

THE RISEN LORD.

(1) "THE New Testament itself," says Harnack, "distinguishes the Easter-message of the empty grave and the appearances of Jesus on the one hand and the Easter-faith on the other. Although it gives the highest value to that message, it demands the Easter faith even without it. . . ." "The *Easter-message* reports the wonderful occurrence in the garden of Joseph of Arimathaea, which, however, no eye saw, the empty grave, into which several women and disciples looked, the appearances of the Lord in glorified form—so glorified that His own could not at once recognize Him,—soon also speeches and deeds of the Risen One; always more complete and more confident do the reports become. But the *Easter-faith* is the conviction of the victory of the Crucified over death, of the power and the righteousness of God, and of the life of Him, who is the firstborn among many brethren. . . ." "But who among us can affirm that it is possible from the narratives of Paul and the Gospels to form a distinct picture of these appearances; and, if that is impossible, and no tradition of single occurrences is absolutely certain, how does one want to base the Easter-faith upon them? . . ." "Whatever may have happened at the grave and in the appearances, one thing stands sure: from this grave the indestructible faith in the conquest of death and in an eternal life had its origin." (*Das Wesen des Christentums*, pp. 101-102.) This distinction is an instance of Harnack's endeavour to preserve what is essential to Christian faith, and yet to

sacrifice whatever is supernatural (at least in the physical realm) in the Christian history. But the validity of the distinction must be challenged, as well as the grounds given for it. The words to Thomas, "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet believed," are surely a rebuke to him for distrusting the testimony of his fellow-disciples (John xx. 29). The reproach to the two on the way to Emmaus is directed against their hesitation to believe the tidings brought by the women, confirmed as these were by the prophetic interpretations of the Messiah's entrance through His passion into His glory (Luke xxiv. 25-26). It is exceedingly doubtful whether Paul would have ever reached the conviction that the Lord is the Spirit, and consequently the certainty of the Resurrection, or the conception of Christ as "the second Adam" from heaven, or the experience of God's revelation of His Son as living on the way to Damascus had he not received the testimony of the Church regarding Christ's appearances, and had not his unbelief been changed to faith by a vision of the Risen Christ, which he reckons among, and as similar to these appearances. The stress Paul lays on the appearances as evidence of the resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. xv. 5-8) altogether forbids the attempt to detach his *Easter-faith*, or that of the Christian Church, with which in these matters he knew himself to be in agreement, from the *Easter-message*. For us with the evidences of Christ's presence and power in His church throughout many generations belief in the Risen Lord may not depend so exclusively on the historical testimony, but so comfortless and hopeless was the condition of the disciples after the Crucifixion, that it is certain the *Easter-faith* would not have arisen within them had not the *Easter-message* come to them. If the testimony of the early Church is to be distrusted in so important a matter, if it could imagine such appear-

ances, and base its faith in the Risen Lord on these, if it could not distinguish the real grounds of its convictions from these fictitious ones, do we not discredit its intelligence and discernment? Can a true faith rest on false imaginations? If the conviction that *Christ lives* is one that we to-day may retain, as Harnack himself maintains, does it not carry with it consequences which he ignores? The physical is subordinate to the spiritual. If Christ as living Spirit did conquer death really, why should not the physical consequences of death be so far annulled that it was possible for Him to give His disciples such sensible evidence as was necessary to give them the certainty of that conquest? The system of nature as we know it gives us no knowledge of the possibilities of life beyond death; and, therefore, our common experience does not, and cannot set the limits to what might or might not be possible, physically, for one who had so conquered death spiritually that He could be a spiritual presence and power to men on this side of the grave. If Harnack concedes so much, he may concede more with logical consistency. May we not in our argument go beyond the possibility and recognize the probability of such manifestations of the subordination of the physical to the spiritual? Death as physical is a reality to men, which they dread, from which they shrink. Would the conquest of death be adequate, which did not include the captivity even of the physical phenomenon? Is the redemption complete, which does not include the transformation of the body of humiliation?

(2) Harnack lays stress on the fact that the records of the appearances do not allow us to form a distinct picture, and that the tradition of no single occurrence is absolutely certain. Reserving for the moment the question of the evidence, the indistinctness of the presentation may be explained by two reasons, *subjective* and *objective*. That

so many persons of different temperament and varied intelligence should be deceived by hallucinations of sight and sound is incredible ; but it is quite probable that their surprise and bewilderment made them less capable of exact observation and accurate recollection, than if they had been witnessing such an event as came within their common experience. That manifestations from the other side of the grave, communications from the unseen in the seen, should be subject to other laws than physical phenomena is not improbable. Both as regards the objective realities and as regards the subjective impression of them we cannot expect the same distinctness of presentation as in regard to the ordinary events of human history. With this concession, can we claim that the evidence is sufficient to justify belief in the *Easter-message* as well as acceptance of the *Easter-faith* ? “ A fact so stupendous as the Resurrection,” says Dr. Sanday, “ needs to be supported by strong evidence, and very strong evidence both as regards quantity and quality is forthcoming ; but all parts of it are not of equal value, and it is well that the authorities should be compared with each other and critically estimated.” (*Outlines of the Life of Christ*, p. 170.) Although it is not the purpose of this series of *Studies* to deal with these apologetic questions, it does seem necessary to justify the discussion of the utterances of the Risen Lord as revealing the “ inner life ” by briefly sketching the argument for the credibility of the fact of the Resurrection as it is presented by Dr. Sanday, than whom it would be difficult to find a scholar both more candid and more cautious. The concluding verses of St. Mark must be left out of account, as the passage (verses 9-20) is not part of the original Gospel, and the passage (verses 1-8) is a fragment, and contains no appearance of the Risen Lord Himself. The discovery of the empty tomb and the message of the angel here narrated are also

recorded by Matthew and Luke. Luke mentions as one of the women at the tomb *Joanna* (xxiv. 10), whom elsewhere he describes as "the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward" (viii. 3). He shows special knowledge of Herod's court (xxiii. 7-12), and of this Joanna was probably the channel. Through her, too, he may have received independent testimony regarding the Resurrection. The name Cleopas (=Cleopatros, xxiv. 18) suggests that the two disciples to whom Jesus appeared on the way to Emmaus also belonged to the Herodian circle, and the report of their experience, too, may have come to Luke through Joanna. Luke's casual reference to the appearance to Peter (ver. 34) is confirmed by Paul (1 Cor. xv. 5). Luke's narrative has links not with Mark and Paul only, but also with John, for the appearance to the Eleven in the Upper Room is recorded in both Gospels (Luke xxiv. 36 ff., John xx. 19 ff.), and it is confirmed by Paul (1 Cor. xv. 5). The manifestation to Thomas (John xx. 24 ff.) is recorded only in the Fourth Gospel, but it is not incredible as a "concrete illustration of the disbelief on which so many of our authorities lay stress." Although the appearance to the eleven disciples on a mountain in Galilee is recorded by Matthew alone (xxviii. 16 ff.), yet the history of the early Church does confirm the probability that the missionary commission was given by Jesus Himself. Yet Paul is our primary witness for the appearances of Jesus (1 Cor. xv. 5-8), "to Peter, to the Twelve, to an assembly of more than five hundred, to James, to all the Apostles." Paul's silence regarding the appearance to Mary Magdalene (John xx. 11-18) and to the two on the way to Emmaus (Luke xxiv. 13 ff.) may be due to one of two reasons, that the stories had not reached him, or that he purposely confined himself to the mention of those who were commissioned to be witnesses of the Resurrection. He enumerates without describing the appearances, because

he is simply reminding the Corinthians of what he had been teaching them from the very beginning of his ministry among them (51 or 53 A.D.). In his earliest extant writing (1 Thess.) he refers twice to the fact of the Resurrection (i. 10 ; iv. 14) as common knowledge in the Church. Although the book of Acts is of later date, yet it represents the Apostles as from the very beginning the witnesses of the Resurrection (i. 8, 22). Paul does not seek to prove the fact ; he assumes that belief is common to himself and his opponents, and on this bases his argument to meet doubts about the resurrection of Christians (1 Cor. xv. 12 ; Compare 2 Tim. ii. 18 f.). Dr. Sanday recognizes that when we try to harmonize the records, " whichever way we turn, difficulties meet us, which the documents to which we have access do not enable us to remove " ; and yet he maintains that " no difficulty of weaving the separate incidents into an orderly well-compacted narrative can impugn the unanimous belief of the Church which lies behind them, that the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead on the third day, and appeared to the disciples " (*op. cit.* p. 180).

(3) Without entering into a critical examination of the narratives the difficulties alluded to by Dr. Sanday may be briefly mentioned. Matthew records an appearance of Jesus at the tomb to the women, in which is repeated the command to the disciples to go and meet Him in Galilee (xxviii. 10), and then reports the meeting on a mountain in Galilee (16-20). In the genuine fragment of Mark the angel at the tomb gives the same command (xvi. 6-7). Luke repeats not only the appearance to the women at the tomb, but also to the two on the way to Emmaus, to Peter, to the Eleven, all at or near Jerusalem. He represents Jesus at the appearance to the Eleven as enjoining them to remain in Jerusalem until they " were clothed with

power from on high " (xxiv. 49). He thus appears expressly to exclude any departure to Galilee. Then in the *Gospel* without indicating any lapse of time, as he does in *Acts* (i. 3), he records the Ascension (50-53). All the appearances mentioned in the Fourth Gospel, except that in the Appendix (chapter xxi.), are placed in Jerusalem, and the author indicates that the disciples remained at least a week in Jerusalem after the Resurrection (xx. 26). The critics usually prefer the tradition in Mark and Matthew "with or without the supposition that the grave was really found empty." Loofs has recently argued for the Luke and John tradition; but treats the story in John xxi. as partly misplaced (the fishing scene—Luke v. 1-11) and as partly disconnected with Galilee (the dialogue of verses 15-23). If we try to combine the two traditions, allowing for some time spent in Jerusalem (John xx. 26) by the disciples (in spite of the Lord's commands to go to Galilee, Matt. xxviii. 10) at the beginning of the period of forty days (*Acts* i. 3), and allowing for some time of waiting in Jerusalem at the end of the time according to Christ's injunctions (*Luke* xxiv. 49), the interval is scarcely long enough for the events in Galilee which must be placed in it, especially for the return of the disciples to their usual calling. It must be conceded then that the combination of the two traditions does involve serious difficulties; especially is the command of the Risen Lord, recorded in Matthew, that the disciples should go and meet Him in Galilee in apparent contradiction to John's and Luke's report of their continuance in Jerusalem, and the injunction of Jesus, according to Luke, that they should remain there till they received power. A less difficulty is Luke's report in the Gospel of the Ascension without the mention of any interval of time, and his correction of that report in the *Acts* by the definite statement "by the space of forty days." For this reason

no attempt will be made in this *Study* to fix definitely the order of events. Its purpose will be quite adequately served by considering some of the utterances ascribed to the Risen Lord as indicating the distinctive features of His "inner life" in the new mode of His existence. While the authenticity of these utterances is assumed, the possibility is recognized that in some degree the report may be coloured by the experience of the Christian Church of the truth and grace of the living Christ.

(4) These utterances suggest a contrast to, as well as a continuity with, the former earthly life, and seem even to offer some indications of a transition from the one to the other state. The outward appearance and the physical conditions were changed. Mary did not at once recognize her Master (John xx. 15); the eyes of the two on the way to Emmaus "were holden that they should not know Him" (Luke xxiv. 16, an explanation by the Evangelist of the failure to recognize which is unnecessary); the Eleven "were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they beheld a spirit" (ver. 37); at the Sea of Galilee, when Jesus stood on the beach, the disciples knew Him not (John xxi. 4). It is implied in Matthew xxviii. 2 that the Lord had risen before the stone was rolled away from the sepulchre to display the empty grave. Closed doors could not prevent His presence (John xx. 19). Distance did not delay His movements. Before the two disciples, whom He had accompanied to Emmaus, got back to Jerusalem, He had appeared to Peter (Luke xxiv. 31, 34). The request for food seems to indicate similar physical conditions; but it was made to prove to the disciples that they were not seeing a ghost (Luke xxiv. 41-43; cf. Acts x. 41). "This," says E. R. Bernard, "with a view to the persons dealt with, could best be done by taking food. If there be resurrection of the body, there is no reason why such a body

should not have the power of taking food without depending on it. Once cross the boundary of the present sphere of existence, and we are in a realm where we can no longer say 'this is impossible.' Indeed it was the reality and identity of His risen body which the Lord had to insist on; the difference was evident, and spoke for itself." (Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*, iv. 234.) The assurance to the disciples—"See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having" (Luke xxiv. 39)—cannot be pressed into the service of any conjecture about the anatomy of the risen body. The words affirm both the identity of Jesus and the substantiality of His manifestation of Himself; the Risen Body could be made tangible as well as visible. (Compare the challenge to Thomas, John xx. 27, and the prohibition of Mary, ver. 17.) Mary recognized Him by the familiar tone of the voice (ver. 16), and the two disciples by the familiar gesture in breaking bread (Luke xxiv. 31). There is, therefore, resemblance as well as difference in the body.

(5) It is possible that there was during the forty days a gradual process of glorification of the Risen Body, and that this process was completed at the Ascension. The appearance of Jesus to Saul on the way to Damascus is described in very different terms than any of the manifestations during the forty days. "Suddenly there shone round about him a light out of heaven," . . . "and when his eyes were opened, he saw nothing" (Acts ix. 3-8). The words of Jesus also indicate such a process. "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended unto the Father; but go unto my brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and My God and your God" (John xx. 17). He is ascending, but not yet ascended. The glorious and beatific vision and communion is still anti-

icipated, it is not yet experienced. So much at least the words must mean. It is vain for us to conjecture whether He was still in Paradise, the abode of the blessed in Hades, the intermediate state, and had not yet passed to the perfect glory and blessedness of His Father's Presence, whether the visible and tangible manifestations of Himself during the forty days were in accord with the laws of that mode of existence, whether that He might taste death for every man, pass through the complete experience of dying, it was necessary that His ascension should thus for a brief period be delayed. This, however, may be said, that probably these forty days were significant for Jesus as well as His disciples. Before attempting by means of other utterances to define what this ascension meant for Jesus, we must inquire why this anticipation was given as the reason for the prohibition of the tokens of affection, which Mary in the delight of her discovery attempted to bestow on Him. As the connexion between the prohibition and the explanation is by no means obvious, other reasons for the former have been sought, and may at the outset be set aside. The action was not forbidden as indecorous, for Jesus allowed the sinful woman thus to show her devotion (Luke vii. 45). Mary was not forbidden to test the reality of Christ's presence by touch; for there is no suggestion that that was her intention; and had it been, Jesus would not have refused it, as He offered it to Thomas (John xx. 27). It is a mere speculation that the embrace would have hindered the process of glorification. Had it been adoration Mary offered, that would not have been refused, for it was accepted from Thomas (ver. 28). Jesus describes the goal towards which He is moving in order to make clear to Mary that the starting-point of the path has once for all been left behind. Her act assumed a restoration of the former intimate associations, the loving intercourse which had

been enjoyed during the earthly life of Jesus. She needed to be taught that that relationship was for ever ended. He who was ascending to the Father after the conquest of death could not return to the former conditions even in His relationship to His loved friends. A spiritual communion would take the place of the intimacy that found expression in outward tokens of affection. The present was a period of transition when the old bonds could not be restored, but when the new links could be prepared. Just as at the beginning of His ministry Jesus had to disown the claim of His mother to control the exercise of His powers (John ii. 4), and at its close in bequeathing her to His beloved disciple (xix. 26, 27). He had to sever the natural relationship, so now He had to raise Mary from the lower to the higher fellowship.

(6) The necessary change of relationship did not involve any alteration in the affection. The love of Jesus for His own had survived death. Was it the instinct of the heart to meet His disciples again amid familiar surroundings which would recall their common life and work which prompted His first command, "Go tell my brethren that they depart into Galilee, and there shall they see Me" (Matt. xxviii. 10)? Was it the impatience of love that urged Him to come into their midst in the Upper Room (Luke xxiv. 36)? Did their misery, doubt, fear, bewilderment, which even His message through the women to whom He appeared could not remove so touch His heart that He could no longer withhold the help and comfort of His Presence from them? The Gospels do not offer us the materials to answer these questions; but it is probable that in the condition of the disciples, and the adaptation of Christ's grace to their need lies the solution of the problems that our fragmentary records leave unsolved. There were three services that the love of Jesus had to render to His

disciples in His intercourse with them after the Resurrection. He had first of all to remove their helpless and hopeless grief on account of His death. This feature of His ministry to their need is made prominent in the record of the walk to Emmaus. His rebuke and His argument alike prove the continuity of His dealing with His disciples. "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Behoved it not the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" (Luke xxiv. 25-26). As has been shown in previous studies Jesus Himself learned His vocation and the method of its fulfilment from meditation on the Holy Scriptures. He in the training of the Twelve in preparation for His Passion made His appeal to the same authority. The disciples should have been prepared both for the death and for the rising again; and should not have been comfortless regarding the one, and hopeless of the other. It was no mere accommodation to their Jewish beliefs that made Him now repeat this argument; it had significance and value for Him now as before, for in His filial consciousness the one fatherly will joined prophecy and fulfilment. The general statement in ver. 27, "beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself," does not affirm Jesus' responsibility for the use of this method which was current in the Christian Church, and which from the standpoint of a historical interpretation of the Old Testament is open to objection. We may assume that on this occasion Christ used the Scriptures as He had been in the habit of doing; and if so, then the argument is as valid for us to-day as it was for the disciples then. Even the Risen Lord found in prophecy the assurance of the necessity of the death He had experienced and the certainty of the Ascension, "the entrance into glory," which He was still anticipating.

(7) The second service which He had to render to His disciples was to assure them of the reality of the Resurrection, and His own personal identity. When He appeared to the Eleven in the Upper Room He offered them the test of touch (Luke xxiv. 38-49, John xx. 20), and even partook of food (Luke xxiv. 41-43). His conversation with Thomas showed His anxiety that they should be thoroughly persuaded; but also His disappointment that they should need so much persuading. "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John xx. 29). The rebuke applies to the other disciples as well as Thomas. His teaching regarding His death and resurrection with its appeal to prophecy, confirmed by the message to meet Him in Galilee which He had entrusted to the women, should have been sufficient evidence of His resurrection to His disciples. Thomas differed from the others only in being more persistent in his doubt, for he resisted their additional testimony. Just as Jesus rated low the faith that rested on His miracles during His earthly ministry (John iv. 48) so belief in His resurrection which needed these sensible proofs was less satisfactory to Him, because showing less spiritual discernment than a humble and confident trust in His word. It was a disappointment to Jesus that His teaching had failed to sustain the hope of His disciples through the trial of His death. It is not unlikely that Jesus Himself would have esteemed the *Easter-faith*, the conviction that His life and work were of such infinite value to God that He must prove the conqueror of death, without the *Easter-message*—the sensible evidences of the reality of His Resurrection—as much more precious than this belief which rested on the signs of sense. But the narratives make plain and certain that the disciples were quite incapable of the *Easter-faith*, and only very

reluctantly accepted the *Easter-message*. As during His earthly life He had been alone, misunderstood and even mistrusted by His disciples, so even after His Resurrection He was solitary. He looked for faith without sight and found it not. His Presence of love at first awakened doubt and fear; but the persistent energy of His love at last conquered dread and unbelief.

(8) The third service was this: having restored their faith, hope, love towards Himself, He had to commit to them the work which it was appointed of God that they should do. Their calling was to be that of "witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts i. 8). They were to continue His work on earth. "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John xx. 21). They were being sent as witnesses "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem" (Luke xxiv. 47). Their commission is expressly set forth in the words, "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you" (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20). Their authority in dealing with the souls of men is to be as Christ's own. "Whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whosoever sins ye retain they are retained" (John xx. 23). Even if in some of these sayings there is "summed up the Church's confession of faith conceived as uttered by the lips of the Risen One" (Bruce, *Expositor's Greek Testament*, i. p. 340), yet the teaching of Jesus in His earthly life presents Him as the sole Revealer of God as Father, and the sole Redeemer of all mankind from sin, guilt, death, doom. The mission of the disciples was to bear this message to all the nations; and whether in

these exact words or not the commission did come to the Church from the lips of the Risen Lord Himself. That Jesus after as before His Resurrection was conscious of His own absolute worth to, and His own universal claim on, all mankind it seems impossible to doubt. To the writer it does not seem at all improbable that Christ's own consciousness of what ascension to the Father meant for Him is expressed in the assurance, "All authority hath been given unto Me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. xxviii. 18), and the promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (ver. 20). The history of the spread of the Gospel and the growth of the Kingdom throughout the centuries, and the experience of Christian believers in all generations confirm the truth of both sayings. As the Son most fully and clearly revealing God, and as the Saviour delivering mankind from the greatest evil, it is fitting to His function that local manifestations should be changed to universal presence, and that His authority, though delegated and mediatorial, should be freed from the limitations which the conditions of incarnation necessarily involved. So indissolubly connected with His person and work are divine revelation and human redemption, so complete is the union of the Son with the Father, that it may be affirmed with confidence that wherever God is and works in grace, there is the Risen Lord, ascended to the Father. It does seem to the writer not only possible, but even necessary, to assign to the Ascension this significance and value as the continuation of the process begun at the Resurrection. Although the words that express Jesus' consciousness of His exaltation were spoken before His ascension, yet it is evident that they are prophetic, as the seals attached to the commission given to the disciples, the fulfilment of which, however, still lay in the future, and was dependent on their endowment with power from on high.

(9) The promise of the Spirit was repeated on several occasions by the Risen Lord. His words to the Eleven, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (John xx. 22), accompanied by the symbolic act of breathing upon them, were evidently prophetic (if the Fourth Evangelist has not anticipated events in his record), as in the parallel narrative in Luke it is a promise which is given, for the fulfilment of which the disciples are enjoined to wait. "Behold I send forth the promise of My Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high" (xxiv. 49). In the record of the Ascension in Acts the same promise and the same injunction are given (i. 4, 5, 8). What then was this power from on high? The descent of the Spirit at Pentecost is often misrepresented both as regards its character and conditions. The abnormal accompaniments were of secondary importance; the primary feature was the holy enthusiasm which possessed the apostolic company. Confidence and courage took the place of uncertainty and despondency. The boldness of Peter and John was what most impressed the Jewish Sanhedrim (Acts iv. 13). Enthusiasm begets energy, spiritual vitality shows itself in moral vigour. The power the disciples received as witnesses was that of absolute certainty in their convictions regarding the Risen Lord. Hence the descent of the Spirit was not unprepared, not unconnected with the condition of the disciples resulting from their intercourse with Christ. When faith in His absolute authority and universal presence triumphed over all their doubts and fears, and took complete possession of them, then the Spirit came upon them. Fellowship with the Risen Lord, the living Christ, is ever the condition of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

(10) To pursue this subject would, however, lead us beyond the limits prescribed for these *Studies*, and we

must turn from it to consider two manifestations of the Risen Lord, which have not yet been brought into the discussion, one because of its peculiar place in the evangelical testimony, and the other because it was subsequent to the Ascension. The appendix to the Fourth Gospel (chapter xxi.) is an addition not only outside its plan, but evidently included at a later date to remove a current misconception of a traditional saying about the beloved disciple (ver. 23). It has already been mentioned that the first part (verses 1-14) presents a parallel to the account Luke (v. 1-11) gives of the call of Peter, and although there are differences in details it is impossible to affirm confidently that it cannot be a variant tradition of the same occurrence. The second part (15-23), if detached from the first, offers no indication of time and place. These difficulties must be recognized. Nevertheless the conversation of Jesus with Peter is one which it would cause us keen regret to lose. Without laying any emphasis on the different meaning of the words ἀγαπᾷς and φιλεῖς both translated "lovest thou," or any of the other variations of language, we must be impressed by the grace of Jesus, which that the restoration to service might be complete pressed for a full repentance. The question "lovest thou Me more than these?" was doubtless intended to recall to Peter his foolish boast, "Although all shall be offended, yet will not I" (Mark xiv. 29). Dr. Dods' great authority as an expositor cannot convince me that this is not the only possible reference. See *Expositor's Greek Testament*, i. p. 870). The threefold repetition of the question would remind him of his threefold denial. Peter's grief was the sorrow of penitence, as his words "Thou knowest all things" were its confession. He remembered the guilty past which his Lord knew, and yet dared to claim that he still loved. If there is no joy like the joy of forgiveness, surely it was a most gracious

act of Christ's grace that He gave Peter the opportunity of penitence, and Himself the occasion for pardon. Must one not add that surely that grace was shown as soon as possible, and that one is inclined to sacrifice the historical accuracy of the writer of this appendix to the Fourth Gospel, so that one may identify this meeting of Jesus and Peter with that mentioned in Luke's Gospel (xxiv. 34)? One may ask, would Peter unpardoned have been found in the Apostolic company? Could the loving heart of Jesus have left him so long uncomforted? The incident loses much of its significance if placed at a later date and after another meeting with Jesus; surely the restoration to apostleship must have taken place at the first and not the second meeting. The writer must leave these suggestions, as a definite answer is unattainable.

(11) Paul regarded the appearance of Christ to himself on the way to Damascus as having the same character as the manifestation of the Risen Christ before the Ascension. This does not exclude the possibility already suggested, that the mode of the appearance, although not less objective, was different, as Christ had ascended to the Father. The form of Christ was invested in dazzling splendour. Without here discussing the attempts to explain this vision subjectively, and assuming its objectivity, we may now call attention to two indications which the narrative affords of the inner life of the ascended Lord. In the parable of the judgment He had identified Himself with the people in regarding service rendered to them as to Him, and neglect of them as of Him (Matt. xxv. 40, 45). So here the persecution of His Church is persecution of Himself, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest" (Acts ix. 5). He, the High Priest within the veil, is touched with the feeling of our infirmities; He sorrows, suffers, struggles with us. The spread of His Gospel and the growth of the Kingdom are still His interest.

The Lord describes Saul to Ananias as "a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel (ver. 15)." Must we not ask, were none of the vessels already chosen worthy and fit for this service? The hesitation of the Apostles in regard to the admission of the Gentiles to the Church, their indifference to the fulfilment of their commission in its world-wide range, the opposition that Paul's efforts afterwards met with from the church in Jerusalem, compel us to recognize that Jesus did not see the travail of His soul and was not satisfied with the work of His Apostles. The persecutor had by a violent birth (1 Cor. xv. 8, ὡσπερὶ τῷ ἐκτρώματι) to be made the preacher in order that the purpose of Christ might find fulfilment. The Lord appeared that the burden of His Church might be relieved, that the task of His Church might be discharged. Although such appearance is not now the means He uses, yet His passion with and His action in His Church, His body, "the fulfilment of Him that filleth all in all" (Eph. i. 23), are constant and universal. The "inner life" of Jesus which has been the subject of these *Studies*—His truth, holiness, grace—is always and everywhere the life of God in man, and man in God.

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