchants of the capital matched their wits against those of their provincial customers. They perhaps trusted that the pilgrims would be awed by the sanctity of the place and season, and would abate something of the noisy importunity of Eastern bargaining and allow the sellers to make an exorbitant profit.

Jesus had surveyed the scene the evening before. On both occasions He may have witnessed sharp practice, chicanery, the hungry eagerness for gain. Now, perhaps, some one who thought himself aggrieved appealed to the Galilean Prophet; the buyers and sellers near at hand crowded round Him to argue the case, each seeking to win

¹ The exact interpretation of the words about the fig-tree is very difficult, but the intention of the narrative clearly is that Jesus went to the tree believing that He had good ground for expecting to find fruit on it.

His support. When they were silent for His decision, He broke out into fierce condemnation of the traffic.

“Is it not written that My House shall be called a House of Prayer for all nations? And ye have made it a den of thieves?” His teaching was promptly enforced by His Galilean followers, who swept the Temple courts clear of the salesmen and their goods, and thus “He drove out the sellers and buyers from the Temple, and upset the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of the dovesellers, and would not allow any one to carry a vessel through the Temple.”

The disciples hailed the action of Jesus as a practical assertion of Messiahship, a further step towards the establishment of His authority, to be followed doubtless by others even more effective. Was not the Holy City polluted by the presence of a Roman garrison? But the disciples were again disappointed; Jesus did not give the signal for the attack on the Antonia, but simply preached to the people on the sanctity of the Temple, which seemed to friends and foes alike a lame and impotent conclusion of a very promising beginning. He had gone so far, men said, that He could neither pause nor go back; He must go on or perish. But Jesus was not now to be hurried on by the logic of events; He saw no Divine leading in them when they pointed to violence for political or personal ends; He went His own way without regard to the expectations of His friends or the personal consequences to Himself.

Meanwhile the news spread through the city; the mildest rumour was that there had been a disturbance in the Temple courts; that Jesus of Nazareth, at the head of a Galilean mob, had broken up the customary order of the festival, and suppressed the fair established for the convenience of pilgrims and the general advantage of all concerned. Public order in Jerusalem at the time of the

Passover was an anxious matter for both Jewish and Roman officials. The Jews especially dreaded any riot which might give the Romans an excuse for indiscriminate, bloody severity. To the chief priests, therefore, Jesus seemed a public danger, a view of the matter heartily endorsed by His old enemies, the scribes and Pharisees; so that the priestly officials, for the most part Sadducees, and the popular religious leaders, the Pharisees, were equally desirous of getting rid of Jesus. But for the moment He held the walled enclosures of the Temple with a formidable following; and an attempt to arrest Him would have caused a fresh riot. So for the time they left Him alone; and in the evening He let the crowd disperse, and departed quietly from the city with His disciples.

W. H. BENNETT.

THE ETHICAL TEACHING OF ST. PAUL.

(4) THE PASSIVE VIRTUES.

CHRISTIAN morality is founded on natural morality. It is the republication of the law written on the heart. The findings of that "silent court of justice" which each man bears about within his breast, it adopts and makes its own. The virtues of Paganism, no less than the specifically Christian virtues, are essential to the completeness of the Christian character. So much we have seen in the last paper. We have now to turn to a type of ethical doctrine in which Christian teachers own no master save Christ, and in which the ethical originality of Christianity is most strikingly revealed. When St. Paul exhorts the Thesalonians to industry, or the Ephesians to truthfulness,¹ he is doing no more than any Roman moralist might have

¹ 2 Thess. iii. 10-12; Eph. iv. 25.