

and absurd. On the other hand, when we retain the "not," as thoroughly well attested by the preponderance of the *external* and the decisiveness of the *internal* evidence, the reasoning and severe censure of the Apostle, in view of the presumptuous incursions of the errorists into the spiritual world in support of their false teaching, become intelligible and lucid: "Let no one condemn you at will in, etc., rashly intruding into things which, *I trow*, he hath not seen, being puffed up by his carnal intellect" (*νοός*). (To avoid confusion with the "*carnal mind*" of Rom. viii. 6, 7—where there is the different Greek word, *φρόνημα*—it is necessary and more relevant here to render *νοός* by "*intellect*"; and the *εἰκῆ*, *at random, rashly* [R.V. *vainly*], is more suitably joined with the "*intruding*" than with the "*being puffed up*": but it may be taken either way.)

In conclusion, then, after a minute investigation, step by step, of the language and argument of the verse and context, the R.V. is seen to be in error throughout, and to give to the passage partly an entirely wrong sense, and partly no sense at all. The right reading and rendering of the verse will be as follows:—"Let no one condemn you at will in the matter of fasting and ceremonial religion [*or ordinances*] of the angels, rashly intruding into the things which, *I trow*, he hath not seen, being puffed up by his carnal intellect, and not holding fast the Head."

JOHN B. McCLELLAN.

## THE ESCHATOLOGY OF THE GOSPELS.

### IV. JESUS.

#### VARIOUS MODES OF UNDERSTANDING (St. John).

OUR investigation of the Gospel-tradition led us to the conclusion that there are different lines of thought, and various groups of sayings, which have each of them the

same claim to be accounted for, if we try to make out what was Jesus' own opinion. We will do our best to combine them in the way of a psychological analysis of the leading ideas in Jesus. Contrary to the order of our former investigation, we will begin with the third group of sayings, i.e. the non-eschatological group, which we found to cover the most space and to be of the highest importance.

(a) Jesus, as it is commonly said, started as a teacher of piety and morality. So at least people understood Him. They called him a rabbi, remarking, however, that there was something in Him far above the doctrine of the rabbis of His time. It has been proclaimed by many a rationalistic writer of recent time, and especially by modern Jewish authorities, that Jesus was nothing but a reformer of moral ideas, and that He did not go beyond the line of the best moralists of His time, such as, e.g., Rabbi Hillel. There are coincidences, of course, for Hillel also summed up the whole of the law in one sentence, the so-called golden rule. But we need only read attentively Jesus' explanation of the law as given in Matthew v. to see the difference. He expresses not an individual opinion which may be balanced by the authority of some other rabbi—the way in which the rabbinical schools of that time used to settle questions concerning the law—but gives *the* explanation; He fulfils the law, as it is said, by setting finally the rule which is to guide its interpretation. He even speaks with no less authority than the law itself: "You have heard that it was said to them of old time: but I say unto you," and sometimes He sets aside the letter of the law by giving higher ordinances of His own, as in the law of the Sabbath, the law of purification, the law of divorce, etc.

There are others who consider Him more than a rabbi, and are prepared to acknowledge that His teaching is rather to be compared with the teaching of the great

prophets of a former time, the prophets whose great work was to raise the religion of Israel to a higher platform of ethical conceptions. Jesus, it has been said, overcame the rabbinical Judaism of His time, with all its ritualistic and legalistic moralities, by going back to the simple and lofty standard of the old prophets. There is undoubtedly some truth in this statement. We need only read Mark vii. or x. to see how deeply Jesus' mind was filled with prophetic sayings, how He opposed Old Testament authority to the traditional doctrine of the rabbis of His time. But this touches only the form of His utterances, and you will remark that while the prophet is speaking in the name of his God, Jesus sets His own authority even against the Divine Law. There is something more in His teaching than a mere restoration of the old prophetic religion.

In the last twenty years there has been a great change as regards Jesus' teaching—or rather, our view of religion has been changed by rediscovering that morals, however important in religion, are not *the* religion, that there is in religion something beyond all that is moral, intellectual, aesthetic, some real intercourse with God. We may call this mysticism, only that it is not necessarily mysticism in the strict sense of the word with a naturalistic notion about Deity as its basis and including some materialistic means of intercourse with the Divine. In Judaism, certainly, this element of nature-religion had been cast away long before, and it came into Christianity only later through pagan influence. It marks the position of Jesus in the history of religion, that He is the culmination of that line of religion which has broken off all relation to the primitive cult of nature and has put in its place the idea of God's moral holiness, and that to do the will of God makes the man religious. But, as we have remarked already, to do the will of

God is not in itself the religion, but a part of it, or, rather, a consequence of it. The centre of religion is a real experience of God's presence and helpfulness, of His grace and mercy. And this is what we find in complete fulness in Jesus. It is only by taking account of this fundamental part of Jesus' doctrine, that we can hope to approach His own meaning as well as His position in the history of mankind. Jesus' teaching deals not so much with morals, however important the moral element of His teaching may be : He preaches a new relation of God to man and of man to God ; or better, he brings, He represents this new relation. And this is, we may say confidently, what constitutes His distinction from, and His superiority to all prophets. He has in Himself the unity with God which He brings to mankind. He does not only tell how to realise a new form of relation to God ; He embodies it in Himself.

(b) Now, without entering into the profound question of metaphysical speculation, we may simply say that Jesus, according to His own words, felt this relation to God to be unique in Himself, and that He had no other means of explaining it and speaking about it than by calling God His Father and Himself God's Son. We may be sure He supposed that the same relation ought to exist between God and every one else. But His refined moral sense must have discovered at a very early period of His life the difference between Himself and others in this respect, He Himself being in uninterrupted communion with His Father, while all others were separated from God by sin. He felt the longer, the more that it was His task to bring them into full communion with God. His life was to be devoted to this very aim, to remove all that could stand between God and mankind.

This is, I should think, the real meaning of what we call Jesus' "*Taufserlebnis*," the experience at the moment of

His baptism: He became aware of this as the task laid upon Him by His Father's will. This, at the same time, explains the story of the temptation, that in taking upon Him that task, He had to come to terms with the ordinary Messianic notion of His people. "*Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased.*" This Jesus had known all His life; but at this very moment it gained a new significance for Him. He was to be the Son of God, acknowledged as such by His people; in other words, He was to be the Messiah.<sup>1</sup> Of course, Jesus did not think of Himself as the Messiah according to the current popular notion; this He declined, as we learn from the story of the temptation. Whatever may be the kernel of this story, it shows that it is a mistake, in order to get at a solution of the problem, to start from the current popular notion and ask how Jesus could adopt this. The late Professor A. Merx (of Heidelberg) was quite right in denying that Jesus ever thought of adopting this.<sup>2</sup> We have to go the opposite way: we take it for granted that Jesus had a peculiar estimation of His own importance, what German theology calls His "*Selbstbewusstsein.*" Conscious as He was of a unique position involving a great task as well as a supreme authority, He had no other notion in the language of His people to describe this position than that of Messiah. Rabbi was a common title, expressing the human authority of scholarship, a man of letters, a man who studies and knows the law. Jesus was no man of letters: He of course knew the law, but not by scholarly training; He knew it as the will of His Father. He was far above all that could be meant by calling Him a rabbi. Nor would prophet have been sufficient to express His own self-appreciation; there had

<sup>1</sup> Cp. on this topic E. Schürer, *Das messianische Selbstbewusstsein Jesu*, Göttingen, 1903.

<sup>2</sup> *Die vier kanonischen Evangelien*, ii. 1, 1902, 186 and passim.

been prophets in great number : He knew His position was unique ; the prophets had all been talking about a time of fulfilment to come : He was bringing this time. They all derived their authority from a special calling, from individual acts of inspiration : He did not need such calling ; His understanding of God His Father was beyond all inspiration. So to express His unique position there was no other means than to adopt the title of Messiah, and to express His task there was no other way than to preach the Kingdom of God, because the Messiah was to bring salvation, and the Kingdom of God was the most comprehensive term for final salvation. Both notions undoubtedly included at that time many other things. So it has been said, with some appearance of truth, that Jesus, when adopting such terms in a sense different from the current one, was bound to give at the beginning of His teaching a clear statement about His own understanding of it. As He did not do so, He must, we are told, have taken the notions in their current sense, and we are bound to accept them in the realistic meaning of late Jewish eschatology. I do not think the presuppositions are right : Jesus was not a philosopher proceeding upon definitions and conclusions. He was a preacher, or rather, His way was preaching. And we see Him going on slowly in His declarations. He likes to make men find out by themselves what He is. You remember His answer to the Baptist. He likes to put forth things in such a way that they are clear for those who are willing to understand, whereas others may guess as they like. Mark is surely not quite wrong in his statement regarding the parabolic form of Jesus' teaching—parables including indeed, besides their proper aim of illustrating, some element of concealment. So it is easy enough to explain how the Messiahship of Jesus came to be looked upon by His disciples as a mystery not to be revealed to the people.

There is no necessity for accepting the ingenious, but rather too ingenious, theory of the late Professor W. Wrede (of Breslau),<sup>1</sup> who maintained this conception of a mystery to involve the implicit confession that at a later time two opposite views were combined, viz., an earlier view regarding Jesus as Messiah only after His death and resurrection, and a later one taking Him as Messiah already in His lifetime.

As an example of Jesus' own way of dealing with His Messiahship, let us take His entrance into Jerusalem, which usually is declared to be the most solemn form of Messianic self-declaration. But where is the Messianic element? To ride upon an ass is a very common fashion, occurring frequently in Talmudic narratives regarding celebrated rabbis. The devotion of His adherents in breaking branches from the trees and putting their garments in the way, is not so extraordinary in eastern lands as it may seem to western readers. Even the shouting, "*Hosanna! Blessed He who comes in the name of the Lord,*" is not by itself a clear statement of Messiahship, for Matthew, as a matter of fact, says that the people declared Jesus to be the prophet from Galilee (xxi. 11). So His entrance was not interpreted as a royal one, as a solemn declaration of Messianic dignity. I quite agree that Jesus Himself meant to enter the capital of His people as the Messiah, and that by riding on an ass He intended to make allusion to the prophecy of Zechariah; but the manner He chose for His entrance was very fit for declaring His Messianic dignity to those who were able and inclined to understand and to conceal it from the others. Whatever one may think of this behaviour, I am sure there is no other means of explaining the tradition. Jesus goes His way in the full consciousness of His unique position; but while others would have spoken of their mission in the highest terms,

<sup>1</sup> *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien*, 1901.

He only preaches the Kingdom of God, and chooses for Himself the lowest of all Messianic titles—a title not even regarded as involving Messiahship by the mass of the people. He does His work, and He leaves it to His Father to reveal His Son to mankind. This He tells us in that famous saying called usually, according to Luke's introduction, "the Agalliasis" (Luke x. 21, 22; Matt. xi. 25, 27). Jesus is the Messiah. However slow may be the understanding of His claim on the part of His disciples, He is the Messiah from the very beginning of His public career, and not only, as has been said recently,<sup>1</sup> from the time of His transfiguration. This transfiguration has significance not for Himself but for His disciples, the heavenly voice being not a declaration on the part of the Father to the Son, like that at the baptism, "*Thou art My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,*" but rather a declaration to the witnesses on behalf of the Son, "*This is My beloved Son: hear ye Him*" (Mark ix. 7).<sup>2</sup>

Jesus not only preaches the Kingdom of Heaven, He brings it by casting out devils and forgiving sins, by healing diseases and filling men with a new spirit, by spreading around Himself an atmosphere of happiness and salvation. Whoever enjoys in company with Him His complete communion with God, belongs to the Kingdom and gets all its blessings.

All this belongs to what we called the transmuted eschatology; this best expresses Jesus' proper view. The second group of sayings, however small it may be, is the most conspicuous: Jesus the Messiah, i.e. the Saviour bringing actual and present salvation to all those who

<sup>1</sup> Harnack, *Sprüche Jesu*, 138, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Harnack (l.c. 172<sub>2</sub>) is quite right insisting upon the priority of the *Sohnesbewusstsein* compared with the *Messiasbewusstsein*; but these two steps in the evolution of Jesus' self-consciousness correspond to the period before His public ministry and during it, not to two parts of His public life.



follow Him, salvation indeed in a purely religious and moral sense, very different from what people expected: "*Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.*"

(c) There still remains the first group of purely eschatological sayings, and we have now to try to make out their significance for Jesus Himself and His disciples. Thinking of Jesus as a teacher of systematic theology, one would be inclined to say: Granted that Jesus was persuaded that He was the Messiah in the true religious sense of the word and brought salvation to His people, there was no need of talking about a future Kingdom of God or of a coming again in the clouds of heaven. These are notions belonging to a former stage of religious insight, and corrected and overthrown by Jesus' own new views. Transmuted eschatology makes eschatology an unnecessary and even wrong supposition. So one could argue; but I do not think that this is right. Jesus, looking upon the misunderstanding and even hatred with which He met, could not think of His actual work as being the final establishment of God's Kingdom. Jesus reading the Holy Scriptures could not help acknowledging that the prophecies wanted some other fulfilment. Being convinced that He was the Messiah, and that He was bringing salvation to His people and all mankind, He had to look forward to a final success, and it was only in the forms given by the prophets of old and by the apocalyptic tradition that He could imagine it. Being sure that He represented in Himself the culmination of the religious history of His people, He could only think of Himself, trained as He was in Jewish views, as standing at the end of history, at the meeting-point of the two ages. Thus His coming back with the clouds of heaven in the glory of the Father and the holy angels must needs occur in a very short time. This, I think, is the way in which one may easily explain how Jesus came to accept the eschato-

logical views of His time. Conservative as He was, I think this was only natural for Him (if we are allowed to apply psychology to so exceptional a case). He did but add eschatological expectation to His conviction of being already in an eschatological relationship to the world, the term being understood in the transmuted sense. It was an inevitable consequence of His trust in God His Father. God could not leave His work undone or only half done. He would certainly bring it to a plain issue. He was bound to fulfil all His promises. Salvation, as brought by Jesus, was only an individual and inward experience; it ought to be some collective and outward fact. It is, as we have seen, characteristic of Jesus' eschatological teaching, that He makes no efforts to get a more detailed view of eschatology; he confines Himself to repeating the outlines of what was given by prophetic and apocalyptic tradition, emphasising only two points, viz., the responsibility of men regarding the coming judgment and that He Himself is the Son of Man, who will pronounce judgment. As he expressly says about the time, that no one, not even the Son, but only the Father knows it, so He leaves to the Father also the form in which all that is to be expected will be fulfilled. He only expresses His own opinion that it will happen soon, so that men must be prepared, and that it will be glorious, so that He Himself will be justified even in the eyes of His enemies, who condemned Him to death.

If we take it in this fashion, we shall easily come to a fair understanding. And we shall, I think, discover at the same time how to deal with the difficult question whether Jesus was misled in His expectation.

In fact, He did not come back in the clouds of heaven in the lifetime of His own generation. He has not come yet. The history of the world did not come to an end soon after mankind reached its highest religious level

in Jesus; it has continued through many centuries, going up and down, mankind falling back to a lower standard and climbing again, but never reaching the height represented in Jesus. So He was wrong in His expectation. Was He really? If we keep to the letter of His words, we cannot help agreeing that He was wrong regarding the outward form of His predictions, and especially the time of God's fulfilment. But this does not involve, I am sure, any imperfection on His side, any more than His opinion about the sun as a star going around the earth, or about the Pentateuch as a book written by Moses. In all these respects He was a Jew of His time. But as we have remarked already, the form of His expectation was unimportant even for Himself. He left it to His Father how and when He would realise it. His belief was that His work and His own person could not be overthrown, that His work, confined as it was to a small circle, should gain universal importance and undisputed success, and that He Himself should be acknowledged by every man as what He was: the King of the Kingdom of God.

Now in this expectation He was not wrong. His work has gone on through His death and resurrection in a wonderful way: the Church founded by His disciples upon belief in His name, has spread through the world, and will—so we hope—gain the whole earth. He Himself is acknowledged and adored as the Son of God by millions and millions of believers. Looking back through history, we may see His work in the judgment upon His nation, the Holy City being destroyed and the nation scattered over the world. So far Luke's interpretation is right; only it is the view of a later time regarding Jesus' prophecies in the light of a fulfilment, and he himself did not think in this way. We may truly say that it pleased God to fulfil Jesus' words thus, but we would be guilty of false witness if we dared to maintain that Jesus Himself expressed this as His own opinion.

## II.

Beside this historical *ex eventu* interpretation, there is another, which is regarded by many a pious Christian as the true one. I mean the interpretation given to the eschatological sayings in the Fourth Gospel. I have avoided up till now making use of this Gospel, the reason for which will be seen presently. Our research, however, would not be complete if we did not at least glance at it.

As a specimen I select two passages dealing with Jesus' coming (xiv. 15-29), and with the judgment (v. 19-29), two notions of undoubted eschatological origin.

(a.) It is rather hard to say what the coming in chap. xiv. may be meant to be. As the sayings concerning this idea are placed now between other sayings dealing with the coming of the Comforter, one would feel inclined to say : it is Jesus coming by His Spirit ; it is at Pentecost that this promise was fulfilled. But there is evidently some distinction between the sending of the Comforter and the coming of Jesus Himself. When we compare chap. xvi. v. 16, "*A little while, and ye behold Me no more (ye shall not see Me, A.V.), and again a little while, and ye shall see Me,*" we feel compelled to think of the appearances of the risen Lord. And this would suit very well the question of that other Judas (chap. xiv. v. 22) : "*Lord, what is come to pass that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not unto the world ?*" The risen Lord appeared, as has been remarked from the earliest time, only to His believers, and the Greek used here, *ἐμφανίσειν ἑαυτόν*, is a technical term for appearances of healing gods who come to visit their adherents in dreams. But let us look more closely at the two verses, xvi. 16 and xiv. 19, and it will appear that there is a marked difference. The former, "*A little while, and ye behold Me no more, and again a little while, and ye shall see Me,*" has certainly to do with death and resurrection. But the latter

in the passage before us, "*Yet a little while, and the world beholdeth Me no more, but ye behold Me ; because I live, <and> ye shall live also,*" runs quite differently. It is the abiding communion of the Lord with His disciples, unbroken even by death, which finds here a splendid exposition. That this is the true meaning will be seen by the answer given to Judas : "*If a man love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and WE will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*" It is impossible not to see that this means nothing else than an inward dwelling of God and of the Lord in the hearts of Christians, what we may call mystical union, although St. John understands it rather in an ethical than in a mystical way. Even this idea of an indwelling God can be traced back to an eschatological conception, found in the Old Testament prophets : God abiding in the midst of His people, either in the temple of His Holy City, or perhaps, as it is put in the Christian apocalypse, instead of the temple. There is no need of sunlight, God Himself being in their midst. But you will easily observe how much this is altered. There is no more eschatology ; its place has been taken by mysticism ; the nation has given place to the individual. Instead of dwelling in the midst of His people, God is dwelling inwardly in the hearts of the individual believers. Now when we ask, Is this Jesus or is it a Johannine conception, one may at first sight be inclined to think of it as a genuine utterance of the Lord. It is very like what we have called transmuted eschatology. I need only remind you of our interpretation of the word ἐντὸς ὑμῶν (Luke xvii. 21), which we found to represent Jesus' own teaching, that the kingdom is "within you," i.e. something inward, an experience of the heart, a rule governing man's will. But—we must remark the very important difference—it is the Kingdom of God which is here spoken of, not God or Jesus ; it is a purely ethical

inwardness, expressed by these words, while there is some mystical element in the words as given by the Fourth Gospel, personal union between God and man, Jesus and man. And this is not an original view of Jesus; it is, however, what we find in St. John elsewhere. We need only compare Revelation iii. 20: "*Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.*" It is the well-known eschatological notion of a Messianic supper, where all the saints will be at table with the Son of Man and the patriarchs. Only it is not said here, "He who hears my voice shall enter into the wedding and sit down at My table," but, "I will come in to him and will sup with him." It is again an inward and individual experience instead of an outward and collective fact; the eschatological picture is turned into some mystical idea. Here we have the Johannine conception as we found it in the Gospel. So I venture to say: The coming of the Lord promised by Himself as an outward eschatological act is changed into an inward mystical experience by this Johannine colouring of His words. I quite agree that there is some connexion with one line of Jesus' thoughts. His conception of the ethical inwardness of religion reacted upon the eschatological ideas, and out of this combination there arose what we rightly may call the Johannine mysticism. Only, in order to understand this process thoroughly, we must remember that it was not in Palestine but in Asia Minor that St. John—whoever he was—lived; that he was surrounded by a Hellenistic atmosphere; and that this, full of mysticism, helped to transform his Jewish conceptions. The ethical inwardness of Jesus and the mysticism of Hellenistic religion had to co-operate in order to produce this change of attitude. So it happened that the idea of the Parousia was turned into the idea of Jesus coming into the hearts of His believers.

This interpretation, however, does not account for the whole passage we are dealing with. We do not reach the full meaning of its content if we confine ourselves to this mystical colouring of the original eschatological conception. There is another element in it, which we may call an historical adaptation: the coming of Jesus is understood as meaning the appearances of the risen Lord. This at least is the meaning of some words in these chapters, as we have seen before, the promises of Jesus that He would come again being interpreted from the experiences of the earliest Christianity as fulfilled in the appearances of the risen Lord.

Another experience was the coming of the Holy Ghost, and this led to the juxtaposition of the sayings regarding the Comforter with the sayings about Jesus' own coming, with the result that the latter may now be understood as identical with the former.

So we may rightly distinguish a triple stratification: (1) the underlying eschatological one, representing Jesus' own view; (2) the mystical one, which we may call the main Johannine stratum; and (3) a twofold historical adaptation: Jesus' coming is to be seen in His appearances or in His sending the Comforter; both these adaptations may be attributed to a later stage of Johannine thought, represented by the author of the Fourth Gospel, whom I believe to have been a pupil of John the Presbyter, the Elder of Ephesus.

(b) The other passage which I choose as an illustration is found in chap. v. vv. 19-29. This passage deals with resurrection and judgment, two notions which undoubtedly belong to the eschatological stock of late Jewish doctrines, and are found in Jesus' teaching in their original meaning. But here in the Fourth Gospel we have them coloured almost to an opposite meaning. Except the last two verses, the

passage in question deals entirely with the spiritual experiences of Christianity. The judgment—or, as I would prefer to translate, the discrimination—between good and bad happens not at the end of the world, but, as it is said in chap. iii. vv. 18–21, when Jesus preaches (or the gospel is preached) and one man believes and the other refuses. This is what the Fourth Gospel calls the judgment, a self-going-on process, an automatic judgment upon the moral work of men: those who do well will be attracted by the light of the gospel, those who do badly will withdraw from this light. And so their fate will be decided without any special judgment having to be pronounced on the part of God. This is called *ἡ κρίσις*, the judgment (R.V.), or, as the Authorised Version has it, *the condemnation*. So it is said: “*He that heareth My word, and believeth Him that sent Me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgement but hath passed out of death into life*” (or, *is passed from death unto life*, A.V.). This gives the old notion of resurrection, but changed into something inward, so that it reminds us of the teaching of the Gnostics, as given by the Pastoral Epistles, that the resurrection has already taken place (*ἀνάστασιν ἤδη γεγονέναι*, 2 Tim. ii. 18). This spiritualising tendency of Johannine teaching is best seen in chap. v. v. 25, “*Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.*” This sounds purely eschatological, very like the description of the great act of resurrection as we find it e.g. in St. Paul’s first letter to the Thessalonians (iv. 16), “*For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.*” But as it stands in John v. it cannot be taken in this eschatological sense, but only in a spiritual one: the dead are men dead in their sin; the voice of the Son of God is the preaching of Jesus; not all are listening



to it, only some hear it, i.e. credit Him, believe in Him ; those who believe gain life, not only a life of future time, but life in the full sense of the word, presently.

This meaning here is unmistakable. But the Fourth Gospel does not stop here ; it goes on supplementing the inward spiritual view by an outward eschatological outlook, and thereby distinguishing Johannine theology from the doctrine of Gnostic heretics. We read nearly the same words again, only a few verses later on, v. 28, 29, but now in a clear eschatological form : “ *Marvel not at this ; for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgment* ” (or better, *damnation*, A.V.). It is quite clear : these verses are dealing with some future event—there is no word about the hour being now, as in v. 25 ; they speak of a general resurrection—there is no distinction between those who hear and those who do not hear ; they indicate a bodily resurrection—“ *all that are in the tombs* ” is not susceptible of a spiritual interpretation as “ *the dead* ” of v. 25. There are two different notions of life expressed in these two verses : inward, present, spiritual ; and external, future ; in one word, eschatological. Chap. v. vv. 28, 29 gives indeed the description of what is called in Revelation xx. 7–15 the second resurrection, only that what precedes in v. 25 does not correspond to the first resurrection in Revelation xx. 1–6. It is not so much a first and a second resurrection as a regeneration and then a resurrection. Of course, vv. 28, 29, as they are put now, are meant to be an explanatory repetition, a corroboration and at the same time an interpretation of v. 25 ; but taken in their proper sense, they deal with two quite different notions and originate in different conceptions ; vv. 28, 29 give the current popular eschatology in its realistic form,

which has been transmuted by spiritualising in *v.* 25. The curious phenomenon here is that the transmuted eschatology appears as the main line, the underlying popular eschatology only as an additional feature.

Now this comes very near to what we found in Jesus' own teaching : transmuted eschatology with an additional element of real eschatology ; it is, however, not quite the same. There is a slight difference which prevents us from tracing back this Johannine tradition immediately to Jesus Himself. He never speaks of the judgment as some inward experience of man : to Him it is some future event. He often talks about entering into life, but never as done by the very act of believing in His word : to do so is a privilege granted by God or His Messiah in a future time. On the other side, the idea of a bodily resurrection of all mankind on the day of judgment, so common in late Jewish literature and not uncommon even in the Synoptic Gospels, belongs rather to that stratum of later eschatological additions which we recognised there in our first lecture.

Here we may stop our inquiry into the Johannine branch of Gospel-tradition. The two illustrations I ventured to give will be sufficient, I trust, to show the complicated nature of Johannine doctrines, and what I think to be the right way of dealing with them. There are different stratifications, as modern research (Wendt, Spitta, Wellhausen, Ed. Schwartz) has made more and more conspicuous. Beside some genuine sayings of the Lord, we have what may be called the Johannine tradition, resting largely upon original conceptions of Jesus, but transforming them in the direction of mysticism ; and then we have some additional matter, in our case the real eschatology, which perhaps may be traced back to the author of the Fourth Gospel, as distinguished from St. John ; it is, however, possible that it belongs to

a later redaction, of which chap. xxi. gives ample proof.

The main Johannine stratum, with its characteristics of individualistic, ethical, inward transformation of the current Jewish eschatology, bears signs of close affinity to the gospel of Jesus ; but at the same time there is a marked difference: the Johannine doctrine has a distinct touch of mysticism, which is entirely wanting in the teaching of Jesus, and is to be explained by Hellenistic influences.

The validity of this distinction being granted, we may, without fear of misunderstanding, declare that we take the Johannine doctrine as an approximately good expression of Jesus' own views. The mystical inwardness of St. John certainly approaches far more nearly to Jesus' real meaning than the enlarging and enforcing of His eschatological utterances which we remarked in some passages of the Synoptic Gospels, especially St. Matthew. However strong Jesus' belief in eschatology might have been, it was only of secondary importance for His religious life, and for His teaching. It was a misunderstanding on the part of primitive Christianity when they laid the greatest stress on this side of the gospel. It may be called even a sign of decline that the expectation of some outward, realistic event overgrew the joyful experience of inward, present salvation. Later Christianity, when following the Johannine line of thought, came nearer to the true intention of Jesus Himself, notwithstanding His own belief in realistic eschatology.

Christianity is—and will ever be—the religion of sure salvation, brought by Jesus and to be experienced by His believers already during their present life. This does not exclude Christian hope. On the contrary, the more present salvation is experienced in mankind, the stronger Christian hope will be. This is the great lesson given to us by Jesus Himself ; He realised in Himself the complete and supreme communion with God, and yet He looked forward to a

time of final salvation. He was the Son of God, and He had to bring salvation; but His gospel reached only few, and only individuals realised what was given to them in Jesus! However fully they submitted their own will to God, there were powers of evil outside them. The Kingdom of God is not established so long as its dominion is only recognised by individuals; it wants to be collective, universal. Jesus' victory over Satan, His casting out of devils, was only an anticipation.

And this is the abiding truth in eschatology: it is to be sought not in the particulars of Jesus' coming and similar details, but in the fact that we have to expect and to pray for a state of things in which God's dominion will be fully established, and all obstacles, all evil energies finally destroyed.<sup>1</sup> We have seen in St. John's Gospel—and the later history of Christianity affords plenty of similar examples—that this looking out for some external real change is well combined with the finest and best inwardness. The Christian is a new creature, but he looks for a new heaven and a new earth, and his prayer will be for ever as His Lord taught him: "*Thy kingdom come.*"

E. VON DOBSCHÜTZ.

### *MIRACLES AND THE MODERN CHRISTIAN MIND.*

"It is time," observes a recent writer, "that defenders of the Christian faith gave up apologising for it." The tendency to apologise for religious belief, so justly reprobated, has made itself felt nowhere more markedly than in connexion with miracles. All sorts of ingenious excuses have been offered for their occurrence in Bible times. They were necessary, as it has been put, "to arrest the attention

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Dr. Kölbing (formerly Principal of the Moravian Seminary at Gnadensfeld): *Die bleibende Bedeutung der urchristlichen Eschatologie*, 1907.