

is at present unchanged intrinsically; *potentially* transformable when caught up into God's great plan of Redemption. Its expectation is of an era or age of glory when all will be finally subject to God (I Cor. xv, 27, 28). The sovereignty of our Lord is, more particularly, that of the Head of the Church Militant, continually at war with powers of evil, until finally the last enemy, death, is destroyed and our Lord 'gives back' the royal, messianic, power—yet He will not cease to reign, even when God is 'all in all' (cf. Allo. I *Corinthians*, Excursus xviii).

The final act of 'submission' of the Son of God will be no lessening of the Son who is God; it is in his human nature that he will be subject—as Redeemer and Mediator. And the submission will be that of the whole Body of our Lord, the Church, and the whole universe of creatures ordained with it, and at present yearning for that final outcome.

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BETHANY

THE Gospel scenes at Bethany (Luke x, 38 f., John xi; Matt xxvi 6 ff.) show in a most charming way the kindness and human affection of our divine Saviour towards a friendly family. But there is another interesting feature about the place which, though not appearing prominently in the sacred writings should be appreciated in its full bearing. The hospitable house of Martha was a pleasant and attractive shelter for our Lord and his companions.

Owing to the hostility of the Samaritans towards the pilgrims whose faces were turned towards Jerusalem (Luke ix, 53), the Galilean travellers to the great feasts, often accompanied by the victims intended for sacrifice, had to make their way along the plain of the Jordan. It was a long detour and the last lap from Jericho to Mount Olivet was most arduous. It is a climb of 3,000 feet within fifteen miles and there is no resting place or water supply except in the middle of the course at the 'Inn of the Good Samaritan' and at the spring of the Apostles just below Bethany. The welcome at Bethany would save the worn-out travellers another tramp of three miles to Jerusalem. The house offered the guests also a quiet place of rest during the noisy and strenuous feast days in Jerusalem (Matt, xxi, 17; Mark xi, 19).

There arises a curious question. How was it that Martha, at a time when Jesus was hardly known as yet in Jerusalem, but well known in Galilee, should pick out the poor wandering Rabbi and his companions from amongst the numerous groups of pilgrims passing her house (Luke x, 38)? The friendship might date back of course to the days of our Lord's early Judæan ministry when many in Jerusalem believed

in His name, (John ii, 23). But it is possible that this was due to the influence of St Mary Magdalen, who according to the Roman liturgy was Martha's sister, cf. Collect of Mass of the feast, 22nd July. There is no conclusive proof of this in the text of the New Testament, but on the supposition of identity certain facts take on a new light. We meet Mary Magdalen first in Galilee (Luke viii, 2, 3). She appears there as a resident, having probably acquired (as women did and still do) a domicile by marriage, if she were a native of Bethany (John xi, 1). Her social position is indicated by the fact that she was a woman of means (perhaps a widow), like Joanna the wife of Herod's steward and Salome the wife of Zebedee, the owner of a thriving fishing business, and others who ministered to the Lord 'of their substance' (Luke viii, 3). She is mentioned again in the company of these women from Galilee in Holy Week and on Easter Sunday morning, practically as their leader, being generally named first (Matt. xxvii, 55-6; xxviii, 1; Mark xv, 40; xvi, 1-4; Luke xxiii, 55-6; xxiv, 1-2; John xix, 25; xx, 1).

The origin of the name Magdalen is obscure. Its earliest appearance is in St Matthew (xxvii, 56, cf. Luke viii, 2), but its derivation is not indicated. It is usually considered to be derived from her place of residence Magdala, now Mejdal, on the western shore of the Lake of Genesareth. On the assumption that she is Martha's sister, she would stay at Bethany only occasionally, in particular at the time of the great feasts, and be known there as plain Mary, the sister and guest of Martha. Thus reading between the lines of St Luke it would appear that having become the friend of our Lord she introduced Him to Martha and met Him shortly afterwards at Bethany (Luke viii, 2; x, 38). Mary Magdalen's position as a visitor would also explain why she did not feel called upon to share her sister's trouble in serving our Lord. We can also easily understand that on the Sabbath, six days before the Pasch, she was at Bethany, but that early on Good Friday she hurried to join her companions in Jerusalem when some of the scattered Apostles had fled on Thursday night to the hospitable roof at Bethany and brought news of the capture of the Master (Matt. xxvi, 56).

The supper at Bethany at which our Lord was entertained (Matt. xxvi; Mark xiv; John xii), deserves special attention because the Gospel accounts of it contain more information than appears at first sight. It was the Sabbath meal on Friday evening, for the Sabbath began at sunset on the Friday; and it was just six days before the Paschal Supper. The Sabbath was, and still is, among the Jews, the most sumptuous repast of the week and especially suitable for entertaining friends (Luke xiv, 12). As the cooking must be finished even in summer by 6.30 and in midwinter by 5.30, there is ample time for conversation and amusement. On the other hand the supper on Saturday had to be prepared late, for no cooking was allowed before sunset, and it was consequently

a hurried and scrappy affair. The host was Simon, known locally as 'the Leper'; perhaps because our Lord had cured him of that disease. Though our Lord was naturally staying with Martha as her guest, He was able to accept Simon's invitation because His hostess, Martha, with her brother and sister were invited too. By custom the women could not sit at table with the men, but did the serving, and had their meal by themselves. Of course the irrepressible Martha took a leading share in the serving. Matthew and Mark who give us the name of the host, also tell of the woman who enters rather boldly, carrying a jar of precious spikenard, and anoints the head of the Master, breaking the pot and pouring the contents on His head. John adds the information that her name was Mary, that the ointment was one pound in weight and that she anointed His feet as well. As she had put it on too thickly she picked up the superfluity with her hair for which it was really meant. And the whole house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment.

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DID CHRIST FORETELL THE END OF THE WORLD IN MARK XIII?¹

FROM general considerations of the nature of 'the Kingdom of God' and from some particular observations upon Luke xvii: 20 ff, we have urged prudence in interpreting all passages which refer to the 'coming' of this Kingdom. With the 'Little Apocalypse' of Mark chap. xiii (Matt. xxiv; Luke xxi and cf. Luke xvii) we touch the heart of the problem. Catholic exegetes maintain the authenticity of this eschatological discourse (against many moderns who question it) but are divided in their interpretation. Most are agreed, however, that the passage treats of two distinct subjects: the Destruction of Jerusalem, the End of the World; they differ only in identifying the point of transition from one subject to the other.

In this brief, too brief, survey of the question we are trying to show that the discourse in its literal sense does not imply two distinct subjects at all but one only: the Destruction of Jerusalem with its positive counterpart, the establishment of Christ's Kingdom as an independent entity on earth.² We do not deny that this great judgement upon Jerusalem, a

¹ The first part of this article appeared in *SCRIPTURE*, Oct. 1950, pp. 222-30, under the title *The Eschatology of the Synoptic Gospels*.

² Cf. A. Feuillet, *Recherches de Science Religieuse*, 35 (1947) 303-27; 36 (1948) 544-65; *Nouvelle Revue Theologique*, 71 (1949) 701-22, 806-28; *Revue Biblique*, 56 (1949) 61-92, 340-64; 57 (1950) 43-62, 180-211.