

CLARKE'S COMMENTARY  
THE NEW TESTAMENT, VOLUME 5A  
MATTHEW THROUGH LUKE  
*by Adam Clarke*

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## EDITOR'S NOTES

Preparing Clarke's Commentary on the Old and New Testaments for an electronic format has been a task of considerable dimensions. The Digital Library edition is the labor of love of Sulu Kelley of Concord, NC, USA. "Mr. Sulu" converted the original text from the six volume edition (originally published in 8 volumes) authored by Adam Clarke between 1810 and 1826. We thank Mr. Kelley for giving us permission to include this the first electronic edition of a most helpful and inspiring work.

The reader is advised to note the following characteristics of this version:

1. There are no Hebrew vowel pointings nor are there any Greek accents. These were not a part of the published editions of Clarke's Commentary.
2. Most capitalizations and many breathing marks were omitted from the Greek text.
3. Adam Clarke had an exceptional knowledge of Biblical languages and the languages of the earliest (known) Biblical texts. The author provides numerous references to versions in various languages which contain nuances and/or insight into the meaning of a given text. These references frequently contained phrases printed in Arabic and Anglo-Saxon among others. We anticipated few of the Library readers would have an appreciation for these references, particularly since the script and dialects of many of them were outside the scope of almost anyone's experience or education. Since these references are usually transliterated and/or explained by Mr. Clarke, we have omitted these scripts. We have observed the following abbreviation conventions when the associated language/script has been removed from the text: [AS] Anglo-Saxon; [A] Arabic, Arabian; [P], Persic, Persian; [S] Syriac, Syrian; [H] Hindu.
4. The printed version contains material not included in this electronic version: The King James text, from which the author worked, and associated cross references are omitted as each phrase discussed is quoted in the analysis itself. Several tables with obscure material are

omitted as it was felt that archaic data on, for example, the motion of the planets, information long since revised and corrected, would not enhance and may even obscure the timeless portions of the commentary.

5. The printed version contains a number of archaic forms of punctuation and capitalization. These were retained if they did not seem to obscure the meaning of the text.

# PREFACE TO THE GOSPEL

OF

ST. MATTHEW

THE general title of this latter collection of sacred books, which, as well as the former, all Christians acknowledge to have been given by immediate inspiration from God, is in the Greek **η καινη διαθηκη**, which we translate THE NEW TESTAMENT: but which should rather be translated THE NEW COVENANT; or, if it were lawful to use a periphrasis, the New Covenant, including a **Testamentary Declaration and Bequest**: for this is precisely the meaning of this system of justice, holiness, goodness, and truth. St. Paul, 2 Corinthians 3:14, calls the sacred books before the time of Christ, **η παλαια διαθηκη**, THE OLD COVENANT; which is a very proper and descriptive title of the grand subject of those books. This apostle evidently considers the Old Testaments and the New, as **two** covenants, Galatians 4:24; and, if comparing these two together, he calls one **παλαιαν διαθηκην**, the **old** covenant, the other **καινην**, the **new**; one **πρωτην**, the **first**, the other **νεαν**, that which is **recent**; in opposition to the old covenant, which was to terminate in the new, he calls this **κρειττανα**, **better**, more **excellent**, Hebrews 7:22; 8:6; and **αιωνιον**, **everlasting**, Hebrews 13:20, because it is never to be changed, nor terminate in any other; and to endure endlessly itself. The word covenant, from **con** together, and **venio**, I come, signifies a contract or agreement made between two parties; to fulfill the conditions of which, they are mutually bound. The old covenant, in its essential parts, was very simple. I WILL BE YOUR GOD. YE SHALL BE MY PEOPLE-the spirit of which was never changed. The people were to take Jehovah as the sole object of their religious worship; put their whole trust and confidence in him; serve him in his own way, according to the prescribed forms which he should lay before them. This was **their part**. On his side, God was to accept them as his people, give them his **Spirit** to guide them, his **mercy** to pardon them, his **providence** to support them, and his **grace** to preserve them unto eternal

life. But all this was connected with the strict observance of a great variety of rites and ceremonies, at once expressive of the holiness of God, the purity of the Divine justice, and the exceeding sinfulness and utter helpless state of man. A great part of the four latter books of Moses is employed in prescribing and illustrating these rites and ceremonies; and what is called the **new covenant** is the complement and perfection of the whole.

The word **διαθηκη**, from **δια** and **τιθημι**, **I lay down**, signifies not only a covenant agreement, but also that disposal which a man makes of his secular matters during his life, which is to take place after his death. It answers to the Hebrew **בְּרִית** **berith**, from **בר** **bar**, to **purify**, because, in making covenants, a sacrifice was usually offered to God, for the purification of the contracting parties; and hence the word **בְּרִית** **berith** is frequently used to express not only the covenant itself, but also the sacrifice offered on the occasion. See below under GOSPEL; and see the notes on Genesis 6:18; 15:18; Exodus 29:45; Leviticus 26:15; and Deuteronomy 29:12, where every thing relative to this subject is minutely considered.

The term new covenant, as used here, seems to mean that grand plan of agreement or reconciliation which God made between himself and mankind, by the death of Jesus Christ; in consequence of which, all those who truly repent, and unfeignedly believe in the great atoning sacrifice, are purified from their sins, and **united** to God. Christ is called **της διαθηκης καινης μεσιτης**, the Mediator of the new covenant, Hebrews 9:15. And referring to the ratification of this new covenant or agreement, by means of his own death, in the celebration of his last supper, Christ calls the cup, **το ποτεριον η καινη διαθηκη εν τω αιματι μου**, **this cup is the new covenant in my blood**: i.e. an emblem or representation of the new covenant ratified by his blood. See Luke 22:20. And from these expressions, and their obvious meaning, the whole Christian Scriptures have obtained this title, THE NEW TESTAMENT, OR COVENANT, OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST.

Those writings, and the grand subject of them, which, previously to the New Testament times, were termed simply THE **covenant**; were, after the incarnation, called the OLD covenant, as we have already seen, to distinguish them from the Christian Scriptures, and their grand subject,

which were called the NEW covenant; not so much because it was a new agreement, but rather a renewal of the old, in which the *spirit, object*, and *design* of that *primitive* covenant were more clearly and fully manifested.

The particular title to each of the four following books, in most Greek MSS. and printed editions, is *εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ ματθαίον-μαρκον-λουκαν-ιοαννην*, which we translate, the Gospel according to Matthew-Mark-Luke-John; i.e. the gospel or history of our blessed Lord, as written and transmitted to posterity by each of these writers. Our word GOSPEL, which should be always written godspel, or godespel, comes from the Anglo-Saxon, and is compounded of [AS], good, and [AS] history, narrative, doctrine, mystery, or secret; and was applied by our ancestors to signify the revelation of that glorious system of truth, which had been, in a great measure, hidden or kept secret from the foundation of the world.

Among Saxon scholars, the word GOSPEL has been variously explained. Mr. Somner, who writes it [AS], explains it thus, Sermo Dei mysticus; Dei historia. “The mystic word of God; the history of God, or God’s history.” But he supposes that it may be compounded of [AS] good, and [AS], a message; and very properly observes, that [AS] signifies, not only to preach, or proclaim the Gospel; but also to foretell, or predict; to prophesy, to divine: and in this latter sense the word [AS] spell was anciently used among us, and still signifies an incantation, or a charm; which implies a peculiar collocation and repetition of certain words, which were supposed to produce supernatural effects by means of spiritual influence or agency; which agency was always attracted and excited by such words, through some supposed correspondency between the words, and the spiritual agency to be employed. The word, in this sense, occurs in King Alfred’s Saxon translation of Boethius, Deuteronomy Consolatione Philosophiae, chap. 38. [AS], Then deceitful men began to practice incantations. It is possible that our ancestors gave this title to the preaching of Christ crucified, from observing the astonishing effects produced by it, in changing the hearts and lives of sinners. And very innocently might they denominate the pure powerful preaching of the death and resurrection of Christ, God’s charm: that wonderful word, which, accompanied with the demonstration and power of the Holy Ghost, produced such miraculous effects among men.

As the word [AS] spellian signifies to teach or instruct, hence our word to spell, i.e. to teach a person, by uniting vowels and consonants, to enunciate words; and thus learn to read. And hence the book out of which the first rudiments of language are learned is termed a spelling book, exactly answering to the [AS] spell-book of our ancestors, which signified a book of homilies, or plain discourses, for the instruction of the common people. We may See (note on “Genesis 1:1”) that [AS] among our ancestors, not only signified GOD, the supreme Being; but also good or goodness, which is his nature: [AS] godspell, therefore, is not only God’s history, doctrine, or plan of teaching; but also the good history, the good doctrine; and hence [AS] to preach or proclaim this doctrine; [AS] the sermons that contained the rudiments of it, for the instruction of men; and [AS] spel-boda, the orator, messenger, or ambassador, that announced it.

The Greek word *ευαγγελιον*, from *ευ good*, and *αγγελια a message*, signifies good news, or glad tidings in general; and is evidently intended to point out, in this place, the good message or the glad tidings of great joy which God has sent to all mankind, preaching peace and reconciliation by Christ Jesus, who is Lord of all: proclaiming that he, as the promised Messiah, has, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man-for he has died for their offenses, and risen again for their justification; and that, through his grace, every sinner under the whole heaven, may turn to God, and find mercy. This is good news, glad tidings, a joyful message; and it is such to all mankind, as in it every human spirit is interested.

It is used in this sense by Achilles Tatius, lib. v. c. 12, *ταυτα ακουσας ο σατυρος, προστρεχει προς την μελιττην ευαγγελια φερων*: Having heard these things, Satyrus ran to Melitta, bringing the good news.

But, besides this general meaning, the word *ευαγγελιον*, has other acceptations in the New Testament, and in the Greek writers, which may be consulted here with great propriety and effect.

1. It signifies the reward given to those who brought good news. Thus Homer represents the disguised Ulysses claiming a reward *ευαγγελιον*, a vest and mantle, should he verify to Eumeus the glad tidings of his master’s safety. *ευαγγελιον δε μοι εστω*. Let me have a reward for my good news. Odyss. xiv. v. 152.



To which Eumeus, who despaired of his master's return, replied:-

ω γερων, ουτ' αρ' εγων ευαγγελιος τοδε τισω,  
ουτ' οδυσσευς ετι οικον ελευσεται. Ib. v. 266

Old friend! nor cloake nor vest thy gladsome news Will ever earn:  
Ulysses comes no more! COWPER

And on the word, as thus used, Eustathius gives the following comment:  
ευαγγελιον; δωρον υπερ αγαθης ευαγγελιας. “Euangelion signifies the  
reward given for bringing good news.”

St. Chrysostom, in his sixth Homily on the Acts, gives this as a common  
meaning of the word. “The Gospel is this: Thou shalt receive good things:  
as men are accustomed in their common conversation to say to each other,  
τι μοι των ευαγγελιων; What reward wilt thou give me for my good  
news? etc.” It is used in the same sense by the Septuagint. 2 Samuel 4:10.  
When one told me, saying, Behold, Saul is dead, thinking to have brought  
good tidings, I took him and slew him in Ziglag, who thought ω εδει με  
δουναι ευαγγελια, that I would have given him A REWARD for his  
tidings. CICERO uses it in the same sense; see his epistles to Atticus, lib. 2.  
ep. 3. O suaves epistolas tuas uno tempore mihi datas duas: quibus  
ευαγγελια quae reddam nescio, deberi quidem, plane fateor. “O, how  
delightful are your epistles! two of which I have received at one time, for  
which I know not what recompense to make: but, that I am your debtor, I  
candidly confess.”

2. It is used also to signify the prayers, thanksgivings, and sacrifices  
offered on the arrival of good news. So Aristophanes, μοι  
δοκει-ευαγγελια θυειν, εκατον βους, τη θεω, I think I should  
SACRIFICE A HECATOMB to the goddess for this intelligence, ARISTOPH. in  
Equit. v. 653.

ISOCRATES (Areopag. initio) is supposed to use the word in the sense of  
supplication, επι τοςανταις πραξεσιν ευαγγελια μεν δις ηδη  
τεθυκαμεν- “relative to these transactions, we have purposed to make  
supplication twice.” Xenophon uses it to denote a eucharistic offering  
made on account of receiving good news. εθυε τα ευαγγελια. See Hist.  
Gr. i. 6, 27. It seems to be used in a similar sense by the Septuagint in 2  
Samuel 18:20, 27.

Other examples might be produced in which the word is used in all the above senses; but these may be deemed sufficient. I would not have been so copious, had not a certain great man denied that the word had the above meanings.

3. However illustrative the above acceptations of *εὐαγγέλιον*, among the Greek writers, may be of the word in relation to the great doctrine of the new covenant; yet, among the sacred writers, it is restricted to express the glad tidings of the coming of the Messiah, for the reasons mentioned above. See Luke 2:10.

4. The whole doctrine of Jesus Christ, comprised in the history of his incarnation, preaching, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, and the mission of the Holy Spirit, by which salvation was procured for a lost world, is expressed by the word *εὐαγγέλιον*, as well as by the general title; *καὶ νη διαθήκη*. Romans 1:1, 3, 9; Matthew 4:23; 9:35; 24:14; Mark 1:14. But the sacred writers use it with a variety of epithets which it may be necessary to mention.

1st, It is sometimes termed, The Gospel of God concerning his Son. Romans 1:1, 3.

2dly, The Gospel of the Son of God. Romans 1:9.

3dly, The Gospel of the kingdom of God. Matthew 4:23; 9:35; 24:14; Mark 1:14.

4thly, Sometimes it is simply called THE GOSPEL. Mark 13:10; Mark 16:15.

5thly, The word or doctrine (*λογος*) of the Gospel. Acts 15:7.

6thly, The Gospel of peace. Ephesians 6:15.

7thly, The Gospel of glory, *το εὐαγγέλιον της δοξης*. 1 Timothy 1:11.

8thly, The Gospel of salvation, *το εὐαγγέλιον της σωτηριας* Ephesians 1:13.

5. In 1 Corinthians 9:23, it means the blessings and privileges promised in the New Testament.

6. It means the public profession of the doctrine taught by Christ, Mark 8:35; 10:29; 2 Timothy 1:8; Phm 13.

7. But in Galatians 1:6, 8, 9, the word *εὐαγγέλιον* seems to mean any new doctrine, whether true or false.

Many MSS. have **το κατά ματθαιον αγιον ευαγγελιον**, which is generally rendered, The Gospel according to SAINT Matthew. But the word **αγιον**, saint, or holy, should be here applied to the Gospel, with which it properly agrees; and then the title would run, The holy Gospel according to Matthew; that is, the account of this holy dispensation according to the narrative composed by Matthew, an eye witness of all the transactions he relates. But anciently the word holy was neither applied to the narrative nor to the narrator, the title being simply, The Gospel according to Matthew, and so of the others.

## SOME ACCOUNT OF MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST

MATTHEW, supposed to be the same who is also called Levi, son of Alpheus, was by birth a Jew. As to his office, he appears to have been a tax-gatherer, under the Romans. He was a native of Galilee, as the rest of Christ's apostles were; but of what city in that country, or of which tribe of the people of Israel, is not known.

As he sat at the custom house, by the seaside, in or near the city of Capernaum, Jesus called him; and as soon as he could make up his accompts with those by whom he had been employed and intrusted, he became a willing, faithful disciple of Christ. After this, St. Mark tells us, he made an entertainment in his own house, where Christ and several of his disciples were present, together with many tax-gatherers, and others, of no very respectable character, in the sight of the Pharisees.

It is probable that Matthew took this occasion of calling together his relatives and acquaintances, that he might take a friendly farewell of them; and give them the opportunity of seeing and hearing that Divine Person, whose words he had already found to be spirit and life to his own soul, and to whose service he had now solemnly dedicated himself.

He was placed by our Lord in the number of his apostles, and continued with him during his life. After the ascension of Christ, he was at Jerusalem, and received the Holy Ghost with the rest of the disciples on the day of pentecost.

Matthew, with Andrew, Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee, are the only disciples whose call is particularly mentioned. It is uncertain when, where, or how he died. There does not appear to be any clear evidence, in the writings of the primitive fathers, that he suffered martyrdom.

St. Matthew's gospel is generally allowed to be the most ancient part of the writings of the New Covenant. Many modern critics contend that it was written about the year of our Lord 61, or between this and 65. Others,

that it was written so early as 41, or about the eighth year after the ascension; and this is supported by the subscriptions at the end of this gospel in many MSS.; but it must be observed, that all these MSS. are posterior to the 10th century. Michaelis has adopted a middle way, which carries much of the appearance of probability with it, viz.: that Matthew wrote his gospel in Hebrew about the 8th year after the ascension of our Lord, or A. D. 41; and that the translation of it into Greek was made about A. D. 61, or later.

Whether this gospel were written originally in Hebrew or Greek, is a question by which the most eminent critics have been greatly puzzled and divided. The balance, however, is clearly in favor of a Hebrew original. The present Greek text was doubtless published at a very early period; who the translator was, cannot, at this distance of time, be determined; probably it was the evangelist himself.

As Matthew was one of the twelve disciples, his history is an account of what he heard and saw, being a constant attendant on our blessed Lord. This consideration, of itself, would prove that, allowing him only to be a man of integrity, he would make no mistakes in his narrative. Add to this, the influence and superintendence of the Holy Spirit, under which he constantly acted, and which our Lord had promised to his disciples, to guide them into all truth, and bring what soever he had spoken to them, into remembrance, John 14:26. These two considerations stamp the narrative with the utmost degree of credibility.

## ADVERTISEMENT

It may be necessary to say a few words in explanation of the different ERAS introduced at the commencement of the gospels. 1. By the Usherian year of the World, the reader is to understand the chronological computation of Archbishop Usher; who supposed that 4000 years exactly had elapsed from the creation of the world till the birth of Christ. 2. The Alexandrian era is that chronological computation which was used by the people of Alexandria; who began their reckoning 5502 before the vulgar year of Christ 1. 3. The Antiochian era is a correction of the preceding, in the 4th century, by Pandorus, an Egyptian monk, and used by the people of Antioch; it differs only from the Alexandrian by subtracting ten years. 4. The Constantinopolitan era is that still in use in the Greek Church, which reckons 5508 before the year 1 of the Incarnation, according to the vulgar era. 5. The Julian Period is a factitious era, conceived by Joseph Scaliger, to facilitate the reduction of the years of any given epoch to that of another. This Period is the result of the Lunar and Solar Cycles, and the Indictions, multiplied by each other. Thus: multiply 19 the Lunar Cycle, by 28 the Solar Cycle, and the product will be 532; multiply this sum by 15, the Cycle of the Indictions, and you will have 7980 years, which constitute the Julian Period. The first year of the vulgar era is placed in the 4714th year of the Julian Period: whence it follows, that to find any year of our Lord in this period, 4713 years must be added to that year: e. g., to find the year of this period, answering to the present year of our Lord 1812, add 4713, and you will have 6525, which is the year of the Julian Period sought. 6. The era of the Seleucidae, sometimes improperly called the era of Alexander, commenced 12 years after the death of Alexander the Great, 312 before the Incarnation, according to the vulgar reckoning, and was properly the first year of the Syro-Macedonian empire. 7. By the year before the vulgar era of Christ, is meant that correct chronological reckoning which showed that the vulgar or common reckoning of the A. D. or year of our Lord, is deficient not less than four years: so that the present year, 1812, should be, according to strict chronological precision, 1816. 8. The mode of computing by Olympiads derived its origin from the institution of the Olympic Games, which were celebrated every four years,

for five successive days, at the time of the first full moon, after the summer's solstice. They were held on the banks of the river Alpheus, near Olympia, a city of Elis, from which they derived their name. The first Olympiad commenced 776 before the Incarnation of our Lord. It need scarcely be added, that each Olympiad consists of four years; hence the first, second, third, or fourth year of any particular Olympiad. 9. The year of the building of Rome is an important era among the Roman historians: it commenced 753 years before the birth of Christ. 10. The year of Augustus, or years after the battle of Actium, is the computation of time from the commencement of the Roman EMPIRE, which took place after the battle of Actium, 27 years before our Lord: from this time Augustus became sole governor. 11. The Cycles introduced require little explanation. The Solar Cycle is a revolution consisting of 28 years; the Lunar Cycle of 19; and the Paschal Cycle or Dionysian Period, is compounded of both, thus: The Solar Cycle of 28, and the Lunar of 19, multiplied by each other, produce 532, which constitutes a third Cycle, called the Paschal Cycle, because in that period the Christian Passover, or Easter, a moveable feast, has gone through all possible variations, and the Solar and Lunar Cycles, Dominical Letters, Paschal term, Epacts, New Moons, etc., etc., all recommence exactly 532 years before. 12. The Caesarean era of Antioch was a monument which the city of Antioch erected to the honor of Julius Caesar, in commemoration of his victory at Pharsalia. This was obtained 48 years before the commencement of the Christian era. 13. The Spanish era: this was kept in commemoration of the entire subduction of Spain, by Augustus Caesar, which took place in the year of Rome 715, or 39 years before the vulgar era of Christ. 14. The Julian era, or as it is sometimes called, the era of Julius Caesar: this had for its foundation the reformation of the Roman Calendar by Julius Caesar: and the change was made 45 years before the birth of Christ. Other eras might have been noticed, but those mentioned above were judged to be the most important.

For farther particulars relative to the history of the gospels, see the GENERAL PREFACE to the NEW TESTAMENT.

## THE GOSPEL

ACCORDING TO

## ST. MATTHEW

-Usherian year of the World, 4000. -Alexandrian year of the World, 5498. -Antiochian year of the World, 5488. -Constantinopolitan AEra of the World, 5504. -Year of the Julian Period, 4709. -AEra of the Seleucidae, 308. -Year before the vulgar AEra of Christ, 5. -Year of the CXCIII. Olympiad, 4. -Year of the building of Rome, 749. -Year of the Emperor Augustus, i.e. from the battle of Actium, 26. -Consuls, Augustus XII. and Lucius Cornelius Sulla. -Year of the Paschal Cycle or Dionysian Period, 530. -Year of the Solar Cycle, 5. -Year of the Lunar Cycle, 13. -Dominical Letters, B A.

### CHAPTER 1.

*The genealogy of Christ divided into three classes of fourteen generations each: The first fourteen, from Abraham to David, 2-6. The second fourteen, from Solomon to Jechonias, 7-10. The third fourteen, from Jechonias to Christ, 11-16. The sum of these generations, 17. Christ is conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary, when she was espoused to Joseph, 18. Joseph's anxiety and doubts are removed by the ministry of an Angel, 19, 20; by whom the child is named JESUS, 21. The fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah relative to this, 22, 23. Joseph takes home his wife, Mary, and Christ is born, 24, 25.*



## NOTES ON CHAP. 1

**Verse 1. *The book of the generation of Jesus Christ***— I suppose these words to have been the original title to this Gospel; and that they signify, according to the Hebrew Phraseology, not only the account of the genealogy of Christ, as detailed below, hut the history of his birth, acts, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension.

The phrase, book of the generation, **פר תולדות** *sepher toledoth*, is frequent in the Jewish writings, and is translated by the Septuagint, **βιβλος γενεσεως**, as here, by the evangelist; and regularly conveys the meaning given to it above; e. g. This is the book of the generations of Adam, Genesis 5:1. That is, the account of the life of Adam and certain of his immediate descendants. Again. These are the generations of Jacob, Genesis 37:2. That is, the account or history of Jacob, his son Joseph, and the other remarkable branches of the family. And again. These are the generations of Aaron and Moses, Numbers 3:1. That is, the history of the life and acts of these persons, and some of their immediate descendants. The same form of expression is also used, Genesis 2:4, when giving the history of the creation of heaven and earth.

Some have translated **βιβλος γενεσεως**, *The book of the genealogy*; and consider it the title of this chapter only; but the former opinion seems better founded.

***Jesus Christ***— See on Matthew 1:16, 21.

***The son of David, the son of Abraham***— No person ever born could boast, in a direct line, a more illustrious ancestry than Jesus Christ. Among his progenitors, the regal, sacerdotal, and prophetic offices, existed in all their glory and **splendor**. DAVID, the most renowned of sovereigns, was king and prophet: ABRAHAM, the most perfect character in all antiquity, whether sacred or profane, was priest and prophet: but the three offices were never united except in the person of Christ; he alone was prophet, priest, and king; and possessed and executed these offices in such a supereminent degree as no human being ever did, or ever could do. As the principal business of the prophet was to make known the will of God to

men, according to certain partial communications received from Heaven; so Jesus, who lay in the bosom of the Father, and who was intimately and thoroughly acquainted with all the mysteries of the eternal world, came to declare the Divine nature and its counsels to mankind; see John 1:18. As the business of the priest was to offer sacrifices to God, to make atonement for the sins of the people; so Christ was constituted a high priest, to make, by the sacrifice of himself, an atonement for the sins of the whole world; see 1 John 2:2, and the whole Epistle to the Hebrews. As the office of king was to reign over, protect, and defend the people committed to his care by the Divine Providence; so Christ is set as a king upon Sion, having the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, Psalm 2:6, 8, etc. Of the righteousness, peace, and increase of whose government, there shall be no end, Isaiah 9:7. This three-fold office, Christ executes not only in a general sense, in the world at large; but, in a particular sense, in every Christian soul. He is first a prophet, to teach the heart of man the will of God; to convict the conscience of sin, righteousness, and judgment; and fully to illustrate the way of salvation. He is next a priest, to apply that atonement to the guilty conscience, the necessity of which, as a prophet, he had previously made known. And lastly, as a king, he leads captivity captive, binds and casts out the strong man armed, spoils his goods, extends the sway of the scepter of righteousness, subdues and destroys sin, and reigns Lord over all the powers and faculties of the human soul; so that As sin reigned unto death, EVEN so does grace reign through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 5:21.

It is remarkable, that the evangelist names David before Abraham, though the latter was many generations older: the reason seems to be this, that David was not only the most illustrious of our Lord's predecessors, as being both king and prophet; but because that promise, which at first was given to Abraham, and afterwards, through successive generations, confirmed to the Jewish people, was at last determined and restricted to the family of David. Son of David, was an epithet by which the Messiah was afterwards known among the Jews; and, under this title, they were led to expect him by prophetic authority. See Psalm 89:3, 4; Psalm 132:10, 11, compared with Acts 13:23, and Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5. Christ was

prophesied of under the very name of David. See Ezekiel 34:23, 24; 37:24, 25.

**Verse 2. *Abraham begat Isaac***— In this genealogy, those persons only, among the ancestors of Christ, which formed the direct line, as specified: hence no mention is made of Ishmael, the son of Abraham, nor of Esau, the son of Isaac; and of all the twelve patriarchs, or sons of Jacob, Judah alone is mentioned.

**Verse 3. *Phares and Zara***— The remarkable history of these twins may be seen, Genesis 38: Some of the ancients were of opinion, that the evangelist refers to the mystery of the youngest being preferred to the eldest, as prefiguring the exaltation of the Christian Church over the synagogue. Concerning the women whose names are recorded in this genealogy, see the note at the end of the chapter.

**Verse 8. *Joram begat Ozias***— This is the Uzziah, king of Judah, who was struck with the leprosy for his presumption in entering the temple to offer incense before the Lord. See 2 Chronicles 26:16, etc. Ozias was not the immediate son of Joram: there were three kings between them, Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah, which swell the fourteen generations to seventeen: but it is observed that omissions of this kind are not uncommon in the Jewish genealogies. In Ezra 7:3, Azariah is called the son of Meraioth, although it is evident, from 1 Chronicles 6:7-9, that there were six descendants between them. This circumstance the evangelist was probably aware of; but did not see it proper to attempt to correct what he found in the public accredited genealogical tables; as he knew it to be of no consequence to his argument, which was merely to show that Jesus Christ as surely descended, in an uninterrupted line from David, as David did from Abraham. And this he has done in the most satisfactory manner; nor did any person in those days pretend to detect any inaccuracy in his statement; though the account was published among those very people whose interest it was to expose the fallacy, in vindication of their own obstinate rejection of the Messiah, if any such fallacy could have been proved. But as they were silent, modern and comparatively modern unbelievers may for ever hold their peace. The objections raised on this head are worthy of no regard; yet the following statement deserves notice.

St. Matthew took up the genealogies just as he found them in the public Jewish records, which, though they were in the main correct, yet were deficient in many particulars. The Jews themselves give us sufficient proof of this. The Talmud, title Kiddushim, mentions ten classes of persons who returned from the Babylonish captivity: I. כהני COHANEY, priests. II. לוי LEVEY, Levites. III. ישראל YISHRAEL, Israelites. IV. חלולי CHULULEY, common persons, as to the priesthood; such whose fathers were priests, but their mothers were such as the priests should not marry. V. גירי GIREY, proselytes. VI. חרורי CHARUREY, freed-men, or servants who had been liberated by their masters. VII. ממזיר MAMZIREY, spurious, such as were born in unlawful wedlock. VIII. נתיני NETHINEY, Nethinim. IX. שתוקי SHETUKEY, bastards, persons whose mothers, though well known, could not ascertain the fathers of their children, because of their connections with different men. X. אופי ASUPHEY, such as were gathered up out of the streets, whose fathers and mothers were utterly unknown. Such was the heterogeneous mass brought up from Babylon to Jerusalem; and although we learn from the Jews, that great care was taken to separate the spurious from the true-born Israelites, and canons were made for that purpose, yet it so happened, that sometimes a spurious family had got into high authority, and therefore must not be meddled with. See several cases in Lightfoot. On this account, a faithful genealogist would insert in his roll such only as were indisputable. “It is therefore easy to guess,” says Dr. Lightfoot, “whence Matthew took the last fourteen generations of this genealogy, and Luke the first forty names of his: namely, from the genealogical rolls, at that time well known, and laid up in the public κειμηλια, repositories, and in the private also. And it was necessary indeed, in so noble and sublime a subject, and a thing that would be so much inquired into by the Jewish people, as the lineage of the Messiah would be, that the evangelists should deliver a truth, not only that could not be gainsayed, but also might be proved and established from certain and undoubted rolls of ancestors.” See *Horae Talmudicae*.

**Verse 11. *Josias begat Jechonias, etc.***— There are three considerable difficulties in this verse. 1. Josias was not the father of Jechonias; he was only the grandfather of that prince: 1 Chronicles 3:14-16. 2. Jechonias had no brethren; at least, none are on record. 3. Josias died 20 years before the

Babylonish captivity took place, and therefore Jechonias and his brethren could not have been begotten about the time they were carried away to Babylon. To this way be added a fourth difficulty, viz. there are only thirteen in this 2nd class of generations; or forty-one, instead of forty-two, in the whole. But all these difficulties disappear, by adopting a reading found in many MSS. **ιωωσιας δε εγεννησε τος ιωακειμ· ιωακειμ δε εγεννησε τον ιεχονιαν.** And Josias begat JEHOIAKIM, or Joakim, and JOAKIM begat Jechonias. For this reading, see the authorities in Griesbach. Josiah was the immediate father of Jehoiakim (called also Eliakeim and Joakim) and his brethren, who were Johanan, Zedekiah, and Shallum: see 1 Chronicles 3:15. Joakim was the father of Joachin or Jechonias, about the time of the first Babylonish captivity: for we may reckon three Babylonish captivities. The first happened in the fourth year of Joakim, son of Josiah, about A. M. 3398. In this year, Nebuchadnezzar, having taken Jerusalem, led a great number of captives to Babylon. The second captivity happened under Jechoniah, son of Joakim; who, having reigned three months, was taken prisoner in 3405, and was carried to Babylon, with a great number of the Jewish nobility. The third captivity took place under Zedekiah, A. M. 3416. And thus, says Calmet, Matthew 1:11 should be read: Josias begat Joakim and his brethren: and Joakim begat Jechonias about the time of the first Babylonish captivity; and Jechonias begat Salathiel, after they were brought to Babylon. Thus, with the necessary addition of Joakim, the three classes, each containing fourteen generations, are complete. And to make this the more evident, I shall set down each of these three generations in a separate column, with the additional Joakim, that the reader may have them all at one view.

|            |             |             |
|------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1 Abraham  | 1 Solomon   | 1 Jechonias |
| 2 Isaac    | 2 Rehoboam  | 2 Salathiel |
| 3 Jacob    | 3 Abia      | 3 Zorobabel |
| 4 Judah    | 4 Asa       | 4 Abiud     |
| 5 Pharez   | 5 Josaphat  | 5 Eliakim   |
| 6 Esrom    | 6 Joram     | 6 Azor      |
| 7 Aram     | 7 Ozias     | 7 Sadoc     |
| 8 Aminadab | 8 Joatham   | 8 Achim     |
| 9 Naason   | 9 Achaz     | 9 Eliud     |
| 10 Salmon  | 10 Ezekias  | 10 Eleazar  |
| 11 Booz    | 11 Manasses | 11 Matthan  |
| 12 Obed    | 12 Amon     | 12 Jacob    |
| 13 Jesse   | 13 Josias   | 13 Joseph   |
| 14 David   | 14 Joachim  | 14 JESUS    |

In all **forty-two** generations.

**Verse 12. *Jechonias begat Salathiel***— After Jechonias was brought to Babylon, he was put in prison by Nebuchadnezzar, where he continued till the death of this prince, and the accession of Evilmerodach, who brought him out of prison, in which he had been detained thirty-seven years, and restored him to such favor that his throne (seat) was exalted above all the kings which were with him in Babylon: Jeremiah 52:31, 32. But though he thus became a royal favorite, he was never restored to his kingdom. And, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, Jeremiah 22:30, no man of his seed sat upon the throne of David; yet the regal line was continued through his son Salathiel, who died in Babylon: but Zorobabel, his son, returned from captivity, and by him the race of David was continued, according to Matthew, by Abiud; and, according to Luke, by Rhesa. See on Luke 3:23, etc.

The term carrying away to Babylon, **μετοικεσια**, from **μετοικεω**, to change a habitation, or place of residence, would be more properly translated by the word transportation, which is here peculiarly appropriate: the change was not voluntary; they were forced away.

**Verse 16. *Jesus, who is called Christ***.— As the word **χριστος** Christ, signifies the anointed or anointer, from **χρω**, to anoint, it answers exactly to the Hebrew **מָשִׁיחַ** *mashiach*, which we pronounce Messiah or Messias;

this word comes from the root מִשַּׁח mashac, signifying the same thing. As the same person is intended by both the Hebrew and Greek appellation, it should be regularly translated The Messiah, or The Christ; whichever is preferred, the demonstrative article should never be omitted.

Priests, prophets, and kings, among the Jews, were anointed in order to the legitimate exercise of their respective offices. Hence the word χριστος Christ, or מִשִּׁיחַ Mashiach, became a name of dignity, and often signified the same as king. See Isaiah 45:1; Psalm 105:15; Leviticus 4:3; 6:20; 1 Samuel 2:10. The words מִשִּׁיחַ Mashiach and מֶלֶךְ melec, χριστος and βασιλευς, Christ and king, are frequently interchanged. 1 Samuel 2:10; Psalm 2:2, 6; Luke 23:2; and see the Scholia of Rosenmuller on this place. The reason of this may be seen in the following note, which I extract from the comment on Exodus 29:7.

“It appears from Isaiah 61:1, that anointing with oil, in consecrating a person to any important office, whether civil or religious, was considered as an emblem of the communication of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit. This ceremony was used on three occasions, viz. the installation of prophets, priests, and kings, into their respective offices. But why should such an anointing be deemed necessary? Because the common sense of men taught them that all good, whether spiritual or secular, must come from God, its origin and cause. Hence it was taken for granted, 1. That no man could foretell events, unless inspired by the Spirit of God. And therefore the prophet was anointed, to signify the communication of the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge. 2. That no person could offer an acceptable sacrifice to God for the sins of men, or profitably minister in holy things, unless enlightened, influenced, and directed, by the Spirit of grace and holiness. Hence the priest was anointed, to signify his being divinely qualified for the due performance of his sacred functions. 3. That no man could enact just and equitable laws, which should have the prosperity of the community and the welfare of the individual continually in view, or could use the power confided to him only for the suppression of vice and the encouragement of virtue, but that man who was ever under the inspiration of the Almighty. Hence kings were inaugurated by anointing with oil. Two of these offices only exist in all civilized nations, the sacerdotal and regal; and, in some countries, the priest and king are still

consecrated by anointing. In the Hebrew language מָשַׁח mashach signifies to anoint; and מָשִׁיחַ mashiach, the anointed person. But as no man was ever dignified by holding the three offices, so no person ever had the title Mashiach, the anointed one, but Jesus, The CHRIST. He alone is King of kings, and Lord of lords: the king who governs the universe, and rules in the hearts of his followers; the prophet, to instruct men in the way wherein they should go; and the great high priest, to make atonement for their sins. Hence he is called the Messiah, a corruption of the word מָשִׁיחַ ha-mashiach, THE anointed ONE, in Hebrew; which gave birth to ο χριστος ho Christos, which has precisely the same signification in Greek: of him, Melchisedeck, Abraham, Aaron, David, and others, were illustrious types. But none of these had the title of THE MESSIAH, or THE ANOINTED OF GOD. This does, and ever will, belong exclusively to JESUS, The CHRIST.”

**Verse 17. *Fourteen generations***— See the note on “Matthew 1:11”. The Jews had a sort of technical method of summing up generations in this way. In Synopsis Sohar, p. 132, n. 18, we have the following words; “From Abraham to Solomon were fifteen generations; and then the moon was at the full. From Solomon to Zedekiah were other fifteen generations; the moon was then in the wane, and Zedekiah’s eyes were put out.” That is, the regal state came to its zenith of light and glory in the time of Solomon; but decreased gradually, till it became nearly extinct in the days of Zedekiah. See Schoetgen.

**Verse 18. *Espoused to Joseph***— The word μνηστευθεισης, from μνηστευω, to contract, or betroth, refers to the previous marriage agreement, in which the parties mutually bound themselves to each other; without which, no woman was ever married among the Jews. Among the Hindoos, a woman is espoused often a whole year, and even longer before the marriage takes place.

***Before they came together***— The woman was espoused at her own, or her father’s house; and, generally, some time elapsed before she was taken home to the house of her husband: Deuteronomy 20:7; Judges 14:7, 8. This custom has been immemorially observed among the inhabitants of Ireland, who have not only this, but many Asiatic customs, which, added to various authentic historic proofs, are collateral evidences that they



received the Christian religion, not from the popes of Rome, but through the means of Asiatic missionaries.

Among the Jews, the espousal, though the marriage had not been consummated, was considered as perfectly legal and binding on both sides; and hence a breach of this contract was considered as a case of adultery, and punished exactly in the same way. See Deuteronomy 22:25, 28. Nor could a contract of this kind, though there was no cohabitation, be broken but by a regular divorce, as Mr. Selden, in his *Uxor Hebraica*, has proved at large from the Jewish rabbins.

***She was found with child***— Her situation was the most distressing and humiliating that can be conceived. Nothing but the fullest consciousness of her own integrity, and the strongest confidence in God, could have supported her in such trying circumstances, where her reputation, her honor, and her life were at stake. What conversation passed between her and Joseph, on this discovery, we are not informed; but the issue proves that it was not satisfactory to him: nor could he resolve to consider her as his wife, till God had sent his angel to bear the most unequivocal testimony to the virgin's innocence. His whole conduct, on this occasion, was exceedingly benevolent and humane. He might at once have taken the advantage of the law, Deuteronomy 22:23, 24, and had her stoned to death.

**Verse 19. *To make her a public example***— *παράδειγματισαι*, to expose her to public infamy; from *παρα*, near, and *δεικνυμαι*, I show, or expose; what is oddly, though emphatically, called in England, showing up-exposing a character to public view. Though Joseph was a righteous man, *δικαιος*, and knew that the law required that such persons as he supposed his wife to be should be put to death, yet, as righteousness is ever directed by mercy, he determined to put her away or divorce her privately, i.e. without assigning any cause, that her life might be saved; and, as the offense was against himself, he had a right to pass it by if he chose. Some have supposed that the term *δικαιος* should be translated merciful, and it certainly often has this signification; but here it is not necessary.

**Verse 20. *That which is conceived (or formed) in her***— So I think *γεννηθεν* should be translated in this place: as it appears that the human nature of Jesus Christ was a real creation in the womb of the virgin, by the

power of the Holy Spirit. The angel of the Lord mentioned here was probably the angel Gabriel, who, six months before, had been sent to Zacharias and Elisabeth, to announce the birth of Christ's forerunner, John the Baptist. See Luke 1:36.

**Verse 21. *JESUS***— The same as Joshua, יהושע Yehoshua, from ישע yasha, he saved, delivered, put in a state of safety. See on Exodus 13:9; Numbers 13:16, and in the preface to Joshua.

***He shall save his people from their sins.***— This shall be his great business in the world: the great errand on which he is come, viz. to make an atonement for, and to destroy, sin: deliverance from all the power, guilt, and pollution of sin, is the privilege of every believer in Christ Jesus. Less than this is not spoken of in the Gospel; and less than this would be unbecoming the Gospel. The perfection of the Gospel system is not that it makes allowances for sin, but that it makes an atonement for it: not that it tolerates sin, but that it destroys it. In Matthew 1:1, he is called Jesus Christ, on which Dr. Lightfoot properly remarks, "That the name of Jesus, so often added to the name of Christ in the New Testament, is not only that Christ might be thereby pointed out as the Savior, but also that Jesus might be pointed out as the true Christ or Messiah, against the unbelief of the Jews." This observation will be of great use in numberless places of the New Testament. See Acts 2:36; 8:35; 1 Corinthians 16:22; 1 John 2:22; 1 John 4:15, etc.

**Verse 22. *By the prophet***— ISAIAH is added here by several MSS., versions, and fathers. The prophecy is taken from Isaiah 7:14.

**Verse 23. *Behold, a virgin shall be with child***— We have already seen, from the preceding verse, that this prophecy is taken from Isaiah 7:14; but it may be necessary to consider the circumstances of the original promise more particularly. At the time referred to, the kingdom of Judah, under the government of Ahaz, was reduced very low. Pekah, king of Israel, had slain in Judea 120,000 persons in one day, and carried away captives 200,000, including women and children, together with much spoil. To add to their distress, Rezin, king of Syria, being confederate with Pekah, had taken Elath, a fortified city of Judah, and carried the inhabitants away captive to Damascus. In this critical conjuncture, need we wonder that Ahaz was afraid that the enemies who were now united against him must prevail,

destroy Jerusalem, and the kingdom of Judah, and annihilate the family of David! To meet and remove this fear, apparently well grounded, Isaiah is sent from the Lord to Ahaz, swallowed up now both by sorrow and by unbelief, in order to assure him that the counsels of his enemies should not stand; and that they should be utterly discomfited. To encourage Ahaz, he commands him to ask a sign or miracle, which should be a pledge in hand, that God should, in due time, fulfill the predictions of his servant, as related in the context. On Ahaz humbly refusing to ask any sign, it is immediately added, Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, etc. Both the Divine and human nature of our Lord, as well as the miraculous conception, appear to be pointed out in the prophecy quoted here by the evangelist:-He shall be called עִמְנוּאֵל IM-MENU-EL; literally, The STRONG GOD WITH US: similar to those words in the New Testament:-The Word which was God-was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth: John 1:1, 14. And, God was manifested in the flesh: 1 Timothy 3:16. So that we are to understand, God with us, to imply God incarnated-God in human nature. This seems farther evident from the words of the prophet, Isaiah 7:15. Butter and honey shall he eat-he shall be truly man, grow up and be nourished in a human, natural way; which refers to his being WITH US, i.e. incarnated. To which the prophet adds, That he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good:-or rather, According to his knowledge, לְדַעְתּוֹ le-daato, reprobating the evil, and choosing the good. This refers to him as GOD; and is the same idea given by this prophet, Isaiah 53:11: By (or in) his knowledge (the knowledge of Christ crucified, בְּדַעְתּוֹ be-dadto) shall my righteous servant sanctify many; for he shall bear their offenses. Now this union of the Divine and human nature is termed a sign or miracle, אֵיזֶה oth, i.e. something which exceeds the power of nature to produce. And this miraculous union was to be brought about in a miraculous way: Behold a VIRGIN shall conceive: the word is very emphatic, הָעַלְמָה ha-almah, THE virgin; the only one that ever was, or ever shall be, a mother in this way. But the Jews, and some called Christians, who have espoused their desperate cause, assert, that “the word עַלְמָה almah does not signify a VIRGIN only; for it is applied, Proverbs 30:19, to signify a young married woman.” I answer, that this latter text is no proof of the contrary doctrine:

the words **דֶּרֶךְ גֵּבֶר בַּעֲלָמָה** derec geber be-almah, the way of a man with a maid, cannot be proved to mean that for which it is produced: beside, one of Deuteronomy Rossi's MSS. reads **בַּעֲלָמָיו** be-almaiu, the way of a strong, or stout, man (**גֵּבֶר** geber) IN HIS YOUTH; and in this reading the Syriac, Septuagint, Vulgate, and Arabic agree, which are followed by the first version in the English language, as it stands in a MS. in my own possession-the weie of a man in his waring youthe; so that this place, the only one that can with any probability of success be produced, were the interpretation contended for correct, which I am by no means disposed to admit, proves nothing. Beside, the consent of so many versions in the opposite meaning deprives it of much of its influence in this question.

The word **עֲלָמָה** almah, comes from **עָלַם** alam, to lie hid, be concealed; and we are told that "virgins were so called, because they were concealed or closely kept up in their fathers' houses, till the time of their marriage." This is not correct: see the case of Rebecca, Genesis 24:43, and my note there: that of Rachel, Genesis 29:6, 9, and the note there also: and see the case of Miriam, the sister of Moses, Exodus 2:8, and also the Chaldee paraphrase on La 1:4, where the virgins are represented as going out in the dance. And see also the whole history of Ruth. This being concealed, or kept at home, on which so much stress is laid, is purely fanciful; for we find that young unmarried women drew water, kept sheep, gleaned publicly in the fields, etc., etc., and the same works they perform among the Turcomans to the present day. This reason, therefore, does not account for the radical meaning of the word; and we must seek it elsewhere. Another well known and often used root in the Hebrew tongue will cast light on this subject. This is **גָּלָה** galah, which signifies to reveal, make manifest, or uncover, and is often applied to matrimonial connections, in different parts of the Mosaic law: **עָלַם** alam, therefore, may be considered as implying the concealment of the virgin, as such, till lawful marriage had taken place. A virgin was not called **עֲלָמָה** almah, because she was concealed by being kept at home in her father's house, which is not true, but literally and physically, because, as a woman, she had not been uncovered-she had not known man. This fully applies to the blessed virgin: see Luke 1:34. "How can this be, seeing I know no man?" and this text throws much light on the subject before us. This also is in

perfect agreement with the ancient prophecy, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent," Genesis 3:15; for the person who was to destroy the work of the devil was to be the progeny of the woman, without any concurrence of the man. And, hence, the text in Genesis speaks as fully of the virgin state of the person, from whom Christ, according to the flesh, should come, as that in the prophet, or this in the evangelist. According to the original promise, there was to be a seed, a human being, who should destroy sin; but this seed or human being must come from the woman ALONE; and no woman ALONE, could produce such a human being, without being a virgin. Hence, A virgin shall bear a son, is the very spirit and meaning of the original text, independently of the illustration given by the prophet; and the fact recorded by the evangelist is the proof of the whole. But how could that be a sign to Ahaz, which was to take place so many hundreds of years after? I answer, the meaning of the prophet is plain: not only Rezin and Pekah should be unsuccessful against Jerusalem at that time, which was the fact; but Jerusalem, Judea, and the house of David, should be both preserved, notwithstanding their depressed state, and the multitude of their adversaries, till the time should come when a VIRGIN should bear a son. This is a most remarkable circumstance-the house of David could never fail, till a virgin should conceive and bear a son-nor did it: but when that incredible and miraculous fact did take place, the kingdom and house of David became extinct! This is an irrefragable confutation of every argument a Jew can offer in vindication of his opposition to the Gospel of Christ. Either the prophecy in Isaiah has been fulfilled, or the kingdom and house of David are yet standing. But the kingdom of David, we know, is destroyed: and where is the man, Jew or Gentile, that can show us a single descendant of David on the face of the earth? The prophecy could not fail-the kingdom and house of David have failed; the virgin, therefore, must have brought forth her son-and this son is Jesus, the Christ. Thus Moses, Isaiah, and Matthew concur; and facts, the most unequivocal, have confirmed the whole! Behold the wisdom and providence of God!

Notwithstanding what has been said above, it may be asked, In what sense could this name Immanuel be applied to Jesus Christ, if he be not truly and properly GOD? Could the Spirit of truth ever design that Christians should receive him as an angel or a mere man, and yet, in the very beginning of the

Gospel history, apply a character to him which belongs only to the most high God? Surely no. In what sense, then, is Christ GOD WITH US? Jesus is called Immanuel, or God with us, in his incarnation.—God united to our nature—God with man—God in man.—God with us, by his continual protection.—God with us, by the influences of his Holy Spirit—in the holy sacrament—in the preaching of his word—in private prayer. And God with us, through every action of our life, that we begin, continue, and end in his name. He is God with us, to comfort, enlighten, protect, and defend us in every time of temptation and trial, in the hour of death, in the day of judgment; and God with us, and in us, and we with and in him, to all eternity.

**Verse 25. *Her first-born son***— *τον υιον αυτης τον πρω-οτοκον*.

Literally, That son of hers, the first-born one. That Mary might have had other children, any person may reasonably and piously believe; that she had others, many think exceedingly probable, and that this text is at least an indirect proof of it. However this may be, the perpetual virginity of Mary should not be made an article of faith. God has not made it one: indeed it can hardly bear the light of several texts in the Gospels.

***He knew her not***— Had no matrimonial intercourse with her—TILL she had brought forth that son of hers, of whom the evangelist had been just speaking, the first-born, the eldest of the family, to whom the birthright belonged, and who was miraculously born before she knew any man, being yet in a state of virginity. See on Matthew 13:55. The virginity of Mary, previously to the birth of Christ, is an article of the utmost consequence to the Christian system; and therefore it is an article of faith: her perpetual virginity is of no consequence; and the learned labor spent to prove it has produced a mere castle in the air. The thing is possible; but it never has been, and never can be proved.

***He called his name JESUS.***— This name was given by the command of God, see Matthew 1:16, and was imposed on Christ when eight days old; for then, according to the Jewish law, he was circumcised: thus he had the name of Savior given when he first began to shed that blood without which there could be no remission of sins.

The goodness of God is manifested, not only in his giving his Son to save a lost world, but also in the choice of the persons who were his progenitors:

among whom we find, First, SAINTS, to excite our courage: Abraham, remarkable for his faith; Isaac, for his obedience; and Jacob, for his fervor and constancy.

Secondly, Penitent SINNERS, to excite our confidence: such as David, Manasses, etc.

Thirdly, Sinners, of whose repentance and salvation we hear nothing; to put us on our guard. Who can read the account of idolatrous Solomon, who, from the whole evidence of the sacred history, died in his sins, without trembling?

Four WOMEN are mentioned in this genealogy: two of these were adulteresses, Tamar and Bathsheba; and two were Gentiles, Rahab and Ruth, and strangers to the covenant of promise; to teach us that Jesus Christ came to save sinners, and that, though strangers to his people, we are not on that account excluded from a salvation which God has designed for all men. He is not the God of the Jews only; he is also the God of the Gentiles.

The state of the royal family of David, the circumstances of the holy virgin and her spouse Joseph, the very remarkable prophecy of Isaiah, the literal and circumstantial fulfillment of it, the names given to our blessed Lord, the genealogical scroll of the family, etc., etc., are all so many proofs of the wisdom, goodness, and providence of God. Every occurrence seems, at first view, to be abandoned to fortuitous influence, and yet the result of each shows that God managed the whole. These circumstances are of the greatest importance; nor can the Christian reader reflect on them without an increase of his faith and his piety.

## CHAPTER 2

*Wise men come from the east to worship Christ, 1, 2. Herod, hearing of the birth of our Lord, is greatly troubled, 3; and makes inquiry of the chief priests and scribes, where the Christ should be born, 4. They inform him of the prophecy relative to Bethlehem, 5, 6. The wise men, going to Bethlehem, are desired by Herod to bring him word when they have found the child, pretending that he wished to do him homage, 7, 8. The wise men are directed by a star to the place where the young child lay, adore him, and offer him gifts, 9-11. Being warned of God not to return to Herod, they depart into their own country another way, 12. Joseph and Mary are divinely warned to escape into Egypt, because Herod sought to destroy Jesus, 13, 14. They obey, and continue in Egypt till the death of Herod, 15. Herod, finding that the wise men did not return, is enraged, and orders all the young children in Bethlehem, under two years of age, to be massacred, 16-18. Herod dies, and Joseph is divinely warned to return to the land of Israel, 19-21. Finding that Archelaus reigned in Judea in place of his father Herod, he goes to Galilee, and takes up his residence at Nazareth, 22, 23.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 2

**Verse 1. *Bethlehem of Judea***— This city is mentioned in Judges 17:7, and must be distinguished from another of the same name in the tribe of Zebulon, Joshua 19:15. It is likewise called Ephrath, Genesis 48:7, or Ephratah, Micah 5:2, and its inhabitants Ephrathites, Ruth 1:2; 1 Samuel 17:12. It is situated on the declivity of a hill, about six miles from Jerusalem. **בֵּית לֶחֶם** Beth-lechem, in Hebrew, signifies the house of bread. And the name may be considered as very properly applied to that place where Jesus, the Messiah, the true bread that came down from heaven, was manifested, to give life to the world. But **לֶחֶם** lehem also signifies flesh, and is applied to that part of the sacrifice which was burnt upon the altar. See Leviticus 3:11-16; 21:6. The word is also used to signify a carcass, Zephaniah 1:17. The Arabic version has [A] Beet lehem, and the



Persic [P] Beet allehem: but [A] lehem, in Arabic, never signifies bread, but always means flesh. Hence it is more proper to consider the name as signifying the house of flesh, or, as some might suppose, the house of the incarnation, i.e. the place where God was manifested in the flesh for the salvation of a lost world.

*In the days of Herod the king*— This was HEROD, improperly denominated the GREAT, the son of Antipater, an Idumean: he reigned 37 years in Judea, reckoning from the-time he was created-king of that country by the Romans. Our blessed Lord was born in the last year of his reign; and, at this time, the scepter had literally departed from Judah, a foreigner being now upon the throne.

As there are several princes of this name mentioned in the New Testament, it may be well to give a list of them here, together with their genealogy.

Herod, the Great, married ten wives, by whom he had several children, Euseb. l. i. c. 9. p. 27. The first was Doris, thought to be an Idumean, whom he married when but a private individual; by her he had Antipater, the eldest of all his sons, whom he caused to be executed five days before his own death.

His second wife was Mariamne, daughter to Hircanus, the sole surviving person of the Asmonean, or Maccabean, race. Herod put her to death. She was the mother of Alexander and Aristobulus, whom Herod had executed at Sebastia, (Joseph. Antiq. l. xvi. c. 13.-Deuteronomy Bello, l. i. c. 17,) on an accusation of having entered into a conspiracy against him. Aristobulus left three children, whom I shall notice hereafter.

His third wife was Mariamne, the daughter of Simon, a person of some note in Jerusalem, whom Herod made high priest, in order to obtain his daughter. She was the mother of Herod Philippus, or Herod Philip, and Salome. Herod or Philip married Herodias, mother to Salome, the famous dancer, who demanded the head of John the Baptist, Mark 6:22. Salome had been placed, in the will of Herod the Great, as second heir after Antipater; but her name was erased, when it was discovered that Mariamne, her mother, was an accomplice in the crimes of Antipater, son of Herod the Great. Joseph de Bello, lib. i. c. 18,19,20.

His fourth wife was Malthake, a Samaritan, whose sons were Archelaus and Philip. The first enjoyed half his father's kingdom under the name of tetrarch, viz. Idumea, Judea, and Samaria: Joseph. Antiq. l. xvii. c. 11. He reigned nine years; but, being accused and arraigned before the Emperor Augustus, he was banished to Vienna, where he died: Joseph. Antiq. l. xvii. c. 15. This is the Archelaus mentioned in Matthew 2:22.

His brother Philip married Salome, the famous dancer, the daughter of Herodias; he died without children, and she was afterwards married to Aristobulus.

The fifth wife of Herod the Great was Cleopatra of Jerusalem. She was the mother of Herod surnamed Antipas, who married Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, while he was still living. Being reproved for this act by John the Baptist, Matthew 14:3; Mark 6:17; Luke 3:19, and having imprisoned this holy man, he caused him to be beheaded, agreeable to the promise he had rashly made to the daughter of his wife Herodias, who had pleased him with her dancing. He attempted to seize the person of Jesus Christ, and to put him to death. It was to this prince that Pilate sent our Lord, Luke 13:31, 32. He was banished to Lyons, and then to Spain, where both he and his wife Herodias died. Joseph. Antiq. l. xv. c. 14.-Deuteronomy Bello, l. ii. c. 8.

The sixth wife of Herod the Great was Pallas, by whom he had Phasaelus: his history is no ways connected with the New Testament.

The seventh was named Phoedra, the mother of Roxana, who married the son of Pheroras.

The eighth was Elpida, mother of Salome, who married another son of Pheroras.

With the names of two other wives of Herod we are not acquainted; but they are not connected with our history, any more than are Pallas, Phoedra, and Elpida, whose names I merely notice to avoid the accusation of inaccuracy.

ARISTOBULUS, the son of Herod the Great by Mariamne, a descendant of the Asmoneans, left two sons and a daughter, viz. Agrippa, Herod, and

Herodias, so famous for her incestuous marriage with Antipas, in the life-time of his brother Philip.

AGRIPPA, otherwise named Herod, who was imprisoned by Tiberius for something he had inconsiderately said against him, was released from prison by Caligula, who made him king of Judea: Joseph. Antiq. l. xviii. c. 8. It was this prince who put St. James to death, and imprisoned Peter, as mentioned in xii. of Acts. He died at Caesarea, in the way mentioned in the Acts, as well as by Josephus, Antiq. l. xix. c. 7. He left a son named Agrippa, who is mentioned below.

HEROD, the second son of Aristobulus, was king of Chalcis, and, after the death of his brother, obtained permission of the emperor to keep the ornaments belonging to the high priest, and to nominate whom he pleased to that office: Joseph. Antiq. l. xx. c. 1. He had a son named Aristobulus, to whom Nero gave Armenia the lesser, and who married Salome, the famous dancer, daughter to Herodias.

AGRIPPA, son of Herod Agrippa, king of Judea, and grandson to Aristobulus and Mariamne; he was at first king of Chalcis, and afterwards tetrarch of Galilee, in the room of his uncle Philip: Joseph. Antiq. l. xx. c. 5. It was before him, his sister Berenice, and Felix, who had married Drusilla, Agrippa's second daughter, that St. Paul pleaded his cause, as mentioned Acts 26.

HERODIAS, the daughter of Mariamne and Aristobulus, is the person of whom we have already spoken, who married successively the two brothers Philip and Antipas, her uncles, and who occasioned the death of John the Baptist. By her first husband she had Salome, the dancer, who was married to Philip, tetrarch of the Trachonitis, the son of Herod the Great. Salome having had no children by him, she was married to Aristobulus, her cousin-german, son of Herod, king of Chalcis, and brother to Agrippa and Herodias: she had by this husband several children.

This is nearly all that is necessary to be known relative to the race of the Herods, in order to distinguish the particular persons of this family mentioned in the New Testament. See Basnage, Calmet, and Josephus.

***There came wise men from the east***— Or, Magi came from the eastern countries. “The Jews believed that there were prophets in the kingdom of

Saba and Arabia, who were of the posterity of Abraham by Keturah; and that they taught in the name of God, what they had received in tradition from the mouth of Abraham.”-WHITBY. That many Jews were mixed with this people there is little doubt; and that these eastern magi, or philosophers, astrologers, or whatever else they were, might have been originally of that class, there is room to believe. These, knowing the promise of the Messiah, were now, probably, like other believing Jews, waiting for the consolation of Israel. The Persic translator renders the Greek **μαγοι** by [P] mejooseean, which properly signifies a worshipper of fire; and from which we have our word magician. It is very probable that the ancient Persians, who were considered as worshippers of fire, only honored it as the symbolical representation of the Deity; and, seeing this unusual appearance, might consider it as a sign that the God they worshipped was about to manifest himself among men. Therefore they say, We have seen his star-and are come to worship him; but it is most likely that the Greeks made their **μαγοι** magi, which we translate wise men, from the Persian [P] mogh, and [P] moghan, which the Kushuf ul Loghat, a very eminent Persian lexicon, explains by [P] atush perest, a worshipper of fire; which the Persians suppose all the inhabitants of Ur in Chaldea were, among whom the Prophet Abraham was brought up. The Mohammedans apply this title by way of derision to Christian monks in their associate capacity; and by a yet stronger catachresis, they apply it to a tavern, and the people that frequent it. Also, to ridicule in the most forcible manner the Christian priesthood, they call the tavern-keeper [A], peeri Mughan, the priest, or chief of the idolaters. It is very probable that the persons mentioned by the evangelist were a sort of astrologers, probably of Jewish extraction, that they lived in Arabia-Felix, and, for the reasons above given, came to worship their new-born sovereign. It is worthy of remark, that the Anglo-saxon translates the word **μαγοι** by [AS], which signifies astrologers, from [AS] **a star or planet, and [AS]**, to know or understand.

**Verse 2. *We have seen his star***— Having discovered an unusual luminous appearance or meteor in the heavens, supposing these persons to have been Jews, and knowing the prophecies relative to the redemption of Israel, they probably considered this to be the star mentioned by Balaam, Numbers 24:17. See the note there.

**In the east**— *εν τη ανατολη*, At its rise. *ανατολη* and *δυση* are used in the New Testament for east and west.

**To worship him.**— Or, To do him homage; *προσκυνησαι αυτω*. The word *προσκυνεω*, which is compounded of *προς*, to, and *κυνω*, a dog, signifies to crouch and fawn like a dog at his master's feet. It means, to prostrate oneself to another, according to the eastern custom, which is still in use. In this act, the person kneels, and puts his head between his knees, his forehead at the same time touching the ground. It was used to express both civil and religious reverence. In Hindostan, religious homage is paid by prostrating the body at full length, so that the two knees, the two hands, forehead, nose, and cheeks all touch the earth at the same time. This kind of homage is paid also to great men. *AYEEN AKBERY*, vol. iii. p. 227.

As to what is here called a star, some make it a meteor, others a luminous appearance like an Aurora Borealis; others a comet! There is no doubt, the appearance was very striking; but it seems to have been a simple meteor provided for the occasion. See on "Matthew 2:9".

**Verse 3. When Herod-heard these things, he was troubled**— Herod's consternation was probably occasioned by the agreement of the account of the magi, with an opinion predominant throughout the east, and particularly in Judea, that some great personage would soon make his appearance, for the deliverance of Israel from their enemies; and would take upon himself universal empire.

SUETONIUS and TACITUS, two Roman historians, mention this. Their words are very remarkable:-

Percrebuerat Oriente toto, vetus et constans opinio, esse in fatis, ut eo tempore Judaea profecti rerum potirentur. Id de imperatore Romano, quantum eventu postea predictum patuit, Judaei ad se trahentes, rebellarunt. SUETON. VESP. "An ancient and settled persuasion prevailed throughout the east, that the fates had decreed some to proceed from Judea, who should attain universal empire. This persuasion, which the event proved to respect the Roman emperor, the Jews applied to themselves, and therefore rebelled."

The words of Tacitus are nearly similar:-

Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret Oriens, profectique Judaea rerum potirentur. Quae ambages Vespasianum ac Titum praedixerant.

“Many were persuaded, that it was contained in the ancient books of their priests, that at that very time the east should prevail: and that some should proceed from Judea and possess the dominion. It was Vespasian and Titus that these ambiguous prophecies predicted.” Histor. v.

**Verse 4. *The chief priests***— Not only the high priest for the time being, called כהן הראש cohen ha-rosh, 2 Kings 25:18, and his deputy, called כהן משנה cohen mishneh, with those who had formerly borne the high priest’s office; but also, the chiefs or heads of the twenty four sacerdotal families, which David distributed into so many courses, 1 Chronicles 24. These latter are styled סרי הכהנים sarey ha-cohanim, chief of the priests, 2 Chronicles 36:14; Ezra 8:24; and ראשי הכהנים roshey ha-cohanim, heads of the priests, Nehemiah 12:7. Josephus calls them by the same name as the writers of the New Testament. In his Life, sect. 8, he mentions πολλους-των αρχιερεων, MANY of the chief priests. The word is used in the singular in this last sense, for a chief of the priests, Acts 19:14.

***Scribes***— The word γραμματευσ, in the Septuagint, is used for a political officer, whose business it was to assist kings and civil magistrates, and to keep an account in writing of public acts and occurrences. Such an officer is called in Hebrew פר המלך seper hamelech, ο γραμματευσ του βασιλεως, the king’s scribe, or secretary. See LXX. 2 Kings 12:10.

The word is often used by the LXX. for a man of learning, especially for one skilled in the Mosaic law: and, in the same sense, it is used by the New Testament writers. γραμματευσ is therefore to be understood as always implying a man of letters, or learning, capable of instructing the people. The derivation of the names proves this to be the genuine meaning of the word γραμμα: a letter, or character, in writing: or γραμματα, letters, learning, erudition, and especially that gained from books. The Hebrew ספר or סופר sopher, from saphar, to tell, count, cypher,

signifies both a book, volume, roll, etc., and a notary, recorder, or historian; and always signifies a man of learning. We often term such a person a man of letters.

The word is used Acts 19:35, for a civil magistrate at Ephesus, probably such a one as we would term recorder. It appears that Herod at this time gathered the whole Sanhedrin, in order to get the fullest information on a subject by which all his jealous fears had been alarmed.

**Verse 5. *In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet*—**

As there have been several confused notions among the Jews, relative not only to the Messiah, and his character, but also to the time of his birth, it may be necessary to add, to what has already been said on this subject, the following extracts from the Talmudists and Gemarists, quoted by LIGHTFOOT. At the close of a long dissertation on the year of our Lord's birth, (which he places in the 35th of the reign of Herod, not the last or 37th as above,) he says: "It will not be improper here to produce the Gemarists themselves openly confessing that the Messiah had been born, a good while ago before their times. For so they write: After this the children of Israel shall be converted, and shall inquire after the Lord their God, and David their king: Ho 3:5. Our rabbins say, That is King Messiah, If he be among the living, his name is David, or if dead, David is his name. R. Tanchum said, Thus I prove it: He sheweth mercy to David his Messiah. (Psalm 18:50.) R. Joshua ben Levi saith, His name is **צמח** tsemach, a Branch. (Zechariah 3:8.) R. Juban bar Arbu saith, His name is Menahem. (That is, **παράκλητος**, the Comforter.) 'And that which happened to a certain Jew, as he was ploughing, agreeth with this business. A certain Arabian travelling, and hearing the ox bellow, said to the Jew at plough, O Jew, loose thy oxen, and loose thy ploughs, for behold! The temple is laid waste. The ox belloweth the second time; the Arabian saith to him, O Jew, Jew, yoke thy oxen, and fit thy ploughs: **והא יליר מלכא משיחא** For behold! King Messiah is born. But, saith the Jew, What is his name? Menahem, saith he (i.e. the Comforter.) And what is the name of his Father? Hezekiah, saith the Arabian. To whom the Jew, But whence is He? The other answered, From the palace of the king of Bethlehem Judah. Away he went, and sold his oxen and his ploughs, and became a seller of infants' swaddling clothes, going about from town to town. When he came to that city, (Bethlehem,) all the women bought of him, but the mother of

Menahem bought nothing. He heard the voice of the women saying, O thou mother of Menahem, thou mother of Menahem, carry thy son the things that are here sold. But she replied, May the enemies of Israel be strangled, because on the day that he was born, the temple was laid waste. To whom he said, But we hoped, that as it was laid waste at his feet, so at his feet it would be built again. She saith, I have no money. To whom he replied, But why should this be prejudicial to him? Carry him what you buy here, and if you have no money today, after some days I will come back and receive it. After some days, he returned to that city, and saith to her, How does the little infant? And she said, From the time you saw me last, spirits and tempests came, and snatched him away out of my hands. R. Bon saith, What need have we to learn from an Arabian? Is it not plainly written, And Lebanon shall fall before the powerful one? (Isaiah 10:34.) And what follows after? A branch shall come out of the root of Jesse. (Isaiah 11:1.)

“The Babylonian doctors yield us a confession not very unlike the former. R. Charinah saith: After four hundred years are passed from the destruction of the temple, if any one shall say to you, Take to thyself for one penny a field worth a thousand pence, do not take it. And again, After four thousand two hundred thirty and one years from the creation of the world, if any shall say to you, Take for a penny a field worth a thousand pence, take it not. The gloss is, For that is the time of redemption, and you shall be brought back to the holy mountain, to the inheritance of your fathers; why, therefore, should you misspend your penny?

“You may fetch the reason of this calculation, if you have leisure, out of the tract Sanhedrin. The tradition of the school of Elias, the world is to last six thousand years, etc. And a little after, Elias said to Rabh Judah, The world shall last not less than eighty-five jubilees: and in the last jubilee shall the Son of David come. He saith to him, Whether in the beginning of it, or in the end? He answered him, I know not. Whether is this whole time to be finished first, or not? He answered him, I know not. But Rabh Asher asserted, that he answered thus, Until then, expect him not, but from thence expect him. Hear your own countrymen, O Jew! How many centuries of years are passed by and gone from the eighty-fifth jubilee of the world, that is, the year MMMMCCL, and yet the Messias of your expectation is not yet come!



“Daniel’s weeks had so clearly defined the time of the true Messias, his coming, that the minds of the whole nation were raised into the expectation of him. Hence, it was doubted of the Baptist, whether he were not the Messias, Luke 3:15. Hence it was, that the Jews are gathered together from all countries unto Jerusalem, Acts 2:, expecting and coming to see, because at that time the term of revealing the Messias, that had been prefixed by Daniel, was come. Hence it was that there was so great a number of false Christs, Matthew 24:5, etc., taking the occasion of their impostures hence, that now the time of that great expectation was at hand, and fulfilled: and in one word, They thought the kingdom of God should presently appear, Luke 19:11.

“But when those times of expectation were past, nor did such a Messias appear as they expected, (for when they saw the true Messias, they would not see him,) they first broke out into various, and those wild, conjectures of the time; and at length, all those conjectures coming to nothing, all ended in this curse (the just cause of their eternal blindness) **קצי הפת רות** **של מתשבי**, May their soul be confounded who compute the times!”

They were fully aware that the time foretold by the prophets must be long since fulfilled; and that their obstinacy must be confounded by their own history, and the chronology of their own Scriptures; and therefore they have pronounced an anathema on those who shall attempt to examine, by chronological computations, the prophecies that predict his coming. Who can conceive a state of willful blindness or determined obstinacy superior to this!

**Verse 6. *And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda***— To distinguish it from Bethlehem, in the tribe of Zebulon. Joshua 19:15. See on “Matthew 2:1”.

***Art not the least***— In Micah 5:2, it is read, Though thou be little-**להיות צעיר** tsdir lehayoth, little to be. Houbigant, struck with the oddness of the construction of the Hebrew, by dividing the last word, and making a small change in two of the letters, makes the prophet agree with the evangelist, **צעיר לא היית** tsdir lo hayita, thou art not the least. Several learned men are of opinion, that the copy from which St. Matthew quoted, had the text in this way. However, some MSS. of very good note, among which is the Codex Bezae, have **μη ελαχιστη ει**, for **ουδαμως ελαχιστη**

εἰ, Art thou not the least? This reconciles the prophet and evangelist without farther trouble. See the authorities for this reading in Griesbach and Wetstein.

***Among the princes of Juda***— In Micah 5:2, it is, the thousands of Judah. There is much reason to believe that each tribe was divided into small portions called thousands, as in England certain small divisions of counties are called hundreds. For the proof of the first, the reader is referred to Judges 6:15, where, instead of my FAMILY is poor in Manasseh, the Hebrew is, my THOUSAND (אלפִי) is the meanest in Manasseh: and to 1 Samuel 10:19, Present yourselves before the Lord by your TRIBES and by your THOUSANDS: and to 1 Chronicles 12:20, Captains of the THOUSANDS of Manasseh. Now these THOUSANDS being petty governments, Matthew renders them by the word **ηγεμοσις**, because the word princes or governors was more intelligible in the Greek tongue than thousands, though, in this case, they both signify the same. See Wakefield.

***That shall rule my people Israel.***— **οστις ποιμανει**, Who shall FEED my people. That is as a shepherd feeds his flock. Among the Greeks, kings are called, by Homer, **λαων ποιμενες**, shepherds of the people. This appellation probably originated from the pastoral employment, which kings and patriarchs did not blush to exercise in the times of primitive simplicity; and it might particularly refer to the case of David, the great type of Christ, who was a keeper of his father's sheep, before he was raised to the throne of Israel. As the government of a good king was similar to the care a good shepherd has of his flock, hence **ποιμην** signified both shepherd and king; and **ποιμαινω**, to feed and to rule among the ancient Greeks.

**Verse 8. *That I may come and worship him also.***— See Matthew 2:2, and on Genesis 17:3, and Exodus 4:31. What exquisite hypocrisy was here! he only wished to find out the child that he might murder him; but see how that God who searches the heart prevents the designs of wicked men from being accomplished!

**Verse 9. *In the east***— Or, at its rise. See “Matthew 2:2”.

***Stood over where the young child was.***— Super caput pueri, Over the head of the child, as the OPUS IMPERFECTUM, on this place, has it. See

Griesbach's Var. Lect. So it appears to have been a simple luminous meteor in a star-like form, and at a very short distance from the ground, otherwise it could not have ascertained the place where the child lay. But the last quoted reading, from the *Opus Imperfectum*, justifies the opinion that the luminous appearance which had hitherto directed them now encompassed the head of the child; and probably this gave the first idea to the ancient painters, of representing Christ in the manger, with a glory surrounding his head. This glory, or nimbus, is usually given also to saints and eminent persons, especially in the Roman Church, by all Roman Catholic painters.

**Verse 11. *They presented unto him gifts***— The people of the east never approach the presence of kings and great personages, without a present in their hands. This custom is often noticed in the Old Testament, and still prevails in the east, and in some of the newly discovered South Sea Islands.

***Gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.***— Some will have these gifts to be emblematic of the Divinity, regal office, and manhood of Christ. "They offered him incense as their God; gold as their king; and myrrh, as united to a human body, subject to suffering and death." Aurum, thus, myrrham, regique, DEO, HOMINIQUE, dona ferunt. JUVENCUS. Rather, they offered him the things which were in most esteem among themselves; and which were productions of their own country. The gold was probably a very providential supply, as on it, it is likely, they subsisted while in Egypt.

**Verse 13. *Flee into Egypt***— Many Jews had settled in Egypt; not only those who had fled thither in the time of Jeremiah, see Jeremiah. 48; but many others who had settled there also, on account of the temple which Onias IV. had built at Heliopolis. Those who could speak the Greek tongue enjoyed many advantages in that country: besides, they had the Greek version of the Septuagint, which had been translated nearly 300 years before this time. Egypt was now a Roman province, and the rage of Herod could not pursue the holy family to this place. There is an apocryphal work in Arabic, called the Gospel of the infancy, which pretends to relate all the acts of Jesus and Mary while in Egypt. I have taken the pains to read this through, and have found it to be a piece of gross superstition, having nothing to entitle it to a shadow of credibility.

**Verse 15. *Out of Egypt have I called my son.***— This is quoted from Ho 11:1, where the deliverance of Israel, and that only, is referred to. But as that deliverance was extraordinary, it is very likely that it had passed into a proverb, so that “Out of Egypt have I called my son,” might have been used to express any signal deliverance. I confess, I can see no other reference it can have to the case in hand, unless we suppose, which is possible, that God might have referred to this future bringing up of his son Jesus from Egypt, under the type of the past deliverance of Israel from the same land. Midrash Tehillin, on Psalm 2:7, has these remarkable words: I will publish a decree: this decree has been published in the Law, in the Prophets, and in the Hagiographia. In the Law, Israel is my first-born son: Exodus 4:22. In the Prophets, Behold, my servant shall deal prudently: Isaiah 52:13. In the Hagiographia, The Lord said unto my lord: Psalm 110:1. All these passages the Jews refer to the Messiah. See Schoetgen.

**Verse 16. *Slew all the children***— This cruelty of Herod seems alluded to in very decisive terms by Macrobius, who flourished toward the conclusion of the fourth Century. In his chapter Deuteronomy josis Augusti in alios, et aliorum rursus in ipsum, he says, Cum audisset inter pueros, quos in Syria Herodes, rex Judeorum, intra bimatum jussit interfici, filium quoque ejus occisum, ait, Melius est Herodis PORCUM esse, quam FILIUM. “When he heard that among those male infants about two years old, which Herod, the king of the Jews, ordered to be slain in Syria, one of his sons was also murdered, he said: ‘It is better to be Herod’s HOG than his SON.’” Saturn. lib. ii. c. 4. The point of this saying consists in this, that Herod, professing Judaism, his religion forbade his killing swine, or having any thing to do with their flesh; therefore his hog would have been safe, where his son lost his life.

**Verse 18. *In Rama was there a voice heard***— These words, quoted from Jeremiah 31:15, were originally spoken concerning the captivity of the ten tribes; but are here elegantly applied to the murder of the innocents at Bethlehem. As if he had said, Bethlehem at this time resembled Rama; for as Rachel might be said to weep over her children, which were slaughtered or gone into captivity; so in Bethlehem, the mothers lamented bitterly their children, because they were slain. The word θρηνος, lamentation is omitted by the Codd. Vatic. Cypr. one of Selden’s MSS. the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, AEthiopic, all the Itala, (except that in the Cod. Bezae,)

Vulgate, and Saxon, several of the fathers, and above all Jeremiah, Jeremiah 31:15, from which it is quoted. Griesbach leaves it in the text with a note of doubtfulness. This mourning may refer to cases far from uncommon in the east, where all the children have been massacred. The lamentations of a Hindoo mother for her child are loud and piercing; and it is almost impossible to conceive of a scene more truly heart-rending than that of a whole town of such mothers wailing over their massacred children. See WARD.

**Verse 20. *They are dead***— Both Herod and Antipater his son; though some think the plural is here used for the singular, and that the death of Herod alone is here intended. But as Herod's son Antipater was at this time heir apparent to the throne, and he had cleared his way to it by procuring the death of both his elder brothers, he is probably alluded to here, as doubtless he entered into his father's designs. **THEY** are dead—Antipater was put to death by his father's command, five days before this execrable tyrant went to his own place. See Josephus, Antiq. xvi. 11; xvii. 9.

**Verse 22. *When he heard that Archelaus did reign***— Herod, having put Antipater his eldest son to death, altered his will, and thus disposed of his dominions: he gave the tetrarchy of Galilee and Petrea to his son Antipas; the tetrarchy of Gaulonitis, Trachonitis, Batanea, and Paneadis, to his son Philip; and left the kingdom of Judea to his eldest remaining son, Archelaus. This son partook of the cruel and blood-thirsty disposition of his father: at one of the passovers, he caused three thousand of the people to be put to death in the temple and city. For his tyranny and cruelty, Augustus deprived him of the government, and banished him. His character considered, Joseph, with great propriety, forbore to settle under his jurisdiction.

***He turned aside into the parts of Galilee***— Here Antipas governed, who is allowed to have been of a comparatively mild disposition: and, being intent on building two cities, Julias and Tiberias, he endeavored, by a mild carriage and promises of considerable immunities, to entice people from other provinces to come and settle in them. He was besides in a state of enmity with his brother Archelaus: this was a most favorable circumstance

to the holy family; and though God did not permit them to go to any of the new cities, yet they dwelt in peace, safety, and comfort at Nazareth.

**Verse 23. *That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets—***

It is difficult to ascertain by what prophets this was spoken. The margin usually refers to Judges 13:5, where the angel, foretelling the birth of Samson, says, No razor shall come upon his head; for the child shall be a NAZARITE (נִזִּיר nezir) unto God from the womb. The second passage usually referred to is Isaiah 11:1: There shall come forth a rod from the stem of Jesse, and a BRANCH (נֶצֶר netser) shall grow out of his roots.

That this refers to Christ, there is no doubt. Jeremiah, Jeremiah 23:5, is supposed to speak in the same language—I will raise unto David a righteous BRANCH: but here the word is צֶמַח tsemach, not נֶצֶר netser; and it is the same in the parallel place, Zechariah 3:8; 6:12; therefore, these two prophets cannot be referred to; but the passages in Judges and Isaiah may have been in the eye of the evangelist, as well as the whole institution relative to the Nazarite (נִזִּיר nezir) delivered at large, Num. 6:, where see the notes. As the Nazarite was the most pure and perfect institution under the law, it is possible that God intended to point out by it, not only the perfection of our Lord, but also the purity of his followers. And it is likely that, before St. Matthew wrote this Gospel, those afterwards called Christians bore the appellation of Nazarites, or Nazoreans, for so the Greek word, ναζωραῖος, should be written. Leaving the spiritual reference out of the question, the Nazarene or Nazorean here may mean simply an inhabitant or person of Nazareth; as Galilean does a person or inhabitant of Galilee. The evangelist evidently designed to state, that neither the sojourning at Nazareth, nor our Lord being called a Nazarene, were fortuitous events, but were wisely determined and provided for in the providence of God; and therefore foretold by inspired men, or fore-represented by significant institutions.

But how shall we account for the manner in which St. Matthew and others apply this, and various other circumstances, to the fulfillment of ancient traditions? This question has greatly agitated divines and critics for more than a century. Surenhusius, Hebrew professor at Amsterdam, and editor of a very splendid and useful edition of the Mishna, in six vols. fol. published an express treatise on this subject, in 1713, full of deep research

and sound criticism. He remarks great difference in the mode of quoting used in the Sacred Writings: as, It hath been said-it is written-that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets-the Scripture says-see what is said-the Scripture foreseeing-he saith-is it not written?-the saying that is written, etc., etc. With great pains and industry, he has collected ten rules out of the Talmud and the rabbins, to explain and justify all the quotations made from the Old Testament in the New.

RULE I. Reading the words, not according to the regular vowel points, but to others substituted for them. He thinks this is done by Peter, Acts 3:22, 23; by Stephen, Acts 7:42, etc.; and by Paul, 1 Corinthians 15:54; 2 Corinthians 8:15.

RULE II. Changing the letters, as done by St. Paul, Romans 9:33; 1 Corinthians 9:9, etc.; Hebrews 8:9., etc.; Hebrews 10:5.

RULE III. Changing both letters and vowel points, as he supposes is done by St. Paul, Acts 13:40, 41; 2 Corinthians 8:15.

RULE IV. Adding some letters, and retrenching others.

RULE V. Transposing words and letters.

RULE VI. Dividing one word into two.

RULE VII. Adding other words to make the sense more clear.

RULE VIII. Changing the original order of the words.

RULE IX. Changing the original order, and adding other words.

RULE X. Changing the original order, and adding and retrenching words, which he maintains is a method often used by St. Paul.

Let it be observed, that although all these rules are used by the rabbins, yet, as far as they are employed by the sacred writers of the New Testament, they never, in any case, contradict what they quote from the Old, which cannot be said of the rabbins: they only explain what they quote, or accommodate the passage to the facts then in question. And who will venture to say that the Holy Spirit has not a right, in any subsequent period, to explain and illustrate his own meaning, by showing that it had a greater extension in the Divine mind than could have been then perceived

by men? And has HE not a right to add to what he has formerly said, if it seem right in his own sight? Is not the whole of the New Testament, an addition to the Old, as the apostolic epistles are to the narrative of our Lord's life and acts, as given by the evangelists?

Gusset, Wolf, Rosenmuller, and others, give four rules, according to which, the phrase, that it might be fulfilled, may be applied in the New Testament.

RULE I. When the thing predicted is literally accomplished.

RULE II. When that is done, of which the Scripture has spoken, not in a literal sense, but in a spiritual sense.

RULE III. When a thing is done neither in a literal nor spiritual sense, according to the fact referred to in the Scripture; but is similar to that fact.

RULE IV. When that which has been mentioned in the Old Testament as formerly done, is accomplished in a larger and more extensive sense in the New Testament.

St. Matthew seems to quote according to all these rules; and it will be useful to the reader to keep them constantly in view. I may add here, that the writers of the New Testament seem often to differ from those of the Old, because they appear uniformly to quote from some copy of the Septuagint version; and most of their quotations agree verbally, and often even literally, with one or other of the copies of that version which subsist to the present day. Want of attention to the difference of copies, in the Septuagint version, has led some divines and critics into strange and even ridiculous mistakes, as they have taken that for THE SEPTUAGINT which existed in the printed copy before them; which sometimes happened not to be the most correct.

ON the birth-place of our Lord, a pious and sensible man has made the following observations:-

“At the first sight, it seems of little consequence to know the place of Christ's nativity; for we should consider him as our Redeemer, whatever the circumstances might be which attended his mortal life. But, seeing it has pleased God to announce, beforehand, the place where the Savior of the world should be born, it became necessary that it should happen



precisely in that place; and that this should be one of the characteristics whereby Jesus Christ should be known to be the true Messiah.

“It is also a matter of small importance to us where we may live, provided we find genuine happiness. There is no place on earth, however poor and despicable, but may have better and more happy inhabitants than many of those are who dwell in the largest and most celebrated cities. Do we know a single place on the whole globe where the works of God do not appear under a thousand different forms, and where a person may not feel that blessed satisfaction which arises from a holy and Christian life? For an individual, that place is preferable to all others where he can get and do most good. For a number of people, that place is best where they can find the greatest number of wise and pious men. Every nation declines, in proportion as virtue and religion lose their influence on the minds of the inhabitants. The place where a young man first beheld the dawn and the beauty of renewed nature, and with most lively sensations of joy and gratitude adored his God, with all the veneration and love his heart was capable of; the place where a virtuous couple first met, and got acquainted; or where two friends gave each other the noblest proofs of their most tender affection; the village where one may have given, or seen, the most remarkable example of goodness, uprightness, and patience; such places, I say, must be dear to their hearts.

“Bethlehem was, according to this rule, notwithstanding its smallness, a most venerable place; seeing that there so many pious people had their abode, and that acts of peculiar piety had often been performed in it. First, the patriarch Jacob stopped some time in it, to erect a monument to his well-beloved Rachel. It was at Bethlehem that honest Naomi, and her modest daughter-in-law, Ruth, gave such proofs of their faith and holiness; and in it Boaz, the generous benefactor, had his abode and his possessions. At Bethlehem the humble Jesse sojourned, the happy father of so many sons; the youngest of whom rose from the pastoral life to the throne of Israel. It was in this country that David formed the resolution of building a house for the Lord, and in which he showed himself the true shepherd and father of his subjects, when, at the sight of the destroying angel, whose sword spread consternation and death on all hands, he made intercession for his people. It was in Bethlehem that Zerubbabel the prince was born, this descendant of David, who was the type of that Ruler and Shepherd

under whose empire Israel is one day to assemble, in order to enjoy uninterrupted happiness. Lastly, in this city the Son of God appeared; who, by his birth, laid the foundation of that salvation, which, as Redeemer, he was to purchase by his death for the whole world. Thus, in places which from their smallness are entitled to little notice, men sometimes spring, who become the benefactors of the human race. Often, an inconsiderable village has given birth to a man, who, by his wisdom, uprightness, and heroism, has been a blessing to whole kingdoms.”

S Sturm’s Reflections, translated by A. C. vol. iv.

## CHAPTER 3

*John the Baptist begins to preach, 1. The subject of his preaching, 2, 3. Description of his clothing and food, 4. The success of his ministry, 5, 6. His exhortation to the Pharisees, 7-9. He denounces the judgments of God against the impenitent, 10. The design of his baptism, and that of Christ, 11, 12. He baptizes Christ in Jordan, 13-15; who is attested to be the Messiah by the Holy Spirit, and a voice from heaven, 16, 17.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 3

**Verse 1. *John the Baptist***— John, surnamed The Baptist, because he required those to be baptized who professed to be contrite because of their sins, was the son of a priest named Zacharias, and his wife Elisabeth, and was born about A. M. 3999, and about six months before our blessed Lord. Of his almost miraculous conception and birth, we have a circumstantial account in the Gospel of Luke, chap. 1: to which, and the notes there, the reader is requested to refer. For his fidelity in reproving Herod for his incest with his brother Philip's wife, he was cast into prison, no doubt at the suggestion of Herodias, the profligate woman in question. He was at last beheaded at her instigation, and his head given as a present to Salome, her daughter, who, by her elegant dancing, had highly gratified Herod, the paramour of her incestuous mother. His ministry was short; for he appears to have been put to death in the 27th or 28th year of the Christian aera.

***Came-preaching***— κηρυσσων, proclaiming, as a herald, a matter of great and solemn importance to men; the subject not his own, nor of himself, but from that God from whom alone he had received his commission. See on the nature and importance of the herald's office, at the end of this chapter. κηρυσσειν, says Rosenmuller, de iis dicitur, qui in PLATEIS, in CAMPIS, in AERE aperto, ut a multis audiantur, vocem tollunt, etc. "The verb κηρυσσειν is applied to those who, in the streets, fields, and open air, lift up their voice, that they may be heard by many, and proclaim what has

been committed to them by regal or public authority; as the KERUKES among the Greeks, and the PRECONES among the Romans.”

**The wilderness of Judea**— That is, the country parts, as distinguished from the city; for in this sense the word wilderness, מִדְבָּר midbar or מִדְבָּרִיּוֹת midbarioth, is used among the rabbins. John’s manner of life gives no countenance to the eremite or hermit’s life, so strongly recommended and applauded by the Roman Church.

**Verse 2. Repent**— μετανοεῖτε. This was the matter of the preaching. The verb μετανοεω is either compounded of μετα, after, and νοειν to understand, which signifies that, after hearing such preaching, the sinner is led to understand, that the way he has walked in was the way of misery, death, and hell. Or the word may be derived from μετα after, and ανοια, madness, which intimates that the whole life of a sinner is no other than a continued course of madness and folly: and if to live in a constant opposition to all the dictates of true wisdom; to wage war with his own best interests in time and eternity; to provoke and insult the living God; and, by habitual sin, to prepare himself only for a state of misery, be evidences of insanity, every sinner exhibits them plentifully. It was from this notion of the word, that the Latins termed repentance resipiscentia, a growing wise again, from re and sapere; or, according to Tertullian, Resipiscentia, quasi receptio mentis ad se, restoring the mind to itself: Contra Marcion, lib. ii. Repentance, then, implies that a measure of Divine wisdom is communicated to the sinner, and that he thereby becomes wise to salvation. That his mind, purposes, opinions, and inclinations, are changed; and that, in consequence, there is a total change in his conduct. It need scarcely be remarked, that, in this state, a man feels deep anguish of soul, because he has sinned against God, unfitted himself for heaven, and exposed his soul to hell. Hence, a true penitent has that sorrow, whereby he forsakes sin, not only because it has been ruinous to his own soul, but because it has been offensive to God.

**The kingdom of heaven is at hand**— Referring to the prophecy of Daniel, Daniel 7:13,14, where the reign of Christ among men is expressly foretold. This phrase, and the kingdom of God, mean the same thing, viz. the dispensation of infinite mercy, and manifestation of eternal truth, by Christ Jesus, producing the true knowledge of God, accompanied with that

worship which is pure and holy, worthy of that God who is its institutor and its object. But why is this called a kingdom? Because it has its laws, all the moral precepts of the Gospel: its subjects, all who believe in Christ Jesus: and its king, the Sovereign of heaven and earth. N. B. Jesus Christ never saved a soul which he did not govern; nor is this Christ precious or estimable to any man who does not feel a spirit of subjection to the Divine will.

But why is it called the kingdom of HEAVEN? Because God designed that his kingdom of grace here should resemble the kingdom of glory above. And hence our Lord teaches us to pray, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. The kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink, says St. Paul, Romans 14:17; does not consist in the gratification of sensual passions, or worldly ambition; but is righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost. Now what can there be more than this in glory? Righteousness, without mixture of sin; peace, without strife or contention; joy, in the Holy Ghost, spiritual joy, without mixture of misery! And all this, it is possible, by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, to enjoy here below. How then does heaven itself differ from this state? Answer. It makes the righteousness eternal, the peace eternal, and the joy eternal. This is the heaven of heavens! The phrase, kingdom of heaven, מלכות שמים malcuth shamayim, is frequently used by the rabbinical writers, and always means, the purity of the Divine worship, and the blessedness which a righteous man feels when employed in it.

It is farther added, This kingdom is at hand. The dispensation of the glorious Gospel was now about to be fully opened, and the Jews were to have the first offers of salvation. This kingdom is also at hand to us; and wherever Christ crucified is preached, there is salvation to be found. JESUS is proclaimed to thee, O man! as infinitely able and willing to save. Believe in his name—cast thy soul upon his atonement, and enter into rest!

**Verse 3. *The voice of one crying in the wilderness***— Or, A voice of a crier in the wilderness. This is quoted from Isaiah 40:3, which clearly proves that John the Baptist was the person of whom the prophet spoke.

The idea is taken from the practice of eastern monarchs, who, whenever they entered upon an expedition, or took a journey through a desert country, sent harbingers before them, to prepare all things for their

passage; and pioneers to open the passes, to level the ways, and to remove all impediments. The officers appointed to superintend such preparations were called by the Latins, *stratores*.

Diodorus's account of the march of Semiramis into Media and Persia, will give us a clear notion of the preparation of the way for a royal expedition. "In her march to Ecbatane, she came to the Zarcean mountain, which, extending many furlongs, and being full of craggy precipices and deep hollows, could not be passed without making a great compass about. Being therefore desirous of leaving an everlasting memorial of herself, as well as shortening the way, she ordered the precipices to be digged down, and the hollows to be filled up; and, at a great expense, she made a shorter and more expeditious road, which, to this day, is called from her, The road of Semiramis. Afterwards she went into Persia, and all the other countries of Asia, subject to her dominion; and, wherever she went, she ordered the mountains and precipices to be leveled, raised causeways in the plain country, and, at a great expense, made the ways passable." Diod. Sic. lib. ii. and Bp. Lowth.

The Jewish Church was that desert country, to which John was sent, to announce the coming of the Messiah. It was destitute at that time of all religious cultivation, and of the spirit and practice of piety; and John was sent to prepare the way of the Lord, by preaching the doctrine of repentance. The desert is therefore to be considered as affording a proper emblem of the rude state of the Jewish Church, which is the true wilderness meant by the prophet, and in which John was to prepare the way of the promised Messiah. The awful importance of the matter, and the vehemence of the manner of the Baptist's preaching, probably acquired him the character of the crier, [βωων](#).

For the meaning of the word JOHN, see the note on Mark 1:4.

**Verse 4. *His raiment of camel's hair***— A sort of coarse or rough covering, which, it appears, was common to the prophets, Zechariah 13:4. In such a garment we find Elijah clothed, 2 Kings 1:8. And as John had been designed under the name of this prophet, Malachi 4:5, whose spirit and qualifications he was to possess, Luke 1:17, he took the same habit and lived in the same state of self-denial.

***His meat was locusts***— ακριδες. ακρις may either signify the insect called the locust, which still makes a part of the food in the land of Judea; or the top of a plant. Many eminent commentators are of the latter opinion; but the first is the most likely. The Saxon translator has [AS] grasshoppers.

***Wild honey.***— Such as he got in the rocks and hollows of trees, and which abounded in Judea: see 1 Samuel 14:26. It is most likely that the dried locusts, which are an article of food in Asiatic countries to the present day, were fried in the honey, or compounded in some manner with it. The Gospel according to the Hebrews, as quoted by Epiphanius, seems to have taken a similar view of the subject, as it adds here to the text, ου η γευσις ην του μαννα, ως εγκρις εν ελαιω. And its taste was like manna, as a sweet cake baked in oil.

**Verse 5. *Jordan***— Many of the best MSS. and versions, with Mark 1:5, add ποταμω, the river Jordan; but the definitive article, with which the word is generally accompanied, both in the Hebrew and the Greek, is, sufficient; and our article the, which should ever be used in the translation, expresses the force of the other.

**Verse 6. *Were baptized***— In what form baptism was originally administered, has been deemed a subject worthy of serious dispute. Were the people dipped or sprinkled? for it is certain βαπτω and βαπτίζω mean both. They were all dipped, say some. Can any man suppose that it was possible for John to dip all the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judea, and of all the country round about the Jordan? Were both men and women dipped, for certainly both came to his baptism? This could never have comported either with safety or with decency. Were they dipped in their clothes? This would have endangered their lives, if they had not with them change of raiment: and as such a baptism as John's (however administered) was, in several respects, a new thing in Judea, it is not at all likely that the people would come thus provided. But suppose these were dipped, which I think it would be impossible to prove, does it follow that, in all regions of the world, men and women must be dipped, in order to be evangelically baptized? In the eastern countries, bathings were frequent, because of the heat of the climate, it being there so necessary to cleanliness and health; but could our climate, or a more northerly one, admit of this with safety,

for at least three-fourths of the year? We may rest assured that it could not. And may we not presume, that if John had opened his commission in the north of Great Britain, for many months of the year, he would have dipped neither man nor woman, unless he could have procured a tepid bath? Those who are dipped or immersed in water, in the name of the Holy Trinity, I believe to be evangelically baptized—those who are washed or sprinkled with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, I believe to be equally so; and the repetition of such a baptism I believe to be profane. Others have a right to believe the contrary, if they see good. After all, it is the thing signified, and not the mode, which is the essential part of the sacrament. See the note on Mark 10:16.

**Confessing their sins.**— *εξομολογουμενοι*, earnestly acknowledging that their sins were their own. And thus taking the whole blame upon themselves, and laying nothing to the charge of GOD or man. This is essential to true repentance; and, till a man take the whole blame on himself, he cannot feel the absolute need he has of casting his soul on the mercy of God, that he may be saved.

**Verse 7. Pharisees**— A very numerous sect among the Jews, who, in their origin, were, very probably, a pure and holy people. It is likely that they got the name of Pharisees, i.e. Separatists, (from *פרש* *pharash*, to separate,) from their separating themselves from the pollution of the Jewish national worship; and hence, the word in the Anglo-saxon version is [AS], holy persons who stand apart, or by themselves: but, in process of time, like all religious sects and parties, they degenerated: they lost the spirit of their institution, they ceased to recur to first principles, and had only the form of godliness, when Jesus Christ preached in Judea; for he bore witness, that they did make the outside of the cup and platter clean—they observed the rules of their institution, but the spirit was gone.

**Sadducees**— A sect who denied the existence of angels and spirits, consequently all Divine influence and inspiration, and also the resurrection of the dead. The Sadducees of that time were the Materialists and Deists of the Jewish nation. When the sect of the Pharisees arose cannot be distinctly ascertained; but it is supposed to have been some time after the Babylonish captivity. The sect of the Sadducees were the followers of one Sadok, a disciple of Antigonus Sochaeus, who flourished about three



centuries before Christ. There was a third sect among the Jews, called the Essenes or Essenians, of whom I shall have occasion to speak on Matthew 19:12.

***Come to his baptism***— The AEthiopic version adds the word privately here, the translator probably having read **λαθρα** in his copy, which gives a very remarkable turn to the passage. The multitudes, who had no worldly interest to support, no character to maintain by living in their usual way, came publicly, and openly acknowledged that they were SINNERS; and stood in need of mercy. The others, who endeavored to secure their worldly interests by making a fair show in the flesh, are supposed to have come privately, that they might not be exposed to reproach; and that they might not lose their reputation for wisdom and sanctity, which their consciences, under the preaching of the Baptist, told them they had no right to. See below.

***O generation of vipers***— **γεννηματα εχιδνων**. A terribly expressive speech. A serpentine brood, from a serpentine stock. As their fathers were, so were they, children of the wicked one. This is God's estimate of a SINNER, whether he wade in wealth, or soar in fame. The Jews were the seed of the serpent, who should bruise the heel of the woman's seed, and whose head should be bruised by him.

***Who hath warned you***— Or, privately shown you. **τις επεδιξεν**-from **υπο**, under, and **δεικνυμαι**, to show. Does not this seem to allude to the reading of the AEthiopic noticed above? They came privately: and John may be supposed to address them thus: "Did any person give you a private warning? No, you received your convictions under the public ministry of the word. The multitudes of the poor and wretched, who have been convinced of sin, have publicly acknowledged their crimes, and sought mercy-God will unmask you-you have deceived the people-you have deceived yourselves-you must appear just what you are; and, if you expect mercy from God, act like the penitent multitude, and bring forth FRUIT worthy of repentance. Do not begin to trifle with your convictions, by thinking, that because you are descendants of Abraham, therefore you are entitled to God's favor; God can, out of these stones (pointing probably to those scattered about in the desert, which he appears to have considered as an emblem of the Gentiles) raise up a faithful seed, who,

though not natural descendants of your excellent patriarch, yet shall be his worthy children, as being partakers of his faith, and friends of his God.” It should be added, that the Greek word also signifies plain or ample information. See on Luke 6:47.

***The wrath to come?***— The desolation which was about to fall on the Jewish nation for their wickedness, and threatened in the last words of their own Scriptures. See Malachi 4:6. Lest I come and smite the earth **אֶת הָאָרֶץ** (et ha-arets, this very land) with a curse. This wrath or curse was coming: they did not prevent it by turning to God, and receiving the Messiah, and therefore the wrath of God came upon them to the uttermost. Let him that readeth understand.

**Verse 10. *And now also the axe is laid***— Or, Even now the axe lieth. As if he had said, There is not a moment to spare—God is about to cut off every impenitent soul—you must therefore either turn to God immediately, or be utterly and finally ruined. It was customary with the prophets to represent the kingdoms, nations, and individuals, whose ruin they predicted, under the notion of forests and trees, doomed to be cut down. See Jeremiah 46:22, 23; Ezekiel 31:3, 11, 12. The Baptist follows the same metaphor: the Jewish nation is the tree, and the Romans the axe, which, by the just judgment of God, was speedily to cut it down. It has been well observed, that there is an allusion here to a woodman, who, having marked a tree for excision, lays his axe at its root, and strips off his outer garment, that he may wield his blows more powerfully, and that his work may be quickly performed. For about sixty years before the coming of Christ, this axe had been lying at the root of the Jewish tree, Judea having been made a province to the Roman empire, from the time that Pompey took the city of Jerusalem, during the contentions of the two brothers Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, which was about sixty-three years before the coming of Christ. See Joseph. Antiq. l. xiv. c. 1-5. But as the country might be still considered as in the hands of the Jews, though subject to the Romans, and God had waited on them now nearly ninety years from the above time, expecting them to bring forth fruit, and none was yet produced; he kept the Romans as an axe, lying at the root of this tree, who were ready to cut it down the moment God gave them the commission.

**Verse 11. *But he that cometh after me***— Or, I coming after me, who is now on his way, and will shortly make his appearance. Jesus Christ began his ministry when he was thirty years of age, Luke 3:23, which was the age appointed by the law, Numbers 4:3. John the Baptist was born about six months before Christ; and, as he began his public ministry when thirty years of age, then this coming after refers to six months after the commencement of John's public preaching, at which time Christ entered upon his.

***Whose shoes I am not worthy to bear***— This saying is expressive of the most profound humility and reverence. To put on, take off, and carry the shoes of their masters, was, not only among the Jews, but also among the Greeks and Romans, the work of the vilest slaves. This is amply proved by Kypke, from Arrian, Plutarch, and the Babylonian Talmud.

***With the Holy Ghost, and with fire***— That the influences of the Spirit of God are here designed, needs but little proof. Christ's religion was to be a spiritual religion, and was to have its seat in the heart. Outward precepts, however well they might describe, could not produce inward spirituality. This was the province of the Spirit of God, and of it alone; therefore he is represented here under the similitude of fire, because he was to illuminate and invigorate the soul, penetrate every part, and assimilate the whole to the image of the God of glory. See on John 3:5.

***With fire***— *καὶ πυρὶ*. This is wanting in E. S. (two MSS. one of the ninth, the other of the tenth century) eight others, and many Evangelistaria, and in some versions and printed editions; but it is found in the parallel place, Luke 3:16, and in the most authentic MSS. and versions. It was probably the different interpretations given of it by the fathers that caused some transcribers to leave it out of their copies.

The baptism of fire has been differently understood among the primitive fathers. Some say, it means the tribulations, crosses, and afflictions, which believers in Christ are called to pass through. Hence the author of the Opus Imperfectum, on Matthew, says, that there are three sorts of baptism, 1. that of water; 2. that of the Holy Ghost; and, 3. that of tribulations and afflictions, represented under the notion of fire. He observes farther, that our blessed Lord went through these three baptisms: 1. That of water, he received from the hands of John. 2. That of the Holy

Spirit he received from the Father. And, 3. That of fire, he had in his contest with Satan in the desert. St. Chrysostom says; it means the superabundant graces of the Spirit. Basil and Theophilus explain it of the fire of hell. Cyril, Jerome, and others, understand by it the descent of the Holy Spirit, on the day of pentecost.

Hilary says, it means a fire that the righteous must pass through in the day of judgment, to purify them from such defilements as necessarily cleaved to them here, and with which they could not be admitted into glory.

Ambrose says, this baptism shall be administered at the gate of paradise, by John Baptist; and he thinks that this is what is meant by the flaming sword, Genesis 3:24.

Origen and Lactantius conceive it to be a river of fire, at the gate of heaven, something similar to the Phlegethon of the heathens; but they observe, that when the righteous come to pass over, the liquid flames shall divide, and give them a free passage: that Christ shall stand on the brink of it, and receive through the flames all those, and none but those, who have received in this world the baptism of water in his name: and that this baptism is for those who, having received the faith of Christ, have not, in every respect, lived conformably to it; for, though they laid the good foundation, yet they built hay, straw, and stubble upon it, and this work of theirs must be tried, and destroyed by this fire. This, they think, is St. Paul's meaning, 1 Corinthians 3:13-15. If any man build on this foundation (viz. Jesus Christ) gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is.-If any man's work be burnt, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as BY FIRE. From this fire, understood in this way, the fathers of the following ages, and the schoolmen, formed the famous and lucrative doctrine of PURGATORY. Some in the primitive Church thought that fire should be, in some way or other, joined to the water in baptism; and it is supposed that they administered it by causing the person to pass between two fires, or to leap through the flame; or by having a torch, or lighted candle, present. Thus have those called Doctors of the Church trifled. The exposition which I have given, I believe to be the only genuine one.

**Verse 12. *Whose fan is in his hand***— The Romans are here termed God’s fan, as, in Matthew 3:10, they were called his axe, and, in Matthew 22:7, they are termed his troops or armies.

The winnowing fan of the Hindoos is square, made of split bamboo; and the corn is winnowed by waving the fan backwards with both hands—“Whose fan is in his hand.”

***His floor***— Does not this mean the land of Judea, which had been long, as it were, the threshing-floor of the Lord? God says, he will now, by the winnowing fan (viz. the Romans) thoroughly cleanse this floor—the wheat, those who believe in the Lord Jesus, he will gather into his garner, either take to heaven from the evil to come, or put in a place of safety, as he did the Christians, by sending them to Pella, in Coelosyria, previously to the destruction of Jerusalem. But he will burn up the chaff—the disobedient and rebellious Jews, who would not come unto Christ, that they might have life.

***Unquenchable fire.***— That cannot be extinguished by man.

**Verse 14. *John forbid him***— Earnestly and pressingly opposed him: this is the proper import of the words *διεκώλευν αὐτον*. I have observed that *δια*, in composition, most frequently, if not always, strengthens the signification in classic authors. -Wakefield.

**Verse 15. *To fulfill all righteousness.***— That is, Every righteous ordinance: so I think the words *πασαν δικαιοσυνην* should be translated; and so our common version renders a similar word, Luke 1:6. The following passage, quoted from Justin Martyr, will doubtless appear a strong vindication of this translation. “Christ was circumcised, and observed all the other ordinances of the law of Moses, not with a view to his own justification; but to fulfill the dispensation committed to him by the Lord, the God and Creator of all things.” - Wakefield.

How remarkable are the following words of Creeshna (an Incarnation of the Supreme God, according to the Hindoo theology) related in the Bhagvat Geeta, p. 47. Addressing his disciple Arjoon, he says, “I myself, Arjoon, have not, in the three regions of the universe, any thing which is necessary for me to perform; nor any thing to obtain, which is not obtained; and yet I live in the exercise of the moral duties. If I were not

vigilantly to attend to those duties, all men would presently follow my example. If I were not to perform the moral actions, this world would fail in their duties: I should be the cause of spurious births, and should drive the people from the right way. As the ignorant perform the duties of life from a hope of reward, so the wise man, out of respect to the opinions and prejudices of mankind, should perform the same without motives of interest. The wise man, by industriously performing all the duties of life, should induce the vulgar to attend to them.”

The Septuagint use this word often for the Hebrew **משפט** mishpat, judgment, appointment. And in Ezekiel 18:19, 21, the person who **δικαιοσύνην και ελεος πεποιηκε**-hath done righteousness and mercy, is he who sacredly attended to the performance of all the religious ordinances mentioned in that chapter, and performed them in the genuine spirit of mercy. **δικαιώματα** is used 1 Mac 1:13, 49; 2:21, and in Hebrews 10:1, 10, to denote religious ceremonies. Michaelis supposes that **כל חק** kol chok, all religious statutes or ordinances, were the words used in the Hebrew original of this Gospel.

But was this an ordinance? Undoubtedly: it was the initiatory ordinance of the Baptist’s dispensation. Now, as Christ had submitted to circumcision, which was the initiatory ordinance of the Mosaic dispensation, it was necessary that he should submit to this, which was instituted by no less an authority, and was the introduction to his own dispensation of eternal mercy and truth. But it was necessary on another account: Our Lord represented the high priest, and was to be the high priest over the house of God:- now, as the high priest was initiated into his office by washing and anointing, so must Christ: and hence he was baptized, washed, and anointed by the Holy Ghost. Thus he fulfilled the righteous ordinance of his initiation into the office of high priest, and thus was prepared to make an atonement for the sins of mankind.

***Then he suffered him.***— In the Opus Imperfectum, quoted by Griesbach, there is the following addition, which, at least, may serve to show the opinion of its author: Et Johannes quidem baptizavit illum in aqua, ille autem Johannem cum Spiritu. “Then John baptized him with water, and he baptized John with the Spirit.”

**Verse 16. *The heavens were opened unto him***— That is, to John the Baptist-and he, John, saw the Spirit of God-lighting upon him, i.e. Jesus. There has been some controversy about the manner and form in which the Spirit of God rendered itself visible on this occasion. St. Luke, Luke 3:22, says it was in a bodily shape like to a dove: and this likeness to a dove some refer to a hovering motion, like to that of a dove, and not to the form of the dove itself: but the terms of the text are too precise to admit of this far-fetched interpretation.

This passage affords no mean proof of the doctrine of the Trinity. That three distinct persons are here, represented, there can be no dispute. 1. The person of Jesus Christ, baptized by John in Jordan. 2. The person of the Holy Ghost in a bodily shape, (*σωματικῶ εἶδει*, Luke 3:22) like a dove. 3. The person of the Father; a voice came out of heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, etc. The voice is here represented as proceeding from a different place to that in which the persons of the Son and Holy Spirit were manifested; and merely, I think, more forcibly to mark this Divine personality.

**Verse 17. *In whom I am well pleased***. — *ἐν ᾧ ἐνδᾶκησα* in whom I have delighted-though it is supposed that the past tense is here used for the present: but See the note on “Matthew 17:5”. By this voice, and overshadowing of the Spirit, the mission of the Lord Jesus was publicly and solemnly accredited; God intimating that he had before delighted in him: the law, in all its ordinances, having pointed him out, for they could not be pleasing to God, but as they were fulfilled in, and showed forth, the Son of man, till, he came.

As the office of a herald is frequently alluded to in this chapter, and also in various other parts of the New Testament, I think it best to give a full account of it here, especially as the office of the ministers of the Gospel is represented by it. Such persons can best apply the different correspondences between their own and the herald’s office.

At the Olympic and Isthmian games, heralds were persons of the utmost consequence and importance. Their office was:-

1. To proclaim from a scaffold, or elevated place, the combat that was to be entered on.

2. To summon the Agonistae, or contenders, to make their appearance, and to announce their names.
3. To specify the prize for which they were to contend.
4. To admonish and animate, with appropriate discourses, the athletae, or combatants.
5. To set before them, and explain, the laws of the agones, or contenders; that they might see that even the conqueror could not receive the crown or prize, unless he had strove lawfully.
6. After the conflict was ended, to bring the business before the judges, and, according to their determination, to proclaim the victor.
7. To deliver the prize to the conqueror, and to put the crown on his head, in the presence of the assembly.
8. They were the persons who convoked all solemn and religious assemblies, and brought forth, and often slew, the sacrifices offered on those occasions.
9. They frequently called the attention of the people, during the sacrifices, to the subject of devotion, with hoc age! **τοῦτο πράττε**: mind what you are about, don't be idle; think of nothing else. See PLUTARCH in Coriolanus.

The office, and nearly the word itself, was in use among the ancient Babylonians, as appears from Daniel 3:4, where the Chaldee word **כְּרוּזָא** caroza, is rendered by the Septuagint **κηρυξ** kerux, and by our translation, very properly, herald. His business in the above place was to call an assembly of the people, for the purpose of public worship; to describe the object and nature of that worship, and the punishment to be inflicted on those who did not join in the worship, and properly assist in the solemnities of the occasion.

Daniel 3:4, is the only place in our translation, in which the word herald is used: but the word **κηρυξ**, used by St. Paul, 1 Timothy 2:7; 2 Timothy 1:11, and by St. Peter, 2 Peter 3:5, is found in the Septuagint, Genesis 41:43, as well as in Daniel 3:4, and the verb **κηρυττω** is found in different places of that version, and in a great number of places in the New Testament.



It is worthy of remark, that the office of the **κηρυξ**, kerux, or herald, must have been anciently known, and Indeed established, among the Egyptians: for in Genesis 41:43, where an account is given of the promotion of Joseph to the second place in the kingdom, where we say, And they cried before him, saying, Bow the knee; the Septuagint has **και εκηρυξεν εμπροσθεν αυτου κηρυξ**: And a HERALD made proclamation before him. As the Septuagint translated this for Ptolemy Philadelphus, the Egyptian king, and were in Egypt when they translated the law, we may safely infer that the office was not only known, but in use among the Egyptians, being denominated in their language **אברק** abrek, which our translators, following the Vulgate, have rendered, Bow the knee; but which the Septuagint understood to be the title of an officer, who was the same among the Egyptians as the **κηρυξ** among the Greeks. This is a probable meaning of the word, which escaped me when I wrote the note on Genesis 41:43.

As every kind of office had some peculiar badge, or ensign, by which it was known among the ancients, so the heralds were known by generally carrying a caduceus. This was a rod with two spread wings at the top, and about which two serpents were entwined. The poets fabled that this rod was given by Apollo, the god of wisdom and music, to Mercury, the god of eloquence, and the messenger of the gods. To it wonderful properties are ascribed- especially that it produces sleep, and that it raises the dead. Who does not at once see, that the caduceus and its properties clearly point out the office, honor, and influence of the herald? As persons of strong voice, and ready speech, and copious eloquence, were always chosen for heralds, they were represented as endued with wisdom and eloquence from above. They lulled men to sleep, i.e. by their persuasive powers of speech, they calmed the turbulent dispositions of an inflamed populace, when proceeding to acts of rebellion and anarchy; or they roused the dormant zeal of the community, who, through long oppression, despairing of succor or relief, seemed careless about their best interests being stupidly resolved to sink under their burdens, and expect release only in death.

As to the caduceus itself, it was ever the emblem of peace among the ancients: the rod was the emblem of power; the two serpents, of wisdom and prudence; and the two wings, of diligence and despatch. The first idea

of this wonderful rod seems to have been borrowed from the rod of Moses. See the note on “Exodus 4:17”.

The word **κηρυξ** kerux, or herald, here used, is evidently derived from **κηρυσσειν**, to proclaim, call aloud; and this from **γηρυς**, the voice; because these persons were never employed in any business, but such only as could not be transacted but by the powers of speech, and the energy of ratiocination.

For the derivation of the word herald, we must look to the northern languages. Its meaning in Junius, Skinner, and Minshieu, are various, but not essentially different; they all seem to point out different parts of the herald’s office. 1. In the Belgic, heer signifies army. Hence heer-alt, a senior officer, or general, in the army. 2. Or heer-held, the hero of the army: he who had distinguished himself most in his country’s behalf. 3. Or from the Gallo-teutonic herr-haut, the high lord, because their persons were so universally respected, as we have already seen. 4. Or from the simple Teutonic herr-hold, he who is faithful to his lord. And, lastly, according to Minshieu, from the verb hier-holden, stop here; because, in proclaiming peace, they arrested bloodshed and death, and prevented the farther progress of war.

These officers act an important part in all heroic history, and particularly in the Iliad and Odyssey, from which, as the subject is of so much importance, I shall make a few extracts.

I. Their character was sacred. Homer gives them the epithet of divine, **θειοι**.

— **δολων, ευμηδεος υιος,**  
**κηρυκος θειοι.** Iliad x. 315

“Dolon, son of Eumedes, the divine herald.” They were also termed inviolable, **ασυλτοι**; also, great, admirable, etc. In the first book of the Iliad, we have a proof of the respect paid to heralds, and the inviolability of their persons. Agamemnon commands the heralds, Talthybius and Eurybates, his faithful ministers, to go to the tent of Achilles, seize the young Briseis, and bring her to him. They reluctantly obey; but, when they come into the presence of Achilles, knowing the injustice of their master’s cause, they

are afraid to announce their mission. Achilles, guessing their errand, thus addresses them:-

χαιρετε, κηρυκες, διος αγγελοι, ηδε και ανδρων. κ. τ. λ.

“Hail, O ye heralds, messengers of God and of men! come forward. I cannot blame you-Agamemnon only is culpable, who has sent you for the beautiful Briseis. But come, O godlike Patroclus, bring forth the damsel, and deliver her to them, that they may lead her away,” etc., Iliad i. 334, etc.

II. Their functions were numerous; they might enter without danger into besieged cities, or even into battles. III. They convoked the assemblies of the leaders, according to the orders they received from the general or king.

IV. They commanded silence, when kings were to address the assembly, (Iliad xviii. 503. κηρυκες δ’ αρα λαων εσητυον. See also Iliad ii. 280,) and delivered the scepter into their hands, before they began their harangue.

ην δ’ απα κηρυξ,  
χερσι σκηπτρον εθηκε, σιωπησαι ρ’ εκελευσεν. Iliad xxiii. 567

V. They were the carriers and executors of the royal commands, (Iliad i. 320,) and went in search of those who were summoned to appear, or whose presence was desired.

VI. They were entrusted with the most important missions; and accompanied princes in the most difficult circumstances. Priam, when he went to Achilles, took no person besides a herald with him. (Iliad xxiv. 674, 689.) When Ulysses sent two of his companions to treat with the Lestrygons, he sent a herald at the same time. (Odys. x. 102.) Agamemnon, when he wished to soften Achilles, joined Eurybates and Hodius, his heralds, to the deputation of the princes. (Iliad ix. 170.)

VII. Heralds were employed to proclaim and publish whatever was to be known by the people. (Odys. xx. 276.)

VIII. They declared war and proclaimed peace. (Odys. xviii. 334.)

IX. They took part in all sacred ceremonies: they mingled the wine and water in the large bowls for the libations, which were made at the conclusion of treaties. They were the priests of the people in many cases; they led forth the victims, cut them in pieces, and divided them among those engaged in the sacrifices. (Odys. i. 109, etc.)

X. In Odyssey lib. xvii., a herald presents a piece of flesh to Telemachus, and pours out his wine.

XI. They sometimes waited on princes at table, and rendered them many other personal services. (Iliad ii. 280; Odys. i. 143, etc., 146, 153; ii. 6,38.) In the Iliad, lib. x. 3, Eurybates carries the clothes to Ulysses. And a herald of Alcinous conducts Demodocus, the singer, into the festive hall. (Odys. viii. 470.) Many others of their functions, services, and privileges, the reader may see, by consulting DAMM's Homeric Lexicon, under [κρω](#).

## CHAPTER 4

*Jesus, in the wilderness, is tempted by Satan, 1-11. He goes into Galilee, 12; and Capernaum, 13. The prophecy which was thus fulfilled, 14-16. He begins to preach publicly, 17. Calls Simon Peter, and his brother Andrew, 18-20. Calls also James and John, the sons of Zebedee, 21, 22. Preaches and works miracles throughout Galilee, 23. Becomes famous in Syria, and is followed by multitudes from various quarters, among whom he works a great variety of miracles, 24, 25.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 4

**Verse 1. *Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit***— This transaction appears to have taken place immediately after Christ's baptism; and this bringing up of Christ was through the influence of the Spirit of God; that Spirit which had rested upon him in his baptism.

***To be tempted***— The first act of the ministry of Jesus Christ was a combat with Satan. Does not this receive light from Genesis 3:17. I will put enmity between the woman's seed and thy seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

**Verse 2. *And when he had fasted forty days***— It is remarkable that Moses, the great lawgiver of the Jews, previously to his receiving the law from God, fasted forty days in the mount; that Elijah, the chief of the prophets, fasted also forty days; and that Christ, the giver of the New Covenant, should act in the same way. Was not all this intended to show, that God's kingdom on earth was to be spiritual and Divine?—that it should not consist in meat and drink, but in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost? Romans 14:17. Relative to the forty days' fast of Moses, there is a beautiful saying in the Talmudists. "Is it possible that any man can fast forty days and forty nights? To which Rabbi Meir answered, When thou takest up thy abode in any particular city, thou must live according to its customs. Moses ascended to heaven, where they neither eat nor drink therefore he became assimilated to them. We are accustomed to eat and drink; and, when angels descend to us, they eat and drink also."

Moses, Elijah, and our blessed Lord could fast forty days and forty nights, because they were in communion with God, and living a heavenly life.

**Verse 3. *And when the tempter***— This onset of Satan was made (speaking after the manner of men) judiciously: he came when Jesus, after having fasted forty days and forty nights, was hungry: now, as hunger naturally diminishes the strength of the body, the mind gets enfeebled, and becomes easily irritated; and if much watching and prayer be not employed, the uneasiness which is occasioned by a lack of food may soon produce impatience, and in this state of mind the tempter has great advantages. The following advice of an Arabian philosopher to his son is worthy of attention. “My son, never go out of the house in the morning, till thou hast eaten something: by so doing, thy mind will be more firm; and, shouldest thou be insulted by any person, thou wilt find thyself more disposed to suffer patiently: for hunger dries up and disorders the brain.” Bibliot. Orient. Suppl. p. 449. The state of our bodily health and worldly circumstances may afford our adversary many opportunities of doing us immense mischief. In such cases, the sin to which we are tempted may be justly termed, as in Hebrews 12:1, *την εὐπεριστατον αμαρτιαν*, the well circumstanced sin, because all the circumstances of time, place, and state of body and mind, are favorable to it.

***If thou be the Son of God***— Or, a son of God, *υιος του θεου*. *υιος* is here, and in Luke 4:3, written without the article; and therefore should not be translated THE Son, as if it were *ο υιος*, which is a phrase that is applicable to Christ as the Messiah: but it is certain, whatever Satan might suspect, he did not fully know that the person he tempted was the true Messiah. Perhaps one grand object of his temptation was to find this out.

***Command that these stones***— The meaning of this temptation is: “Distrust the Divine providence and support, and make use of illicit means to supply thy necessities.”

**Verse 4. *But by (or, upon, επι) every word***— *ρημα*, in Greek, answers to *דבר* *dabar* in Hebrew, which means not only a word spoken, but also thing, purpose, appointment, etc. Our Lord’s meaning seems to be this: God purposes the welfare of his creatures—all his appointments are calculated to promote this end. Some of them may appear to man to have a contrary tendency; but even fasting itself, when used in consequence of a

Divine injunction, becomes a mean of supporting that life which it seems naturally calculated to impair or destroy.

**Verse 5. *Pinnacle of the temple***— It is very likely that this was what was called the *στοα βασιλική*, the king's gallery; which, as Josephus says, “deserves to be mentioned among the most magnificent things under the sun: for upon a stupendous depth of a valley, scarcely to be fathomed by the eye of him that stands above, Herod erected a gallery of a vast height, from the top of which if any looked down, he would grow dizzy, his eyes not being able to reach so vast a depth.”-Ant. l. xv. c. 14. See Dr. Lightfoot on this place.

**Verse 6. *Cast thyself down***— Our Lord had repelled the first temptation by an act of confidence in the power and goodness of God; and now Satan solicits him to make trial of it. Through the unparalleled subtlety of Satan, the very means we make use of to repel one temptation may be used by him as the groundwork of another. This method he often uses, in order to confound us in our confidence.

***He shall give his angels charge, etc.***— This is a mutilated quotation of Psalm 91:11. The clause, to keep thee in all thy ways, Satan chose to leave out, as quite unsuitable to his design. That God has promised to protect and support his servants, admits of no dispute; but, as the path of duty is the way of safety, they are entitled to no good when they walk out of it.

***In their hands they shall bear thee up***— This quotation from Psalm 91:11, is a metaphor taken from a nurse's management of her child: in teaching it to walk, she guides it along plain ground; but, when stones or other obstacles occur, she lifts up the child, and carries it over them, and then sets it down to walk again. Thus she keeps it in all its ways, watching over, and guarding every step it takes. To this St. Paul seems also to allude, 1 Thessalonians 2:7. We were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children. Thus the most merciful God deals with the children of men, ever guarding them by his eye, and defending them by his power.

**Verse 7. *Thou shalt not tempt***— To expose myself to any danger naturally destructive, with the vain presumption that God will protect and

defend me from the ruinous consequences of my imprudent conduct, is to tempt God.

**Verse 8. *An exceeding high mountain, and showeth him***— If the words, all the kingdoms of the world, be taken in a literal sense, then this must have been a visionary representation, as the highest mountain on the face of the globe could not suffice to make evident even one hemisphere of the earth, and the other must of necessity be in darkness.

But if we take the world to mean only the land of Judea, and some of the surrounding nations, as it appears sometimes to signify, (see on Luke 2:1,) then the mountain described by the Abbe Mariti (Travels through Cyprus, etc.) could have afforded the prospect in question. Speaking of it, he says, “Here we enjoyed the most beautiful prospect imaginable. This part of the mountain overlooks the mountains of Arabia, the country of Gilead, the country of the Amorites, the plains of Moab, the plains of Jericho, the river Jordan, and the whole extent of the Dead Sea. It was here that the devil said to the Son of God, All these kingdoms will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.” Probably St. Matthew, in the Hebrew original, wrote **הָאָרֶץ** haarets, which signifies the world, the earth, and often the land of Judea only. What renders this more probable is, that at this time Judea was divided into several kingdoms, or governments under the three sons of Herod the Great, viz. Archelaus, Antipas, and Philip; which are not only called ethnarchs and tetrarchs in the Gospels, but also **βασίλεις**, kings, and are said **βασίλευειν**, to reign, as Rosenmuller has properly remarked. See Matthew 2:22; 14:9.

**Verse 9. *If thou wilt fall down and worship me***— As if he had said, “The whole of this land is now under my government; do me homage for it, and I will deliver it into thy hand.”

**Verse 10. *Get thee hence***— Or, behind me, **οπισω μου**. This is added by a multitude of the best MSS., VERSIONS, and FATHERS. This temptation savoring of nothing but diabolical impudence, Jesus did not treat it as the others; but, with Divine authority, commanded the tempter to return to his own place.

In the course of this trial, it appears that our blessed Lord was tempted, 1st. To DISTRUST. Command these stones to become bread. 2dly. To



PRESUMPTION. Cast thyself down. 3dly. To worldly AMBITION. All these will I give. 4thly. To IDOLATRY. Fall down and worship me, or do me homage. There is probably not a temptation of Satan, but is reducible to one or other of these four articles.

From the whole we may learn:

First. No man, howsoever holy, is exempted from temptation: for God manifested to the flesh was tempted by the devil.

Secondly. That the best way to foil the adversary, is by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, Ephesians 6:17.

Thirdly. That to be tempted even to the greatest abominations (while a person resists) is not sin: for Christ was tempted to worship the DEVIL.

Fourthly. That there is no temptation which is from its own nature, or favoring circumstances, irresistible. God has promised to bruise even Satan under our feet.

As I wish to speak what I think most necessary on every subject, when I first meet it, and once for all, I would observe, first, That the fear of being tempted may become a most dangerous snare.

Secondly, That when God permits a temptation or trial to come he will give grace to bear or overcome it.

Thirdly, That our spiritual interests shall be always advanced, in proportion to our trials and faithful resistance.

Fourthly, That a more than ordinary measure of Divine consolation shall be the consequence of every victory.

**Verse 11.** *Behold, angels came and ministered unto him.*— That is, brought that food which was necessary to support nature.

The name given to Satan in the third verse is very emphatic, ο πειραζων, the tempter, or trier, from πειρω, to pierce through. To this import of the name there seems to be an allusion, Ephesians 6:16: The fiery DARTS of the wicked one. This is the precise idea of the word in Deuteronomy 8:2. To humble thee, and to prove thee, TO KNOW WHAT WAS IN THY HEART: לִנְסֹתָךְ linesteca, πειραση σε, LXX. that he might bore thee through.

The quality and goodness of many things are proved by piercing or boring through; for this shows what is in the heart. Perhaps nothing tends so much to discover what we are, as trials either from men or devils.

Shalt thou serve, or pay religious veneration, **λαρρευσεις**. This is Mr. Wakefield's translation, and I think cannot be mended. **λατρεία** comes from **λα**, very much, and **τρεω**, I tremble. When a sinner approaches the presence of God, conscious of HIS infinite holiness and justice, and of his own vileness, he will then fully comprehend what this word means. See this religious reverence exemplified in the case of Moses, when in the presence of God; I exceedingly fear, said he, and tremble, Hebrews 12:21. And yet this fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. See the observations at the end of the chapter.

**Verse 13. *And leaving Nazareth***— Or, entirely leaving Nazareth, **και καταλιπων την ναζαρετ**, from **κατα**, intensive, and **δειπω**, I leave. It seems that, from this time, our blessed Lord made Capernaum his ordinary place of residence; and utterly forsook Nazareth, because they had wholly rejected his word, and even attempted to take away his life. See Luke 4:29.

Galilee was bounded by mount Lebanon on the north, by the river Jordan and the sea of Galilee on the east, by Chison on the south, and by the Mediterranean on the west.

Nazareth, a little city in the tribe of Zebulon, in lower Galilee, with Tabor on the east, and Ptolemais on the west. It is supposed that this city was the usual residence of our Lord for the first thirty years of his life. It was here he became incarnate, lived in subjection to Joseph and Mary, and from which he took the name of a Nazorean.

Capernaum, a city famous in the New Testament, but never mentioned in the Old. Probably it was one of those cities which the Jews built after their return from Babylon. It stood on the sea-coast of Galilee, on the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim, as mentioned in the text. This was called his own city, Matthew 9:1, etc., and here, as a citizen, he paid the half shekel, Matthew 17:24. Among the Jews, if a man became a resident in any city for twelve months, he thereby became a citizen, and paid his proportion of dues and taxes. See Lightfoot. Capernaum is well known to have been the

principal scene of our Lord's miracles during the three years of his public ministry.

Zabulon, the country of this tribe, in which Nazareth and Capernaum were situated, bordered on the lake of Gennesareth, stretching to the frontiers of Sidon, Genesis 49:13. Nephthalim was contiguous to it, and both were on the east side of Jordan, Joshua 19:34.

**Verse 15. *Galilee of the Gentiles***— Or of the nations. So called, because it was inhabited by Egyptians, Arabians, and Phoenicians, according to the testimony of Strabo and others. The Hebrew גוֹיִם goyim, and the Greek ἔθνη, signify nations; and, in the Old and New Testaments, mean those people who were not descendants of any of the twelve tribes. The word Gentiles, from gens, a nation, signifies the same. It is worthy of remark, that it was a regular tradition among the ancient Jews, that the Messiah should begin his ministry in Galilee. See the proofs in Schoetgen.

**Verse 16. *The people which sat in darkness***— This is quoted from Isaiah 9:2, where, instead of sitting, the prophet used the word walked. The evangelist might on purpose change the term, to point out the increased misery of the state of these persons. Sitting in darkness expresses a greater degree of intellectual blindness, than walking in darkness does. In the time of Christ's appearing, the people were in a much worse state than in the time of the prophet, which was nearly 700 years before; as, during all this period, they were growing more ignorant and sinful.

***The region and shadow of death***— These words are amazingly descriptive. A region of death-DEATH's country, where, in a peculiar manner, Death lived, reigned, and triumphed, subjecting all the people to his sway.

***Shadow of death***— σκία θανάτου, used only here and in Luke 1:79, but often in the Old Covenant, where the Hebrew is צל מוֹת tsal maveth, It is not easy to enter fully into the ideal meaning of this term. As in the former clause, death is personified, so here. A shadow is that darkness cast upon a place by a body raised between it and the light or sun. Death is here represented as standing between the land above mentioned, and the light of life, or Sun of righteousness; in consequence of which, all the inhabitants were, involved in a continual cloud of intellectual darkness, misery, and

sin. The heavenly sun was continually eclipsed to them, till this glorious time, when Jesus Christ, the true light, shone forth in the beauty of holiness and truth. Christ began his ministry in Galilee, and frequented this uncultivated place more than he did Jerusalem and other parts of Judea: here his preaching was peculiarly needful; and by this was the prophecy fulfilled.

**Verse 17. *Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent***— See on Matthew 3:1, 2. Every preacher commissioned by God to proclaim salvation to a lost world, begins his work with preaching the doctrine of repentance. This was the case with all the prophets, John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, all the apostles, and all their genuine successors in the Christian ministry. The reasons are evident in the notes already referred to; and for the explanation of the word *κηρυσσεν*, preaching or proclaiming as a herald, see at the end of chap. 3.

**Verse 18. *Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother***— Why did not Jesus Christ call some of the eminent Scribes or Pharisees to publish his Gospel, and not poor unlearned fishermen, without credit or authority? Because it was the kingdom of heaven they were to preach, and their teaching must come from above: besides, the conversion of sinners, though it be effected instrumentally by the preaching of the Gospel, yet the grand agent in it is the Spirit of God. As the instruments were comparatively mean, and, the work which was accomplished by them was grand and glorious, the excellency of the power at once appeared to be of GOD, and not of man; and thus the glory, due alone to his name, was secured, and the great Operator of all good had the deserved praise. Seminaries of learning, in the order of God's providence and grace, have great and important uses; and, in reference to such uses, they should be treated with great respect: but to make preachers of the Gospel is a matter to which they are utterly inadequate; it is a prerogative that God never did, and never will, delegate to man.

Where the seed of the kingdom of God is sowed, and a dispensation of the Gospel is committed to a man, a good education may be of great and general use: but it no more follows, because a man has had a good education, that therefore he is qualified to preach the Gospel, than it does, that because he has not had that, therefore he is unqualified; for there may

be much ignorance of Divine things where there is much human learning; and a man may be well taught in the things of God, and be able to teach others, who has not had the advantages of a liberal education.

Men-made ministers have almost ruined the heritage of God. To prevent this, our Church requires that a man be inwardly moved to take upon himself this ministry, before he can be ordained to it. And he who cannot say, that he trusts (has rational and Scriptural conviction) that he is moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon himself this office, is an intruder into the heritage of God, and his ordination, ipso facto, vitiated and of none effect. See the truly apostolic Ordination Service of the Church of England.

**Fishers.**— Persons employed in a lawful and profitable avocation, and faithfully discharging their duty in it. It was a tradition of the elders, that one of Joshua's ten precepts was, that all men should have an equal right to spread their nets and fish in the sea of Tiberias, or Galilee. The persons mentioned here were doubtless men of pure morals; for the minister of God should have a good report from them that are without.

**Verse 19. Follow me**— Come after me, **δευτε οπισω μου**. Receive my doctrines, imitate me in my conduct—in every respect be my disciples. We may observe that most of the calls of God to man are expressed in a few solemn words, which alarm, the conscience, and deeply impress the heart.

**I will make you fishers of men.**— Ezekiel Ezekiel 47:8-10, casts much light on this place; and to this prophet our Lord probably alludes. To follow Christ, and be admitted into a partnership of his ministry, is a great honor; but those only who are by himself fitted for it, God calls. Miserable are those who do not wait for this call—who presume to take the name of fishers of men, and know not how to cast the net of the Divine word, because not brought to an acquaintance with the saving power of the God who bought them. Such persons, having only their secular interest in view, study not to catch men, but to catch money: and though, for charity's sake, it may be said of a pastor of this spirit, he does not enter the sheepfold as a thief, yet he certainly lives as a hireling. See Quesnel.

Some teach to work, but have no hands to row; Some will be eyes, but have no light to see; Some will be guides, but have no feet to go; Some deaf, yet ears, some dumb, yet tongues will be; Dumb, deaf, lame, blind, and

maimed, yet fishers all! Fit for no use but store an hospital. Fletcher's Piscatory Eclogues. Ecclesiastes. iv. 5, 18.

Following a person, in the Jewish phrase, signifies being his disciple or scholar. See a similar mode of speech, 2 Kings 6:19.

**Verse 20. *They straightway left their nets***— A change, as far as it respected secular things, every way to their disadvantage. The proud and the profane may exult and say, "Such preachers as these cannot be much injured by their sacrifices of secular property—they have nothing but nets, etc., to leave." Let such carpers at the institution of Christ know, that he who has nothing but a net, and leaves that for the sake of doing good to the souls of men, leaves his ALL: besides, he lived comfortably by his net before; but, in becoming the servant of all for Christ's sake, he often exposes himself to the want of even a morsel of bread. See on Matthew 19:27.

**Verse 22. *Left the ship and their father***— By the ship, *το πλοιον*, we are to understand the mere fishing-boat, used for extending their nets in the water and bringing the hawser or rope of the farther end to shore, by which the net was pulled to land. But why should these be called to leave their employment and their father, probably now aged? To this I answer, that to be obedient to, provide for, and comfort our parents, is the highest duty we owe or can discharge, except that to God. But, when God calls to the work of the ministry, father and mother and all must be left. Were we necessary to their comfort and support before? Then God, if he call us into another work or state, will take care to supply to them our lack of service some other way; and, if this be not done, it is a proof we have mistaken our call. Again, were our parents necessary to us, and in leaving them for the sake of the Gospel, or in obedience to a Divine command, do we deprive ourselves of the comforts of life? No matter: we should prefer the honor of serving the Most High, even in poverty and humility, to all the comforts of a father's house. But what an honor was the vocation of James and John, to old Zebedee their father! His sons are called to be heralds of the God of heaven! Allowing him to have been a pious man, this must have given him unutterable delight.

**Verse 23. *Teaching in their synagogues***— Synagogue, *συναγωγη*, from *συν*, together, and *αγω*, I bring, a public assembly of persons, or the place

where such persons publicly assembled. Synagogues, among the Jews, were not probably older than the return from the Babylonish captivity. They were erected not only in cities and towns, but in the country, and especially by rivers, that they might have water for the convenience of their frequent washings.

Not less than ten persons of respectability composed a synagogue; as the rabbins supposed that this number of persons, of independent property, and well skilled in the law, were necessary to conduct the affairs of the place, and keep up the Divine worship. See Lightfoot. Therefore, where this number could not be found, no synagogue was built; but there might be many synagogues in one city or town, provided it were populous. Jerusalem is said to have contained 480. This need not be wondered at, when it is considered that every Jew was obliged to worship God in public, either in a synagogue or in the temple.

The chief things belonging to a synagogue were:

1st. The ark or chest, made after the mode of the ark of the covenant, containing the Pentateuch.

2dly. The pulpit and desk, in the middle of the synagogue, on which he stood who read or expounded the law.

3dly. The seats or pews for the men below, and the galleries for the women above.

4thly. The lamps to give light in the evening service, and at the feast of the dedication. And,

5thly. Apartments for the utensils and alms-chests.

The synagogue was governed by a council or assembly, over whom was a president, called in the Gospels, the ruler of the synagogue. These are sometimes called chiefs of the Jews, the rulers, the priests or elders, the governors, the overseers, the fathers of the synagogue. Service was performed in them three times a day—morning, afternoon, and night. Synagogue, among the Jews, had often the same meaning as congregation among us, or place of judicature, see James 2:2.

***Preaching the Gospel of the kingdom***— Or, proclaiming the glad tidings of the kingdom. See the preceding notes. Behold here the perfect pattern of an evangelical preacher: 1. He goes about seeking sinners on every side, that he may show them the way to heaven. 2. He proclaims the glad tidings of the kingdom, with a freedom worthy of the King whom he serves. 3. He makes his reputation and the confidence of the people subservient not to his own interest, but to the salvation of souls. 4. To his preaching he joins, as far as he has ability, all works of mercy, and temporal assistance to the bodies of men. 5. He takes care to inform men that diseases, and all kinds of temporal evils, are the effects of sin, and that their hatred to iniquity should increase in proportion to the evils they endure through it. 6. And that nothing but the power of God can save them from sin and its consequences.

For glad tidings, or Gospel, see chap. 1. title. Proclaiming, see Matthew 3:1, and end; and for the meaning of kingdom, see Matthew 3:2.

***All manner of sickness, and all manner of disease***— There is a difference between *νοσος*, translated here sickness, and *μαλακία*, translated disease. The first is thus defined: *νοσος, την χρονιαν κακοπαθειαν*, a disease of some standing, a chronic disorder.

Infirmity, *μαλακία την προσκαιρον ανωμαλιαν τοι σωματος*, a temporary disorder of the body. Theophylact. This is a proper distinction, and is necessary to be observed.

**Verse 24. Sick people**— *τους, κακως εχοντας*, those who felt ill-were afflicted with any species of malady.

***And torments***— *βασανοις*, from *βασανιζω*, to examine by torture, such as cholics, gouts, and rheumatisms, which racked every joint.

***Possessed with devils***— Daemoniacs. Persons possessed by evil spirits. This is certainly the plain obvious meaning of daemoniac in the Gospels.

Many eminent men think that the sacred writers accommodated themselves to the unfounded prejudices of the common people, in attributing certain diseases to the influence of evil spirits, which were merely the effects of natural causes: but that this explanation can never



comport with the accounts given of these persons shall be proved as the places occur.

Our common version, which renders the word, those possessed by devils, is not strictly correct; as the word devil, **διαβολος**, is not found in the plural in any part of the Sacred Writings, when speaking of evil spirits: for though there are multitudes of daemons, Mark 5: 9, yet it appears there is but one DEVIL, who seems to be supreme, or head, over all the rest.

**διαβολος** signifies an accuser or slanderer, 1 Timothy 3:11; 2 Timothy 3:3; Titus 2:3. Perhaps Satan was called so, 1st. because he accused or slandered God in paradise, as averse from the increase of man's knowledge and happiness, Genesis 3:5; John 8:44; and 2dly. because he is the accuser of men, Revelation 12:9, 10. See also "Job 1:2". The word comes from **δια**, through, and **βαλλειν**, to cast, or shoot, because of the influence of his evil suggestions; compared, Ephesians 6:16, to fiery darts; and thus it is nearly of the same meaning with **ο πειραζων**, he who pierces through. See on Matthew 4:3.

**Lunatic**— Persons afflicted with epileptic or other disorders, which are always known to have a singular increase at the change and full of the moon. This undoubtedly proceeds from the superadded attractive influence of the sun and moon upon the earth's atmosphere, as, in the periods mentioned above, these two luminaries are both in conjunction; and their united attractive power being exerted on the earth at the same time, not only causes the flux and reflux of the ocean, but occasions a variety of important changes in the bodies of infirm persons, of animals in general, but more particularly in those who are more sensible of these variations. And is this any wonder, when it is well known, that a very slight alteration in the atmosphere causes the most uncomfortable sensations to a number of invalids! But sometimes even these diseases were caused by demons. See on Matthew 8:16, 34, and Matthew 17:15.

**Palsy**— Palsy is defined, a sudden loss of tone and vital power in a certain part of the human body. This may affect a limb, the whole side, the tongue, or the whole body. This disorder is in general incurable, except by the miraculous power of God, unless in its slighter stages.

**He healed them.**— Either with a word or a touch; and thus proved that all nature was under his control.

**Verse 25.** This verse is immediately connected with the fifth chapter, and should not be separated from it.

**Great multitudes**— This, even according to the Jews, was one proof of the days of the Messiah: for they acknowledged that in his time there should be a great famine of the word of God; and thus they understood Amos, Am 8:11. Behold, the days come—that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread—but of hearing the words of the Lord. And as the Messiah was to dispense this word, the bread of life, hence they believed that vast multitudes from all parts should be gathered together to him. See Schoettgenius on this place.

**Decapolis**— A small country, situated between Syria and Galilee of the nations. It was called Decapolis, *δεκαπολις*, from *δεκα*, ten, and *πολις*, a city, because it contained only ten cities; the metropolis, and most ancient of which, was Damascus.

**From beyond Jordan.**— Or, from the side of Jordan. Probably this was the country which was occupied anciently by the two tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh; for the country of Decapolis lay on both sides of the river Jordan. See Numbers 32:5, 33.

THE account of our Lord's temptation, as given by the evangelist, is acknowledged on all hands to be extremely difficult. Two modes of interpretation have been generally resorted to, in order to make the whole plain and intelligible: viz. the literal and allegorical. In all cases, where it can possibly apply, I prefer the first: the latter should never be used, unless obviously indicated in the text itself; or so imperiously necessary that no other mode of interpretation can possibly apply. In the preceding observations, I have taken up the subject in a literal point of view; and it is hoped that most of the difficulties in the relation have been removed, or obviated, by this plan. An ingenious correspondent has favored me with some observations on the subject, which have much more than the merit of novelty to recommend them. I shall give an abstract of some of the most striking; and leave the whole to the reader's farther consideration.

The thoughts in this communication proceed on this ground: "These temptations were addressed to Christ as a public person, and respected his conduct in the execution of his ministry; and are reported to his Church as

a forcible and practical instruction, concerning the proper method of promoting the kingdom of God upon earth. They are warnings against those Satanic illusions, by which the servants of Christ are liable to be hindered in their great work, and even stopped in the prosecution of it.

“As our Lord had, at his baptism, been declared to be the SON of God, i.e. the promised Messiah, this was probably well known to Satan, who did not mean to insinuate any thing to the contrary, when he endeavored to engage him to put forth an act of that power which he possessed as the Messiah. The mysterious union of the Divine with the human nature, in our Lord’s state of humiliation, Satan might think possible to be broken; and therefore endeavored, in the first temptation, Command these stones to be made bread, to induce our Lord to put forth a separate, independent act of power; which our Lord repelled, by showing his intimate union with the Divine will, which he was come to fulfill-Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Thus showing, as he did on another occasion, that it was his meat and drink to do the will of his Father.

“2. The ground of the temptation was then changed; and the fulfillment of the Divine will, in the completion of a prophetic promise, was made the ostensible object of the next attack. Cast thyself down-for it is WRITTEN, He will give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands shall they bear thee up, etc. This our Lord repelled with-Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God-as Satan had designed to induce him to seek this public miraculous confirmation of God’s peculiar care over him, as the promised Messiah, of his being which, according to the hypothesis above, Satan had no doubt. Moses, being appointed to a great and important work, needed miraculous signs to strengthen his faith; but the sacred humanity of our blessed Lord needed them not; nor did his wisdom judge that such a sign from heaven was essential to the instruction of the people.

“3. The last temptation was the most subtle and the most powerful-All these will I give unto thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. To inherit all nations, had been repeatedly declared to be the birthright of the Messiah. His right to universal empire could not be controverted; nor could Satan presume to make the investiture. What, then, was his purpose? Satan had hitherto opposed, and that with considerable success,

the kingdom of God upon earth; and what he appears to propose here, were terms of peace, and an honorable retreat. The worship which he exacted was an act of homage, in return for his cession of that ascendancy which, through the sin of man, he had obtained in the world. Having long established his rule among men, it was not at first to be expected that he would resign it without a combat: but the purpose of this last temptation appears to be an offer to decline any farther contest; and, yet more, if his terms were accepted, apparently to engage his influence to promote the kingdom of the Messiah. And as the condition of this proposed alliance, he required, not Divine worship, but such an act of homage as implied amity and obligation; and if this construction be allowed, he may be supposed to have enforced the necessity of the measure, by every suggestion of the consequences of a refusal. The sufferings which would inevitably result from a provoked opposition, which would render the victory, though certain to Christ himself, dearly bought; added to which, the conflict he was prepared to carry on through succeeding ages, in which all his subtlety and powers should be employed to hinder the progress of Christ's cause in the earth, and that with a considerable degree of anticipated success. Here the devil seems to propose to make over to Christ the power and influence he possessed in this world, on condition that he would enter into terms of peace with him; and the inducement offered was, that thereby our Lord should escape those sufferings, both in his own person, and in that of his adherents, which a provoked contest would ensure. And we may suppose that a similar temptation lies hid in the desires excited even in some of the servants of Christ, who may feel themselves often induced to employ worldly influence and power for the promotion of his kingdom, even though, in so doing, an apparent communion of Christ and Belial is the result: for it will be found that neither worldly riches, nor power, can be employed in the service of Christ, till, like the spoils taken in war, Deuteronomy 31:21-23, they have passed through the fire and water, as, without a Divine purification, they are not fit to be employed in the service of God and his Church.

“Hence we may conclude, that the first temptation had for its professed object, 1st, our Lord's personal relief and comfort, through the inducement of performing a separate and independent act of power.-The second temptation professed to have in view his public acknowledgment by the

people, as the MESSIAH: for, should they see him work such a miracle as throwing himself down from the pinnacle of the temple without receiving any hurt, they would be led instantly to acknowledge his Divine mission; and the evil of this temptation may be explained, as seeking to secure the success of his mission by other means than those which, as the Messiah, he had received from the Father. Compare John 14:31. The third temptation was a subtle attempt to induce Christ to acknowledge Satan as an ally, in the establishment of his kingdom.” E. M. B.

The above is the substance of the ingenious theory of my correspondent, which may be considered as a third mode of interpretation, partaking equally of the allegoric and literal. I still, however, think, that the nearer we keep to the letter in all such difficult cases, the more tenable is our ground, especially where the subject itself does not obviously require the allegorical mode of interpretation. Among many things worthy of remark in the preceding theory the following deserves most attention: That Satan is ever ready to tempt the governors and ministers of the Christian Church to suppose that worldly means, human policy, secular interest and influence, are all essentially necessary for the support and extension of that kingdom which is not of this world! Such persons can never long preserve hallowed hands: they bring the world into the Church; endeavor to sanctify the bad means they use, by the good end they aim at; and often, in the prosecution of their object, by means which are not of God’s devising, are driven into straits and difficulties, and to extricate themselves, tell lies for God’s sake. This human policy is from beneath-God will neither sanction nor bless it. It has been the bane of true religion in all ages of the world; and, in every country where the cause of Christianity has been established, such schemers and plotters in the Church of God are as dangerous to its interests as a plague is to the health of society. The governors and ministers of the Christian Church should keep themselves pure, and ever do God’s work in his own way. If the slothful servant should be cast out of the vineyard, he that corrupts the good seed of the Divine field, or sows tares among the wheat, should be considered as an enemy to righteousness, and be expelled from the sacred pale as one who closes in with the temptation-“All these things (the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them) will I give unto THEE, if thou wilt fall down and worship ME.” However necessary the Church may be to the state, and

the state to the Church, as some people argue, yet the latter is never in so much danger as when the former smiles upon it.

## CHAPTER 5

*Christ begins his sermon on the mount, 1, 2. The beatitudes, 3-12. The disciples the salt of the earth, and light of the world, 13-16. Christ is not come to destroy, but confirm and fulfill, the Law and the Prophets, 17-19. Of the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, 20. Interpretation of the precepts relative to murder, anger, and injurious speaking, 21, 22. Of reconciliation, 23-26. Of impure acts and propensities, and the necessity of mortification, 27-30. Of divorce, 31, 32. Of oaths and profane swearing, 33-37. Of bearing injuries and persecution, 38-41. Of borrowing and lending, 42. Of love and hatred, 43-46. Of civil respect, 47. Christ's disciples must resemble their heavenly Father, 48.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 5

**Verse 1. *And seeing the multitudes***— τοὺς ὄχλους, these multitudes, viz. those mentioned in the preceding verse, which should make the first verse of this chapter.

***He went up into a mountain***— That he might have the greater advantage of speaking, so as to be heard by that great concourse of people which followed him. It is very probable that nothing more is meant here than a small hill or eminence. Had he been on a high mountain they could not have heard; and, had he been at a great distance, he would not have sat down. See the note on “Matthew 5:14”.

***And when he was set***— The usual posture of public teachers among the Jews, and among many other people. Hence sitting was a synonymous term for teaching among the rabbins.

***His disciples***— The word μαθητης signifies literally a scholar. Those who originally followed Christ, considered him in the light of a Divine teacher; and conscious of their ignorance, and the importance of his teaching, they put themselves under his tuition, that they might be instructed in heavenly things. Having been taught the mysteries of the kingdom of God, they became closely attached to their Divine Master, imitating his life and

manners; and recommending his salvation to all the circle of their acquaintance. This is still the characteristic of a genuine disciple of Christ.

**Verse 3. *Blessed are the poor in spirit, etc.***— Or, happy, μακαριοι from μα or μη, not, and κηρ, fate, or death: intimating, that such persons were endued with immortality, and consequently were not liable to the caprices of fate. Homer, Iliad i, 330, calls the supreme gods, θεων μακαρων, the ever happy and IMMORTAL gods, and opposes them to θνητων ανθρωπων, mortal men.

τω δ' αυτω μαρτυροι εστων,  
προς τε θεων μακαρων, προς τε θνητων ανθρωπων

“Be ye witnesses before the immortal gods, and before mortal men.” From this definition we may learn, that the person whom Christ terms happy is one who is not under the influence of fate or chance, but is governed by an all-wise providence, having every step directed to the attainment of immortal glory, being transformed by the power into the likeness of the ever-blessed God. Though some of the persons, whose states are mentioned in these verses, cannot be said to be as yet blessed or happy, in being made partakers of the Divine nature; yet they are termed happy by our Lord, because they are on the straight way to this blessedness.

Taken in this light the meaning is similar to that expressed by the poet when describing a happy man.

FELIX, qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas:  
Atque metus omnes et inexorabile FATUM  
Subjecit pedibus; strepitumque Acherontis avari!  
Virg. Geor. ii. v. 490

Which may be thus paraphrased:-

“Happy is he who gains the knowledge of the first cause of all things; who can trample on every fear, and the doctrine of inexorable FATE; and who is not terrified by death, nor by the threatened torments of the invisible world!”

**Poor in spirit**— One who is deeply sensible of his spiritual poverty and wretchedness. πτωχος, a poor man, comes from πτωσσω, to tremble, or shrink with fear. Being destitute of the true riches, he is tremblingly alive



to the necessities of his soul, shrinking with fear lest he should perish without the salvation of God. Such Christ pronounces happy, because there is but a step between them and that kingdom which is here promised. Some contend, that μακαριοι should be referred to, πνευματι, and the verse translated thus: Happy, or blessed in spirit, are the poor. But our Lord seems to have the humiliation of the spirit particularly in view.

**Kingdom of heaven.**— Or, των ουρανων, of the heavens. A participation of all the blessings of the new covenant here, and the blessings of glory above. See this phrase explained, “Matthew 3:2”. Blessed are the poor! this is God’s word; but who believes it? Do we not say, Yea, rather, Blessed is the rich?

The Jewish rabbins have many good sayings relative to that poverty and humility of spirit which Christ recommends in this verse. In the treatise called Bammidbar Rabbi, s. 20, we have these words: There were three (evils) in Balaam: the evil eye, (envy,) the towering spirit, (pride,) and the extensive mind (avarice.)

Tanchum, fol. 84. The law does not abide with those who have the extensive mind, (avarice,) but with him only who has a contrite heart.

Rabbi Chanina said, “Why are the words of the law compared to water? Because as waters flow from heights, and settle in low places, so the words of the law rest only with him who is of an humble heart.” See Schoettgen.

**Verse 4. Blessed are they that mourn**— That is, those who, feeling their spiritual poverty, mourn after God, lamenting the iniquity that separated them from the fountain of blessedness. Every one flies from sorrow, and seeks after joy, and yet true joy must necessarily be the fruit of sorrow. The whole need not (do not feel the need of) the physician, but they that are sick do; i.e. they who are sensible of their disease. Only such persons as are deeply convinced of the sinfulness of sin, feel the plague of their own heart, and turn with disgust from all worldly consolations, because of their insufficiency to render them happy, have God’s promise of solid comfort. They SHALL BE comforted, says Christ, παρακληθησονται, from παρα, near, and καλεω, I call. He will call them to himself, and speak the words of pardon, peace, and life eternal, to their hearts. See this

notion of the word expressed fully by our Lord, Matthew 11:28, COME UNTO ME all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

**Verse 5. *Blessed are the meek***— Happy, *οι πραεις*, from *ραος*, easy, those who are of a quiet, gentle spirit, in opposition to the proud and supercilious Scribes and Pharisees and their disciples. We have a compound word in English, which once fully expressed the meaning of the original, viz. gentleman; but it has now almost wholly lost its original signification. Our word meek comes from the old Anglo-saxon meca, or meccea, a companion or equal, because he who is of a meek or gentle spirit, is ever ready to associate with the meanest of those who fear God, feeling himself superior to none; and well knowing that he has nothing of spiritual or temporal good but what he has received from the mere bounty of God, having never deserved any favor from his hand.

***For they shall inherit the earth.***— Or, *την γην*, the land. Under this expression, which was commonly used by the prophets to signify the land of Canaan, in which all temporal good abounded, Judges 18:9, 10, Jesus Christ points out that abundance of spiritual good, which was provided for men in the Gospel. Besides, Canaan was a type of the kingdom of God; and who is so likely to inherit glory as the man in whom the meekness and gentleness of Jesus dwell? In some good MSS. and several ancient versions, the fourth and fifth verses are transposed: see the authorities in the various readings in Professor Griesbach's edition. The present arrangement certainly is most natural: 1. Poverty, to which the promise of the kingdom is made. 2. Mourning or distress, on account of this impoverished state, to which consolation is promised. And 3. Meekness established in the heart by the consolations received.

**Verse 6. *They which do hunger and thirst***— As the body has its natural appetites of hunger and thirst for the food and drink suited to its nourishment, so has the soul. No being is indestructible or unfailing in its nature but GOD; no being is independent but him: as the body depends for its nourishment, health, and strength upon the earth, so does the soul upon heaven. Heavenly things cannot support the body; they are not suited to its nature: earthly things cannot support the soul, for the same reason. When the uneasy sensation termed hunger takes place in the stomach, we know we must get food or perish. When the soul is awakened to a tense of

its wants, and begins to hunger and thirst after righteousness or holiness, which is its proper food, we know that it must be purified by the Holy Spirit, and be made a partaker of that living bread, John 8:48, or perish everlastingly. Now, as God never inspires a prayer but with a design to answer it, he who hungers and thirsts after the full salvation of God, may depend on being speedily and effectually blessed or satisfied, well-fed, as the word **χορτασθησονται** implies. Strong and intense desire after any object has been, both by poets and orators, represented metaphorically by hunger and thirst. See the well-known words of Virgil, *Aeneid* iii. 55.

— Quid non mortalia pectora cogis,  
Auri sacra FAMES!

“O cursed hunger after gold! what canst thou not influence the hearts of men to perpetrate?” How frequently do we find, *inexplebilis honorum FAMES-SITIENS virtutis-famae SITUS*, the insatiable hunger after honor, a thirst for virtue, thirst after fame, and such like! Righteousness here is taken for all the blessings of the new covenant—all the graces of the Messiah’s kingdom—a full restoration to the image of God!

**Verse 7. *The merciful***—The word mercy, among the Jews, signified two things: the pardon of injuries, and almsgiving. Our Lord undoubtedly takes it in its fullest latitude here. To know the nature of mercy, we have only to consult the grammatical meaning of the Latin word *miser cordia*, from which ours is derived. It is composed of two words: *miserans*, pitying, and *cor*, the heart; or *miseria cordis*, pain of heart. Mercy supposes two things: 1. A distressed object: and, 2. A disposition of the heart, through which it is affected at the sight of such an object. This virtue, therefore, is no other than a lively emotion of the heart, which is excited by the discovery of any creature’s misery; and such an emotion as manifests itself outwardly, by effects suited to its nature. The merciful man is here termed by our Lord **ελεημων**, from **ελεος**, which is generally derived from the Hebrew **חיל** *chil*, to be in pain, as a woman in travail: or from **לל** *galal*, to cry, or lament grievously; because a merciful man enters into the miseries of his neighbor, feels for and mourns with him.

***They shall obtain mercy.***—Mercy is not purchased but at the price of mercy itself; and even this price is a gift of the mercy of God. What mercy can those vindictive persons expect, who forgive nothing, and are always

ready to improve every advantage they have of avenging themselves? Whatever mercy a man shows to another, God will take care to show the same to him. The following elegant and nervous saying of one of our best poets is worthy of the reader's most serious attention:-

“The quality of mercy is not strained;  
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed;  
It blesseth him who gives, and him who takes:  
‘Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes  
The throned monarch better than his crown  
It is an attribute of God himself;  
And earthly power doth then show likest God's,  
When mercy seasons justice. —  
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,  
That, in the course of justice, none of us  
Should see salvation. We do pray for mercy;  
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render  
The deeds of mercy. —  
Why, all the souls that are, were forfeit once:  
And he who might the ‘vantage best have took  
Found out the remedy. How would you be,  
If He who is the top of judgment should  
But judge you as you are? O! think on that;  
And mercy then will breathe within your lips,  
Like man, new made  
How shalt thou hope for mercy, rend’ring none?”

In the tract Shabbath, fol. 151, there is a saying very like this of our Lord. “He who shows mercy to men, God will show mercy to him: but to him who shows no mercy to man, God will show no mercy.

**Verse 8. *Pure in heart***— In opposition to the Pharisees, who affected outward purity, while their hearts were full of corruption and defilement. A principal part of the Jewish religion consisted in outward washings and cleansings: on this ground they expected to see God, to enjoy eternal glory: but Christ here shows that a purification of the heart, from all vile affections and desires, is essentially requisite in order to enter into the kingdom of God. He whose soul is not delivered from all sin, through the blood of the covenant, can have no Scriptural hope of ever being with God. There is a remarkable illustration of this passage, quoted by Mr. Wakefield from Origen, *Contra Cels.* lib. vi. “God has no body, and therefore is invisible: but men of contemplation can discern him with the heart and

understanding. But A DEFILED HEART CANNOT SEE GOD: BUT HE MUST BE PURE WHO WISHES TO ENJOY A PROPER VIEW OF A PURE BEING.”

**Shall see God.**— This is a Hebraism, which signifies, possess God, enjoy his felicity: as seeing a thing, was used among the Hebrews for possessing it. See Psalm 16:10. Thou wilt not suffer thy Holy One to see corruption, i.e. he shall not be corrupted. So John 3:3: Except a man be born again, he cannot SEE the kingdom of God, i.e. he cannot enjoy it. So John 3:16. He that believeth not the Son, shall not SEE life, i. e shall not be put in possession of eternal glory. The Hindoo idolaters vainly boast of what the genuine followers of Christ actually enjoy—having the Divine favor witnessed to their souls by the Holy Spirit. The Hindoos pretend that some of their sages have been favored with a sight of their guardian deity.—See WARD’S Customs.

Probably our Lord alludes to the advantages those had, who were legally pure, of entering into the sanctuary, into the presence of God, while those who had contracted any legal defilement were excluded from it. This also was obviously typical.

**Verse 9. The peace-makers**— εἰρηνη, peace, is compounded of εἰρεῖν (εἰς) εἰν, connecting into one: for as WAR distracts and divides nations, families, and individuals, from each other, inducing them to pursue different objects and different interests, so PEACE restores them to a state of unity, giving them one object, and one interest. A peace-maker is a man who, being endowed with a generous public spirit, labors for the public good, and feels his own interest promoted in promoting that of others: therefore, instead of fanning the fire of strife, he uses his influence and wisdom to reconcile the contending parties, adjust their differences, and restore them to a state of unity. As all men are represented to be in a state of hostility to God and each other, the Gospel is called the Gospel of peace, because it tends to reconcile men to God and to each other. Hence our Lord here terms peace-makers the children of God: for as he is the Father of peace, those who promote it are reputed his children. But whose children are they who foment divisions in the Church, the state, or among families? Surely they are not of that GOD, who is the Father of peace, and lover of concord; of that CHRIST, who is the sacrifice and mediator of it; of

that SPIRIT, who is the nourisher and bond of peace; nor of that CHURCH of the Most High, which is the kingdom and family of peace.

St. Clement, Strom. lib. iv. s. 6, in fin. says, that “Some who transpose the Gospels add this verse: Happy they who are persecuted by justice, for they shall be perfect: happy they who are persecuted on my account, for they shall have a place where they shall not be persecuted.”

**Verse 10. *They which are persecuted***— *δεδιωγμενοι*, they who are hard pressed upon and pursued with repeated acts of enmity. Parkhurst. They are happy who suffer, seems a strange saying: and that the righteous should suffer, merely because they are such, seems as strange. But such is the enmity of the human heart to every thing of God and goodness, that all those who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution in one form or other. As the religion of Christ gives no quarter to vice, so the vicious will give no quarter to this religion, or to its professors.

***For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.***— That spiritual kingdom, explained Matthew 3:2, and that kingdom of glory which is its counterpart and consequence.

**Verse 11. *When men shall revile you, and persecute***— The persecution mentioned in the preceding verse comprehends all outward acts of violence—all that the hand can do. This comprehends all calumny, slander, etc., all that the tongue can effect. But as *διωκειν*, which we render to persecute, is a forensic term, and signifies legal persecutions and public accusations, which, though totally unsubstantiated, were the means of destroying multitudes of the primitive Christians, our Lord probably refers to such. No Protestant can think, without horror, of the great numbers burnt alive in this country, on such accusations, under the popish reign of her who is emphatically called Bloody Queen Mary.

**Verse 12. *Rejoice***— In the testimony of a good conscience; for, without this, suffering has nothing but misery in it.

***Be exceeding glad***— *αγαλλιασθε*, leap for joy. There are several cases on record, where this was literally done by the martyrs, in Queen Mary’s days.

***Great is your reward in heaven***— In the Talmudical tract Pirkey Aboth, are these words: “Rabbi Tarpon said, The day is short: the work is great: the laborers are slow: the REWARD IS GREAT: and the father of the family is urgent.”

The followers of Christ are encouraged to suffer joyfully on two considerations. 1. They are thereby conformed to the prophets who went before. 2. Their reward in heaven is a great one. God gives the grace to suffer, and then crowns that grace with glory; hence it is plain, the reward is not of debt, but of grace: Romans 6:23.

**Verse 13. *Ye are the salt of the earth***— Our Lord shows here what the preachers of the Gospel, and what all who profess to follow him, should be; the salt of the earth, to preserve the world from putrefaction and destruction. See the note on “Leviticus 2:13”.

***But if the salt have lost his savor***— That this is possible in the land of Judea, we have proof from Mr. Maundrell, who, describing the Valley of Salt, speaks thus: “Along, on one side of the valley, toward Gibul, there is a small precipice about two men’s lengths, occasioned by the continual taking away of the salt; and, in this, you may see how the veins of it lie. I broke a piece of it, of which that part that was exposed to the rain, sun, and air, though it had the sparks and particles of salt, YET IT HAD PERFECTLY LOST ITS SAVOUR: the inner part, which was connected to the rock, retained its savor, as I found by proof.” See his Trav., 5th edit., last page. A preacher, or private Christian, who has lost the life of Christ, and the witness of his Spirit, out of his soul, may be likened to this salt. He may have the sparks and glittering particles of true wisdom, but without its unction or comfort. Only that which is connected with the rock, the soul that is in union with Christ Jesus by the Holy Spirit, can preserve its savor, and be instrumental of good to others.

***To be trodden underfoot***— There was a species of salt in Judea, which was generated at the lake Asphaltites, and hence called bituminous salt, easily rendered vapid, and of no other use but to be spread in a part of the temple, to prevent slipping in wet weather. This is probably what our Lord alludes to in this place. The existence of such a salt, and its application to such a use, Schoettgenius has largely proved in his *Horae Hebraicae*, vol. i. p. 18, etc.

**Verse 14. *Ye are the light of the world***— That is, the instruments which God chooses to make use of to illuminate the minds of men; as he uses the sun (to which probably he pointed) to enlighten the world. Light of the world, **נר עולם** *ner olam*, was a title applied to the most eminent rabbins. Christ transfers the title from these, and gives it to his own disciples, who, by the doctrines that he taught them, were to be the means of diffusing the light of life throughout the universe.

***A city that is set on a hill***— This place may receive light from the following passage in Maundrell's Travels. "A few points toward the north (of Tabor) appears that which they call the Mount of Beatitudes, a small rising, from which our blessed Savior delivered his sermon in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of Matthew. (See the note on "Matthew 5:5".) Not far from this little hill is the city Saphet, supposed to be the ancient Bethulia. It stands upon a very eminent and conspicuous mountain, and is SEEN FAR and NEAR. May we not suppose that Christ alludes to this city, in these words of his, A city set on a hill cannot be hid?" p. 115. Quesnell remarks here: "The Christian life is something very high and sublime, to which we cannot arrive without pains: while it withdraws us from the earth, and carries us nearer heaven, it places us in view, and as a mark, to the malice of carnal men."

**Verse 15. *Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel***— A bushel **μοδιος**:—a measure both among the Greeks and Romans, containing a little more than a peck English. From some ancient writers we learn, that only those who had bad designs hid a candle under a bushel; that, in the dead of the night, when all were asleep, they might rise up, and have light at hand to help them to effect their horrid purposes of murder, etc. See Wetstein, Kypke, Wolf, etc.

**Verse 16. *Let your light so shine***— Or more literally, Thus let your light shine, **οὕτω λαμψατω το φως**. As the sun is lighted up in the firmament of heaven to diffuse its light and heat freely to every inhabitant of the earth; and as the lamp is not set under the bushel, but placed upon the lamp-stand that it may give light to all in the house; **THUS** let every follower of Christ, and especially every preacher of the Gospel, diffuse the light of heavenly knowledge, and the warmth of Divine love through the whole circle of their acquaintance.



***That they may see your good works***— It is not sufficient to have light—we must walk in the light, and by the light. Our whole conduct should be a perpetual comment on the doctrine we have received, and a constant exemplification of its power and truth.

***And glorify your Father***— The following curious saying is found in Bammidbar Rabba, s. 15. “The Israelites said to the holy blessed God, Thou commandest us to light lamps to thee; and yet thou art the, Light of the world, and with thee the light dwelleth. The holy blessed God answered, I do not command this because I need light; but that you may reflect light upon me, as I have illuminated you:—that the people may say, Behold, how the Israelites illustrate him, who illuminates them in the sight of the whole earth.” See more in Schoettgen. Real Christians are the children of God—they are partakers of his holy and happy nature: they should ever be concerned for their Father’s honor, and endeavor so to recommend him, and his salvation, that others may be prevailed on to come to the light, and walk in it. Then God is said to be glorified, when the glorious power of his grace is manifested in the salvation of men.

**Verse 17. *Think not that I am come to destroy the law***— Do not imagine that I am come to violate the law *καταλυσαι*, from *κατα*, and *λυω*, I loose, violate, or dissolve—I am not come to make the law of none effect—to dissolve the connection which subsists between its several parts, or the obligation men are under to have their lives regulated by its moral precepts; nor am I come to dissolve the connecting reference it has to the good things promised. But I am come, *πληρωσαι*, to complete—to perfect its connection and reference, to accomplish every thing shadowed forth in the Mosaic ritual, to fill up its great design; and to give grace to all my followers, *πληρωσαι*, to fill up, or complete, every moral duty. In a word, Christ completed the law: 1st. In itself, it was only the shadow, the typical representation, of good things to come; and he added to it that which was necessary to make it perfect, HIS OWN SACRIFICE, without which it could neither satisfy God, nor sanctify men. 2dly. He completed it in himself by submitting to its types with an exact obedience, and verifying them by his death upon the cross. 3dly. He completes this law, and the sayings of his prophets, in his members, by giving them grace to love the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and their neighbor as themselves; for this is all the law and the prophets.

It is worthy of observation, that the word גָּמַר gamar, among the rabbins, signifies not only to fulfill, but also to teach; and, consequently, we may infer that our Lord intimated, that the law and the prophets were still to be taught or inculcated by him and his disciples; and this he and they have done in the most pointed manner. See the Gospels and epistles; and see especially this sermon on the mount, the Epistle of James, and the Epistle to the Hebrews. And this meaning of the word gives the clear sense of the apostle's words, Colossians 1:25. Whereof I am made a minister, πληρωσαι τοσ λογον του θεου, to fulfill the word of God, i.e. to teach the doctrine of God.

**Verse 18. *For verily I say unto you, Till heaven***— In the very commencement of his ministry, Jesus Christ teaches the instability of all visible things. “The heaven which you see, and which is so glorious, and the earth which you inhabit and love, shall pass away; for the things which are seen are temporal, προσκαιρα, are for a time; but the things which are not seen are eternal αιωνια, ever-during,” 2 Corinthians 4:18. And the WORD of the Lord endureth for ever.

***One jot or one tittle***— One yod, (י,) the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet. One tittle or point, κεραια, either meaning those points which serve for vowels in this language, if they then existed; or the seraphs, or points of certain letters, such as ר resh, or ד dalet, ה he, or ח cheth (as the change of any of these into the other would make a most essential alteration in the sense, or, as the rabbins say, destroy the world.) Or our Lord may refer to the little ornaments which certain letters assume on their tops, which cause them to appear like small branches. The following letters only can assume coronal apices, י tsaddi-ג gimel-ז zain-נ nun-ט teth-ע ayin-ש shin. These, with the coronal apices, often appear in MSS.

That this saying, one jot or one tittle, is a proverbial mode of expression among the Jews, and that it expressed the meaning given to it above, is amply proved by the extracts in Lightfoot and Schoettgen. The reader will not be displeased to find a few of them here, if he can bear with the allegorical and strongly figurative language of the rabbins.

“The book of Deuteronomy came and prostrated itself before the Lord, and said: ‘O Lord of the world, thou hast written in me thy law; but now,

a Testament defective in some parts is defective in all. Behold, Solomon endeavors to root the letter yod out of me.’ (In this text, Deuteronomy 17:5. **לֹא יִרְבֶּה נָשִׁים** lo yirbeh, nashim, he shall not multiply wives.) The holy blessed God answered, ‘Solomon and a thousand such as he shall perish, but the least word shall not perish out of thee.’“

In Shir Hashirim Rabba, are these words: “Should all the inhabitants of the earth gather together, in order to whiten one feather of a crow, they could not succeed: so, if all the inhabitants of the earth should unite to abolish one י yod, which is the smallest letter in the whole law, they should not be able to effect it.”

In Vayikra Rabba, s. 19, it is said: “Should any person in the words of Deuteronomy 6:4, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is **אֶחָד** achad, ONE Lord, change the ד dalet into a ר resh, he would ruin the world.” [Because, in that case, the word **אֶחָד** achar, would signify a strange or false God.]

“Should any one, in the words of Exodus 34:14, Thou shalt worship no OTHER, **אֶחָד** achar, God, change ר resh into ד dalet, he would ruin the world.” [Because the command would then run, Thou shalt not worship the ONLY or true God.]

“Should any one in the words of Leviticus 22:32, Neither shall ye PROFANE **תְּחַלְּלוּ** techelelu, my holy name, change ח cheth into ה he, he would ruin the world.” [Because the sense of the commandment would then be, Neither shall ye PRAISE my holy name.]

“Should any one, in the words of Psalm 150:6, Let every thing that hath breath PRAISE, **תְּהַלֵּל** te halel, the Lord, change ה he into ח cheth, he would ruin the world.” [Because the command would then run, Let every thing that hath breath PROFANE the Lord.]

“Should any one, in the words of Jeremiah 5:10, They lied AGAINST the Lord, **בִּיהוָה** beihovah, change ב beth into כ caph, he would ruin the world.” [For then the words would run, They lied LIKE the Lord.]

“Should any one, in the words of Hosea, Hosea 5:7, They have dealt treacherously, **בִּיהוָה** beihovah, AGAINST the Lord, change ב beth into כ

caph, he would ruin the world.” [For then the words would run, They have dealt treacherously LIKE the Lord.]

“Should any one, in the words of 1 Samuel 2:2, There is none holy As the Lord, change כ caph into ב beth, he would ruin the world.” [For then the words would mean, There is no holiness IN the Lord.]

These examples fully prove that the *μια κεραία* of our Lord, refers to the apices, points, or corners, that distinguish כ beth from כ caph; ח cheth from ה he; and ר resh from ד daleth. For the reader will at once perceive, how easily a כ caph may be turned into a ב beth; a ה he into a ח cheth; and a ר resh into a ד daleth: and he will also see of what infinite consequence it is to write and print such letters correctly.

***Till all be fulfilled.***— Or, accomplished. Though all earth and hell should join together to hinder the accomplishment of the great designs of the Most High, yet it shall all be in vain—even the sense of a single letter shall not be lost. The words of God, which point out his designs, are as unchangeable as his nature itself. Every sinner, who perseveres in his iniquity, shall surely be punished with separation from God and the glory of his power; and every soul that turns to God, through Christ, shall as surely be saved, as that Jesus himself hath died.

**Verse 19. *Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments***—

The Pharisees were remarkable for making a distinction between weightier and lighter matters in the law, and between what has been called, in a corrupt part of the Christian Church, mortal and venial sins. See on “Matthew 22:36”.

Whosoever shall break. What an awful consideration is this! He who, by his mode of acting, speaking, or explaining the words of God, sets the holy precept aside, or explains away its force and meaning, shall be called least—shall have no place in the kingdom of Christ here, nor in the kingdom of glory above. That this is the meaning of these words is evident enough from the following verse.

**Verse 20. *Except your righteousness shall exceed***— *περισσευση*, Unless your righteousness abound more—unless it take in, not only the letter, but the spirit and design of the moral and ritual precept; the one directing you

how to walk so as to please God; the other pointing out Christ, the great Atonement, through and by which a sinner is enabled to do so-more than that of the scribes and Pharisees, who only attend to the letter of the law, and had indeed made even that of no effect by their traditions-ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. This fully explains the meaning of the preceding verse. The old English word is [AS], right-wiseness, i.e. complete, thorough, excellent Wisdom. For a full explanation of this verse, see Luke 18:10, etc.

**Verse 21. *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time*—** τοῖς ἀρχαίοις, to or by the ancients. By the ancients, we may understand those who lived before the law, and those who lived under it; for murder was, in the most solemn manner, forbidden before, as well as under, the law, Genesis 9:5, 6.

But it is very likely that our Lord refers here merely to traditions and glosses relative to the ancient Mosaic ordinance; and such as, by their operation, rendered the primitive command of little or no effect. Murder from the beginning has been punished with death; and it is, probably, the only crime that should be punished with death. There is much reason to doubt, whether the punishment of death, inflicted for any other crime, is not in itself murder, whatever the authority may be that has instituted it. GOD, and the greatest legislators that have ever been in the universe, are of the same opinion. See Montesquieu, Blackstone, and the Marquis Beccaria, and the arguments and testimonies lately produced by Sir Samuel Romilly, in his motion for the amendment of the criminal laws of this kingdom. It is very remarkable, that the criminal code published by Joseph II., late emperor of Germany, though it consists of seventy-one capital crimes, has not death attached to any of them. Even murder, with all intention to rob, is punished only with “imprisonment for thirty years, to lie on the floor, to have no nourishment but bread and water, to be closely chained, and to be publicly whipped once a year, with less than one hundred lashes.” See Colquhoun on the Police of the City of London, p. 272.

**Verse 22. *Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause*—** ὁ οργιζόμενος-εἰκη, who is vainly incensed. “This translation is literal; and the very objectionable phrase, without a cause, is left out, εἰκη being more

properly translated by that above.” What our Lord seems here to prohibit, is not merely that miserable facility which some have of being angry at every trifle, continually taking offense against their best friends; but that anger which leads a man to commit outrages against another, thereby subjecting himself to that punishment which was to be inflicted on those who break the peace. εἰκη, vainly, or, as in the common translation, without a cause, is wanting in the famous Vatican MS. and two others, the Ethiopic, latter Arabic, Saxon, Vulgate, two copies of the old Itala, J. Martyr, Ptolomeus, Origen, Tertullian, and by all the ancient copies quoted by St. Jerome. It was probably a marginal gloss originally, which in process of time crept into the text.

***Shall be in danger of the judgment***— ενοχος εσται, shall be liable to the judgment. That is, to have the matter brought before a senate, composed of twenty-three magistrates, whose business it was to judge in cases of murder and other capital crimes. It punished criminals by strangling or beheading; but Dr. Lightfoot supposes the judgment of God to be intended. See at the end of this chapter.

***Raca***— רִיקָה from the Hebrew רַק rak, to be empty. It signifies a vain, empty, worthless fellow, shallow brains, a term of great contempt. Such expressions were punished among the Gentoos by a heavy fine. See all the cases, Code of Gentoo Laws, chap. 15: sec. 2.

***The council***— συνέδριον, the famous council, known among the Jews by the name of Sanhedrin. It was composed of seventy-two elders, six chosen out of each tribe. This grand Sanhedrin not only received appeals from the inferior Sanhedrins, or court of twenty-three mentioned above; but could alone take cognizance, in the first instance, of the highest crimes, and alone inflict the punishment of stoning.

***Thou fool***— Moreh, probably from מָרָה marah, to rebel, a rebel against God, apostate from all good. This term implied, among the Jews, the highest enormity, and most aggravated guilt. Among the Gentoos, such an expression was punished by cutting out the tongue, and thrusting a hot iron, of ten fingers breadth, into the mouth of the person who used it. Code of Gentoo Laws, chap. 15: sec. 2. p. 212.

***Shall be in danger of hell fire.***— **ενοχος εσται εις την γεενναν του πυρος**, shall be liable to the hell of fire. Our Lord here alludes to the valley of the son of Hinnom, **גִּי הִינּוֹם** Ghi hinom. This place was near Jerusalem, and had been formerly used for those abominable sacrifices, in which the idolatrous Jews had caused their children to pass through the fire to Molech. A particular place in this valley was called Tophet, from **תֹּפֶת** tophet, the fire stove, in which some supposed they burnt their children alive to the above idol. See 2 Kings 23:10; 2 Chronicles 28:3; Jeremiah 7:31, 32. From the circumstances of this valley having been the scene of those infernal sacrifices, the Jews, in our Savior's time, used the word for hell, the place of the damned. See the word applied in this sense by the Targum, on Ruth 2:12; Psalm 140:12; Genesis 3:24; 15:17. It is very probable that our Lord means no more here than this: if a man charge another with apostasy from the Jewish religion, or rebellion against God, and cannot prove his charge, then he is exposed to that punishment (burning alive) which the other must have suffered, if the charge had been substantiated. There are three kinds of offenses here, which exceed each other in their degrees of guilt. 1st. Anger against a man, accompanied with some injurious act. 2dly. Contempt, expressed by the opprobrious epithet raka, or shallow brains. 3dly. Hatred and mortal enmity, expressed by the term moreh, or apostate, where such apostasy could not be proved. Now, proportioned to these three offenses were three different degrees of punishment, each exceeding the other in its severity, as the offenses exceeded each other in their different degrees of guilt. 1st. The judgment, the council of twenty-three, which could inflict the punishment of strangling. 2dly. The Sanhedrin, or great council, which could inflict the punishment of stoning. And 3dly. The being burnt alive in the valley of the son of Hinnom. This appears to be the meaning of our Lord.

Now, if the above offenses were to be so severely punished, which did not immediately affect the life of another, how much sorer must the punishment of murder be! Matthew 5:21. And as there could not be a greater punishment inflicted than death, in the above terrific forms, and this was to be inflicted for minor crimes; then the punishment of murder must not only have death here, but a hell of fire in the eternal world, attached to it. It seems that these different degrees of guilt, and the punishment attached to each, had not been properly distinguished among

the Jews. Our Lord here calls their attention back to them, and gives them to understand, that in the coming world there are different degrees of punishment prepared for different degrees of vice; and that not only the outward act of iniquity should be judged and punished by the Lord, but that injurious words, and evil passions, should all meet their just recompense and reward. Murder is the most punishable of all crimes, according to the written law, in respect both of our neighbors and civil society. But he who sees the heart, and judges it by the eternal law, punishes as much a word or a desire, if the hatred whence they proceed be complete and perfected. Dr. Lightfoot has some curious observations on this passage in the preface to his *Harmony of the Evangelists*. See his works, vol. ii., and the conclusion of this chapter.

**Verse 23. *Therefore if thou bring thy gift***— Evil must be nipped in the bud. An unkind thought of another may be the foundation of that which leads to actual murder. A Christian, properly speaking, cannot be an enemy to any man; nor is he to consider any man his enemy, without the fullest evidence: for surmises to the prejudice of another can never rest in the bosom of him who has the love of God in his heart, for to him all men are brethren. He sees all men as children of God, and members of Christ, or at least capable of becoming such. If a tender forgiving spirit was required, even in a Jew, when he approached God's altar with a bullock or a lamb, how much more necessary is this in a man who professes to be a follower of the Lamb of God; especially when he receives the symbols of that Sacrifice which was offered for the life of the world, in what is commonly called the sacrament of the Lord's supper!

**Verse 24. *Leave there thy gift before the altar***— This is as much as to say, "Do not attempt to bring any offering to God while thou art in a spirit of enmity against any person; or hast any difference with thy neighbor, which thou hast not used thy diligence to get adjusted." It is our duty and interest, both to bring our gift, and offer it too; but God will not accept of any act of religious worship from us, while any enmity subsists in our hearts towards any soul of man; or while any subsists in our neighbor's heart towards us, which we have not used the proper means to remove. A religion, the very essence of which is love, cannot suffer at its altars a heart that is revengeful and uncharitable, or which does not use its utmost endeavors to revive love in the heart of another. The original word, δωρον,



which we translate gift, is used by the rabbins in Hebrew letters דָּוָרֹן doron, which signifies not only a gift, but a sacrifice offered to God. See several proofs in Schoettgen.

**Then come and offer thy gift.**— Then, when either thy brother is reconciled to thee, or thou hast done all in thy power to effect this reconciliation. My own obstinacy and uncharitableness must render me utterly unfit to receive any good from God's hands, or to worship him in an acceptable manner; but the wickedness of another can be no hinderance to me, when I have endeavored earnestly to get it removed, though without effect.

**Verse 25. Agree with thine adversary quickly**— Adversary, ἀντιδικος, properly a plaintiff in law—a perfect law term. Our Lord enforces the exhortation given in the preceding verses, from the consideration of what was deemed prudent in ordinary law-suits. In such cases, men should make up matters with the utmost speed, as running through the whole course of a law-suit must not only be vexatious, but be attended with great expense; and in the end, though the loser may be ruined, yet the gainer has nothing. A good use of this very prudential advice of our Lord is this: Thou art a sinner; God hath a controversy with thee. There is but a step between thee and death. Now is the accepted time. Thou art invited to return to God by Christ Jesus. Come immediately at his call, and he will save thy soul. Delay not! Eternity is at hand; and if thou die in thy sins, where God is thou shalt never come.

Those who make the adversary, God; the judge, Christ; the officer, Death; and the prison, Hell, abuse the passage, and highly dishonor God.

**Verse 26. The uttermost farthing.**— נְהַתְנֵאֲרַדֵּךְ. The rabbins have this Greek word corrupted into קרדיונות kordiontes, and קונטריוק, kontrik, and say, that two פרוטות prutoth make a kontarik, which is exactly the same with those words in Mark 12:42, λεπτα δυο, ο εστι κοδραντης, two mites, which are one farthing. Hence it appears that the λεπτον lepton was the same as the prutah. The weight of the prutah was half a barley-corn, and it was the smallest coin among the Jews, as the kodrantes, or farthing, was the smallest coin among the Romans. If the matter issue in law, strict justice will be done, and your creditor be allowed the fullness of

his just claim; but if; while you are on the way, going to the magistrate, you come to a friendly agreement with him, he will relax in his claims, take a part for the whole, and the composition be, in the end, both to his and your profit.

This text has been considered a proper foundation on which to build not only the doctrine of a purgatory, but also that of universal restoration. But the most unwarrantable violence must be used before it can be pressed into the service of either of the above antisciptural doctrines. At the most, the text can only be considered as a metaphorical representation of the procedure of the great Judge; and let it ever be remembered, that by the general consent of all (except the basely interested) no metaphor is ever to be produced in proof of any doctrine. In the things that concern our eternal salvation, we need the most pointed and express evidence on which to establish the faith of our souls.

**Verse 27. *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old***— By the ancients, **τοῖς ἀρχαίοις**, is omitted by nearly a hundred MSS., and some of them of the very greatest antiquity and authority; also by the Coptic, Ethiopic, Armenian, Gothic, and Sclavonian versions; by four copies of the old Itala; and by Origen, Cyril, Theophylact, Euthymius, and Hilary. On this authority Wetstein and Griesbach have left it out of the text.

**Verse 28. *Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her***— **ἐπιθυμῶν**, earnestly to covet her. The verb, **ἐπιθυμῶ**, is undoubtedly used here by our Lord, in the sense of coveting through the influence of impure desire. The word is used in precisely the same sense, on the same subject, by Herodotus, book the first, near the end. I will give the passage, but I dare not translate it. To the learned reader it will justify my translation, and the unlearned must take my word. **τῆς ἐπιθυμῆσαι γυναῖκος μασσαγέτης ἀνὴρ, μισγεται ἀδεῶς**, Raphelius, on this verse, says, **ἐπιθυμῶν** hoc loco, est turpi cupiditate mulieris potiundae flagrare. In all these eases, our blessed Lord points out the spirituality of the law; which was a matter to which the Jews paid very little attention. Indeed it is the property of a Pharisee to abstain only from the outward crime. Men are very often less inquisitive to know how far the will of God extends, that they may please him in performing it, than they are to know how far they

may satisfy their lusts without destroying their bodies and souls, utterly, by an open violation of his law.

***Hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.***— It is the earnest wish or desire of the soul, which, in a variety of cases, constitutes the good or evil of an act. If a man earnestly wish to commit an evil, but cannot, because God puts time, place, and opportunity out of his power, he is fully chargeable with the iniquity of the act, by that God who searches and judges the heart. So, if a man earnestly wish to do some kindness, which it is out of his power to perform, the act is considered as his; because God, in this case, as in that above, takes the will for the deed. If voluntary and deliberate looks and desires make adulterers and adulteresses, how many persons are there whose whole life is one continued crime! whose eyes being full of adultery, they cannot cease from sin, 2 Peter 2:14. Many would abhor to commit one external act before the eyes of men, in a temple of stone; and yet they are not afraid to commit a multitude of such acts in the temple of their hearts, and in the sight of God!

**Verse 29. — 30. *Pluck it out-cut it off***— We must shut our senses against dangerous objects, to avoid the occasions of sin, and deprive ourselves of all that is most dear and profitable to us, in order to save our souls, when we find that these dear and profitable things, however innocent in themselves, cause us to sin against God.

***It is profitable for thee that one of thy members***— Men often part with some members of the body, at the discretion of a surgeon, that they may preserve the trunk, and die a little later; and yet they will not deprive themselves of a look, a touch, a small pleasure, which endanger the eternal death of the soul. It is not enough to shut the eye, or stop the hand; the one must be plucked out, and the other cut off. Neither is this enough, we must cast them both from us. Not one moment's truce with an evil passion, or a sinful appetite. If you indulge them, they will gain strength, and you shall be ruined. The rabbins have a saying similar to this: "It is better for thee to be scorched with a little fire in this world, than to be burned with a devouring fire in the world to come."

**Verse 31. *Whosoever shall put away his wife***— The Jewish doctors gave great license in the matter of divorce. Among them, a man might divorce his wife if she displeased him even in the dressing of his victuals!

Rabbi Akiba said, “If any man saw a woman handsomer than his own wife, he might put his wife away; because it is said in the law, If she find not favor in his eyes.” Deuteronomy 24:1.

Josephus, the celebrated Jewish historian, in his *Life*, tells us, with the utmost coolness and indifference, “About this time I put away my wife, who had borne me three children, not being pleased with her manners.”

These two cases are sufficient to show to what a scandalous and criminal excess this matter was carried among the Jews. However, it was allowed by the school of Shammai, that no man was to put away his wife unless for adultery. The school of Hillel gave much greater license.

***A writing of divorcement***— The following is the common form of such a writing. See Maimonides and Lightfoot.

“On the day of the week A. in the month B. in the year C. from the beginning of the world, according to the common computation in the province of D., I, N. the son of N. by whatever name I am called, of the city E. with entire consent of mind, and without any compulsion, have divorced, dismissed, and expelled thee-thee, I say, M. the daughter of M. by whatever name thou art called, of the city E. who wast heretofore my wife: but now I have dismissed thee-thee, I say, M. the daughter of M. by whatever name thou art called, of the city E. so as to be free, and at thine own disposal, to marry whomsoever thou pleasest, without hinderance from any one, from this day for ever. Thou art therefore free for any man. Let this be thy bill of divorce from me, a writing of separation and expulsion, according to the law of Moses and Israel.

REUBEN, son of Jacob, Witness.

ELIEZAR, son of Gilead, Witness.”

God permitted this evil to prevent a greater; and, perhaps, to typify his repudiating the Jews, who were his first spouse.

**Verse 32. *Saving for the cause of fornication***— *λογου πορνειας*, on account of whoredom. As fornication signifies no more than the unlawful connection of unmarried persons, it cannot be used here with propriety, when speaking of those who are married. I have therefore translated *λογου πορνειας*, on account of whoredom. It does not appear that there is any

other case in which Jesus Christ admits of divorce. A real Christian ought rather to beg of God the grace to bear patiently and quietly the imperfections of his wife, than to think of the means of being parted from her. “But divorce was allowed by Moses;” yes, for the hardness of their hearts it was permitted: but what was permitted to an uncircumcised heart among the Jews, should not serve for a rule to a heart in which the love of God has been shed abroad by the Holy Spirit. Those who form a matrimonial connection in the fear and love of God, and under his direction, will never need a divorce. But those who marry as passion or money lead the way, may be justly considered adulterers and adulteresses as long as they live.

**Verse 33. *Thou shalt not forswear thyself***— They dishonor the great God, and break this commandment, who use frequent oaths and imprecations, even in reference to things that are true; and those who make vows and promises, which they either cannot perform, or do not design to fulfill, are not less criminal. Swearing in civil matters is become so frequent, that the dread and obligation of an oath are utterly lost in it. In certain places, where oaths are frequently administered, people have been known to kiss their thumb or pen, instead of the book, thinking thereby to avoid the sin of perjury; but this is a shocking imposition on their own souls. See the notes on Deuteronomy 4:26; 6:13.

***Perform unto the Lord thine oaths***— The morality of the Jews on this point was truly execrable: they maintained, that a man might swear with his lips, and annul it in the same moment in his heart. Rab. Akiba is quoted as an example of this kind of swearing. See Schoettgen.

**Verse 34. — 35. *Neither by heaven, etc.***— It was a custom among the Scythians, when they wished to bind themselves in the most solemn manner, to swear by the king’s throne; and if the king was at any time sick, they believed it was occasioned by some one’s having taken the oath falsely. Herod. l. iv.

Who is there among the traders and people of this world who obey this law? A common swearer is constantly perjuring himself: such a person should never be trusted. When we make any promise contrary to the command of God, taking, as a pledge of our sincerity, either GOD, or something belonging to him, we engage that which is not ours, without the

Master's consent. God manifests his glory in heaven, as upon his throne; he imprints the footsteps of his perfections upon the earth, his footstool; and shows that his holiness and his grace reign in his temple as the place of his residence. Let it be our constant care to seek and honor God in all his works.

**Verse 36. *Neither shalt thou swear by thy head***— For these plain reasons: 1st. God commands thee not to do it. 2dly. Thou hast nothing which is thy own, and thou shouldst not pledge another's property. 3dly. It never did, and never can, answer any good purpose. And 4thly. Being a breach of the law of God, it is the way to everlasting misery.

**Verse 37. *Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay***— That is, a positive affirmation, or negation, according to your knowledge of the matter concerning which you are called to testify. Do not equivocate; mean what you assert, and adhere to your assertion. Hear what a heathen says on this subject:-

εχθρος γαρ μοι κεινος ὁμως αἰδαο πύλησιν,  
ος χ'ετερον μεν κευθει ενι φρεσιν, αλλο δε βαζει. Hom. Il. ix. 312

“He whose words agree not with his private thoughts is as detestable to me as the gates of hell.” See on Joshua 2: at the end.

See the subject of swearing particularly considered in the note at the conclusion of Deuteronomy 6.

***Whatsoever is more than these***— That is, more than a bare affirmation or negation, according to the requirements of Eternal Truth, cometh of evil; or, is of the wicked one-*εκ του πονηρου εστιν*, i.e. the devil, the father of superfluities and lies. One of Selden's MSS. and Gregory Nyssen, a commentator of the fourth century, have *εκ του διαβολου εστιν*, is of the devil.

That the Jews were notoriously guilty of common swearing, for which our Lord particularly reprehends them, and warns his disciples against, and that they swore by heaven, by earth, by Jerusalem, by their head, etc., the following extracts, made by Dr. Lightfoot from their own writings, amply testify:-

“It was customary and usual among them to swear by the creatures. ‘If any swear by heaven, by earth, by the sun, etc., although the mind of the swearer be, under these words, to swear by HIM who created them, yet this is not an oath. Or, if any swear by some of the prophets, or by some of the books of the Scripture, although the sense of the swearer be to swear by HIM that sent that prophet, or that gave that book, nevertheless, this is not an oath. MAIMONIDES.’

“If any adjure another by heaven or earth, he is not guilty. TALMUD.

“They swore by HEAVEN, **השמים כ הוּא** hashsha mayim, ken hu, ‘By heaven, so it is.’ BAB. BERAC.

“They swore by the TEMPLE. ‘When turtles and young pigeons were sometimes sold at Jerusalem for a penny of gold, Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel said, **המעו הוּא** By this habitation (that is, by this TEMPLE) I will not rest this night, unless they be sold for a penny of silver.’ CHERITUTH, cap. i.

“R. Zechariah ben Ketsab said, **המעו הוּא** ‘By this TEMPLE, the hand of the woman departed not out of my hand.’-R. Jochanan said, **היכולא** ‘By the TEMPLE, it is in our hand, etc.’ KETUBOTH and BAB. KIDUSHIN.

“Bava ben Buta swore by the TEMPLE in the end of the tract Cherithuth, and Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel in the beginning, **מנהג בישראל** **וזה**-And so was the custom in Israel.-Note this, so was the custom. JUCAS. fol. 56.

“They swore by the city Jerusalem. R. Judah saith, ‘He that saith, By JERUSALEM, saith nothing, unless with an intent purpose he shall vow towards Jerusalem.’ Where also, after two lines coming between those forms of swearing and vowing, are added, **היכל להיכל בהיכל** **ירושלם לירושלם בירושלם** ‘Jerusalem, For Jerusalem, By Jerusalem.-The Temple, For the temple, By the temple.-The Altar, For the altar, By the altar.-The Lamb, For the Lamb, By the Lamb.-The Chambers of the Temple, For the chambers of the temple, By the chambers of the temple.-The Word, For the Word, By the Word.-The Sacrifices on Fire, For the sacrifices on fire, By the sacrifices on fire.-The Dishes, For the

dishes, By the dishes.-By all these things, that I will do this to you.’  
TOSAPHT. ad. NEDARIM.

“They swore by their own HEADS. ‘One is bound to swear to his neighbor, and he saith, **וְיָד לִי כִתְיִי רֹאשְׁךָ** Vow (or swear) to me by the life of thy head, etc. SANHEDR. cap. 3.

“One of the holiest of their precepts relative to swearing was this: ‘Be not much in oaths, although one should swear concerning things that are true; for in much swearing it is impossible not to profane.’ Tract. DEMAI.”-See Lightfoot’s Works, vol. ii. p. 149.

They did not pretend to forbid ALL common swearing, but only what they term MUCH. A Jew might swear, but he must not be too abundant in the practice. Against such permission, our Lord opposes his Swear NOT AT ALL! He who uses any oath, except what he is solemnly called by the magistrate to make, so far from being a Christian, he does not deserve the reputation, either of decency or common sense. In some of our old elementary books for children, we have this good maxim: “Never swear: for he that swears will lie; and he that lies will steal; and, if so, what bad things will he not do!” READING MADE EASY.

**Verse 38. *An eye for an eye***— Our Lord refers here to the law of retaliation mentioned See “Exodus 21:24”, (see the note there, and See “Leviticus 24:20”,) which obliged the offender to suffer the same injury he had committed. The Greeks and Romans had the same law. So strictly was it attended to at Athens, that if a man put out the eye of another who had but one, the offender was condemned to lose both his eyes, as the loss of one would not be an equivalent misfortune. It seems that the Jews had made this law (the execution of which belonged to the civil magistrate) a ground for authorizing private resentments, and all the excesses committed by a vindictive spirit. Revenge was often carried to the utmost extremity, and more evil returned than what had been received. This is often the case among those who are called Christians.

**Verse 39. *Resist not evil***— Or, the evil person. So, I am fully persuaded, **τὸ πονηρὸν** ought to be translated. Our Lord’s meaning is, “Do not repel one outrage by another.” He that does so makes himself precisely what the other is, a wicked person.



**Turn to him the other also**— That is, rather than avenge thyself, be ready to suffer patiently a repetition of the same injury. But these exhortations belong to those principally who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. Let such leave the judgment of their cause to Him for whose sake they suffer. The Jews always thought that every outrage should be resented; and thus the spirit of hatred and strife was fostered.

**Verse 40. *And if any man will sue thee at the law***— Every where our blessed Lord shows the utmost disapprobation of such litigations as tended to destroy brotherly kindness and charity. It is evident he would have his followers to suffer rather the loss of all their property than to have recourse to such modes of redress, at so great a risk. Having the mind averse from contentions, and preferring peace and concord to temporal advantages, is most solemnly recommended to all Christians. We are great gainers when we lose only our money, or other property, and risk not the loss of our souls, by losing the love of God and man.

**Coat**— *χιτών*, upper garment.—Cloke, *ὑμᾶτιον*, under garment. What we call strait coat, and great coat.—See on Luke 6:29.

**Verse 41. *Shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.***— *ἀγγαρεύσει*. This word is said to be derived from the Persians, among whom the king's messengers, or posts, were called *ἀγγαποί*, or angari. This definition is given both by Hesychius and Suidas.

The Persian messengers had the royal authority for pressing horses, ships, and even men, to assist them in the business on which they were employed. These angari are now termed chappars, and serve to carry despatches between the court and the provinces. When a chappar sets out, the master of the horse furnishes him with a single horse; and, when that is weary, he dismounts the first man he meets, and takes his horse. There is no pardon for a traveler that refuses to let a chappar have his horse, nor for any other who should deny him the best horse in his stable. See Sir J. Chardin's and Hanway's Travels. For pressing post horses, etc., the Persian term is [P] Sukhreh geriften. I find no Persian word exactly of the sound and signification of *ἀγγαρος*; but the Arabic [A] agharet signifies spurring a horse, attacking, plundering, etc. The Greek word itself is preserved among the rabbins in Hebrew characters, *אנגריא* angaria, and it has precisely the same meaning; viz. to be compelled by violence to do any

particular service, especially of the public kind, by the king's authority. Lightfoot gives several instances of this in his *Horae Talmudicae*.

We are here exhorted to patience and forgiveness:

First, When we receive in our persons all sorts of insults and affronts, Matthew 5:39.

Secondly, When we are despoiled of our goods, Matthew 5:40.

Thirdly, When our bodies are forced to undergo all kinds of toils, vexations, and torments, Matthew 5:41. The way to improve the injustice of man to our own advantage, is to exercise under it meekness, gentleness, and long-suffering, without which disposition of mind, no man can either be happy here or hereafter; for he that avenges himself must lose the mind of Christ, and thus suffer an injury ten thousand times greater than he can ever receive from man. Revenge, at such an expense, is dear indeed.

**Verse 42. *Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow***— To give and lend freely to all who are in need, is a general precept from which we are only excused by our inability to perform it. Men are more or less obliged to it as they are more or less able, as the want is more or less pressing, as they are more or less burthened with common poor, or with necessitous relatives. In all these matters, both prudence and charity must be consulted. That God, who makes use of the beggar's hand to ask our charity, is the same from whom we ourselves beg our daily bread: and dare we refuse HIM! Let us show at least mildness and compassion, when we can do no more; and if we cannot or will not relieve a poor man, let us never give him an ill word nor an ill look. If we do not relieve him, we have no right to insult him.

To give and to lend, are two duties of charity which Christ joins together, and which he sets on equal footing. A rich man is one of God's stewards: God has given him money for the poor, and he cannot deny it without an act of injustice. But no man, from what is called a principle of charity or generosity, should give that in alms which belongs to his creditors. Generosity is godlike; but justice has ever, both in law and Gospel, the first claim.

A loan is often more beneficial than an absolute gift: first, because it flatters less the vanity of him who lends; secondly, it spares more the shame of him who is in real want; and, thirdly, it gives less encouragement to the idleness of him who may not be very honest. However, no advantage should be taken of the necessities of the borrower: he who does so is, at least, half a murderer. The lending which our Lord here inculcates is that which requires no more than the restoration of the principal in a convenient time: otherwise to live upon trust is the sure way to pay double.

**Verse 43. *Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy.***— Instead of **πλησιον** neighbor, the Codex Graevii, a MS. of the eleventh century, reads **φιλον** friend. Thou shalt love thy friend, and hate thine enemy. This was certainly the meaning which the Jews put on it: for neighbor, with them, implied those of the Jewish race, and all others were, considered by them as natural enemies. Besides, it is evident that **πλησιον**, among the Hellenistic Jews, meant friend merely: Christ uses it precisely in this sense in Luke 10:36, in answer to the question asked by a certain lawyer, Matthew 5:29. Who of the three was neighbor (**πλησιον** friend) to him who fell among the thieves? He who showed him mercy; i.e. he who acted the friendly part. In Hebrew, **רֵעָא** reā, signifies friend, which word is translated **πλησιον** by the LXX. in more than one hundred places. Among the Greeks it was a very comprehensive term, and signified every man, not even an enemy excepted, as Raphelius, on this verse, has shown from Polybius. The Jews thought themselves authorized to kill any Jew who apostatized; and, though they could not do injury to the Gentiles, in whose country they sojourned, yet they were bound to suffer them to perish, if they saw them in danger of death. Hear their own words: “A Jew sees a Gentile fall into the sea, let him by no means lift him out; for it is written, Thou shalt not rise up against the blood of thy neighbor:—but this is not thy neighbor.” Maimon. This shows that by neighbor they understood a Jew; one who was of the same blood and religion with themselves.

**Verse 44. *Love your enemies***— This is the most sublime piece of morality ever given to man. Has it appeared unreasonable and absurd to some? It has. And why? Because it is natural to man to avenge himself, and plague those who plague him; and he will ever find abundant excuse for his

conduct, in the repeated evils he receives from others; for men are naturally hostile to each other. Jesus Christ design's to make men happy. Now he is necessarily miserable who hates another. Our Lord prohibits that only which, from its nature, is opposed to man's happiness. This is therefore one of the most reasonable precepts in the universe. But who can obey it? None but he who has the mind of Christ. But I have it not. Seek it from God; it is that kingdom of heaven which Christ came to establish upon earth. See on Matthew 3:2. This one precept is a sufficient proof of the holiness of the Gospel, and of the truth of the Christian religion. Every false religion flatters man, and accommodates itself to his pride and his passions. None but God could have imposed a yoke so contrary to self-love; and nothing but the supreme eternal love can enable men to practice a precept so insupportable to corrupt nature. Sentiments like this are found among Asiatic writers, and in select cases were strongly applied; but as a general command this was never given by them, or any other people. It is not an absolute command in any of the books which they consider to be Divinely inspired. Sir William Jones lays by far too much stress on the casual introduction of such sentiments as this in the Asiatic writers. See his *WORKS*, vol. i. p. 168, where the sentiment is connected with circumstances both extravagant and unnatural; and thus it is nullified by the pretended recommendation.

***Bless them that curse you***— *εὐλογεῖτε*, give them good words for their bad words. See the note on “Genesis 2:3”.

***Do good to them that hate you***— Give your enemy every proof that you love him. We must not love in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

***Pray for them which despitefully use you***— *ἐπηρεάζοντων* from *ἐπι* against, and *αἰνῆς* Mars, the heathen god of war. Those who are making continual war upon you, and constantly harassing and calumniating you. Pray for them—This is another exquisitely reasonable precept. I cannot change that wicked man's heart; and while it is unchanged he will continue to harass me: God alone can change it: then I must implore him to do that which will at once secure the poor man's salvation, and contribute so much to my own peace.

***And persecute you***— *διωκόντων*, those who press hard on and pursue you with hatred and malice accompanied with repeated acts of enmity.

In this verse our Lord shows us that a man may be our enemy in three different ways.

First, in his heart, by hatred.

Secondly, in his words by cursing or using direful imprecations (**καταρωμενους**) against us.

Thirdly, in his actions, by continually harassing and abusing us.

He shows us also how we are to behave to those.

The hatred of the first we are to meet with love.

The cursings or evil words of the second, we are to meet with good words and blessings.

And the repeated injurious acts of the third, we are to meet with continual prayer to God for the man's salvation.

**Verse 45. *That ye may be the children of your Father***— Instead of υιοι children, some MSS., the latter Persic version, and several of the primitive fathers, read ομοιοι, that ye may be like to, or resemble, your Father who is in heaven. This is certainly our Lord's meaning. As a man's child is called his, because a partaker of his own nature, so a holy person is said to be a child of God, because he is a partaker of the Divine nature.

***He maketh his sun to rise on the evil***— “There is nothing greater than to imitate God in doing good to our enemies. All the creatures of God pronounce the sentence of condemnation on the revengeful: and this sentence is written by the rays of the sun, and with the drops of rain, and indeed by all the natural good things, the use of which God freely gives to his enemies.” If God had not loved us while we were his enemies, we could never have become his children: and we shall cease to be such, as soon as we cease to imitate him.

**Verse 46. *For if ye love them which love you***— He who loves only his friends, does nothing for God's sake. He who loves for the sake of pleasure or interest, pays himself. God has no enemy which he hates but sin; we should have no other.

**The publicans**— That is, tax-gatherers, **τελωναι**, from **τελος** a tax, and **ωνομαι** I buy or farm. A farmer or collector of the taxes or public revenues. Of these there were two classes; the superior, who were Romans of the equestrian order; and the inferior, those mentioned in the Gospels, who it appears were mostly Jews.

This class of men was detestable among the Romans, the Greeks, and the Jews, for their intolerable rapacity and avarice. They were abhorred in an especial manner by the Jews, to whom the Roman government was odious: these, assisting in collecting the Roman tribute, were considered as betrayers of the liberties of their country, and abettors of those who enslaved it. They were something like the tythe-farmers of certain college-livings in some counties of England, as Lancashire, etc.—a principal cause of the public burthens and discontent. One quotation, of the many produced by Kypke, will amply show in what detestation they were held among the Greeks. Theocritus being asked, Which of the wild beasts were the most cruel? answered, **εν μεν τοις ορεσιν απκτοι και λεοντες· εν δε ταις πολεσιν, τελωναι και συκοφανται**. Bears and lions, in the mountains; and TAX-GATHERERS and calumniators, in cities.

**Verse 47. And if ye salute your brethren only**— Instead of **αδελφους** brethren, upwards of one hundred MSS., and several of them of great authority and antiquity, have **φιλους** friends. The Armenian Slavonic, and Gothic versions, with the later Syriac, and some of the primitive fathers, agree in this reading. I scarcely know which to prefer; as brother is more conformable to the Jewish mode of address, it should be retained in the text: the other reading, however, tends to confirm that of the Codex Graevii on Matthew 5:43.

On the subject of giving and receiving salutations in Asiatic countries, Mr. Harmer, *Observat.* vol. ii. p. 327, etc., edit. 1808, has collected much valuable information: the following extract will be sufficient to elucidate our Lord's meaning.

“Dr. Doddridge supposes that the salutation our Lord refers to, Matthew 5:47, If ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? means embracing, though it is a different word. I would observe, that it is made use of in the Septuagint to express that action of endearment; and which is made use of by an apocryphal writer,

(Ecclus. 30:19,) whereas, the word we translate salute is of a much more general nature: this, I apprehend, arose from his being struck with the thought, that it could never be necessary to caution his disciples, not to restrain the civilities of a common salutation to those of their own religious party. Juvenal, when he satirizes the Jews of the apostolic age for their religious opinions, and represents them as unfriendly, and even malevolent, to other people, Sat. xiv., and when he mentions their refusing to show travelers the way, *Non monstrare vias*, etc., or to point out to them where they might find water to drink when thirsty with journeying, takes no notice of their not saluting those of another nation; yet there is no reason to believe, from these words of CHRIST, that many of them at least would not, and that even a Jewish publican received no salutations from one of his own nation, excepting brother publicans.

“Nor shall we wonder at this, or think it requisite to suppose the word we translate salute (*ασπάζομαι*) and which certainly, sometimes at least, signifies nothing more than making use of some friendly words upon meeting with people, must here signify something more particular, since we find some of the present inhabitants of the east seem to want this admonition of our Lord. ‘When the Arabs salute one another,’ according to Niebuhr, ‘it is generally in these terms, *Salam aleikum*, Peace be with you; in speaking which words they lay the right hand on the heart. The answer is, *Aleikum essalam*, With you be peace. Aged people are inclined to add to these words, And the mercy and blessing of God. The Mohammedans of Egypt and Syria never salute a Christian in this manner; they content themselves with saying to them, Good day to you; or, Friend, how do you do? The Arabs of Yemen, who seldom see any Christians, are not so zealous but that sometimes they will give them the *Salam aleikum*.’

“Presently after he says: ‘For a long time I thought the Mohammedan custom, of saluting Christians in a different manner from that made use of to those of their own profession, was an effect of their pride and religious bigotry. I saluted them sometimes with the *Salam aleikum*, and I had often only the common answer. At length I observed in Natolia, that the Christians themselves might probably be the cause that Mohammedans did not make the same return to their civilities that they did to those of their own religion. For the Greek merchants, with whom I traveled in that country, did not seem pleased with my saluting Mohammedans in the

Mohammedan manner. And when they were not known to be Christians, by those Turks whom they met with in their journeying, (it being allowed Christian travelers in these provinces to wear a white turban, Christians in common being obliged to wear the sash of their turbans white striped with blue, that banditti might take them at a distance for Turks, and people of courage,) they never answered those that addressed them with the compliment of Salam aleikum. One would not, perhaps, suspect that similar customs obtain in our times, among Europeans: but I find that the Roman Catholics of some provinces of Germany never address the Protestants that live among them with the compliment JESUS CHRIST be praised; and, when such a thing happens by mistake, the Protestants do not return it after the manner in use among Catholics, For ever and ever. Amen!’

“After this, the words of our Lord in the close of the fifth of Matthew want no farther commentary. The Jews would not address the usual compliment of Peace be to you, to either heathens or publicans; the publicans of the Jewish nation would use it to their countrymen that were publicans, but not to heathens; though the more rigid Jews would not do it to them, any more than to heathens: our Lord required his disciples to lay aside the moroseness of Jews, and express more extensive benevolence in their salutations. There seems to be nothing of embracing thought of in this case, though that, doubtless, was practised anciently among relations, and intimate friends, as it is among modern Asiatics.”

If not to salute be a heathenish indifference, to hide hatred under outward civilities is a diabolic treachery. To pretend much love and affection for those for whom we have neither-to use towards them complimentary phrases, to which we affix no meaning, but that they mean, nothing, is highly offensive in the sight of that God by whom actions are weighed and words judged.

**Do not-the publicans**— **τελωναι**, -but **εθνικοι** heathens, is adopted by Griesbach, instead of **τελωναι**, on the authority of Codd. Vatican. & Bezae, and several others; together with the Coptic, Syriac later, and Syriac Jerusalem; two Arabic, Persic, Slavonic; all the Itala but one; Vulgate, Saxon, and several of the primitive fathers.



**Verse 48. *Be ye therefore perfect-as your Father***— God himself is the grand law, sole giver, and only pattern of the perfection which he recommends to his children. The words are very emphatic, **εσσεσθε ουν υμεις τελειοι**, Ye shall be therefore perfect-ye shall be filled with the spirit of that God whose name is Mercy, and whose nature is love. God has many imitators of his power, independence, justice, etc., but few of his love, condescension, and kindness. He calls himself LOVE, to teach us that in this consists that perfection, the attainment of which he has made both our duty and privilege: for these words of our Lord include both a command and a promise.

“Can we be fully saved from sin in this world?” is an important question, to which this text gives a satisfactory answer: “Ye shall be perfect, as your Father, who is in heaven, is perfect.”-As in his infinite nature there is no sin, nothing but goodness and love, so in your finite nature there shall dwell no sin, for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus shall make you free from the law of sin and death, Romans 8:2. God shall live in, fill, and rule your hearts; and, in what He fills and influences, neither Satan nor sin can have any part. If men, slighting their own mercies, cry out, This is impossible!-whom does this arguing reprove-God, who, on this ground, has given a command, the fulfillment of which is impossible. “But who can bring a clean out of an unclean thing?” God Almighty-and, however inveterate the disease of sin may be, the grace of the Lord Jesus can fully cure it; and who will say, that he who laid down his life for our souls will not use his power completely to effect that salvation which he has died to procure. “But where is the person thus saved?” Wherever he is found who loves God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength, and his neighbor as himself; and, for the honor of Christianity and its AUTHOR, may we not hope there are many such in the Church of God, not known indeed by any profession of this kind which they make, but by a surer testimony, that of uniformly holy tempers, piety to God, and beneficence to man?

Dr. Lightfoot is not perfectly satisfied with the usual mode of interpreting the 22nd verse of this chapter. I subjoin the substance of what he says. Having given a general exposition of the word brother, which the Jews understood as signifying none but an Israelite-**ενοχος**, which we translate is in danger of, and which he shows the Jews used to signify, is exposed

to, merits, or is guilty of-and the word gehenna, hell-fire, which he explains as I have done above, he comes to the three offenses, and their sentences.

The FIRST is causeless anger, which he thinks too plain to require explanation; but into the two following he enters in considerable detail:-

“The SECOND. Whosoever shall say to his brother, ‘Racha,’ a nickname, or scornful title usual, which they disdainfully put one upon another, and very commonly; and therefore our Savior has mentioned this word, the rather because it was of so common use among them. Take these few examples:-

“A certain man sought to betake himself to repentance (and restitution.) His wife said to him, ‘Rekah, if thou make restitution, even thy girdle about thee is not thine own, etc.’ Tanchum, fol. 5.

“Rabbi Jochanan was teaching concerning the building of Jerusalem with sapphires and diamonds, etc. One of his scholars laughed him to scorn. But afterwards, being convinced of the truth of the thing, he saith to him, ‘Rabbi, do thou expound, for it is fit for thee to expound: as thou saidst, so have I seen it.’ he saith to him, ‘Rekah, hadst thou not seen, thou wouldst not have believed, etc.’ Midras Tillin, fol. 38, col. 4.

“To what is the thing like? To a king of flesh and blood, who took to wife a king’s daughter: he saith to her, ‘Wait and fill me a cup;’ but she would not: whereupon he was angry, and put her away; she went, and was married to a sordid fellow; and he saith to her, ‘Wait, and fill me a cup;’ she said unto him, ‘Rekah, I am a king’s daughter, etc.’ Idem in Psalm 137.

“A Gentile saith to an Israelite, ‘I have a choice dish for thee to eat of.’ He saith, ‘What is it?’ He answers, ‘Swine’s flesh.’ he saith to him, ‘Rekah, even what you kill of clean beasts is forbidden us, much more this.’ Tanchum, fol. 18, col. 4.

“The THIRD offense is to say to a brother, ‘Thou fool,’ which, how to distinguish from racha, which signifies an empty fellow, were some difficulty, but that Solomon is a good dictionary here for us, who takes the term continually here for a wicked wretch and reprobate, and in opposition to spiritual wisdom: so that in the first clause is condemned causeless anger; in the second, scornful taunting and reproaching of a brother; and, in

the last, calling him a reprobate and wicked, or uncharitably censuring his spiritual and eternal estate. And this last does more especially hit the scribes and Pharisees, who arrogated to themselves only to be called חכמים chocamim, wise men, but of all others they had this scornful and uncharitable opinion, ‘This people, that knoweth not the law, is cursed,’ John 7:49.

“And now for the penalties denounced upon these offenses, let us look upon them, taking notice of these two traditions of the Jews, which our Savior seems to face, and to contradict.

“1st. That they accounted the command, Thou shalt not kill, to aim only at actual murder. So that in their collecting the six hundred and thirteen precepts out of the law, they understand that command to mean but this: ‘That one should not kill an Israelite,’ and accordingly they allotted this only violation of it to judgments; against this wild gloss and practice, he speaks in the first clause: Ye have heard it said, Thou shalt not kill, and he that killeth, or committeth actual murder, is liable to judgment, and ye extend the violation of that command no farther; but I say to you, that causeless anger against thy brother is a violation of that command, and even that maketh a man liable to judgment.

2nd. They allotted that murder only to be judged by the council, or Sanhedrin, that was committed by a man in propria persona: let them speak their own sense, etc. Talm. in Sanhedrin, per. 9.

“Any one that kills his neighbor with his hand, as if he strike him with a sword, or with a stone that kills him, or strangle him till he die, or burn him in the fire, seeing that he kills him any how in his own person, lo! such a one must be put to death by the Sanhedrin; but he that hires another to kill his neighbor, or that sends his servants, and they kill him, or that violently thrusts him before a lion, or the like, and the beast kills him-any one of these is a shedder of blood, and the guilt of shedding of blood is upon him, and he is liable to death by the hand of Heaven, but he is not to be put to death by the Sanhedrin. And whence is the proof that it must be thus! Because it is said, He that sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed. This is he that slays a man himself, and not by the hand of another. Your blood of your lives will I require. This is he that slays himself. At the hand of every beast will I require it. This is he that delivers up his neighbor

before a beast to be rent in pieces. At the hand of man, even at the hand of every man's brother, will I require the life of man. This is he that hires others to kill his neighbor: In this interpretation, requiring is spoken of all the three; behold, their judgment is delivered over to Heaven (or God.) And all these man-slayers and the like, who are not liable to death by the Sanhedrin, if the king of Israel will slay them by the judgment of the kingdom, and the law of nations, he may, etc.' Maym. ubi supr. per. 2.

"You may observe in these wretched traditions a twofold killing, and a twofold judgment: a man's killing another in his own person, and with his own hand, and such a one liable to the judgment of the Sanhedrin, to be put to death by them, as a murderer; and a man that killed another by proxy, not with his own hand, not hiring another to kill him, or turning a beast or serpent upon him to kill him. This man is not to be judged and executed by the Sanhedrin, but, referred and reserved only to the judgment of God. So that we see plainly, from hence, in what sense the word judgment is used in the latter end of the preceding verse, and the first clause of this, namely, not for the judgment of any one of the Sanhedrins, as it is commonly understood, but for the judgment of God. In the former verse, Christ speaks their sense, and in the first clause of this, his own, in application to it. Ye have heard it said, that any man that kills is liable to the judgment of God; but I say unto you, that he that is but angry with his brother without a cause is liable to the judgment of God. You have heard it said, that he only that commits murder with his own hand is liable to the council, or Sanhedrin, as a murderer; but I say unto you, that he that but calls his brother racha, as common a word as ye make it, and a thing of nothing, he is liable to be judged by the Sanhedrin.

"Lastly, he that saith to his brother, Thou fool, wicked one, or cast-away, shall be in danger of hell-fire, **ενοχος εις θεεσσας πυρος**. There are two observable things in the words. The first is the change of case from what was before; there it was said **τη κρισει τω συνεδριω**, but here, **εις γεενναν**. It is but an emphatical raising of the sense, to make it the more feeling and to speak home. He that saith to his brother, Raka, shall be in danger of the council; but he that says, Thou fool, shall be in danger of a penalty even to hell-fire. And thus our Savior equals the sin and penalty in a very just parable. In just anger, with God's just anger and judgment;

public reproach, with public correction by the council; and censuring for a child of hell, to the fire of hell.

“2nd. It is not said *εις πυρ γεεννης*, To the fire of hell, but *εις γεεννας πυρος*, To a hell of fire; in which expression he sets the emphasis still higher. And, besides the reference to the valley of Hinnom, he seems to refer to that penalty used by the Sanhedrin of burning-the most bitter death that they used to put men to; the manner of which was thus: They set the malefactor in a dunghill up to the knees; and they put a towel about his neck, and one pulled one way, and another the opposite, till, by thus strangling him, they forced him to open his mouth. Then they poured boiling lead into his mouth, which went down into his belly, and so burnt his bowels. Talm. in Sanhedrin. per. 7.

“Now, having spoken in the clause before, of being judged by the Sanhedrin, whose most terrible penalty was this burning, he doth in this clause raise the penalty higher; namely, of burning in hell; not with a little scalding lead, but even with a hell of fire.” It is possible that our Lord might have reference to such customs as these.

## CHAPTER 6

*Of alms-giving, 1-5. Of prayer, 6-8. The Lord's prayer, or model according to which Christians should pray, 9-13. Of forgiveness, 14, 15. Of fasting, 16, 17. Of laying up treasures, 18-21. Of the single eye, 22, 23. The impossibility of serving two masters, 24. Of contentment and confidence in the Divine providence, 25-32. Directions about seeking the kingdom of God, 33, 34.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 6

**Verse 1.** *That ye do not your alms*—δικαιοσυνην υμων μη ποιειν, perform not your acts of righteousness-such as alms-giving, fasting, and prayer, mentioned immediately after. Instead of δικαιοσυνην, righteousness, or acts of righteousness, the reading in the text, that which has been commonly received is ελεημοσυνην, alms. But the first reading has been inserted in several editions, and is supported by the Codd. Vatican. and Bezae, some others, and several versions, all the Itala except one, and the Vulgate. The Latin fathers have justitiam, a word of the same meaning. Mr. Gregory has amply proved, צדקה tsidekeh, righteousness, was a common word for alms among the Jews. Works, 4to. p. 58, 1671. R. D. Kimchi says that צדקה tsidekeh, Isaiah 59:14, means alms-giving; and the phrase נתן צדקה natan tsidekah, is used by the Jews to signify the giving of alms. The following passages from Dr. Lightfoot show that it was thus commonly used among the Jewish writers:-

“It is questioned,” says he, “whether Matthew writ ελεημοσυνην, alms, or δικαιοσυνην, righteousness. I answer:-

“I. That, our Savior certainly said צדקה tsidekah, righteousness, (or, in Syriac זידקתא zidkatha,) I make no doubt at all; but, that that word could not be otherwise understood by the common people than of alms, there is as little doubt to be made. For although the word צדקה tsidekah, according to the idiom of the Old Testament, signifies nothing else than

righteousness; yet now, when our Savior spoke these words, it signified nothing so much as alms.

“II. Christ used also the same word **זִדְקָתָא** zidkatha, righteousness, in time three verses next following, and Matthew used the word **ἐλεημοσύνην**, alms; but by what right, I beseech you, should he call it **δικαιοσύνην**, righteousness, in the first verse, and **ἐλεημοσύνην**, alms, in the following; when Christ every where used one and the same word? Matthew might not change in Greek, where our Savior had not changed in Syriac: therefore we must say that the Lord Jesus used the word **זִדְקָתָא** tsidekeh or **זִדְקָתָא** zidkatha, in these four first verses; but that, speaking in the dialect of common people, he was understood by the common people to speak of alms. Now they called alms by the name of righteousness, for the fathers of the traditions taught, and the common people believed, that alms contributed very much to justification. Hear the Jewish chair in this matter-For one farthing given to a poor man in alms, a man is made partaker of the beatific vision: where it renders these words, Psalm 17:15, I shall behold thy face in righteousness, after this manner, I shall behold thy face, BECAUSE OF ALMS. Bava. Bathra.

“This money goeth for alms, that my sons may live, and that I may obtain the world to come. Bab. Rosh. Hashshanah.

“A man’s table now expiates by alms, as heretofore the altar did by sacrifice. Beracoth.

“If you afford alms out of your purse, God will keep you from all damage and harm. Hieros. Peah.

“MONOBAZES the king bestowed his goods liberally upon the poor, and had these words spoken to him by his kinsmen and friends-‘Your ancestors increased both their own riches, and those that were left them by their fathers; but you waste both your own and those of your ancestors.’ To whom he answered-‘My fathers laid up their wealth on earth: I lay up mine in heaven. As it is written, Truth shall flourish out of the earth, but Righteousness shall look down from heaven. My fathers laid up treasures that bear no fruit; but I lay up such as bear fruit. As it is said, It shall be well with the just, for they shall eat the fruit of their own works. My fathers treasured up, when power was in their hands; but I where it is not.

As it is said, Justice and judgment is the habitation of his throne. My fathers heaped up for others; I for myself. As it is said, And this shall be to thee for righteousness. They scraped together for this world. I for the world to come. As it is said, Righteousness shall deliver from death.’ Ibid. These things are also recited in the Babylonian Talmud.

“You see plainly in what sense he understands righteousness, namely, in the sense of alms: and that sense not so much framed in his own imagination, as in that of the whole nation, and which the royal catachumen had imbibed from the Pharisees his teachers.

“Behold the justifying and saving virtue of alms, from the very work done according to the doctrine of the Pharisaical chair! And hence, the opinion of this efficacy of alms so far prevailed with the deceived people, that they pointed out alms by no other name (confined within one single word) than צדקה tsidekah, righteousness. Perhaps those words of our Savior are spoken in derision of this doctrine. Yea, give those things which ye have in alms, and behold all things shall be clean to you, Luke 11:41. With good reason indeed exhorting them to give alms; but yet withal striking at the covetousness of the Pharisees, and confuting their vain opinion of being clean by the washing of their hands, from their own opinion of the efficacy of alms. As if he had said, “Ye assert that alms justifies and saves, and therefore ye call it by the name of righteousness; why therefore do ye affect cleanliness by the washing of hands; and not rather by the performance of charity?” LIGHTFOOT’S Works, vol. ii. p. 153.

**Before men**— Our Lord does not forbid public alms-giving, fasting, and prayer, but simply censures those vain and hypocritical persons who do these things publicly that they may be seen of men, and receive from them the reputation of saints, etc.

**Verse 2. Therefore when thou doest thine alms**— In the first verse the exhortation is general: Take YE heed. In this verse the address is pointed-and THOU-man-woman-who readeest-hearest.

**Do not sound a trumpet**— It is very likely that this was literally practised among the Pharisees, who seemed to live on the public esteem, and were excessively self-righteous and vain. Having something to distribute by way of alms, it is very probable they caused this to be published by blowing a



trumpet or horn, under pretense of collecting the poor; though with no other design than to gratify their own ambition. There is a custom in the east not much unlike this. “The derveeshes carry horns with them, which they frequently blow, when any thing is given to them, in honor of the donor. It is not impossible that some of the poor Jews who begged alms might be furnished like the Persian derveeshes, who are a sort of religious beggars, and that these hypocrites might be disposed to confine their alms-giving to those that they knew would pay them this honor.”  
HARMER’S *Observat.* vol. i. p. 474.

It must be granted, that in the Jewish writings there is no such practice referred to as that which I have supposed above, viz. blowing a trumpet to gather the poor, or the poor blowing a horn when relieved. Hence some learned men have thought that the word שופר shopher, a trumpet, refers to the hole in the public alms chest, into which the money was dropped which was allotted for the service of the poor. Such holes, because they were wide at one end and grew gradually narrow towards the other, were actually termed שופרות shopheroth, trumpets, by the rabbins; of this Schoettgen furnishes several examples. An ostentatious man, who wished to attract the notice of those around him, would throw in his money with some force into these trumpet-resembling holes, and thus he might be said שופר σαλπίζειν, to sound the trumpet. The Jerusalem Gemara, tract Shekalim, describes these שופרות shopheroth thus—These trumpet holes were crooked, narrow above and wide below, in order to prevent fraud. As our Lord only uses the words, μη σαλπισης, it may be tantamount to our term jingle. Do not make a public ostentatious jingle of that money which you give to public charities. Pride and hypocrisy are the things here reprehended. The Pharisees, no doubt, felt the weight of the reproof. Still the words may be taken in their literal meaning, as we know that the Moslimans, who nearly resemble the ancient Pharisees in the ostentation, bigotry, and cruelty of their character, are accustomed, in their festival of Muhurram, to erect stages in the public streets, and, by the sound of a trumpet, call the poor together to receive alms of rice, and other kinds of food. See WARD.

Works of charity and mercy should be done as much in private as is consistent with the advancement of the glory of God, and the effectual relief of the poor.

***In the synagogues and in the streets***— That such chests or boxes, for receiving the alms of well-disposed people, were placed in the synagogues, we may readily believe; but what were the streets? Schoettgen supposes that courts or avenues in the temple and in the synagogues may be intended—places where the people were accustomed to walk, for air, amusement, etc., for it is not to be supposed that such chests were fixed in the public streets.

***They have their reward.***— That is, the honor and esteem of men which they sought. God is under no obligation to them—they did nothing with an eye to his glory, and from HIM they can expect no recompense. They had their recompense in this life; and could expect none in the world to come.

**Verse 3. *Let not thy left hand know***— In many cases, works of charity must be hidden from even our nearest relatives, who, if they knew, would hinder us from doing what God has given us power and inclination to perform. We must go even farther; and conceal them as far as is possible from ourselves, by not thinking of them, or eyeing them with complacency. They are given to GOD, and should be hidden in HIM.

**Verse 4. *Which seeth in secret***— We should ever remember that the eye of the Lord is upon us, and that he sees not only the act, but also every motive that led to it.

***Shall reward thee openly.***— Will give thee the fullest proofs of his acceptance of thy work of faith, and labor of love, by increasing that substance which, for his sake, thou sharest with the poor; and will manifest his approbation in thy own heart, by the witness of his Spirit.

**Verse 5. *And when thou prayest***— *οταν προσευχη. προσευχη*, prayer, is compounded of *προς* with, and *ευχη* a vow, because to pray right, a man binds himself to God, as by a vow, to live to his glory, if he will grant him his grace, etc. *ευχομαι* signifies to pour out prayers or vows, from *ευ* well, and *χεω*, I pour out; probably alluding to the offerings or libations which were poured out before, or on the altar. A proper idea of prayer is, a pouring out of the soul unto God, as a free-will offering, solemnly and

eternally dedicated to him, accompanied with the most earnest desire that it may know, love, and serve him alone. He that comes thus to God will ever be heard and blessed. Prayer is the language of dependence; he who prays not, is endeavoring to live independently of God: this was the first curse, and continues to be the great curse of mankind. In the beginning, Satan said, Eat this fruit; ye shall then be as God; i.e. ye shall be independent: the man hearkened to his voice, sin entered into the world, and notwithstanding the full manifestation of the deception, the ruinous system is still pursued; man will, if possible, live independently of God; hence he either prays not at all, or uses the language without the spirit of prayer. The following verses contain so fine a view, and so just a definition, of prayer, that I think the pious reader will be glad to find them here.

### WHAT IS PRAYER ?

*Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,  
Unuttered or expressed,  
The motion of a hidden fire  
That trembles in the breast:*

*Prayer is the burden of a sigh,  
The falling of a tear,  
The upward gleaming of an eye,  
When none but God is near*

*Prayer is the simplest form of speech  
That infant lips can try;  
Prayer, the sublimest strains that reach  
The Majesty on high:*

*Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,  
The Christian's native air,  
His watch-word at the gates of death,  
He enters heaven by prayer*

*Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice,  
Returning from his ways,  
While angels in their songs rejoice,  
And say, Behold he prays!*

*The saints in prayer appear as one,  
In word, in deed, in mind,  
When with the Father and the Son  
Their fellowship they find*

*Nor prayer is made on earth alone:  
The Holy Spirit pleads;*

*And Jesus, on th' eternal throne,  
For sinners intercedes*

*“O Thou, by whom we come to God!  
The Life, the Truth, the Way,  
The path of prayer thyself hast trod,  
Lord, teach us how to pray!”*

MONTGOMERY

***Thou shalt not be as the hypocrites***— **υποκριται**. From **υπο** under, and **κρινομαι** to be judged, thought: properly a stage-player, who acts under a mask, personating a character different from his own; a counterfeit, a dissembler; one who would be thought to be different from what he really is. A person who wishes to be taken for a follower of God, but who has nothing of religion except the outside.

***Love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets***— The Jewish phylacterical prayers were long, and the canonical hours obliged them to repeat these prayers wherever they happened to be; and the Pharisees, who were full of vain glory, contrived to be overtaken in the streets by the canonical hour, that they might be seen by the people, and applauded for their great and conscientious piety. See Lightfoot. As they had no piety but that which was outward, they endeavored to let it fully appear, that they might make the most of it among the people. It would not have answered their end to kneel before God, for then they might have been unnoticed by men; and consequently have lost that reward which they had in view: viz. the esteem and applause of the multitude. This hypocritical pretension to devotion is common among the Asiatics. Both Hindoos and Mohammedans love to pray in the most public places, at the landing places of rivers, in the public streets, on the roofs of the covered boats, without the least endeavor to conceal their outside devotion, that they may be seen of men.

**Verse 6. *But thou, when thou prayest***— This is a very impressive and emphatic address. But THOU! whosoever thou art, Jew, Pharisee, Christian—enter into thy closet. Prayer is the most secret intercourse of the soul with God, and as it were the conversation of one heart with another. The world is too profane and treacherous to be of the secret. We must shut the door against it: endeavor to forget it, with all the affairs which busy and amuse it. Prayer requires retirement, at least of the heart; for this may be fitly termed the closet in the house of God, which house the body of

every real Christian is, 1 Corinthians 3:16. To this closet we ought to retire even in public prayer, and in the midst of company.

**Reward thee openly.**— What goodness is there equal to this of God to give, not only what we ask, and more than we ask, but to reward even prayer itself! How great advantage is it to serve a prince who places prayers in the number of services, and reckons to his subjects' account, even their trust and confidence in begging all things of him!

**Verse 7. Use not vain repetitions**— μη βαττολογησητε, Suidas explains this word well: “πολυλογία, much speaking, from one Battus, who made very prolix hymns, in which the same idea frequently recurred.” “A frequent repetition of awful and striking words may often be the result of earnestness and fervor. See Daniel 9:3-20; but great length of prayer, which will of course involve much sameness and idle repetition, naturally creates fatigue and carelessness in the worshipper, and seems to suppose ignorance or inattention in the Deity; a fault against which our Lord more particularly wishes to secure them.” See “Matthew 6:8”. This judicious note is from the late Mr. Gilbert Wakefield, who illustrates it with the following quotation from the Heautontimorumenos of Terence:

*Ohe! jam decine Deos, uxor, gratulando OBTUNDERE,  
Tuam esse inventam gnatum: nisi illos ex TUO INGENIO judicas,  
Ut nil credas INTELLIGERE, nisi idem DICTUM SIT CENTIES*

“Pray thee, wife, cease from STUNNING the gods with thanksgivings, because thy child is in safety; unless thou judgest of them from thyself, that they cannot UNDERSTAND a thing, unless they are told of it a HUNDRED TIMES.” Heaut. ver. 880.

Prayer requires more of the heart than of the tongue. The eloquence of prayer consists in the fervency of desire, and the simplicity of faith. The abundance of fine thoughts, studied and vehement motions, and the order and politeness of the expressions, are things which compose a mere human harangue, not an humble and Christian prayer. Our trust and confidence ought to proceed from that which God is able to do in us, and not from that which we can say to him. It is abominable, says the HEDAYAH, that a person offering up prayers to God, should say, “I beseech thee, by the glory of thy heavens!” or, “by the splendor of thy throne!” for a style of

this nature would lead to suspect that the Almighty derived glory from the heavens; whereas the heavens are created, but God with all his attributes is eternal and inimitable. HEDAYAH, vol. iv. p. 121.

This is the sentiment of a Mohammedan; and yet for this vain repetition the Mohammedans are peculiarly remarkable; they often use such words as the following:-

[A]

O God, O God, O God, O God!-O Lord, O Lord, O Lord, O Lord!-O living, O immortal, O living, O immortal, O living, O immortal, O living, O immortal!-O Creator of the heavens and the earth!-O thou who art endowed with majesty and authority! O wonderful, etc. I have extracted the above from a form of prayer used by Tippo Sahib, which I met with in a book of devotion in which there were several prayers written with his own hand, and signed with his own name.

Of this vain repetition in civil matters, among the Jews, many instances might be given, and not a few examples might be found among Christians. The heathens abounded with them: see several quoted by Lightfoot.-Let the parricide be dragged! We beseech thee, Augustus, let the parricide be dragged! This is the thing we ask, let the parricide be dragged! Hear us, Caesar; let the false accusers be cast to the lion! Hear us, Caesar, let the false accusers be condemned to the lion! Hear us, Caesar, etc. It was a maxim among the Jews, that “he who multiplies prayer, must be heard.” This is correct, if it only imply perseverance in supplication; but if it be used to signify the multiplying of words, or even forms of prayer, it will necessarily produce the evil which our Lord reprehends: Be not as the heathen-use not vain repetition, etc. Even the Christian Churches in India have copied this vain repetition work; and in it the Roman Catholic, the Armenian, and the Greek Churches strive to excel.

**As the heathen**—The Vatican MS. reads *υποκριται*, like the hypocrites. Unmeaning words, useless repetitions, and complimentary phrases in prayer, are in general the result of heathenism, hypocrisy, or ignorance.

**Verse 8. *Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of***—Prayer is not designed to inform God, but to give man a sight of his misery; to humble his heart, to excite his desire, to inflame his faith, to animate his

hope, to raise his soul from earth to heaven, and to put him in mind that THERE is his Father, his country, and inheritance.

In the preceding verses we may see three faults, which our Lord commands us to avoid in prayer:-

1st. HYPOCRISY. Be not as the hypocrites. Matthew 6:5.

2ndly. DISSIPATION. Enter into thy closet. Matthew 6:6.

3rdly. MUCH SPEAKING, or UNMEANING REPETITION, Be not like the heathens. Matthew 6:7.

**Verse 9.** *After this manner therefore pray ye*— Forms of prayer were frequent among the Jews; and every public teacher gave one to his disciples. Some forms were drawn out to a considerable length, and from these abridgments were made: to the latter sort the following prayer properly belongs, and consequently, besides its own very important use, it is a plan for a more extended devotion. What satisfaction must it be to learn from God himself, with what words, and in what manner, he would have us pray to him, so as not to pray in vain! A king, who draws up the petition which he allows to be presented to himself, has doubtless the fullest determination to grant the request. We do not sufficiently consider the value of this prayer; the respect and attention which it requires; the preference to be given to it; its fullness and perfection: the frequent use we should make of it; and the spirit which we should bring with it. “Lord, teach us how to pray!” is a prayer necessary to prayer; for unless we are divinely instructed in the manner, and influenced by the spirit of true devotion, even the prayer taught us by Jesus Christ may be repeated without profit to our souls.

**Our Father**— It was a maxim of the Jews, that a man should not pray alone, but join with the Church; by which they particularly meant that he should, whether alone or with the synagogue, use the plural number as comprehending all the followers of God. Hence, they say, Let none pray the short prayer, i.e. as the gloss expounds it, the prayer in the singular, but in the plural number. See Lightfoot on this place.

This prayer was evidently made in a peculiar manner for the children of God. And hence we are taught to say, not MY Father, but OUR Father.

The heart, says one, of a child of God, is a brotherly heart, in respect of all other Christians: it asks nothing but in the spirit of unity, fellowship, and Christian charity; desiring that for its brethren which it desires for itself.

The word Father, placed here at the beginning of this prayer, includes two grand ideas, which should serve as a foundation to all our petitions: 1st. That tender and respectful love which we should feel for God, such as that which children feel for their fathers. 2dly. That strong confidence in God's love to us, such as fathers have for their children. Thus all the petitions in this prayer stand in strictest reference to the word Father; the first three referring to the love we have for God; and the three last, to that confidence which we have in the love he bears to us.

The relation we stand in to this first and best of beings dictates to us reverence for his person, zeal for his honor, obedience to his will, submission to his dispensations and chastisements, and resemblance to his nature.

***Which art in heaven***— The phrase אֲבִינוּ שְׁבֹשְׁמַיִם, abinu sheboshemayim, our Father who art in heaven, was very common among the ancient Jews; and was used by them precisely in the same sense as it is used here by our Lord.

This phrase in the Scriptures seems used to express:

1st. His OMNIPRESENCE. The heaven of heavens cannot contain thee. 1 Kings 8:27: that is, Thou fillest immensity.

2dly. His MAJESTY and DOMINION over his creatures. Art thou not God in heaven, and rulest thou not over all the kingdoms of the heathen? 2 Chronicles 20:6.

3dly. His POWER and MIGHT. Art thou not God in heaven, and in thy hand is there not power and might, so that no creature is able to withstand thee! 2 Chronicles 20:6. Our God is in heaven, and hath done whatsoever he pleased. Psalm 115:3.

4thly. His OMNISCIENCE. The Lord's throne is in heaven, his eyes behold, his eye-lids try the children of men. Psalm 11:4. The Lord looketh down from heaven, he beholdeth all the sons of men. Psalm 33:13-15.



5thly. His infinite PURITY and HOLINESS. Look down from thy holy habitation, etc. Deuteronomy 26:15. Thou art the high and lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy. Isaiah 57:15.

**Hallowed**— *αγιασθητω. αγιαζω*· from a negative, and *γη*, the earth, a thing separated from the earth, or from earthly purposes and employments. As the word sanctified, or hallowed, in Scripture, is frequently used for the consecration of a thing or person to a holy use or office, as the Levites, first-born, tabernacle, temple, and their utensils, which were all set apart from every earthly, common, or profane use, and employed wholly in the service of God, so the Divine Majesty may be said to be sanctified by us, in analogy to those things, viz. when, we separate him from, and in our conceptions and desires exalt him above, earth and all things.

**Thy name.**— That is, GOD himself, with all the attributes of his Divine nature-his power, wisdom, justice, mercy, etc.

We hallow God's name, 1st. With our lips, when all our conversation is holy, and we speak of those things which are meet to minister grace to the hearers.

2dly. In our thoughts, when we suppress every rising evil, and have our tempers regulated by his grace and Spirit.

3dly. In our lives, when we begin, continue, and end our works to his glory. If we have an eye to God in all we perform, then every act of our common employment will be an act of religious worship.

4thly. In our families, when we endeavor to bring up our children in the discipline and admonition of the Lord; instructing also our servants in the way of righteousness.

5thly. In a particular calling or business, when we separate the falsity, deception, and lying, commonly practised, from it; buying and selling as in the sight of the holy and just God.

**Verse 10. Thy kingdom come.**— The ancient Jews scrupled not to say: He prays not at all, in whose prayers there is no mention of the kingdom of God. Hence, they were accustomed to say, "Let him cause his kingdom

to reign, and his redemption to flourish: and let the Messiah speedily come and deliver his people.”

The universal sway of the scepter of Christ:-God has promised that the kingdom of Christ shall be exalted above all kingdoms. Daniel 7:14-27. That it shall overcome all others, and be at last the universal empire. Isaiah 9:7. Connect this with the explanation given of this phrase, Matthew 3:2.

***Thy will be done***— This petition is properly added to the preceding; for when the kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Spirit, is established in the heart, there is then an ample provision made for the fulfillment of the Divine will.

The will of God is infinitely good, wise, and holy; to have it fulfilled in and among men, is to have infinite goodness, wisdom, and holiness diffused throughout the universe; and earth made the counterpart of heaven.

***As it is in heaven.***— The Jews maintained, that they were the angels of God upon earth, as these pure spirits were angels of God in heaven; hence they said, “As the angels sanctify the Divine name in heaven, so the Israelites sanctify the Divine name, upon earth.” See Schoettgen.

Observe, 1st. The salvation of the soul is the result of two wills conjoined: the will of God, and the will of man. If God will not the salvation of man, he cannot be saved: If, man will not the salvation God has prepared for him, he cannot be delivered from his sins. 2dly. This petition certainly points out a deliverance from all sin; for nothing that is unholy can consist with the Divine will, and if this be fulfilled in man, surely sin shall be banished from his soul. 3dly. This is farther evident from these words, as it is in heaven; i.e. as the angels do it: viz. with all zeal, diligence, love, delight, and perseverance. 4thly. Does not the petition plainly imply, we may live without sinning against God? Surely the holy angels never mingle iniquity with their loving obedience; and as our Lord teaches us to pray, that we do his will here as they do it in heaven, can it be thought he would put a petition in our mouths, the fulfillment of which was impossible? 5thly. This certainly destroys the assertion: “There is no such state of purification, to be attained here, in which it may be said, the soul is redeemed from sinful passions and desires;” for it is on EARTH that we are commanded to pray that this will, which is our sanctification, may be

done. 6thly. Our souls can never be truly happy, till our WILLS be entirely subjected to, and become one with, the will of God. 7thly. How can any person offer this petition to his Maker, who thinks of nothing less than the performance of the will of God, and of nothing more than doing his own?

Some see the mystery of the Trinity in the three preceding petitions. The first being, addressed to the Father, as the source of all holiness. The second, to the Son, who establishes the kingdom of God upon earth. The third, to the Holy Spirit, who by his energy works in men to will and to perform.

To offer these three petitions with success at the throne of God, three graces, essential to our salvation, must be brought into exercise; and, indeed, the petitions themselves necessarily suppose them. FAITH, Our Father-for he that cometh to God, must believe that he is.

HOPE, Thy kingdom come-For this grace has for its object good things to come.

LOVE, Thy will be done-For love is the incentive to and principle of all obedience to God, and beneficence to man.

**Verse 11. *Give us this day our daily bread***—The word **ἐπιουσιαν** has greatly perplexed critics and commentators. I find upwards of thirty different explanations of it. It is found in no Greek writer before the evangelists, and Origen says expressly, that it was formed by them, **ἀλλ' εοικε πεπλασθαι υπο των ευαγγελιστων**. The interpretation of Theophylact, one of the best of the Greek fathers, has ever appeared to me to be the most correct, **αρτος επι τη ουσια και ανστασει ημων ανταρκης**, Bread, sufficient for our substance and support, i.e. That quantity of food which is necessary to support our health and strength, by being changed into the substance of our bodies. Its composition is of **επι** and **ουσια**, proper or sufficient for support. Mr. Wakefield thinks it probable, that the word was originally written **επι ουσιαν**, which coalesced by degrees, till they became the **ἐπιουσιον** of the MSS. There is probably an allusion here to the custom of travelers in the east, who were wont to reserve a part of the food given them the preceding evening to serve for their breakfast or dinner the next day. But as this was not

sufficient for the whole day, they were therefore obliged to depend on the providence of God for the additional supply. In Luke 15:12, 13, **οὐσίᾳ** signifies, what a person has to live on; and nothing can be more natural than to understand the compound **ἐπιουσίᾳ**, of that additional supply which the traveler needs, to complete the provision necessary for a day's eating, over and above what he had then in his possession. See Harmer.

The word is so very peculiar and expressive, and seems to have been made on purpose by the evangelists, that more than mere bodily nourishment seems to be intended by it. Indeed, many of the primitive fathers understood it as comprehending that daily supply of grace which the soul requires to keep it in health and vigor: He who uses the petition would do well to keep both in view. Observe 1. God is the author and dispenser of all temporal as well as spiritual good. 2. We have merited no kind of good from his hand, and therefore must receive it as a free gift: Give us, etc. 3. We must depend on him daily for support; we are not permitted to ask any thing for to-morrow: give us to-day. 4. That petition of the ancient Jews is excellent: "Lord, the necessities of thy people Israel are many, and their knowledge small, so that they know not how to disclose their necessities: Let it be thy good pleasure to give to every man, what sufficeth for food!" Thus they expressed their dependence, and left it to God to determine what was best and most suitable. We must ask only that which is essential to our support, God having promised neither luxuries nor superfluities.

**Verse 12. *And forgive us our debts***— Sin is represented here under the notion of a debt, and as our sins are many, they are called here debts. God made man that he might live to his glory, and gave him a law to walk by; and if, when he does any thing that tends not to glorify God, he contracts a debt with Divine Justice, how much more is he debtor when he breaks the law by actual transgression! It has been justly observed, "All the attributes of God are reasons of obedience to man; those attributes are infinite; every sin is an act of ingratitude or rebellion against all these attributes; therefore sin is infinitely sinful."

Forgive us.—Man has nothing to pay: if his debts are not forgiven, they must stand charged against him for ever, as he is absolutely insolvent. Forgiveness, therefore, must come from the free mercy of God in Christ:

and how strange is it we cannot have the old debt canceled, without (by that very means) contracting a new one, as great as the old! but the credit is transferred from Justice to Mercy. While sinners we are in debt to infinite Justice; when pardoned, in debt to endless Mercy: and as a continuance in a state of grace necessarily implies a continual communication of mercy, so the debt goes on increasing ad infinitum. Strange economy in the Divine procedure, which by rendering a man an infinite debtor, keeps him eternally dependent on his Creator! How good is God! And what does this state of dependence imply? A union with, and participation of, the fountain of eternal goodness and felicity!

***As we forgive our debtors.***— It was a maxim among the ancient Jews, that no man should lie down in his bed, without forgiving those who had offended him. That man condemns himself to suffer eternal punishment, who makes use of this prayer with revenge and hatred in his heart. He who will not attend to a condition so advantageous to himself (remitting a hundred pence to his debtor, that his own creditor may remit him 10,000 talents) is a madman, who, to oblige his neighbor to suffer an hour, is himself determined to suffer everlastingly! This condition of forgiving our neighbor, though it cannot possibly merit any thing, yet it is that condition without which God will pardon no man. See Matthew 6:14, 15.

**Verse 13. *And lead us not into temptation***— That is, bring us not in to sore trial. **πειρασμον**, which may be here rendered sore trial, comes from **πειρω**, to pierce through, as with a spear, or spit, used so by some of the best Greek writers. Several of the primitive fathers understood it something in this way; and have therefore added *quam ferre non possumus*, “which we cannot bear.” The word not only implies violent assaults from Satan, but also sorely afflictive circumstances, none of which we have, as yet, grace or fortitude sufficient to bear. Bring us not in, or lead us not in. This is a mere Hebraism: God is said to do a thing which he only permits or suffers to be done.

The process of temptation is often as follows: 1st. A simple evil thought. 2ndly. A strong imagination, or impression made on the imagination, by the thing to which we are tempted. 3dly. Delight in viewing it. 4thly. Consent of the will to perform it. Thus lust is conceived, sin is finished, and death brought forth. James 1:15. See also on Matthew 4:1. A man may

be tempted without entering into the temptation: entering into it implies giving way, closing in with, and embracing it.

**But deliver us from evil—** *απο του πονηρου*, from the wicked one. Satan is expressly called *ο πονηρος*, the wicked one. Matthew 13:19, 38, compare with Mark 4:15; Luke 8:12. This epithet of Satan comes from *πονος*, labor, sorrow, misery, because of the drudgery which is found in the way of sin, the sorrow that accompanies the commission of it, and the misery which is entailed upon it, and in which it ends.

It is said in the MISHNA, Titus. Beracoth, that Rabbi Judah was wont to pray thus: “Let it be thy good pleasure to deliver us from impudent men, and from impudence: from an evil man and an evil chance; from an evil affection, an evil companion, and an evil neighbor: from Satan the destroyer, from a hard judgment, and a hard adversary.” See Lightfoot.

**Deliver us—** *ρυσαι ημας*-a very expressive word-break our chains, and loose our bands-s snatch, pluck us from the evil, and its calamitous issue.

**For thine is the kingdom, etc.—** The whole of this doxology is rejected by Wetstein, Griesbach, and the most eminent critics. The authorities on which it is rejected may be seen in Griesbach and, Wetstein, particularly in the second edition of Griesbach’s Testament, who is fully of opinion that it never made a part of the sacred text. It is variously written in several MSS., and omitted by most of the fathers, both Greek and Latin. As the doxology is at least very ancient, and was in use among the Jews, as well as all the other petitions of this excellent prayer, it should not, in my opinion, be left out of the text, merely because some MSS. have omitted it, and it has been variously written in others. See various forms of this doxology, taken from the ancient Jewish writers, in Lightfoot and Schoettgen.

By the kingdom, we may understand that mentioned Matthew 6:10, and explained Matthew 3:2.

By power, that energy by which the kingdom is governed and maintained.

By glory, the honor that shall redound to God in consequence of the maintenance of the kingdom of grace, in the salvation of men.

**For ever and ever.**— εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, to the for evers. Well expressed by our common translation-ever in our ancient use of the word taking in the whole duration of time; the second ever, the whole of eternity. May thy name have the glory both in this world, and in that which is to come! The original word αἰὼν comes from αἰ always, and ὦν being, or existence. This is Aristotle's definition of it. See the note on "Genesis 21:33". There is no word in any language which more forcibly points out the grand characteristic of eternity-that which always exists. It is often used to signify a limited time, the end of which is not known; but this use of it is only an accommodated one; and it is the grammatical and proper sense of it which must be resorted to in any controversy concerning the word. We sometimes use the phrase for evermore: i.e. for ever and more, which signifies the whole of time, and the more or interminable duration beyond it. See on "Matthew 25:46".

**Amen.**— This word is Hebrew, אמן, and signifies faithful or true. Some suppose the word is formed from the initial letters of אדוני מלך נאמן adoni melech neetnan, My Lord, the faithful King. The word itself implies a confident resting of the soul in God, with the fullest assurance that all these petitions shall be fulfilled to every one who prays according to the directions given before by our blessed Lord.

The very learned Mr. Gregory has shown that our Lord collected this prayer out of the Jewish Euchologies, and gives us the whole form as follows:-

"Our Father who art in heaven, be gracious unto us! O Lord our God, hallowed be thy name, and let the remembrance of Thee be glorified in heaven above, and in the earth here below! Let thy kingdom reign over us now, and for ever! The holy men of old said, remit and forgive unto all men whatsoever they have done against me! And lead us not into the hands of temptation, but deliver us from the evil thing! For thine is the kingdom, and thou shalt reign in glory for ever and for evermore." Gregory's Works, 4to. 1671, p. 162. See this proved at large in the collections of Lightfoot and Schoettgenius,

**Verse 14. If ye forgive men**— He who shows mercy to men receives mercy from God. For a king to forgive his subjects a hundred millions of

treasons against his person and authority, on this one condition, that they wilt henceforth live peaceably with him and with each other, is what we shall never see; and yet this is but the shadow of that which Christ promises on his Father's part to all true penitents. A man can have little regard for his salvation, who refuses to have it on such advantageous terms. See Quesnel.

**Verse 15. *But if ye forgive not***— He who does not awake at the sound of so loud a voice, is not asleep but dead. A vindictive man excludes himself from all hope of eternal life, and himself seals his own damnation.

**Trespases**— *παραπτώματα*, from *παρα* and *πιπτω*, to fall off. What a remarkable difference there is between this word and *οφειλήματα*, debts, in Matthew 6:12! Men's sins against us are only their stumblings, or fallings off from the duties they owe us; but our's are debts to God's justice, which we can never discharge. It can be no great difficulty to forgive those, especially when we consider that in many respects we have failed as much, in certain duties which we owed to others, as they have done in those which they owed us. "But I have given him no provocation." Perhaps thou art angry, and art not a proper judge in the matter; but, however it may be, it is thy interest to forgive, if thou expectest forgiveness from God. On this important subject I will subjoin an extract from Mason's Self-knowledge, page 248, 1755.

"Athenodorus, the philosopher by reason of his old age, begged leave to retire from the court of Augustus, which the emperor granted. In his compliments of leave, he said, 'Remember, Caesar, whenever thou art angry, that thou say or do nothing before thou hast distinctly repeated to thyself the twenty-four letters of the alphabet.' On which Caesar caught him by the hand, and said, 'I have need of thy presence still:' and kept him a year longer. This was excellent advice from a heathen; but a Christian may prescribe to himself a wiser rule. When thou art angry, answer not till thou hast repeated the fifth petition of our Lord's prayer-Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors: and our Lord's comment upon it-For if ye forgive not men their trespases, neither will your heavenly father forgive your trespases."

PRAYER to God is considered among the Mohammedans in a very important point of view. It is declared by the Mosliman doctors to be the



corner stone of RELIGION, and the pillar of FAITH. It is not, say they, a thing of mere form, but requires that the heart and understanding should accompany it, without which they pronounce it to be of no avail. They direct prayer to be performed five times in the twenty-four hours. 1. Between day-break and sun-rise; 2. Immediately after noon; 3. Immediately before sun-set; 4. In the evening before dark; and 5. Before the first watch of the night.

They hold the following points to be essentially requisite to the efficacy of prayer:—1. That the person be free from every species of defilement. 2. That all sumptuous and gaudy apparel be laid aside. 3. That the attention accompany the act, and be not suffered to wander to any other object. 4. That the prayer be performed with the face toward the temple of MECCA. HEDAYAH. Prel. Dis. pp. 53, 54.

There are few points here but the follower of Christ may seriously consider and profitably practice.

**Verse 16. *When ye fast***— A fast is termed by the Greeks *νηστις*, from *νη* not, and *εσθειν* to eat; hence fast means, a total abstinence from food for a certain time. Abstaining from flesh, and living on fish, vegetables, etc., is no fast, or may be rather considered a burlesque on fasting. Many pretend to take the true definition of a fast from Isaiah 58:3, and say that it means a fast from sin. This is a mistake; there is no such term in the Bible as fasting from sin; the very idea is ridiculous and absurd, as if sin were a part of our daily food. In the fast mentioned by the prophet, the people were to divide their bread with the hungry, Isaiah 58:7; but could they eat their bread, and give it too? No man should save by a fast: he should give all the food he might have eaten to the poor. He who saves a day's expense by a fast, commits an abomination before the Lord. See more on “#Matthew 9:15”.

***As the hypocrites-of a sad countenance***— *σκυθρωποι*, either from *σκυθρος* sour, crabbed, and *ωψ* the countenance; or from *σκυθης* a Scythian, a morose, gloomy, austere phiz, like that of a Scythian or Tartar. A hypocrite has always a difficult part to act: when he wishes to appear as a penitent, not having any godly sorrow at heart, he is obliged to counterfeit it the best way he can, by a gloomy and austere look.

**Verse 17. *Anoint thine head and wash thy face***— These were forbidden in the Jewish canon on days of fasting and humiliation; and hypocrites availed themselves of this ordinance, that they might appear to fast. Our Lord, therefore, cautions us against this: as if he had said, Affect nothing-dress in thy ordinary manner, and let the whole of thy deportment prove that thou desirest to recommend my soul to God, and not thy face to men. That factitious mourning, which consists in putting on black clothes, crapes, etc., is utterly inconsistent with the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ; and if practised in reference to spiritual matters, is certainly forbidden here: but sin is so common, and so boldly persisted in, that not even a crape is put on, as an evidence of deploring its influence, or of sorrow for having committed it.

**Verse 18. *Thy father which seeth in secret***— Let us not be afraid that our hearts can be concealed from God; but let us fear lest he perceive them to be more desirous of the praise of men than they are of that glory which comes from Him.

**Openly.**— *εν τω φανερω*. These words are omitted by nine MSS. in uncial letters; and by more than one hundred others, by most of the versions, and by several of the primitive fathers. As it is supported by no adequate authority, Bengel, Wetstein, Griesbach, and others, have left it out of the text.

**Verse 19. *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth***— What blindness is it for a man to lay up that as a treasure which must necessarily perish! A heart designed for God and eternity is terribly degraded by being fixed on those things which are subject to corruption. “But may we not lay up treasure innocently?” Yes. 1st. If you can do it without setting your heart on it, which is almost impossible: and 2dly. If there be neither widows nor orphans, destitute nor distressed persons in the place where you live. “But there is a portion which belongs to my children; shall I distribute that among the poor?” If it belongs to your children, it is not yours, and therefore you have no right to dispose of it. “But I have a certain sum in stock, etc.; shall I take that and divide it among the poor?” By no means; for, by doing so, you would put it out of your power to do good after the present division: keep your principal, and devote, if you possibly can spare it, the product to the poor; and thus you shall have the

continual ability to do good. In the mean time take care not to shut up your bowels of compassion against a brother in distress; if you do, the love of God cannot dwell in you.

**Rust**— Or canker, **βρωσις**, from **βρωσκω**, I eat, consume. This word cannot be properly applied to rust, but to any thing that consumes or cankers clothes or metals. There is a saying exactly similar to this in the Institutes of MENU: speaking of the presents made to Brahmins, he says, “It is a gem which neither thieves nor foes take away, and which never perishes.” Chapter of Government, Institute 83.

**Where thieves do not break through**— **διορυσσοῦσι**, literally dig through, i.e. the wall, in order to get into the house. This was not a difficult matter, as the house was generally made of mud and straw, kneaded together like the cobb houses in Cornwall, and other places. See Clarke on “Matthew 7:27”.

**Verse 20. Lay up-treasures in heaven**— “The only way to render perishing goods eternal, to secure stately furniture from moths, and the richest metals from canker, and precious stones from thieves, is to transmit them to heaven by acts of charity. This is a kind of bill of exchange which cannot fail of acceptance, but through our own fault.” Quesnel.

It is certain we have not the smallest portion of temporal good, but what we have received from the unmerited bounty of God: and if we give back to him all we have received, yet still there is no merit that can fairly attach to the act, as the goods were the Lord’s; for I am not to suppose that I can purchase any thing from a man by his own property. On this ground the doctrine of human merit is one of the most absurd that ever was published among men, or credited by sinners. Yet he who supposes he can purchase heaven by giving that meat which was left at his own table, and that of his servants; or by giving a garment which he could no longer in decency wear, must have a base ignorant soul, and a very mean opinion of the heaven he hopes for. But shall not such works as these be rewarded? Yes, yes, God will take care to give you all that your refuse victuals and old clothes are worth. Yet he, who through love to God and man, divides his bread with the hungry, and covers the naked with a garment, shall not lose his reward; a reward which the mercy of God appoints, but to which, in strict justice, he can lay no claim.

**Verse 21. *Where your treasure is***— If God be the treasure of our souls, our hearts, i.e. our affections and desires will be placed on things above. An earthly minded man proves that his treasure is below; a heavenly minded man shows that his treasure is above.

**Verse 22. *The light of the body is the eye***— That is, the eye is to the body what the sun is to the universe in the day time, or a lamp or candle to a house at night.

***If-thine eye be single***— *απλους*, simple, uncompounded; i.e. so perfect in its structure as to see objects distinctly and clearly, and not confusedly, or in different places to what they are, as is often the case in certain disorders of the eye; one object appearing two or more-or else in a different situation, and of a different color to what it really is. This state of the eye is termed, Matthew 6:23, *πονηρος* evil, i.e. diseased or defective. An evil eye was a phrase in use, among the ancient Jews, to denote an envious, covetous man or disposition; a man who repined at his neighbor's prosperity, loved his own money, and would do nothing in the way of charity for God's sake. Our blessed Lord, however, extends and sublimates this meaning, and uses the sound eye as a metaphor to point out that simplicity of intention, and purity of affection with which men should pursue the supreme good. We cannot draw more than one straight line between two indivisible points. We aim at happiness: it is found only in one thing, the indivisible and eternal GOD. If the line of simple intention be drawn straight to him, and the soul walk by it, with purity of affection, the whole man shall be light in the Lord; the rays of that excellent glory shall irradiate the mind, and through the whole spirit shall the Divine nature be transfused. But if a person who enjoyed this heavenly treasure permit his simplicity of intention to deviate from heavenly to earthly good; and his purity of affection to be contaminated by worldly ambition, secular profits, and animal gratifications; then, the light which was in him becomes darkness, i.e. his spiritual discernment departs, and his union with God is destroyed: all is only a palpable obscure; and, like a man who has totally lost his sight, he walks without direction, certainty, or comfort. This state is most forcibly intimated in our Lord's exclamation, How great a darkness! Who can adequately describe the misery and wretchedness of that soul which has lost its union with the fountain of all good, and, in

losing this, has lost the possibility of happiness till the simple eye be once more given, and the straight line once more drawn.

**Verse 24. *No man can serve two masters***— The master of our heart may be fitly termed the love that reigns in it. We serve that only which we love supremely. A man cannot be in perfect indifference betwixt two objects which are incompatible: he is inclined to despise and hate whatever he does not love supremely, when the necessity of a choice presents itself.

***He will hate the one and love the other.***— The word hate has the same sense here as it has in many places of Scripture; it merely signifies to love less—so Jacob loved Rachel, but hated Leah; i.e. he loved Leah much less than he loved Rachel. God himself uses it precisely in the same sense: Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated; i.e. I have loved the posterity of Esau less than I have loved the posterity of Jacob: which means no more than that God, in the course of his providence, gave to the Jews greater earthly privileges than he gave to the Edomites, and chose to make them the progenitors of the Messiah, though they ultimately, through their own obstinacy, derived no more benefit from this privilege than the Edomites did. How strange is it, that with such evidence before their eyes, men will apply this loving and hating to degrees of inclusion and exclusion, in which neither the justice nor mercy of God are honored!

***Ye cannot serve God and mammon.***— מָמוֹן mamon is used for money in the Targum of Onkelos, Exodus 18:21; and in that of Jonathan, Judges 5:19; 1 Samuel 8:3. The Syriac word מַמוֹנָא mamona is used in the same sense, Exodus 21:30. Dr. Castel deduces these words from the Hebrew מָאֵן aman, to trust, confide; because men are apt to trust in riches. Mammon may therefore be considered any thing a man confides in. Augustine observes, “that mammon, in the Punic or Carthaginian language, signified gain.” Lucrum Punicā mammon dicitur. The word plainly denotes riches, Luke 16:9, 11, in which latter verse mention is made not only of the deceitful mammon, (τὸ ἀδίκω,) but also of the true (τὸ ἀληθινόν.) St. Luke’s phrase, μαμωνοῦ ἀδικίας, very exactly answers to the Chaldee מָמוֹן דְּשֻׁקָא mamon dishekar, which is often used in the Targums. See more in Wetstein and Parkhurst.

Some suppose there was an idol of this name, and Kircher mentions such a one in his OEdip. Egyptiacus. See Castel.

Our blessed Lord shows here the utter impossibility of loving the world and loving God at the same time; or, in other words, that a man of the world cannot be a truly religious character. He who gives his heart to the world robs God of it, and, in snatching at the shadow of earthly good, loses substantial and eternal blessedness. How dangerous is it to set our hearts upon riches, seeing it is so easy to make them our God!

**Verse 25. *Therefore***— **δια τουτο**, on this account; viz., that ye may not serve mammon, but have unshaken confidence in God, I say unto you,-

***Take no thought***— Be not anxiously careful, **μη μεριμνατε**; this is the proper meaning of the word. **μεριμνα** anxious solicitude, from **μεριζειν τον νοον** dividing or distracting the mind. My old MS. Bible renders it, be not busy to your life. Prudent care is never forbidden by our Lord, but only that anxious distracting solicitude, which, by dividing the mind, and drawing it different ways, renders it utterly incapable of attending to any solemn or important concern. To be anxiously careful concerning the means of subsistence is to lose all satisfaction and comfort in the things which God gives, and to act as a mere infidel. On the other hand, to rely so much upon providence as not to use the very powers and faculties with which the Divine Being has endowed us, is to tempt God. If we labor without placing our confidence in our labor, but expect all from the blessing of God, we obey his will, co-operate with his providence, set the springs of it a-going on our behalf, and thus imitate Christ and his followers by a sedate care and an industrious confidence.

In this and the following verses, our Lord lays down several reasons why men should not disquiet themselves about the wants of life, or concerning the future.

The first is, the experience of greater benefits already received. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Can he who gave us our body, and breathed into it the breath of life, before we could ask them from him, refuse us that which is necessary to preserve both, and when we ask it in humble confidence?

The clause what ye must eat, is omitted by two MSS., most of the ancient versions, and by many of the primitive fathers. Griesbach has left it in the text with a note of doubtfulness. It occurs again in Matthew 6:31, and there is no variation in any of the MSS. in that place. Instead of, Is not the life more than, etc., we should read, Of more value; so the word *πλειον* is used in Numbers 22:15, and by the best Greek writers; and in the same sense it is used in Matthew 21:37. See the note there.

**Verse 26. *Behold the fowls of the air***— The second reason why we should not be anxiously concerned about the future, is the example of the smaller animals, which the providence of God feeds without their own labor; though he be not their father. We never knew an earthly father take care of his fowls, and neglect his children; and shall we fear this from our heavenly Father? God forbid! That man is utterly unworthy to have God for his father, who depends less upon his goodness, wisdom, and power, than upon a crop of corn, which may be spoiled either in the field or in the barn. If our great Creator have made us capable of knowing, loving, and enjoying himself eternally, what may we not expect from him, after so great a gift?

***They sow not, neither do they reap***— There is a saying among the rabbins almost similar to this—“Hast thou ever seen a beast or a fowl that had a workshop? yet they are fed without labor and without anxiety. They were created for the service of man, and man was created that he might serve his Creator. Man also would have been supported without labor and anxiety, had he not corrupted his ways. Hast thou ever seen a lion carrying burthens, a stag gathering summer fruits, a fox selling merchandise, or a wolf selling oil, that they might thus gain their support? And yet they are fed without care or labor. Arguing therefore from the less to the greater, if they which were created that they might serve me, are nourished without labor and anxiety, how much more I, who have been created that I might serve my Maker! What therefore is the cause, why I should be obliged to labor in order to get my daily bread? Answer, SIN.” This is a curious and important extract, and is highly worthy of the reader’s attention. See Schoettgen.

**Verse 27. *Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?***— The third reason against these carking cares is the

unprofitableness of human solicitude, unless God vouchsafe to bless it. What can our uneasiness do but render us still more unworthy of the Divine care? The passage from distrust to apostasy is very short and easy; and a man is not far from murmuring against Providence, who is dissatisfied with its conduct. We should depend as fully upon God for the preservation of his gifts as for the gifts themselves.

***Cubit unto his stature?***— I think *ἡλικίαν* should be rendered age here, and so our translators have rendered the word in John 9:21, *αὐτος ἡλικίαν ἔχει* he is of age. A very learned writer observes, that no difficulty can arise from applying *πῆχυν* a cubit, a measure of extension, to time, and the age of man: as place and time are both quantities, and capable of increase and diminution, and, as no fixed material standard can be employed in the mensuration of the fleeting particles of time, it was natural and necessary, in the construction of language, to apply parallel terms to the discrimination of time and place. Accordingly, we find the same words indifferently used to denote time and place in every known tongue. Lord, let me know the MEASURE of my days! Thou hast made my days HAND-BREADTHS, Psalm 39:5. Many examples might be adduced from the Greek and Roman writers. Besides, it is evident that the phrase of adding one cubit is proverbial, denoting something minute; and is therefore applicable to the smallest possible portion of time; but, in a literal acceptance, the addition of a cubit to the stature, would be a great and extraordinary accession of height. See Wakefield.

***Verse 28. And why take ye thought for raiment?***— Or, why are ye anxiously careful about raiment? The fourth reason against such inquietudes is the example of inanimate creatures: The herbs and flowers of the field have their being, nourishment, exquisite flavors, and beautiful hues from God himself. They are not only without anxious care, but also without care or thought of every kind. Your being, its excellence and usefulness, do not depend on your anxious concern: they spring as truly from the beneficence and continual superintendence of God, as the flowers of the field do; and were you brought into such a situation, as to be as utterly incapable of contributing to your own preservation and support as the lilies of the field are to theirs, your heavenly Father could augment your substance, and preserve your being, when for his glory and your own advantage.



**Consider**— Diligently consider this, *καταμαθετε*, lay it earnestly to heart, and let your confidence be unshaken in the God of infinite bounty and love.

**Verse 29. *Solomon in all his glory***— Some suppose that as the robes of state worn by the eastern kings were usually white, as were those of the nobles among the Jews, that therefore the lily was chosen for the comparison.

**Verse 30. *If God so clothe the grass of the field***— Christ confounds both the luxury of the rich in their superfluities, and the distrust of the poor as to the necessities of life. Let man, who is made for God and eternity, learn from a flower of the field how low the care of Providence stoops. All our inquietudes and distrusts proceed from lack of faith: that supplies all wants. The poor are not really such, but because they are destitute of faith.

***To-morrow is cast into the oven***— The inhabitants of the east, to this day, make use of dry straw, withered herbs, and stubble, to heat their ovens. Some have translated the original word *κλιβανον*, a still, and intimate that our Lord alludes to the distillation of herbs for medicinal purposes; but this is certainly contrary to the scope of our Lord's argument, which runs thus: If God covers with so much glory things of no farther value than to serve the meanest uses, will he not take care of his servants, who are so precious in his sight, and designed for such important services in the world? See Harmer's Observations.

**Verse 31. *What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? etc.***— These three inquiries engross the whole attention of those who are living without God in the world. The belly and back of a worldling are his compound god; and these he worships in the lust of the flesh, in the lust of the eye, and in the pride of life.

**Verse 32. *For after all these things do the Gentiles seek***— The fifth reason against solicitude about the future is—that to concern ourselves about these wants with anxiety, as if there was no such thing as a providence in the world; with great affection towards earthly enjoyments, as if we expected no other; and without praying to God or consulting his

will, as if we could do any thing without him: this is to imitate the worst kind of heathens, who live without hope, and without God in the world.

**Seek**— *ἐπιζητεῖ* from *ἐπι*, intensive, and *ζητεω*, I seek, to seek intensely, earnestly, again and again: the true characteristic of the worldly man; his soul is never satisfied-give! give! is the ceaseless language of his earth-born heart.

**Your heavenly Father knoweth, etc.**— The sixth reason against this anxiety about the future is-because God, our heavenly Father, is infinite in wisdom, and knows all our wants. It is the property of a wise and tender father to provide necessities, and not superfluities, for his children. Not to expect the former is an offense to his goodness; to expect the latter is injurious to his wisdom.

**Verse 33. *But seek ye first the kingdom of God***— See on “Matthew 3:7”.

**His righteousness**— That holiness of heart and purity of life which God requires of those who profess to be subjects of that spiritual kingdom mentioned above. See on “Matthew 5:20”.

The seventh reason against these worldly cares and fears is-because the business of our salvation ought to engross us entirely: hither all our desires, cares, and inquiries ought to tend. Grace is the way to glory-holiness the way to happiness. If men be not righteous, there is no heaven to be had: if they be, they shall have heaven and earth too; for godliness has the promise of both lives. 1 Timothy 6:3.

**All these things shall be added unto you.**— The very blunt note of old Mr. Trapp, on this passage, is worthy of serious attention. All things shall be added. “They shall be cast in as an overplus, or as small advantages to the main bargain; as paper and pack-thread are given where we buy spice and fruit, or an inch of measure to an ell of cloth.” This was a very common saying among the Jews: “Seek that, to which other things are necessarily connected.” “A king said to his particular friend, ‘Ask what thou wilt, and I will give it unto thee.’ He thought within himself, ‘If I ask to be made a general I shall readily obtain it. I will ask something to which all these things shall be added:’ he therefore said, ‘Give me thy daughter to wife.’ This he did knowing that all the dignities of the kingdom should be added unto this gift.” See in Schoettgen.

To this verse, probably, belong the following words, quoted often by Clement, Origen, and Eusebius, as the words of Christ: *αἰτεῖτε τὰ μεγάλα, καὶ τὰ μικρὰ ὑμῖν προστεθήσεται· καὶ αἰτεῖτε τὰ ἐπουρανια, καὶ τὰ ἐπιγεια προστεθήσεται ὑμῖν*. “Ask great things, and little things shall be added unto you; ask heavenly things, and earthly things shall be added unto you.”

**Verse 34. *Take therefore no thought***— That is, Be not therefore anxiously careful.

The eighth and last reason, against this preposterous conduct, is—that carking care is not only useless in itself, but renders us miserable beforehand. The future falls under the cognizance of God alone: we encroach, therefore, upon his rights, when we would fain foresee all that may happen to us, and secure ourselves from it by our cares. How much good is omitted, how many evils caused, how many duties neglected, how many innocent persons deserted, how many good works destroyed, how many truths suppressed, and how many acts of injustice authorized by those timorous forecasts of what may happen; and those faithless apprehensions concerning the future! Let us do now what God requires of us, and trust the consequences to him. The future time which God would have us foresee and provide for is that of judgment and eternity: and it is about this alone that we are careless!

***Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof***— *αρκετον τη ημερα η κακια αυτης*, Sufficient for each day is its own calamity. Each day has its peculiar trials: we should meet them with confidence in God. As we should live but a day at a time, so we should take care to suffer no more evils in one day than are necessarily attached to it. He who neglects the present for the future is acting opposite to the order of God, his own interest, and to every dictate of sound wisdom. Let us live for eternity, and we shall secure all that is valuable in time.

There are many valuable reflections in the Abbe Quesnel’s work, on this chapter; and from it several of the preceding have been derived.

## CHAPTER 7

*Our Lord warns men against rash judgment and uncharitable censures, 1-5. Shows that holy things must not be profaned, 6; gives encouragement to fervent persevering prayer, 7-11. Shows how men should deal with each other, 12. Exhorts the people to enter in at the strait gate, 13, 14; to beware of false teachers, who are to be known by their fruits, 15-20. Shows that no man shall be saved by his mere profession of Christianity, however specious, 22, 23. The parable of the wise man who built his house upon a rock, 24, 25. Of the foolish man who built his house, without a foundation, on the sand, 26, 27. Christ concludes his sermon, and the people are astonished at his doctrine, 28, 29.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 7

**Verse 1. *Judge not, that ye be not judged.***— These exhortations are pointed against rash, harsh, and uncharitable judgments, the thinking evil, where no evil seems, and speaking of it accordingly. The Jews were highly criminal here, and yet had very excellent maxims against it, as may be seen in Schoettgen. This is one of the most important exhortations in the whole of this excellent sermon. By a secret and criminal disposition of nature, man endeavors to elevate himself above others, and, to do it more effectually, depresses them. His jealous and envious heart wishes that there may be no good quality found but in himself, that he alone may be esteemed. Such is the state of every unconverted man; and it is from this criminal disposition, that evil surmises, rash judgments, precipitate decisions, and all other unjust procedures against our neighbor, flow.

**Verse 2. *For with what judgment***— He who is severe on others will naturally excite their severity against himself. The censures and calumnies which we have suffered are probably the just reward of those which we have dealt out to others.

**Verse 3. *And why beholdest thou the mote***— **καρφος** might be translated the splinter: for splinter bears some analogy to beam, but mote does not. I should prefer this word (which has been adopted by some learned men) on the authority of Hesychius, who is a host in such matters; **καρφος, κεραια ξυλου λεπτη**, Karpfos is a thin piece of wood, a splinter. It often happens that the faults which we consider as of the first enormity in others are, to our own iniquities, as a chip is, when compared to a large beam. On one side, self-love blinds us to ourselves; and, on the other, envy and malice give us piercing eyes in respect of others. When we shall have as much zeal to correct ourselves, as we have inclination to reprove and correct others, we shall know our own defects better than now we know those of our neighbor. There is a caution very similar to this of our Lord given by a heathen:-

*Cum tua praevideas oculis mala lippus inunctis:  
Cur in amicorum vitiis tam cernis acutum,  
Quam aut aquila, aut serpens Epidaurius?  
Hor. Sat. lib. 1. sat. 3. l. 25-27*

“When you can so readily overlook your own wickedness, why are you more clear-sighted than the eagle or serpent of Epidaurus, in spying out the failings of your friends?” But the saying was very common among the Jews, as may be seen in Lightfoot.

**Verse 4. *Or how wilt thou say***— That man is utterly unfit to show the way of life to others who is himself walking in the way of death.

**Verse 5. *Thou hypocrite***— A hypocrite, who professes to be what he is not, (viz. a true Christian,) is obliged, for the support of the character he has assumed, to imitate all the dispositions and actions of a Christian; consequently he must reprove sin, and endeavor to show an uncommon affection for the glory of God. Our Lord unmasks this vile pretender to saintship, and shows him that his hidden hypocrisy, covered with the garb of external sanctity, is more abominable in the sight of God than the openly professed and practised iniquity of the profligate.

In after times, the Jews made a very bad use of this saying: “I wonder,” said Rabbi Zarphon, “whether there be any in this age that will suffer reproof? If one say to another, Cast out the mote out of thine eye, he is immediately ready to answer, Cast out the beam that is in thine own eye.”

This proverbial mode of speech the Gloss interprets thus: “Cast out? קים kisim, the mote, that is, the little sin, that is in thy hand: to which he answered, Cast out the great sin that is in thine. So they could not reprove, because all were sinners.” See Lightfoot.

**Verse 6. Give not that which is holy**— το ἅγιον, the holy or sacred thing; i.e. any thing, especially, of the sacrificial kind, which had been consecrated to God. The members of this sentence should be transposed thus:-

*Give not that which is holy unto the dogs,  
Lest they turn again and rend you:  
Neither cast ye your pearls before swine,  
Lest they trample them under their feet*

The propriety of this transposition is self-evident. There are many such transpositions as these, both in sacred and profane writers. The following is very remarkable:-

*“I am black but comely;  
“As the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.”*

That is,

*“I am black as the tents of Kedar,  
“Comely as the curtains of Solomon.”*

See many proofs of this sort of writing in Mr. WAKEFIELD’S Commentary.

As a general meaning of this passage, we may just say: “The sacrament of the Lord’s supper, and other holy ordinances which are only instituted for the genuine followers of Christ, are not to be dispensed to those who are continually returning like the snarling ill-natured dog to their easily predominant sins of rash judgment, barking at and tearing the characters of others by evil speaking, back biting and slandering; nor to him who, like the swine, is frequently returning to wallow in the mud of sensual gratifications and impurities.”

**Verse 7. Ask-seek-knock**— These three words include the ideas of want, loss, and earnestness. Ask: turn, beggar at, the door of mercy; thou art destitute of all spiritual good, and it is God alone who can give it to thee; and thou hast no claim but what his mercy has given thee on itself.

Seek: Thou hast lost thy God, thy paradise, thy soul.-Look about thee-leave no stone unturned there is no peace, no final salvation for thee till thou get thy soul restored to the favor and image of God.

Knock: Be in earnest-be importunate: Eternity is at hand! and, if thou die in thy sins, where God is thou shalt never come.

Ask with confidence and humility.

Seek with care and application.

Knock with earnestness and perseverance.

**Verse 8. *For every one that asketh receiveth***— Prayer is always heard after one manner or other. No soul can pray in vain that prays as directed above. The truth and faithfulness of the Lord Jesus are pledged for its success.-Ye SHALL receive-ye SHALL find-it SHALL be opened. These words are as strongly binding on the side of God, as thou shalt do no murder is on the side of man. Bring Christ's word, and Christ's sacrifice with thee, and not one of Heaven's blessings can be denied thee. See on "Luke 11:9".

**Verse 9. *Or what man is there-whom if his son***— Men are exhorted to come unto God, with the persuasion that he is a most gracious and compassionate Parent, who possesses all heavenly and earthly good, knows what is necessary for each of his creatures, and is infinitely ready to communicate that which they need most.

***Will he give him a stone?***— Will he not readily give him bread if he have it? This was a proverb in other countries; a benefit grudgingly given by an avaricious man is called by Seneca, panem lapidosum, stony bread. Hence that saying in Plautus: Altera manu, fert lapidem, panem ostentat altera.-In one hand he brings a stone, and stretches out bread in the other.

**Verse 11. *If ye, then, being evil***— *πονηροὶ ὄντες*, who are radically and diabolically depraved, yet feel yourselves led, by natural affection, to give those things to your children which are necessary to support their lives, how much more will your Father who is in heaven, whose nature is infinite goodness, mercy, and grace, give good things-his grace and Spirit (*πνεῦμα ἅγιον*, the Holy Ghost, Luke 11:13,) to them who ask him? What a picture is here given of the goodness of God! Reader, ask thy soul, could

this heavenly Father reprobate to unconditional eternal damnation any creature he has made? He who can believe that he has, may believe any thing; but still GOD IS LOVE.

**Verse 12. *Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men***— This is a most sublime precept, and highly worthy of the grandeur and beneficence of the just God who gave it. The general meaning of it is this: “Guided by justice and mercy, do unto all men as you would have them to do to you, were your circumstances and theirs reversed.” Yet this saying may be misunderstood. “If the prisoner should ask the judge, ‘whether he would be content to be hanged, were he in his case,’ he would answer, ‘No.’ Then, says the prisoner, do as you would be done to.—Neither of them must do as private men; but the judge must do by him as they have publicly agreed: that is, both judge and prisoner have consented to a law, that if either of them steal he shall be hanged.”—Selden. None but he whose heart is filled with love to God and all mankind can keep this precept, either in its spirit or letter. Self-love will feel itself sadly cramped when brought within the limits of this precept; but God hath spoken it: it is the spirit and design of the law and the prophets; the sum of all that is laid down in the Sacred Writings, relative to men’s conduct toward each other. It seems as if God had written it upon the hearts of all men, for sayings of this kind may be found among all nations, Jewish, Christian, and Heathen. See many examples in Wetstein’s notes.

**Verse 13. *Enter ye in at the strait gate***— Our Savior seems to allude here to the distinction between the public and private ways mentioned by the Jewish lawyers. The public roads were allowed to be sixteen cubits broad, the private ways only four. The words in the original are very emphatic: Enter in (to the kingdom of heaven) through THIS strait gate, *δια της στενης πυλης*, i.e. of doing to every one as you would he should do unto you; for this alone seems to be the strait gate which our Lord alludes to.

***For wide is the gate***— And very broad, *ευρυχωρος*, from *ευρυς*, broad, and *χωρος*, a place, a spacious roomy place, that leadeth forward, *απαγουσα*, into THAT destruction, *εις την απωλειαν*, meaning eternal misery; intimating, that it is much more congenial, to the revengeful, covetous heart of fallen man, to take every advantage of another, and to enrich himself at his expense, rather than to walk according to the rule laid



down before, by our blessed Lord, and that acting contrary to it is the way to everlasting misery. With those who say it means repentance, and forsaking sin, I can have no controversy. That is certainly a gate, and a strait one too, through which every sinner must turn to God, in order to find salvation. But the doing to every one as we would they should do unto us, is a gate extremely strait, and very difficult, to every unregenerate mind.

**Verse 14. *Because strait is the gate***— Instead of **οτι** because, I should prefer **τι** how, which reading is supported by a great majority of the best MSS., versions, and fathers. How strait is that gate! This mode of expression more forcibly points out the difficulty of the way to the kingdom. How strange is it that men should be unwilling to give up their worldly interests to secure their everlasting salvation! And yet no interest need be abandoned, but that which is produced by injustice and unkindness. Reason, as well as God, says, such people should be excluded from a place of blessedness. He who shows no mercy (and much more he who shows no justice) shall have judgment without mercy. James 2:13.

***Few there be that find it.***— The strait gate, **στενη πυλη**, signifies literally what we call a wicket, i.e. a little door in a large gate. Gate, among the Jews, signifies, metaphorically, the entrance, introduction, or means of acquiring any thing. So they talk of the gate of repentance, the gate of prayers, and the gate of tears. When God, say they, shut the gate of paradise against Adam, He opened to him the gate of repentance. The way to the kingdom of God is made sufficiently manifest—the completest assistance is promised in the way, and the greatest encouragement to persevere to the end is held out in the everlasting Gospel. But men are so wedded to their own passions, and so determined to follow the imaginations of their own hearts, that still it may be said: There are few who find the way to heaven; fewer yet who abide any time in it; fewer still who walk in it; and fewest of all who persevere unto the end. Nothing renders this way either narrow or difficult to any person, but sin. Let all the world leave their sins, and all the world may walk abreast in this good way.

**Verse 15. *Beware of false prophets***— By false prophets we are to understand teachers of erroneous doctrines, who come professing a

commission from God, but whose aim is not to bring the heavenly treasure to the people, but rather to rob them of their earthly good. Teachers who preach for hire, having no motive to enter into the ministry but to get a living, as it is ominously called by some, however they may bear the garb and appearance of the innocent useful sheep, the true pastors commissioned by the Lord Jesus, or to whatever name, class or party they may belong, are, in the sight of the heart-searching God, no other than ravenous wolves, whose design is to feed themselves with the fat, and clothe themselves with the fleece, and thus ruin, instead of save, the flock.

**Verse 16. *Ye shall know them by their fruits.***—Fruits, in the Scripture and Jewish phraseology, are taken for works of any kind. “A man’s works,” says one, “are the tongue of his heart, and tell honestly whether he is inwardly corrupt or pure.” By these works you may distinguish (ἐπιγνώσεσθε) these ravenous wolves from true pastors. The judgment formed of a man by his general conduct is a safe one: if the judgment be not favorable to the person, that is his fault, as you have your opinion of him from his works, i.e. the confession of his own heart.

**Verse 17. *So every good tree***—As the thorn can only produce thorns, not grapes; and the thistle, not figs, but prickles; so an unregenerate heart will produce fruits of degeneracy. As we perfectly know that a good tree will not produce bad fruit, and the bad tree will not, cannot produce good fruit, so we know that the profession of godliness, while the life is ungodly, is imposture, hypocrisy, and deceit. A man cannot be a saint and a sinner at the same time. Let us remember, that as the good tree means a good heart, and the good fruit, a holy life, and that every heart is naturally vicious; so there is none but God who can pluck up the vicious tree, create a good heart, plant, cultivate, water, and make it continually fruitful in righteousness and true holiness.

**Verse 18. *A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit***—Love to God and man is the root of the good tree; and from this principle all its fruit is found. To teach, as some have done, that a state of salvation may be consistent with the greatest crimes, (such as murder and adultery in David,) or that the righteous necessarily sin in all their best works, is really to make the good tree bring forth bad fruit, and to give the lie to the Author of eternal truth.

**Verse 19. *Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit***— What a terrible sentence is this against Christless pastors, and Christless hearers! Every tree that produceth not good fruit, **εκκοπτεται**, is to be now cut down; the act of excision is now taking place: the curse of the Lord is even now on the head and the heart of every false teacher, and impenitent hearer.

**Verse 20. *Wherefore by their fruits, etc.***— This truth is often repeated, because our eternal interests depend so much upon it. Not to have good fruit is to have evil: there can be no innocent sterility in the invisible tree of the heart. He that brings forth no fruit, and he that brings forth bad fruit, are both only fit for the fire.

**Verse 21. *Not every one***— **ου πας**, a Hebraism, say some, for no person. It is a Graecism and a Latinism too: **ου παντων θεων**, not ALL of the gods, i.e. not ANY of the gods, HOM. Odyss. Z. 240. So **TERENCE** Sine omni periclo, without ALL danger, i.e. without ANY danger. And **JUVENAL**: Sine omni labe, without ALL imperfection, i.e. without ANY. See more in Mr. Wakefield. The sense of this verse seems to be this: No person, by merely acknowledging my authority, believing in the Divinity of my nature, professing faith in the perfection of my righteousness, and infinite merit of my atonement, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven—shall have any part with God in glory; but he who doeth the will of my Father—he who gets the bad tree rooted up, the good tree planted, and continues to bring forth fruit to the glory and praise of God. There is a good saying among the rabbins on this subject. “A man should be as vigorous as a panther, as swift as an eagle, as fleet as a stag, and as strong as a lion, to do the will of his Creator.”

**Verse 22. *Many will say to me in that day***— **εκεινη τη ημερα**, in that very day, viz. the day of judgment—have we not prophesied, taught, publicly preached, in thy name; acknowledging thee to be the only Savior, and proclaiming thee as such to others; cast out demons, impure spirits, who had taken possession of the bodies of men; done many miracles, being assisted by supernatural agency to invert even the course of nature, and thus prove the truth of the doctrine we preached?

**Verse 23. *Will I profess***— **ομολογησω**, I will fully and plainly tell them, I never knew you—I never approved of you; for so the word is used in many places, both in the Old and New Testaments. You held the truth in

unrighteousness, while you preached my pure and holy doctrine; and for the sake of my own truth, and through my love to the souls of men, I blessed your preaching; but yourselves I could never esteem, because you were destitute of the spirit of my Gospel, unholy in your hearts, and unrighteous in your conduct. Alas! alas! how many preachers are there who appear prophets in their pulpits; how many writers, and other evangelical workmen, the miracles of whose labor, learning, and doctrine, we admire, who are nothing, and worse than nothing, before God, because they perform not his will, but their own? What an awful consideration, that a man of eminent gifts, whose talents are a source of public utility, should be only as a way-mark or finger-post in the way to eternal bliss, pointing out the road to others, without walking in it himself!

**Depart from me**— What a terrible word! What a dreadful separation! Depart from ME! from the very Jesus whom you have proclaimed in union with whom alone eternal life is to be found. For, united to Christ, all is heaven; separated from him, all is hell.

**Verse 24. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine**— That is, the excellent doctrines laid down before in this and the two preceding chapters. There are several parables or similitudes like to this in the rabbins. I shall quote but the two following:-

Rabbi Eleasar said, “The man whose knowledge exceeds his works, to whom is he like? He is like a tree which had many branches, and only a few roots; and, when the stormy winds came, it was plucked up and eradicated. But he whose good works are greater than his knowledge, to what is he like? He is like a tree which had few branches, and many roots; so that all the winds of heaven could not move it from its place.” Pirke Aboth.

Elisha, the son of Abuja, said, “The man who studies much in the law, and maintains good works, is like to a man who built a house, laying stones at the foundation, and building brick upon them; and, though many waters come against it, they cannot move it from its place. But the man who studies much in the law, and does not maintain good words, is like to a man who, in building his house, put brick at the foundation, and laid stones upon them, so that even gentle waters shall overthrow that house.” Aboth Rab. Nath.

Probably our Lord had this or some parable in his eye: but how amazingly improved in passing through his hands! In our Lord's parable there is dignity, majesty, and point, which we seek for in vain in the Jewish archetype.

***I will liken him unto a wise man***— To a prudent man-*ανδρι φρονιμω*, to a prudent man, a man of sense and understanding, who, foreseeing the evil hideth himself, who proposes to himself the best end, and makes use of the proper means to accomplish it. True wisdom consists in getting the building of our salvation completed: to this end we must build on the Rock, CHRIST JESUS, and make the building firm, by keeping close to the maxims of his Gospel, and having our tempers and lives conformed to its word and spirit; and when, in order to this, we lean on nothing but the grace of Christ, we then build upon a solid rock.

**Verse 25. *And the rain descended-floods came-winds blew***— In Judea, and in all countries in the neighborhood of the tropics, the rain sometimes falls in great torrents, producing rivers, which sweep away the soil from the rocky hills; and the houses, which are built of brick only dried in the sun, of which there are whole villages in the east, literally melt away before those rains, and the land-floods occasioned by them. There are three general kinds of trials to which the followers of God are exposed; and to which, some think, our Lord alludes here: First, those of temporal afflictions, coming in the course of Divine Providence: these may be likened to the torrents of rain. Secondly, those which come from the passions of men, and which may be likened to the impetuous rivers. Thirdly, those which come from Satan and his angels, and which, like tempestuous whirlwinds, threaten to carry every thing before them. He alone, whose soul is built on the Rock of ages, stands all these shocks; and not only stands in, but profits by them.

**Verse 26. *And every one that heareth-and doeth them not***— Was there ever a stricter system of morality delivered by God to man, than in this sermon? He who reads or hears it, and does not look to God to conform his soul and life to it, and notwithstanding is hoping to enter into the kingdom of heaven, is like the fool who built his house on the sand. When the rain, the rivers, and the winds come, his building must fall, and his soul be crushed into the nethermost pit by its ruins. Talking about Christ, his

righteousness, merits, and atonement, while the person is not conformed to his word and spirit, is no other than solemn self-deception.

Let it be observed, that it is not the man who hears or believes these sayings of Christ, whose building shall stand, when the earth and its works are burnt up; but the man who DOES them.

Many suppose that the law of Moses is abolished, merely because it is too strict, and impossible to be observed; and that the Gospel was brought in to liberate us from its obligations; but let all such know, that in the whole of the old covenant nothing can be found so exceedingly strict and holy as this sermon, which Christ lays down as the rule by which we are to walk. “Then, the fulfilling of these precepts is the purchase of glory.” No, it is the WAY only to that glory which has already been purchased by the blood of the Lamb. To him that believes, all things are possible.

**Verse 27. *And the rain descended, and the floods came, etc.***—A fine illustration of this may be seen in the case of the fishermen in Bengal, who, in the dry season, build their huts on the beds of sand from which the rivers had retired: but when the rain sets in suddenly; as it often does, accompanied with violent northwest winds, and the waters pour down in torrents from the mountains; in one night, multitudes of these buildings are swept away, and the place where they stood is on the next morning undiscoverable.

**Verse 28. *The people were astonished***—οἱ ὄχλοι, the multitudes; for vast crowds attended the ministry of this most popular and faithful of all preachers. They were astonished at his doctrine. They heard the law defined in such a manner as they had never thought of before; and this sacred system of morality urged home on their consciences with such clearness and authority as they had never felt under the teaching of their scribes and Pharisees. Here is the grand difference between the teaching of scribes and Pharisees, the self-created or men-made ministers, and those whom GOD sends. The first may preach what is called very good and very sound doctrine; but it comes with no authority from God to the souls of the people: therefore, the unholy is unholy still; because preaching can only be effectual to the conversion of men, when the unction of the Holy Spirit is in it; and as these are not sent by the Lord, therefore they shall not profit the people at all. Jeremiah 23:32.

From one of the royal household of George III., I have received the following anecdote:-The late Bishop F. of Salisbury having procured a young man of promising abilities to preach before the king, and the young man having, to his lordship's apprehension, acquitted himself well, the Bishop, in conversation with the king afterwards, wishing to get the king's opinion, took the liberty to say, "Does not your majesty think that the young man who had the honor to preach before your majesty, is likely to make a good clergyman, and has this morning delivered a very good sermon?" To which the king, in his blunt manner, hastily replied, "It might have been a good sermon, my lord, for aught I know; but I consider no sermon good that has nothing of Christ in it!"

**Verse 29. *Having authority***— They felt a commanding power and authority in his word, i.e. his doctrine. His statements were perspicuous; his exhortations persuasive; his doctrine sound and rational; and his arguments irresistible. These they never felt in the trifling teachings of their most celebrated doctors, who consumed their own time, and that of their disciples and hearers, with frivolous cases of conscience, ridiculous distinctions, and puerile splittings of controversial hairs-questions not calculated to minister grace to the hearers.

Several excellent MSS. and almost all the ancient versions read, **καὶ οἱ φαρισαῖοι**, and the Pharisees. He taught them as one having authority, like the most eminent and distinguished teacher, and not as the scribes and Pharisees, who had no part of that unction which he in its plenitude possessed. Thus ends a sermon the most strict, pure, holy, profound, and sublime, ever delivered to man; and yet so amazingly simple is the whole that almost a child may apprehend it! Lord! write all these thy sayings upon our hearts, we beseech thee! Amen.

## CHAPTER 8

*Great multitudes follow Christ, 1. He heals a leper, 2-4. Heals the centurion's servant, 5-13. Heals Peter's wife's mother, 14, 15; and several other diseased persons, 16, 17. Departs from that place, 18. Two persons offer to be his disciples, 19-22. He and his disciples are overtaken with a tempest, which he miraculously stills, 23-27. He cures demoniacs, and the demons which went out enter into a herd of swine, which, rushing into the sea, perish, 28-32. The swine-herds announce the miracle to the Gergesenes, who request Christ to depart from their country, 33, 34.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 8

**Verse 1. *From the mountain***— That mountain on which he had delivered the preceding inimitable sermon.

***Great multitudes followed him.***— Having been deeply impressed with the glorious doctrines which they had just heard.

**Verse 2. *And, behold, there came a leper***— The leprosy λεπρα, from λεπις, a scale, was an inveterate cutaneous disease, appearing in dry, thin, white scurfy scales or scabs, either on the whole body, or on some part of it, usually attended with violent itching, and often with great pain. The eastern leprosy was a distemper of the most loathsome kind, highly contagious, so as to infect garments, (Leviticus 13:47, etc.,) and houses, (Leviticus 14:34, etc.,) and was deemed incurable by any human means. Among the Jews, GOD alone was applied to for its removal; and the cure was ever attributed to his sovereign power.

The various symptoms of this dreadful disorder, which was a striking emblem of sin, may be seen in Leviticus 13:14; where also may be read the legal ordinances concerning it; which, as on the one hand, they set forth how odious sin is to God, so, on the other, they represent the cleansing of our pollutions by the sacrifice and resurrection of Christ, by the sprinkling



and application of his blood, and by the sanctifying and healing influences of the Holy Spirit.

The Greek name λεπρα, seems to have been given to this distemper, on account of the thin, white SCALES (λεπιδες) with which the bodies of the leprous were sometimes so covered as to give them the appearance of snow, Exodus 4:6; Numbers 12:10; 2 Kings 5:27.

Herodotus, lib. 1, mentions this disorder as existing, in his time, among the Persians. He calls it λευκην, the white scab; and says, that those who were affected with it were prohibited from mingling with the other citizens; and so dreadful was this malady esteemed among them that they considered it a punishment on the person, from their great god, the sun, for some evil committed against him. Dr. Mead mentions a remarkable case of this kind which came under his own observation. “A countryman whose whole body was so miserably seized with it that his skin was shining as covered with flakes of snow, and as the furfuraceous or bran-like scales were daily rubbed off, the flesh appeared quick or raw underneath.” See the doctor’s Medica Sacra, chap. 2. It was probably on account of its tendency to produce this disorder, in that warm climate, that God forbade the use of swine’s flesh to the Jews. Feeding on this crude aliment, in union with the intemperate use of ardent spirits, is, in all likelihood, the grand cause of the scurvy, which is so common in the British nations, and which would probably assume the form and virulence of a leprosy, were our climate as hot as that of Judea. See the notes on “Exodus 4:6”, and on Leviticus 13: and 14.

***Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.***— As this leper may be considered as a fit emblem of the corruption of man by sin; so may his cure, of the redemption of the soul by Christ. A sinner, truly penitent, seeks God with a respectful faith; approaches him in the spirit of adoration; humbles himself under his mighty hand, acknowledging the greatness of his fall, and the vileness of his sin; his prayer, like that of the leper, should be humble, plain, and full of confidence in that God who can do all things, and of dependence upon his will or mercy, from which all good must be derived. It is peculiar to God that he need only will what he intends to perform. His power is his will. The ability of God to do what is necessary to be done, and his willingness to make his creatures happy,

should be deeply considered by all those who approach him in prayer. The leper had no doubt of the former, but he was far from being equally satisfied in respect of the latter.

**Verse 3. *Jesus put forth his hand-I will; be thou clean.***— The most sovereign authority is assumed in this speech of our blessed Lord-I WILL: there is here no supplication of any power superior to his own; and the event proved to the fullest conviction, and by the clearest demonstration, that his authority was absolute, and his power unlimited. Be thou cleansed, *καθαρισθητι*; a single word is enough.

***And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.***— What an astonishing sight! A man whose whole body was covered over with the most loathsome disease, cleansed from it in a moment of time! Was it possible for any soul to resist the evidence of this fact? This action of Christ is a representation of that invisible hand which makes itself felt by the most insensible heart; of that internal word which makes itself heard by the most deaf; and of that supreme will which works every thing according to its own counsel.

**Verse 4. *Jesus saith-See thou tell no man***— Had our Lord, at this early period, fully manifested himself as the Messiah, the people in all likelihood would have proclaimed him King; this, however, refused by him, must have excited the hatred of the Jewish rulers, and the jealousy of the Roman government; and, speaking after the manner of men, his farther preachings and miracles must have been impeded. This alone seems to be the reason why he said to the leper, See thou tell no man.

***Show thyself to the priest***— This was to conform to the law instituted in this case, Leviticus 14:1, etc.

***Offer the gift***— This gift was two living, clean birds, some cedar wood, with scarlet and hyssop, Leviticus 14:4, which were to be brought for his cleansing; and, when clean, two he lambs, one ewe lamb, three tenth deals of flour, and one log of oil, Leviticus 14:10; but if the person was poor, then he was to bring one lamb, one tenth deal of flour, one log of oil and two turtle doves, or young pigeons, Leviticus 14:21, 22. See the notes on Leviticus 14.

Now all this was to be done for a testimony to them; to prove that this leper, who was doubtless well known in the land, had been thoroughly

cleansed; and thus, in this private way, to give full proof to the priesthood that Jesus was the true Messiah. The Jewish rabbins allowed that curing the lepers should be a characteristic of the Messiah; (see Bishop Chandler's Vindication;) therefore the obstinacy of the priests, etc., in rejecting Christ, was utterly inexcusable.

**Verse 5. *Capernaum***— See “Matthew 4:13”.

***A centurion***— *εκατονταρχος*. A Roman military officer who had the command of one hundred men.

**Verse 6. *Lord***— Rather, Sir, for so the word *κυριε* should always be translated when a Roman is the speaker.

***Lieth at home***— *βεβληται*, lieth all along; intimating that the disease had reduced him to a state of the utmost impotence, through the grievous torments with which it was accompanied.

***Sick of the palsy***— Or paralytic. See “Matthew 4:24”. This centurion did not act as many masters do when their servants are afflicted, have them immediately removed to an infirmary, often to a work-house; or sent home to friends or relatives, who probably either care nothing for them, or are unable to afford them any of the comforts of life. In case of a contagious disorder, it may be necessary to remove an infected person to such places as are best calculated to cure the distemper, and prevent the spread of the contagion. But, in all common cases, the servant should be considered as a child, and receive the same friendly attention. If, by a hasty, unkind, and unnecessary removal, the servant die, are not the master and mistress murderers before God?

**Verse 7. *I will come and heal him.***— *εγω ελθων θεραπευσω αυτον*, I am coming, and will heal him. This saying is worthy of observation. Jesus did not positively say, I will come and heal him; this could not have been strictly true, because our Lord healed him without going to the house: and the issue shows that the words ought to be taken in the most literal sense: thus understood, they contained a promise which it seems none of them distinctly comprehended. Foreseeing the exercise of the centurion's faith, he promises that while he is coming, ere he arrives at the house, he will heal him, and this was literally done, Matthew 8:13. There is much beauty in this passage.

**Verse 8. *But speak the word only***— Or instead of εἶπε λόγον read εἶπε λόγῳ, speak by word or command. This reading is supported by the most extensive evidence from MSS., versions, and fathers. See here the pattern of that living faith and genuine humility which ought always to accompany the prayer of a sinner: Jesus can will away the palsy, and speak away the most grievous torments. The first degree of humility is to acknowledge the necessity of God's mercy, and our own inability to help ourselves: the second, to confess the freeness of his grace, and our own utter unworthiness. Ignorance, unbelief, and presumption will ever retard our spiritual cure.

**Verse 9. *For I am a man under authority***— That is, under the authority of others. This verse has given considerable embarrassment to commentators and critics. I believe the paraphrase given above to be the true meaning of the evangelist. To make this matter more plain, let it be observed, that the Roman foot was divided into three grand parts, Hastati, Principes, and Triarii. Each of these grand divisions was composed of thirty manipuli or companies; and every manipulus made two centuries or companies of one hundred men. Every manipulus had two centurions; but these were very far from being equal in rank and honor, though possessing the very same office. The Triarii and Principes were esteemed the most honorable, and had their centurions elected first; and these first elected centurions took precedency of the centurions of the Hastati, who were elected last. The centurion in the text was probably one of this last order; he was under the authority of either the Principes or Triarii, and had none under him but the hundred men whom he commanded, and who appear to have been in a state of the most loving subjection to him. The argument of the centurion seems to run thus. If I, who am a person subject to the control of others, yet have some so completely subject to myself, that I can say to one, Come, and he cometh, to another, Go, and he goeth, and to my slave (τῷ δούλῳ μου) Do this, and he doeth it; how much more then canst thou accomplish whatsoever thou wilt, being under no control, and having all things under thy command: He makes a proper use of his authority, who, by it, raises his mind to the contemplation of the sovereign power of God, taking occasion from it to humble himself before Him who has all power in heaven and earth, and to expect all good from him.

There are two beautiful passages in Arrian that tend much to illustrate this speech of the centurion. *καταταγεις αγαμεμνων, λεγει μοι, πορευου προς τον αχιλλεα, και αποσπασον την βρισηιδα, πορευομαι. ερχου, ερχομαι.* “He who personates Agamemnon says to me, Go to Achilles, and bring hither Briseis: I go. He says, Come hither: I come.” Dissert. l. i. c. 25. p. 97.

*οταν ο θεος ειπη τοις φυτοις ανθειν, ανθει. οταν ειπη βλαστανειν, βλαστανει. οταν εκφερειν τον καρπον, εκφερει. οταν πεπαινειν, πεπαινει. οταν παλιν αποβαλλειν, και φυλλορροειν, και αυτα εις αυτα συνειλουμενα εφ' ησυχιας μενειν, και αναπνευσθαι, μενει και αναπνευεται.* “When God commands the plants to blossom, they bear blossoms. When he commands them to bear seed, they bear seed. When he commands them to bring forth fruit, they put forth their fruits. When he commands them to ripen, they grow ripe. When he commands them to fade, and shed their leaves, and remain inactive, involved in themselves, they thus remain, and are inactive.” Cap. 14. p. 62. See Raphelius.

This mode of speech fully marks supreme and uncontrolled power, and that power put forth by a sovereign will to effect any purpose of justice or mercy. And God said, let there be light, and there was light, is a similar expression.

**Verse 10. *I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.***— That is, I have not found so great an instance of confidence and faith in my power, even among the Jews, as this Roman, a Gentile, has shown himself to possess.

From Luke 7:5, where it is said of this centurion, “he loved our nation, and has built us a synagogue,” we may infer that this man was like the centurion mentioned Acts 10:1; a devout Gentile, a proselyte of the gate, one who believed in the God of Israel, without conforming to the Jewish ritual or receiving circumcision. Though the military life is one of the most improper nurses for the Christian religion, yet in all nations there have been found several instances of genuine humility, and faith in God, even in soldiers; and perhaps never more, in the British military, than at present, A. D. 1831.

**Verse 11. *Many shall come from the east and west***— Men of every description, of all countries, and of all professions; and shall sit down, that is, to meat, for this is the proper meaning of *ανακλιθισονται*, intimating the recumbent posture used by the easterns at their meals. The rabbins represent the blessedness of the kingdom of God under the notion of a banquet. See several proofs of this in Schoettgenius. This was spoken to soften the unreasonable prejudices of the Jews, which they entertained against the Gentiles, and to prepare them to receive their brethren of mankind into religious fellowship with themselves, under the Christian dispensation.

***With Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob***— In the closest communion with the most eminent followers of God. But if we desire to inherit the promises, we must be followers of them who through faith and patience enjoy them. Let us therefore imitate Abraham in his faith, Isaac in his obedience unto death, and Jacob in his hope and expectation of good things to come, amidst all the evils of this life, if we desire to reign with them.

**Verse 12. *Shall be cast out into outer darkness***— As the enjoyment of that salvation which Jesus Christ calls the kingdom of heaven is here represented under the notion of a nuptial festival, at which the guests sat down in a reclining posture, with the master of the feast; so the state of those who were excluded from the banquet is represented as deep darkness; because the nuptial solemnities took place at night. Hence, at those suppers, the house of reception was filled with lights called *δαδες, λαμπαδες, λυκνεια, φανοι*, torches, lamps, candles, and lanterns, by Athenaeus and Plutarch: so they who were admitted to the banquet had the benefit of the light; but they who were shut out were in darkness, called here outer darkness, i.e. the darkness on the outside of the house in which the guests were; which must appear more abundantly gloomy, when compared with the profusion of light within the guest-chamber. And because they who were shut out were not only exposed to shame, but also to hunger and cold; therefore it is added, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. As these feasts are often alluded to by the evangelists, I would observe, once for all:-that they who were invited to them entered by a gate designed to receive them; whence Christ, by whom we enter into the marriage feast, compares himself to a gate, John 10:1, 2, 7, 9. This gate, at the time the guests were to come, was made narrow, the wicket only being

left open, and the porter standing there, that they who were not bidden to the marriage might not rush into it. Hence Christ exhorts the Jews to enter in at the strait gate, Matthew 7:13, etc. When all that were invited were once come, the door was presently shut, and was not to be opened to any who came too late, and stood knocking without; so after the wise virgins had entered with the bridegroom, the gate was shut, and was not opened to the foolish virgins, who stood knocking without, Matthew 25:11. And in this sense we are to understand the words of Christ, Luke 13:24, 25. Many shall seek to enter in, but shall not be able. Why? because the master of the house hath risen up and shut to the door; they would not come to him when they might, and now the day of probation is ended, and they must be judged according to the deeds done in the body. See Whitby on the place. How many of those who are called Christians suffer the kingdom, the graces, and the salvation which they had in their hands, to be lost; while West-India negroes, American Indians, Hindoo polytheists, and atheistic Hottentots obtain salvation! An eternity of darkness, fears, and pains, for comparatively a moment of sensual gratification, how terrible the thought! What outer darkness, or **το σκοτος το εξωτερικον**, that darkness, that which is outermost, may refer to, in eternal damnation, is hard to say: what it alludes to I have already mentioned: but as the words **βρυγμος των οδοντων**, gnashing or CHATTERING of teeth, convey the idea, not only of extreme anguish, but of extreme cold; some have imagined that the punishment of the damned consists in sudden transitions from extreme heat to extreme cold; the extremes of both I have found to produce exactly the same sensation.

MILTON happily describes this in the following inimitable verses, which a man can scarcely read, even at midsummer, without shivering.

*Beyond this flood a frozen continent  
Lies dark and wild, heat with perpetual storms  
Of whirlwind and dire hail  
— the parching air*

*Burns froze, and cold performs the effect of fire  
Thither by harpy-footed furies haled,  
At certain revolutions all the damn'd  
Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change  
Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,  
From beds of raging fire, to starve in ice,  
— and there to pine*

*Immovable, infix'd, and frozen round  
Periods of time; thence hurried back to fire  
Parad. Lost, book ii. line 586*

There is a passage in the Vulgate, Job 24:19, that might have helped Milton to this idea. *Ad nimum calorem transeat ab aquis nivium.* “Let him pass to excessive heat, from waters of snow.” This reading, which is found only in this form in the Vulgate, is vastly expressive. Every body knows that snow water feels colder than snow itself, even when both are of the same temperature, viz. 32, because the human body, when in contact with snow water, cools quicker than when in contact with snow. Another of our poets has given us a most terrible description of perdition on the same ground.

*The once pamper'd spirit  
To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside  
In thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice;  
To be imprison'd in the viewless winds,  
And blown with restless violence round about  
This pendant world; or to be worse than worst  
Of those that lawless and uncertain thoughts  
Imagine —*

Similar to this is that dreadful description of the torments of the wicked given in the Institutes of Menu: “The wicked shall have a sensation of agony in Tamisra, or utter darkness, and in other seats of horror; in Asipatrauana, or the sword-leaved forest, and in different places of binding fast, and of rending; multifarious tortures await them: they shall be mangled by ravens and owls, and shall swallow cakes boiling hot, and shall walk over inflamed sands, and shall feel the pangs of being baked like the vessels of a potter: they shall assume the forms of beasts continually miserable, and suffer alternate afflictions from extremities of cold and heat; surrounded with terrors of various kinds. They shall have old age without resource; diseases attended with anguish; pangs of innumerable sorts, and, lastly, unconquerable death.”

Institutes of MENU, chap. 12. Inst. 75-80.

In the Zend Avesta, the place of wicked spirits is termed, “The places of darkness, the germs of the thickest darkness.” An uncommonly significant



expression: Darkness has its birth there: there are its seeds and buds, there it vegetates everlastingly, and its eternal fruit is-darkness!

See Zend Avesta, vol. i. Vendidad sadi, Fargard. xviii. p. 412.

And is this, or, any thing as bad as this, HELL? Yes, and worse than the worst of all that has already been mentioned. Hear Christ himself. There their worm dieth not, and the fire is NOT QUENCHED! Great God! save the reader from this damnation!

**Verse 13. *As thou hast believed; so be it done***— Let the mercy thou requestest be equal to the faith thou hast brought to receive it by. ACCORDING to thy faith be it done unto thee, is a general measure of God's dealings with mankind. To get an increase of faith is to get an increase of every grace which constitutes the mind that was in Jesus, and prepares fully for the enjoyment of the kingdom of God. God is the same in the present time which he was in ancient days; and miracles of healing may be wrought on our own bodies and souls, and on those of others, by the instrumentality of our faith. But, alas! where is faith to be found!

***And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.***— *εν τη ωρα εκεινη*, in that very hour. Faith is never exercised in the power and goodness of God till it is needed; and, when it is exercised, God works the miracle of healing. Christ never says, Believe now for a salvation which thou now needest, and I will give it to thee in some future time. That salvation which is expected through works or sufferings must of necessity be future, as there must be time to work or suffer in; but the salvation which is by faith must be for the present moment, for this simple reason, IT IS BY FAITH, that God may be manifested and honored; and not by works or by sufferings, lest any man should boast. To say that, though it is of faith, yet it may; and, must in many cases, be delayed, (though the person is coming in the most genuine humility, deepest contrition, and with the liveliest faith in the blood of the Lamb,) is to say that there is still something necessary to be done, either on the part of the person, or on the part of God, in order to procure it; neither of which positions has any truth in it.

**Verse 14. *Peter's house***— That Peter lived at Capernaum, and that Christ lodged with him, is fully evident from this verse compared with Matthew 17:24.

***Peter's-wife's mother***— Learn hence, says Theophylact, that marriage is no hinderance to virtue, since the chief of the apostles had his wife. Marriage is one of the first of Divine institutions, and is a positive command of God. He says, the state of celibacy is not GOOD, Genesis 2:18. Those who pretend to say that the single state is more holy than the other slander their Maker, and say in effect, “We are too holy to keep the commandments of God.”

**Verse 15. *He touched her hand***— Can any thing on this side the unlimited power of God effect such a cure with only a touch? If the Scriptures had not spoken of the divinity of Christ, these proofs of his power must have demonstrated it to the common sense of every man whose creed had not previously blinded him.

***Ministered unto them.***— *αὐτοῖς*, them, is the reading of most of the printed editions, but *αὐτῷ*, to him, has the utmost evidence in its support from MSS., versions, and fathers. Serving Christ in his ordinances and in his members is the best proof we can give to others of our being soundly restored to spiritual health.

**Verse 16. *When the even was come***— The Jews kept their sabbath from evening to evening, according to the law, Leviticus 23:32, From evening to evening shall ye celebrate your sabbath. And the rabbins say, The sabbath doth not enter but when the sun is set. Hence it was that the sick were not brought out to our Lord till after sun-set, because then the sabbath was ended.

***Many that were possessed with devils***— Dr. Lightfoot gives two sound reasons why Judea, in our Lord's time, abounded with demoniacs. First, Because they were then advanced to the very height of impiety. See what Josephus, their own historian, says of them: There was not (said he) a nation under heaven more wicked than they were. See on “Romans 1:1”. Secondly, Because they were then strongly addicted to magic, and so, as it were, invited evil spirits to be familiar with them. It seems strange to find men at this distance of time questioning the truth of that which neither scribes nor Pharisees then doubted; nor did they ever object against the pretensions of Christ and his apostles to cast them out. And, if the whole business of demonism had been only a vulgar error, (as wise men now tell us,) what a fine opportunity had the wise men then, to unmask the whole

matter, and thus pour contempt on the pretensions of our blessed Lord and his followers, who held it to be one proof of their Divine mission, that demons were subject to them!

***And healed all that were sick***— Not a soul did the Lord Jesus ever reject, who came to him soliciting his aid. Need any sinner despair who comes to him, conscious of his spiritual malady, to be healed by his merciful hand?

**Verse 17. *Himself took our infirmities***— The quotation is taken from Isaiah 53:4, where the verb נָסָא nasa signifies to bear sin, so as to make atonement for it. And the rabbins understand this place to speak of the sufferings of the Messiah for the sins of Israel; and say that all the diseases, all the griefs, and all the punishments due to Israel shall be borne by him. See Synopsis Sohar. Christ fulfils the prophecies in all respects, and is himself the completion and truth of them, as being the lamb and victim of God, which, bears and takes away the sin of the world. The text in Isaiah refers properly to the taking away of sin; and this in the evangelist, to the removal of corporeal afflictions: but, as the diseases of the body are the emblems of the sin of the soul, Matthew, referring to the prediction of the prophet, considered the miraculous healing of the body as an emblem of the soul's salvation by Christ Jesus.

**Verse 18. *Unto the other side***.— Viz. of the lake of Genesareth, whence he proceeded to the country of the Gergesenes, Matthew 8:28.

**Verse 19. *A certain scribe***— Though εἷς γραμματεὺς, ONE scribe, may be considered as a Hebraism, yet it is probable that the literal construction of it was intended, to show that few of this class came to the Lord Jesus for instruction or salvation.

***Master***— Rather, teacher, διδασκαλε from διδάσκω, I teach, which itself seems to be derived from δεικω, I show, and means the person who shows or points out a particular way or science.

***I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest***.— A man who is not illuminated by the Spirit of God thinks himself capable of any thing: he alone who is divinely taught knows he can do nothing but through Christ strengthening him. Every teacher among the Jews had disciples, and some especially that followed or accompanied them wherever they went, that

they might have some person at hand with whom they might converse concerning the Divine law.

**Verse 20. *The foxes have holes, etc.***— Reader! art thou a poor man? and dost thou fear God? Then, what comfort must thou derive from the thought, that thou so nearly resemblest the Lord Jesus! But how unlike is the rich man, who is the votary of pleasure and slave of sin, to this heavenly pattern!

***Son of man***— A Hebrew phrase, expressive of humiliation and debasement; and, on that account, applied emphatically to himself, by the meek and lowly Jesus. Besides, it seems here to be used to point out the incarnation of the Son of God, according to the predictions of the prophets, Psalm 8:5; Daniel 7:13. And as our Lord was now showing forth his eternal Divinity in the miracles he wrought, he seems studious to prove to them the certainty of his incarnation, because on this depended the atonement for sin. Indeed our Lord seems more intent on giving the proofs of his humanity, than of his divinity, the latter being necessarily manifested by the miracles which he was continually working.

**Verse 21. *Another of his disciples***— This does not mean any of the twelve, but one of those who were constant hearers of our Lord's preaching; the name of disciple being common to all those who professed to believe in him, John 6:66. Bury my father: probably his father was old, and apparently near death; but it was a maxim among the Jews, that, if a man had any duty to perform to the dead, he was, for that time, free from the observance of any other precept or duty. The children of Adam are always in extremes; some will rush into the ministry of the Gospel without a call, others will delay long after they are called; the middle way is the only safe one: not to move a finger in the work till the call be given, and not to delay a moment after.

**Verse 22. *Let the dead bury their dead.***— It was usual for the Jews to consider a man as dead who had departed from the precepts of the law; and, on this ground, every transgressor was reputed a dead man. Our Lord's saying, being in common use, had nothing difficult in it to a Jew. Natural death is the separation of the body and soul; spiritual death, the separation of God and the soul: men who live in sin are dead to God. Leave the spiritually dead to bury their natural dead. All the common offices of

life may be performed by any person; to preach the glad tidings of the kingdom of God is granted but to a few, and to these only by an especial call; these should immediately abandon worldly concerns and employments, and give themselves wholly up to the work of the ministry.

**Verse 24. *Arose a great tempest in the sea***— Probably excited by Satan, the prince of the power of the air, who, having got the author and all the preachers of the Gospel together in a small vessel, thought by drowning it, to defeat the purposes of God, and thus to prevent the salvation of a ruined world. What a noble opportunity must this have appeared to the enemy of the human race!

**Verse 25. *And his disciples***— THE disciples. In the common printed editions, as well as in our translation, it is HIS disciples, but *αυτου*, his, is omitted by the very best MSS., and by Bengel, Wetstein, and Griesbach. This is a matter of very small importance, and need not be noticed; only every translator and commentator should aim, to the uttermost of his knowledge and power, to give every particle of the language of the inspired penman that can be expressed, and to insert no one word which he has reason to believe did not come by the inspiration of God.

***Lord, save us: we perish.***— One advantage of trials is to make us know our weakness, so as to oblige us to have recourse to God by faith in Christ. It is by faith alone that we may be said to approach him; by love we are united to him, and by prayer we awake him. All good perishes in us without Christ: without his grace, there is not so much as one moment in which we are not in danger of utter ruin. How proper, then, is this short prayer for us, and how familiar should it be to us! Taken in the extensive Christian sense it is exceedingly expressive: it comprehends all the power of our Lord's might, all the merit of his atonement, and all the depth of our misery and danger. See Quesnel.

**Verse 26. *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?***— Faith is ever bold-incredulity always timid. When faith fails in temptation, there is the utmost danger of shipwreck. Lord, increase our faith! is a necessary prayer for all who desire to be saved.

***Then he arose and rebuked the winds, etc.***— As the agitation of the sea was only the effect of the wind, it was necessary to remove the cause of

the disturbance, that the effect might cease. Joshua did not say to the earth, Earth, stand thou still, because the earth is not the cause of its own motion: but, Sun, stand thou still, שמש דום shemesh dom, Sun, be silent, or restrain thy influence, which is a proper cause of the revolutions of all the planets. When the solar influence was by the miraculous power of God suspended, the standing still of the earth was a necessary consequence. Both Christ and Joshua spoke with the strictest philosophical precision. See the notes on Joshua 10:12-14.

***There was a great calm.***— One word of Christ can change the face of nature; one word of his can restore calm and peace to the most troubled and disconsolate soul. Prayer and faith, if sincere, shall be heard, though they may be weak. 1. That our imperfections may not hinder us from praying to God. 2. That we may be persuaded it is not our merits which make our prayers effectual. 3. That we may offer them up with great humility: and, 4. That we may be fully united to Christ, without which union there is no salvation.

There was at first a great agitation; then a great calm. Thus God ever proportions the comfort to the affliction.

**Verse 27. *The men marvelled***— Every part of the creation (man excepted) hears and obeys the Creator's voice. Sinners have an ear for the world, the devil, and the flesh: till this ear is shut, God's voice is not discerned; for when it is shut to its enemies it is open to its friends.

***What manner of man is this***— ποταπος εστιν ουτος, How great is this person! Here was God fully manifest; but it was in the flesh—there were the hidings of his power.

**Verse 28. *The country of the Gergesenes***— This word is variously written in the MSS, and versions; Gergasenes, Gerasenes, Gadarenes, Gergesions, and Gersedonians, The three first are supported by the greater authorities. They might have all been names of the same place or district; but, if we depend on what Origen says, the people mentioned here could not have been the inhabitants of Gerasa, which, says he, is a city of Arabia, ουτε θαλασσαν, ουτε λιμνην πλησιον εχοντα, which has neither sea nor lake nigh to it. “Gadara was, according to Josephus, the metropolis of Perea, or the region beyond Jordan: both the city and villages belonging to

it lay in the country of the Gergasenes; whence Christ going into the country of the Gadarenes, Mark 5:1, is said to go into the region of the Gergasenes, Matthew 8:28.” WHITBY.

***Two possessed with devils***— Persons possessed by evil demons. Mark and Luke mention only one demoniac, probably the fiercer of the two.

***Coming out of the tombs***— It is pretty evident that cupolas were generally builded over the graves among the Jews, and that these demoniacs had their dwellings under such: the evil spirits which were in them delighting more in these abodes of desolation and ruin, as being more congenial to their fierce and diabolic nature, and therefore would drive the possessed into them.

**Verse 29. *What have we to do with thee***— The literal translation of **τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί**, is, What is it to us and to thee; which perhaps might be understood to imply their disclaiming any design to interfere with the work of Christ, and that he should not therefore meddle with them; for it appears they exceedingly dreaded his power.

What have we to do with thee, is a Jewish phrase, which often occurs in the Old Testament, signifying an abrupt refusal of some request, or a wish not to be troubled with the company or importunity of others. Jehu said to the messenger who was sent by Joram to meet him, What hast thou to do with peace? David said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? Compare Judges 11:12; 2 Samuel 16:10; 2 Kings 9:18; Ezra 4:3; John 2:4. See the note on “Mark 1:24”.

***Jesus, thou Son of God***— Griesbach omits the word Jesus, on the authority of several MSS. of the greatest antiquity and respectability; besides some versions, and several of the fathers. I heartily concur with these MSS., etc., for this simple reason, among others, that the word Jesus, i.e. Savior, was of too ominous an import to the Satanic interest to be used freely, in such a case, by any of his disciples or subalterns.

***Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?***— From this it appears that a greater degree of punishment awaited these demons than they at that time endured; and that they knew there was a time determined by the Divine Judge, when they should be sent into greater torments.

**Verse 30. *A herd of many swine***— These were in all probability Jewish property, and kept and used in express violation of the law of God; and therefore their destruction, in the next verse, was no more than a proper manifestation of the justice of God.

**Verse 31. *Suffer us to go away***— επιτρεψον ημιν απελθειν: this is the common reading; but αποστειλον ημας, send us away, appears more likely to be genuine. This latter reading Griesbach has adopted, on the authority of three ancient MSS., the Coptic, Sahidic, Ethiopic, Syriac, all the Arabic, Saxon, most of the Itala, and the Vulgate. Send us away seems to express more fully the absolute power Jesus Christ had over them—permission alone was not sufficient; the very power by which they were to go away, must come from Christ himself! How vain was the boast of Satan, Matthew 4:9, when we find he could not possess the body of one of the vilest animals that God has made, without immediate authority from the Most High! Since a demon cannot enter even into a swine without being sent by God himself, how little is the power or malice of any of them to be dreaded by those who have God for their portion and protector!

**Verse 32. *They went into the herd of swine***— Instead of την αγελην των χοιρων, the herd of swine, Griesbach reads τους χοιρους, the swine, on the authority of many MSS. and versions.

***The whole herd of swine***— των χοιρων, of swine, is omitted by many MSS. and versions. See Griesbach, and see on “Luke 8:20”, etc.

***Ran violently down a steep place, etc.***— The prayer of these demons is heard and answered! Strange! But let it be noted, that God only hears demons and certain sinners when their prayer is the echo of his own justice. Here is an emblem of the final impenitence and ruin into which the swinish sinners, the habitually unpure, more commonly fall than other sinners. Christ permits the demons to do that in the swine which he did not permit them to do in the possessed, on purpose to show us what rage they would exercise on us if left to their liberty and malice. Many are the Divine favors which we do not consider, or know only in general. “But the owners of the swine lost their property.” Yes; and learn from this of how small value temporal riches, are in the estimation of God. He suffers them to be lost, sometimes to disengage us from them through mercy; sometimes



out of justice, to punish us for having acquired or preserved them either by covetousness or injustice.

**Verse 33. *And they that kept them fled***— Terrified at what had happened to the swine.

**Verse 34. *The whole city came out***— Probably with the intention to destroy Jesus for having destroyed their swine; but, having seen him, they were awed by his presence; and only besought him to depart from their borders. Many rather chose to lose Jesus Christ than those temporal goods by which they gratify their passions at the expense of their souls. They love even their swine better than their salvation.

Certain doctors in both sciences, divinity and physic, gravely tell us that these demoniacs were only common madmen, and that the disease was supposed, by the superstitious Jews, to be occasioned by demons. But, with due deference to great characters, may not a plain man be permitted to ask, by what figure of speech can it be said that “two diseases besought-went out-filled a herd of swine-rushed down a precipice?” etc. What silly trifling is this! Some people’s creeds will neither permit God nor the devil to work; and, in several respects, hardly to exist. For he who denies Divine inspiration, will scarcely acknowledge diabolic influence. See the note on “Matthew 8:16”, and see on “Luke 7:21”.

It is said, The whole city came out to meet Jesus. This means no more than all the inhabitants of that place, which, most probably, was no more than a small country village; or perhaps but a few houses. I have observed that the inhabitants of the Zetland Isles, in the North Seas, denominate any collection of houses a town, even where there are but three or four: and thus I think that the Jews denominated their villages, often calling them cities.

## CHAPTER 9

*Christ heals a paralytic person at Capernaum, 1-8. Calls Matthew, 9-10. Eats with publicans and sinners, at which the Pharisees are offended, and he vindicates his conduct, 11, 12. The disciples of John come to him and inquire about fasting, 14-17. A ruler requests him to heal his daughter, 18, 19. On his road to the ruler's house, he heals a diseased woman, 20-22. Arriving at the ruler's house, he restores the young woman to life, 23-26. Heals two blind men, 27-31. Casts out a dumb demon, 32-34. Preaches and works miracles in all the cities and villages, 35. Is greatly affected at the desolate and dark state of the Jewish people, 36. Exhorts his disciples to pray to God to send them proper instructors, 37, 38.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 9

**Verse 1. *He came into his own city***— Viz. Capernaum, where he seems to have had his common residence at the house of Peter. See Matthew 4:13, and Matthew 8:14. This verse properly belongs to the preceding chapter.

**Verse 2. *Sick of the palsy***— See Matthew 4:24.

***Lying on a bed***— κλινης, a couch or sofa, such as they reclined on at meals.

***Seeing their faith***— The faith of the paralytic person, and the faith of those who brought him; see on “Mark 2:4”.

***Be of good cheer***— θαρσει τεκνον, Son, take courage! Probably he began to despond, and Christ spoke thus to support his faith.

***Thy sins be forgiven thee.***— Moral evil has been the cause of all the natural evil in the world. Christ goes to the source of the malady, which is sin; and to that as the procuring cause we should refer in all our afflictions. It is probable that this paralytic person had, in the earnest desires of his heart, entreated the cure of his soul, leaving his body to the care of others, as the first miracle of healing is wrought on his soul. In a state of

helplessness, when we seek above all things to please God, by giving him our hearts, he often inspires others with the care of our temporal necessities. It may be necessary to be observed, that it was a maxim among the Jews that no diseased person could be healed till all his sins were blotted out. See Nedarim, fol. 41. Hence our Lord first forgives the sins, and then heals the body of the paralytic person. This appears to have been founded on Psalm 103:3. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thy diseases. Here pardon precedes health. See also Psalm 41:3, 4. It may be observed, also, that most people are more in earnest about their souls when in sickness than in health, and therefore are more earnest in prayer for salvation.

**Verse 3. *This man blasphemeth.***—βλασφημεω comes either from βλαπτειν την φημην, to hurt or blast the reputation or credit of another, or from βαλλειν ταις φημαις, to smite with reports. Whenever it is used in reference to GOD, it simply signifies, to speak impiously of his nature, or attributes, or works. Injurious speaking is its proper translation when referred to man.

The scribes were the literati of that time; and their learning, because not used in dependence on God, rendered them proud, envious, and obstinate. Unsanctified knowledge has still the same effect: that light serves only to blind and lead men out of the way which is not joined with uprightness of heart. The most sacred truths often become an occasion of delusion, where men are under the government of their evil passions.

**Verse 4. *Jesus knowing (ιδων seeing) their thoughts***— In telling them what the thoughts of their hearts were, (for they had expressed nothing publicly,) he gave them the fullest proof of his power to forgive sins; because God only can forgive sins, and God only can search and know the heart. Jesus pronounced the man's sins forgiven; and gave the scribes the fullest proof of his power to do so, by telling them what, in the secret of their souls, they thought on the subject.

God sounds the secrets of all hearts—no sin escapes his notice; how senseless then is the sinner to think he sins securely when unseen by men! Let us take heed to our hearts, as well as to our conduct, for God searches out and condemns all that does not spring from, and leads not to himself.

**Verse 5. *For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?***— Both are equally easy, and equally difficult; for both require unlimited power to produce them. And every thing is equally easy to that power which is unlimited. A universe can be as easily produced by a single act of the Divine will as the smallest elementary part of matter.

The common punctuation of the above passage almost destroys the sense: the comma should be placed after easier, and to say, made the first part of the question.

**Verse 6. *But that ye may know, etc.***— External miracles are the proofs of internal ones. Three miracles are wrought in this case. (I mean, by miracle, something produced or known that no power is capable of but that which is omnipotent, and no knowledge adequate to but that which is omniscient.) The miracles are these: 1st. The remission of the poor man's sins. 2d. The discernment of the secret thoughts of the scribes. 3d. The restoring of the paralytic, in an instant, to perfect soundness. Thus one miracle becomes the proof and establishment of another. Never was a clearer proof of omnipotent energy and mercy brought under the senses of man. Here is an absolutely perfect miracle wrought; and here are absolute incontestable proofs that the miracle was wrought; and the conclusion is the fullest demonstration of the Divinity of the ever-blessed Jesus.

***Arise, take up thy bed***— Being enabled to obey this command was the public proof that the man was made whole. Such a circumstance should not pass without improvement. A man gives proof of his conversion from sin to God who imitates this paralytic person. He who does not rise and stand upright, but either continues grovelling on the earth, or falls back as soon as he is got up, is not yet cured of his spiritual palsy. When we see a penitent enabled to rejoice in hope of God's glory, and to walk in the way of his commandments, he affords us all the proof which we can reasonably require, that his conversion is real: the proof sufficient to satisfy himself is the witness of the Holy Spirit in his own heart; but this is a matter of which those who are without cannot judge: they must form their opinion from his conduct, and judge of the tree by its fruits.

**Verse 8. *When the multitudes saw it, they marveled***— Instead of *θαυμάσαν*, wondered, the Codex Vatican. and Cod. Bezae, with several other MSS. and versions, have *εφοβήθησαν*, feared. In the Gothic, and one

copy of the Itala, both readings are conjoined, thus: And the multitudes seeing it, wondered and feared, and glorified God. Wondered at the miracle; feared to offend against such power and goodness; and glorified God for the works of mercy which he had wrought.

That which to the doctors of the law, the worldly-wise and prudent, is a matter of scandal, is to the humble an occasion of glorifying the Most High. Divine things make a deeper impression on the hearts of the simple multitude than on those of the doctors, who, puffed up with a sense of their own wisdom, refuse to receive the truth as it is in Jesus. The conversion of one rebellious soul is a greater miracle, and more to be admired than all that can be wrought on inanimate creatures. He who sees a sinner converted from the error of his way sees a miracle wrought by eternal power and goodness. May such miracles be multiplied!

**Verse 9. *Named Matthew***— Generally supposed to be the same who wrote this history of our blessed Lord. Mathai signifies a gift in Syriac; probably so named by his parents as implying a gift from God.

***The receipt of custom***— The custom-house, *τελωνιον*—the place where the taxes levied by the Romans of the Jews, were collected.

***Follow me.***— That is, become my disciple.

***And he arose, and followed him.***— How blessed it is to be obedient to the first call of Christ—how much happiness and glory are lost by delays, though conversion at last may have taken place!

**Verse 10. *Sat at meat in the house***— Viz. of Matthew, who it appears, from Luke 5:29, made a great feast on the occasion, thus testifying his gratitude for the honor done him; and that his friends and acquaintances might profit by the teaching of his new master, he invites them to the entertainment that was honored by the presence of Christ. His companions, it appears, were not of the most creditable kind. They were tax-gatherers (see “Matthew 5:46”) and sinners, *αμαρτωλοι*, a word which I believe in general signifies heathens, throughout the Gospels, and in several other parts of the New Testament. See, among others, Matthew 11:19; 26:45; Mark 2:15-17; 14:41; Luke 5:30-32; 6:32-34; 7:34, 37, 39; Luke 15:1, 2, 7, 10; 19:7; 24:7; John 9:16, 24, 25, 31; Romans 5: 8; Galatians 2:15; Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 4:18; in most, if not all of which

places, it evidently refers to the character or state of a Gentile, or Heathen. See also the notes on these passages.

**Verse 11. *When the Pharisees saw it***— He who, like a Pharisee, never felt himself indebted to infinite mercy for his own salvation, is rarely solicitous about the salvation of others. The grace of Christ alone inspires the soul with true benevolence. The self-righteous Pharisees considered it equal to legal defilement to sit in company with tax-gatherers and heathens. It is certain that those who fear God should not associate, through choice, with the workers of iniquity, and should only be found with them when transacting their secular business requires it, or when they have the prospect of doing good to their souls.

**Verse 12. *They that be whole need not a physician***— A common proverb, which none could either misunderstand or misapply. Of it the reader may make the following use:-

1. Jesus Christ represents himself here as the sovereign Physician of souls.
2. That all stand in need of his healing power.
3. That men must acknowledge their spiritual maladies, and the need they have of his mercy, in order to be healed by him.
4. That it is the most inveterate and dangerous disease the soul can be afflicted with to imagine itself whole, when the sting of death, which is sin, has pierced it through in every part, infusing its poison every where.

**Verse 13. *I will have mercy, and not sacrifice***— Quoted from 1 Samuel 15:22. These are remarkable words. We may understand them as implying, 1st. That God prefers an act of mercy, shown to the necessitous, to any act of religious worship to which the person might be called at that time. Both are good; but the former is the greater good, and should be done in preference to the other. 2dly. That the whole sacrificial system was intended only to point out the infinite mercy of God to fallen man, in his redemption by the blood of the new covenant. And 3dly. That we should not rest in the sacrifices, but look for the mercy and salvation prefigured by them. This saying was nervously translated by our ancestors, [AS], I will mild-heartedness, and not sacrifice.

***Go ye and learn***— **צא ולמד** tse velimmed, a form of speech in frequent use among the rabbins, when they referred to any fact or example in the

Sacred Writings. Nothing tends more to humble pretenders to devotion than to show them that they understand neither Scripture nor religion, when, relying on external performances, they neglect love to God and man, which is the very soul and substance of true religion. True holiness has ever consisted in faith working by love.

***I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners***— Most of the common editions add, *εις μετανοιαν*, unto repentance; but this is omitted in the Codex Vatic. and Bezae, sixteen others, both the Syriac, both the Persic, Ethiop. Armen. Gothic, Anglo-Saxon, all the Itala except three, the Vulgate, Clemens Roman, Origen, Basil, Jerome, Augustin, Ambrose, and Barnabas. The omission is approved by Mill and Bengel. Griesbach leaves it out of the text.

**Verse 14. *Thy disciples fast not?***— Probably meaning that they did not fast so frequently as the others did, or for the same purposes, which is very likely, for the Pharisees had many superstitious fasts. They fasted in order to have lucky dreams, to obtain the interpretation of a dream, or to avert the evil import of a dream. They also fasted often, in order to obtain the things they wished for. The tract, Taanith is full of these fasts, and of the wonders performed thus by the Jewish doctors.

**Verse 15. *Can the children of the bride-chamber***— *νυμφωνος*. Or, *νυμφιον*, bridegroom, as the Cod. Bezae and several versions have it. These persons were the companions of the bridegroom, who accompanied him to the house of his father-in-law when he went to bring the bride to his own home. The marriage-feast among the Jews lasted seven days; but the new married woman was considered to be a bride for thirty days. Marriage feasts were times of extraordinary festivity, and even of riot, among several people of the east.

***When the bridegroom shall be taken from them, etc.***— There was one annual fast observed in the primitive Church, called by our ancestors [AS] the spring fast, and, by us, LENT; by the Greeks *τεσσαρακοστη*, and by the Latins, Quadrigesima. This fast is pretended to be kept by many, in the present day, in commemoration of our Lord's forty days' fast in the wilderness; but it does not appear that, in the purest ages of the primitive Church, genuine Christians ever pretended that their quadrigesimal fast was kept for the above purpose. Their fast was kept merely to

commemorate the time during which Jesus Christ lay under the power of death, which was about FORTY HOURS; and it was in this sense they understood the words of this text: the days will come, etc. With them, the bridegroom meant Christ: the time in which he was taken away, his crucifixion, death, and the time he lay in the grave. Suppose him dying about twelve o'clock on what is called Friday, and that he rose about four on the morning of his own day, (St. John says, Early, while it was yet dark, Matthew 20:1,) the interim makes forty hours, which was the true primitive Lent, or quadrigesimal fast. It is true that many in the primitive Church were not agreed on this subject, as Socrates, in his Church History, book v. chap. 22, says, "Some thought they should fast one day; others two; others more." Different Churches also were divided concerning the length of the time, some keeping it three, others five, and others seven weeks; and the historian himself is puzzled to know why they all agreed in calling these fasts, differing so much in their duration, by the name of Quadrigesima, or forty days' fast: the plain obvious reason appears to me to have been simply this: They put DAYS in the place of HOURS; and this absurdity continues in some Christian Churches to the present day. For more on fasting, see "Matthew 6:16".

**Verse 16. *No man putteth a piece of new cloth***—οὐδεις δε επιβαλλει επιβλημα ρακους αγναφου επι ιματιω παλαιω. No man putteth a patch of unscoured cloth upon an old garment. This is the most literal translation I can give of this verse, to convey its meaning to those who cannot consult the original. ρακος αγναφον is that cloth which has not been scoured, or which has not passed under the hand of the fuller, who is called γναφευς in Greek: and επιβλημα signifies a piece put on, or what we commonly term a patch.

***It-taketh from the garment***— Instead of closing up the rent, it makes a larger, by tearing away with it the whole breadth of the cloth over which it was laid; αιρει γαρ το πληρωμα αυτου-it taketh its fullness or whole breadth from the garment; this I am persuaded is the meaning of the original, well expressed by the Latin, or Itala of the C. BEZAE, Tollit enim plenitudo ejus de vestimento. "It takes away its fullness from the garment."



**Verse 17. *New wine into old bottles***— It is still the custom, in the eastern countries, to make their bottles of goat skins: if these happened to be old, and new wine were put into them, the violence of the fermentation must necessarily burst them; and therefore newly made bottles were employed for the purpose of putting that wine in which had not yet gone through its state of fermentation. The institutes of Christ, and those of the Pharisees, could never be brought to accord: an attempt to combine the two systems would be as absurd as it would be destructive. The old covenant made way for the new, which was its completion and its end; but with that old covenant the new cannot be incorporated.

Christian prudence requires that the weak, and newly converted, should be managed with care and tenderness. To impose such duties and mortifications as are not absolutely necessary to salvation, before God has properly prepared the heart by his grace for them, is a conduct as absurd and ruinous as putting a piece of raw, unscoured cloth on an old garment; it is, in a word, requiring the person to do the work of a man, while as yet he is but a little child. Preachers of the Gospel, and especially those who are instruments in God's hand of many conversions, have need of much heavenly wisdom, that they may know to watch over, guide, and advise those who are brought to a sense of their sin and danger. How many auspicious beginnings have been ruined by men's proceeding too hastily, endeavoring to make their own designs take place, and to have the honor of that success themselves which is due only to God.

**Verse 18. *A certain ruler***— There were two officers in the synagogue, **חזן הכנת** chazan ha-ceneseth, the bishop or overseer of the congregation; and **ראש הכנת** rosh ha-ceneseth, the head or ruler of the congregation. The chazan takes the book of the Law, and gives it to the rosh, or ruler; and he appoints who shall read the different sections, etc. Jairus, who is the person intended here, was, in this latter sense, the ruler or governor of one of the synagogues, probably at Capernaum. See Mark 5:22; Luke 8:41.

***My daughter is even now dead***— Or, my daughter was just now dying; **αρτι ετελευτησεν**, or, is by this time dead: i.e. as Mr. Wakefield properly observes, She was so ill when I left home that she must be dead by this time. This turn of the expression reconciles the account given here with that in Mark and Luke. Michaelis conjectures that, in the Hebrew

original, the words must have stood thus, **עֲתָה מָתָה** *atah matah*, which, without the points, may signify either, She is dead, or She is dying.

To be successful in our applications to God by prayer, four things are requisite; and this ruler teaches us what they are.

First, A man should place himself in the presence of God—he came unto him.

Secondly, He should humble himself sincerely before God—he fell down before him—at his feet. Mark 5:22.

Thirdly, He should lay open his wants with a holy earnestness—he besought him greatly. Mark 5:23.

Fourthly, he should have unbounded confidence in the power and goodness of Christ that his request shall be granted—put thy hand upon her, and she shall live. He who comes in this way to God, for salvation, is sure to be heard. Imposition of hands was a rite anciently used by the servants of God, through which heavenly influences were conveyed to the bodies and souls of men. This rite is still used in certain Churches; but, as there is no Holy Ghost communicated by it, some suppose it may be as well omitted. But why is this? Is it not because there is an unfaithfulness in the person who lays on hands, or an unfitness in him on whom they are laid? Let the rite be restored to its primitive simplicity, and God will own it as he formerly did. But, however this may be, where is the man or number of men who have authority to abrogate a rite of God's own appointment? In the appointment of men to the sacred ministry it should never be omitted: even in these degenerate days, it may still serve as a sign of the necessity of the gifts and graces of that Holy Spirit without which no man can fulfill the work of the ministry, or be the instrument of saving the souls of them that hear him. When the inventions of men are put in the place of the ordinances of God, the true Church of Christ is in great danger.

**Verse 19. *Jesus arose, and followed him***— Our blessed Lord could have acted as well at a distance as present; but he goes to the place, to teach his ministers not to spare either their steps or their pains when the salvation of a soul is in question. Let them not think it sufficient to pray for the sick in their closets; but let them go to their bed-sides, that they may instruct

and comfort them. He can have little unction in private, who does not also give himself up to public duties.

**Verse 20. *A woman which was diseased with an issue of blood***— γυνή αιμορροῦσα. Mulier sanguinis profluvio laborans. Significatur hoc loco, fluxus muliebris, in SANIS, menstruus; in HAC perpetuus. It would be easy to explain the nature and properties of the disease here mentioned; but, when it is said that prudence forbids it, the intimation itself may be thought sufficiently explanatory of the disorder in question. There are some remarkable circumstances relative to this case mentioned by St. Mark, Mark 5:25, etc., which shall be properly noticed in the notes on that place.

***The hem of his garment***— The צִיצִית tsitsith, or fringes, which the Jews were commanded to wear on their garments. See Numbers 15:38, and the note there.

**Verse 21. *She said within herself, If I may but touch his garment***— Her disorder was of that delicate nature that modesty forbade her to make any public acknowledgment of it; and therefore she endeavored to transact the whole business in private. Besides, the touch of such a person was by the law reputed unclean. By faith in Christ Jesus, little things are often rendered efficacious to our salvation. What more simple than a morsel of bread, and a few drops of wine, in the Lord's Supper! And yet, they who receive them by faith in the sacrifice they represent, are made partakers of the blessings purchased by the crucified body and spilled blood of the Lord Jesus!

**Verse 22. *Daughter, be of good comfort***— θάρσει θυγάτερ, Take courage, daughter. See on "Matthew 9:2". The reason of this kind speech was-Jesus, finding that virtue had proceeded from him; made inquiry who had touched him. The woman, finding that she could not be hid, came fearing and trembling, (Mark 5:33,) and confessed the truth: to dispel these fears and to comfort her mind, Jesus said, Daughter, take courage.

***Thy faith hath made thee whole.***— η πίστις σου σέσωκε σε, This thy faith hath saved thee: i.e. thy faith in my power has interested that power in thy behalf, so that thou art saved from thy disorder, and from all its consequences. See on "Luke 8:46".

**Verse 23. *Saw the minstrels and the people making a noise*—** *αυλητας, pipers; Anglo-Saxon, [AS]* the whistlers; Gothic, haurngans haurngandans, the horn-blowers blowing with their horns. Nearly the same as the pipublasara, pipe-blowers of the Islandic: for among all those nations funeral lamentations accompanied with such rude instruments, were made at the death of relatives. That pipes were in use among the Jews, in times of calamity or death, is evident from Jeremiah 48:36. And among the Greeks, and Romans, as well as among the Jews, persons were hired on purpose to follow the funeral processions with lamentations. See Jeremiah 9:17-21; Amos 5:16. Even the poorest among the Jews were required to have two pipers, and one mourning woman. At these funeral solemnities it was usual with them to drink considerably; even ten cups of wine each, where it could be got. See Lightfoot. This custom is observed among the native Irish to this day, in what is called their CAOINAN. The body of the deceased, dressed in grave-clothes and ornamented with flowers, is placed in some eminent place; the relations and caoiners range themselves in two divisions, one at the head and the other at the feet of the corpse. Anciently, where the deceased was a great personage, the bards and croteries prepared the caoinan. The chief bard of the head chorus began by singing the first stanza in a low doleful tone; which was softly accompanied by the harp. At the conclusion, the foot semichorus began the lamentation, or ULLALOO, from the final note of the preceding stanza, in which they were answered by the head semichorus; then both united in one general chorus.

The chorus of the first stanza being ended, the chief bard of the foot semichorus sung the second stanza, the strain of which was taken from the concluding note of the preceding chorus, which ended, the head semichorus began the GOL, or lamentation, in which they were answered by that of the foot, and then, as before, both united in the general full chorus. Thus alternately were the song and choruses performed during the night. I have seen a number of women, sometimes fourteen, twenty-four, or more, accompany the deceased from his late house to the grave-yard, divided into two parties on each side the corpse, singing the ULLALOO, alternately, all the way. That drinking, in what is called the wake, or watching with the body of the deceased, is practised, and often carried to a shameful excess, needs little proof. This kind of intemperance proceeded to such great

lengths among the Jews that the Sanhedrin were obliged to make a decree, to restrain the drinking to ten cups each. I mention these things more particularly, because I have often observed that the customs of the aboriginal Irish bear, a very striking resemblance to those of the ancient Jews, and other Asiatic nations. The application of these observations I leave to others.

It was a custom with the Greeks to make a great noise with brazen vessels; and the Romans made a general outcry, called *conclamatio*, hoping either to stop the soul which was now taking its flight, or to awaken the person, if only in a state of torpor. This they did for eight days together, calling the person incessantly by his name; at the expiration of which term the phrase, *Conclamatum est*-all is over-there is no hope-was used. See the words used in this sense by Terence, *EUN.* l. 347. In all probability this was the *θορυβουμενον*, the making a violent outcry, mentioned here by the evangelist. How often, on the death of relatives, do men incumber and perplex themselves with vain, worldly, and tumultuous ceremonies, instead of making profitable reflections on death!

**Verse 24. *The maid is not dead, but sleepeth***— That is, she is not dead so as to continue under the power of death; but shall be raised from it as a person is from natural sleep.

***They laughed him to scorn.***— *κατεγελων αυτον*, they ridiculed him; from *κατα*, intensive, and *γελω*, I laugh:-they grinned a ghastly smile, expressive of the contempt they felt for his person and knowledge. People of the world generally ridicule those truths which they neither comprehend nor love, and deride those who publish them; but a faithful minister of God, (copying the example of Christ,) keeps on his way, and does the work of his Lord and Master.

**Verse 25. *He-took her by the hand, and the maid arose.***— The fountain of life thus communicating its vital energy to the dead body. Where death has already taken place, no power but that of the great God can restore to life; in such a case, vain is the help of man. So the soul that is dead in trespasses and sins-that is, sentenced to death because of transgression-and is thus dead in law, can only be restored to spiritual life by the mighty power of the Lord Jesus; because HE alone has made the atonement, and HE alone can pardon transgression. If the spiritually dead

person be utterly unconcerned about the state and fate of his soul, let a converted relative either bring him to Christ by leading him to hear the unadulterated Gospel of the kingdom; or bring Christ to him by fervent, faithful, and persevering prayer.

**Verse 26. *And the fame hereof went abroad***— In this business Jesus himself scarcely appears, but the work effected by his sovereign power is fully manifested; to teach us that it is the business of a successful preacher of the Gospel to conceal himself as much as possible, that God alone may have the glory of his own grace. This is a proper miracle, and a full exemplification of the unlimited power of Christ.

**Verse 27. *Son of David***— This was the same as if they had called him Messiah. Two things here are worthy of remark: 1st. That it was a generally received opinion at this time in Judea, that the Messiah should be son of David. (John 7:42.) 2dly. That Jesus Christ was generally and incontestably acknowledged as coming from this stock. Matthew 12:23.

***Have mercy on us.***— That man has already a measure of heavenly light who knows that he has no merit; that his cry should be a cry for mercy; that he must be fervent, and that in praying he must follow Jesus Christ as the true Messiah, the son of David, expected from heaven.

**Verse 28. *When he was come unto the house***— That is, the house of Peter at Capernaum, where he ordinarily lodged.

***Believe ye that I am able to do this?***— Without faith Jesus does nothing to men's souls now, no more than he did to their bodies in the days of his flesh.

***They said unto him, Yea, Lord.***— Under a sense of our spiritual blindness we should have, 1st. A lively faith in the almighty grace of Christ. 2dly. A fervent, incessant cry for the communication of this grace. 3dly. A proper view of his incarnation, because it is through his union with our nature, and by his sufferings and death, we are to expect salvation.

**Verse 29. *According to your faith***— See on “Matthew 8:13”.

**Verse 30. *Straitly charged them***— He charged them severely, from *ενεβριμῆσατο*, from *εν*, and *βριμασμαι*, to roar or storm with anger; he

charged them, on pain of his displeasure, not to make it as yet public. See the reasons, “Matthew 8:4”.

**Verse 31. *But they-spread abroad his fame***— They should have held their peace; for to obey is better than sacrifice, 1 Samuel 15:22; but man must always be wiser than God, however, it may be profitable to remark, 1st. That honor pursues those who fly from it. 2dly. He who is thoroughly sensible of God’s mercy cannot long contain his acknowledgments. 3dly. That God in general requires that what a man has received, for his own salvation, shall become subservient to that of others—Let your light so shine, etc. God chooses to help man by man, that all may be firmly knit together in brotherly love.

**Verse 32. *A dumb man possessed with a devil.***— Some demons rendered the persons they possessed paralytic, some blind, others dumb, etc. It was the interest of Satan to hide his influences under the appearance of natural disorders. A man who does not acknowledge his sin to God, who prays not for salvation, who returns no praises for the mercies he is continually receiving, may well be said to be possessed with a dumb demon.

**Verse 33. *And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake***— The very miracle which was now wrought was to be the demonstrative proof of the Messiah’s being manifested in the flesh. See Isaiah 35:5, 6.

***It was never so seen in Israel.***— The greatest of the prophets has never been able to do such miracles as these. This was the remark of the people; and thus we find that the poor and the simple were more ready to acknowledge the hand of God than the rich and the learned. Many miracles had been wrought in the course of this one day, and this excited their surprise.

**Verse 34. *He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.***— This verse is wanting in both the Greek and Latin of the C. Bezae, in another copy of the Itala, and in Hilary and Juvencus. But see on “Matthew 12:24”.

It is a consummate piece of malice to attribute the works of God to the devil. Envy cannot suffer the approbation which is given to the excellencies of others. Those whose hearts are possessed by this vice speak the very language of the devil. Calumny is but a little distance from

envy. Though all persons may not have as much envy as the Pharisees, yet they should fear having some degree of it, as all have the principle from whence it proceeds, viz. sin.

**Verse 35. *Jesus went about all the cities and villages***— Of Galilee. See on Matthew 4:23, 24. A real minister of Jesus Christ, after his example, is neither detained in one place by a comfortable provision made by some, nor discouraged from pursuing his work by the calumny and persecution of others. It is proper to remark, that, wherever Christ comes, the proofs of his presence evidently appear: he works none but salutary and beneficial miracles, because his ministry is a ministry of salvation.

***Among the people.***— εν τω λαω. This clause is omitted by about fifty MSS., several of them of the first antiquity and authority; by the Complutensian, and by Bengel; by both the Syriac, both the Arabic, both the Persic; the Ethiopic, Gothic, Saxon, and all the Itala, except four. Griesbach has left it out of the text.

**Verse 36. *Moved with compassion***— εσπλαγχνισθη, from σπλαγχνον, a bowel. The Jews esteemed the bowels to be the seat of sympathy and the tender passions, and so applied the organ to the sense.

εσπλαγχνιζομαι signifies, says Mintert, “to be moved with pity from the very inmost bowels. It is an emphatic word, signifying a vehement affection of commiseration, by which the bowels and especially the heart is moved.” Both this verb and the noun seem to be derived from σπaw, to draw; the whole intestinal canal, in the peristaltic motion of the bowels, being drawn, affected, and agitated with the sight of a distressed or miserable object. Pity increases this motion of the bowels, and produces considerable pain: hence σπλαγχνιζομαι, to have the bowels moved, signifies to feel pity or compassion at seeing the miseries of others.

***They fainted***— Instead of εκλελυμενοι, fainted, all the best MSS., versions, and fathers, read εσκυλμενοι, grieved and melancholy. Kypke says σκυλλειν properly signifies, to pluck off the hair, as persons do in extreme sorrow or distress. The margin says, They were tired and lay down.

***And were scattered abroad***— επιμμενοι, thrown down, or, all along. They were utterly neglected as to the interests of their souls, and rejected



by the proud and disdained Pharisees. This people (οχλος, this mob) that knoweth not the law, is accursed, John 7:49. Thus those execrable men spoke of the souls that God had made, and of whom they should have been the instructors.

Those teachers, in name, have left their successors behind them; but, as in the days of Christ, so now, God has in his mercy rescued the flock out of the hands of those who only fed upon their flesh, and clothed themselves with their wool. The days in which a man was obliged to give his property to what was called THE Church, for the salvation of his soul, Christ being left out of the question, are, thank God, nearly over and gone. Jesus is the true Shepherd; without him there is nothing but fainting, fatigue, vexation, and dispersion. O that we may be led out and in by him, and find pasture!

**Verse 37. *The harvest***— The souls who are ready to receive the truth are very numerous; but the laborers are few. There are multitudes of scribes, Pharisees, and priests, of reverend and right reverend men; but there are few that work. Jesus wishes for laborers, not gentlemen, who are either idle drones, or slaves to pleasure and sin, and nati consumere fruges. “Born to consume the produce of the soil.”

It was customary with the Jews to call their rabbins and students reapers; and their work of instruction, the harvest. So in Idra Rabba, s. 2. “The days are few; the creditor is urgent; the crier calls out incessantly; and the reapers are few.” And in Pirkey Aboth: “The day is short, the work great, the workmen idle, the reward abundant, and the master of the household is urgent.” In all worldly concerns, if there be the prospect of much gain, most men are willing enough to labor; but if it be to save their own souls, or the souls of others, what indolence, backwardness, and carelessness! While their adversary, the devil, is going about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; and a careless soul, and especially a careless minister is his especial prey.

The place of the harvest is the whole earth: it signifies little where a man works, provided it be by the appointment, in the Spirit, and with the blessing of God.

**Verse 38. *That he will send forth laborers***— οπως εκβαλλη εργατας, that he would thrust forth laborers. Those who are fittest for the work are

generally most backward to the employment. The man who is forward to become a preacher knows little of God, of human nature, or of his own heart. It is, God's province to thrust out such preachers as shall labor; and it is our duty to entreat him to do so. A minister of Christ is represented as a day-laborer: he comes into the harvest, not to become lord of it, not to live on the labor of others, but to work, and to labor his day. Though the work may be very severe, yet, to use a familiar expression, there is good wages in the harvest-home; and the day, though hot, is but a short one. How earnestly should the flock of Christ pray to the good Shepherd to send them pastors after his own heart, who will feed them with knowledge, and who shall be the means of spreading the knowledge of his truth and the savor of his grace over the face of the whole earth!

The subject of fasting, already slightly noticed in the preceding notes, should be farther considered.

In all countries, and under all religions, fasting has not only been considered a duty, but also of extraordinary virtue to procure blessings, and to avert evils. Hence it has often been practised with extraordinary rigour, and abused to the most superstitious purposes. There are twelve kinds of fasts among the Hindoos:-

1. The person neither eats nor drinks for a day and night. This fast is indispensable, and occurs twenty-nine times in the year.
2. The person fasts during the day, and eats at night.
3. The person eats nothing but fruits, and drinks milk or water.
4. He eats once during the day and night.
5. Eats one particular kind of food during the day and night, but as often as he pleases.
6. Called Chanderaym, which is, to eat on the first day, only one mouthful; two on the second; and thus continue increasing one mouthful every day for a month, and then decreasing a mouthful every day, till he leaves off where he began.
7. The person neither eats nor drinks for twelve days.

8. Lasts twelve days: the first three days he eats a little once in the day; the next three, he eats only once in the night; the next three, he eats nothing, unless it be brought to him; and, during the last three days, he neither eats nor drinks.

9. Lasts fifteen days. For three days and three nights, he eats only one handful at night; the next three days and nights, he eats one handful if it be brought him, if not, he takes nothing. Then he eats nothing for three days and three nights. The next three days and nights he takes only a handful of warm water each day. The next three days and nights he takes a handful of warm milk each day.

10. For three days and nights he neither eats nor drinks. He lights a fire, and sits at a door where there enters a hot wind, which he draws in with his breath.

11. Lasts fifteen days. Three, days and three nights he eats nothing but leaves; three days and three nights, nothing but the Indian fig; three days and three nights, nothing but the seed of the lotus; three days and three nights, nothing but peepul leaves; three days and three nights, the expressed juice of a particular kind of grass called doobah.

12. Lasts a week. First day he eats milk; second, milk-curd; third, ghee, i.e. clarified butter; fourth, cow's urine; fifth, cow's dung; sixth, water; seventh, nothing.

During every kind of fast, the person sleeps on the ground, plays at no game, has no connection with women, neither shaves nor anoints himself, and bestows alms each day.-*AYEEN AKBERRY*, vol. iii. p. 247-250. How much more simple and effectual is the way of salvation taught in the BIBLE! But, because it is true, it is not credited by fallen man.

FASTING is considered by the Mohammedans as an essential part of piety. Their orthodox divines term it the gate of religion. With them, it is of two kinds, voluntary and incumbent; and is distinguished by the Mosliman doctors into three degrees: 1. The refraining from every kind of nourishment or carnal indulgence. 2. The restraining the various members from every thing which might excite sinful or corrupt desires. 3. The abstracting the mind wholly from worldly cares, and fixing it exclusively upon God. Their great annual fast is kept on the month Ramzan, or

Ramadhan, beginning at the first new moon, and continuing until the appearance of the next; during which, it is required to abstain from every kind of nourishment from day-break till after sun-set of each day. From this observance none are excused but the sick, the aged, and children. This is properly the Mohammedan Lent. See HEDAYAH, prel. Dis. p. LV. LVI.

It is worthy of remark, that these children of the Bridegroom, the disciples, did not mourn, were exposed to no persecution, while the Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus, was with them, but after he had been taken from them, by death and his ascension, they did fast and mourn; they were exposed to all manner of hardships, persecutions, and even death itself, in some of its worst forms.

## CHAPTER 10

*Jesus calls, commissions, and names his twelve disciples, 1-4. Gives them particular instructions relative to the objects of their ministry, 5, 6. Mode of preaching, etc., 7-15. Foretells the afflictions and persecutions they would have to endure, and the support they should receive, 16-25. Cautions them against betraying his cause, in order to procure their personal safety, 26-39. And gives especial promises to those who should assist his faithful servants in the execution of their work, 40-42.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 10

**Verse 1. *Twelve disciples***— Our Lord seems to have had the twelve patriarchs, heads of the congregation of Israel, in view, in his choosing twelve disciples. That he had the plan of the ancient Jewish Church in his eye is sufficiently evident from Matthew 19:28; and from Luke 10:1; 22:30; John 17:1, etc., and Revelation 21:12-14.

***He gave them power against unclean spirits***— The word *κατα*, against, which our translators have supplied in Italic, is found in many MSS. of good note, and in the principal versions. Here we find the first call to the Christian ministry, and the end proposed by the commission given. To call persons to the ministry belongs only to Him who can give them power to cast out unclean spirits. He whose ministry is not accompanied with healing to diseased souls, was never called of God. But let it be observed, that, though the spiritual gifts requisite for the ministry must be supplied by God himself, yet this does not preclude the importance of human learning. No man can have his mind too well cultivated, to whom a dispensation of the Gospel is committed. The influence of the Spirit of God was no more designed to render human learning useless, than that learning should be considered as superseding the necessity of Divine inspiration.

**Verse 2. *Apostles***— This is the first place where the word is used. *αποστολος*, an apostle, comes from *αποστελλω*, I send a message. The word was anciently used to signify a person commissioned by a king to

negotiate any affair between him and any other power or people. Hence **αποστολοι** and **κηρυκες**, apostles and heralds, are of the same import in Herodotus. See the remarks at the end of chap. 3.

It is worthy of notice, that those who were Christ's apostles were first his disciples; to intimate, that men must be first taught of God, before they be sent of God. Jesus Christ never made an apostle of any man who was not first his scholar or disciple. These twelve apostles were chosen. 1. That they might be with our Lord, to see and witness his miracles, and hear his doctrine. 2. That they might bear testimony of the former, and preach his truth to mankind.

***The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; etc.***— We are not to suppose that the word **πρωτος**, first, refers to any kind of dignity, as some have imagined; it merely signifies the first in order—the person first mentioned. A pious man remarks: “God here unites by grace those who were before united by nature.” Though nature cannot be deemed a step towards grace, yet it is not to be considered as always a hinderance to it. Happy the brothers who are joint envoys of Heaven, and the parents who have two or more children employed as ambassadors for God! But this is a very rare case; and family compacts in the work of the ministry are dangerous and should be avoided.

**Verse 3. *Bartholomew***— Many are of opinion that this was Nathanael, mentioned John 1:46, whose name was probably Nathanael bar Talmai, Nathanael, the son of Talmai: here, his own name is repressed, and he is called Bar Talmai, or Bartholomew, from his father.

***Matthew the publican***— The writer of this history. See the preface.

***James the son of Alpheus***— This person was also called Cleopas, or Clopas, Luke 24:18; John 19: 25. He had married Mary, sister to the blessed Virgin, John 19:25.

**Verse 4. *Simon***— He was third son of Alpheus, and brother of James and Jude, or Judas, Matthew 13:55.

***The Canaanite***— This word is not put here to signify a particular people, as it is elsewhere used in the Sacred Writings; but it is formed from the Hebrew **קנא** kana, which signifies zealous, literally translated by Luke,

Luke 6:15, **ζηλωτης**, zelotes, or the zealous, probably from his great fervency in preaching the Gospel of his Master. But see “Luke 6:15”.

**Judas Iscariot**— Probably from the Hebrew **אִישׁ קֵרְיֹת** ish kerioth, a man of Kerioth, which was a city in the tribe of Judah, Joshua 15:25, where it is likely this man was born.

As **אִסְכָּרְיָה** iscara, signifies the quinsy, or strangulation, and Judas hanged himself after he had betrayed our Lord, Dr. Lightfoot seems inclined to believe that he had his name from this circumstance, and that it was not given him till after his death.

**Who also betrayed him**— Rather, even he who betrayed him, or delivered him up; for so, I think, **ο και παραδους αυτον** should be translated. The common translation, who ALSO betrayed him, is very exceptionable, as it seems to imply, he was betrayed by some others, as well as by Judas.

**Verse 5. These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded**— To be properly qualified for a minister of Christ, a man must be, 1. filled with the spirit of holiness; 2. called to this particular work; 3. instructed in its nature, etc.; and, 4. commissioned to go forth, and testify the Gospel of the grace of God. These are four different gifts which a man must receive from God by Christ Jesus. To these let him add all the human qualifications he can possibly attain; as in his arduous work he will require every gift and every grace.

**Go not into the way of the Gentiles**— Our Lord only intended that the first offers of salvation should be made to the Jewish people; and that the heathen should not be noticed in this first mission, that no stumbling-block might be cast in the way of the Jews.

**Into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not**— The Samaritans had afterwards the Gospel preached to them by Christ himself, John 4:4, etc., for the reason assigned above. Such as God seems at first to pass by are often those for whom he has designed his greatest benefits, (witness the Samaritans, and the Gentiles in general,) but he has his own proper time to discover and reveal them.

The history of the Samaritans is sufficiently known from the Old Testament. Properly speaking, the inhabitants of the city of Samaria

should be termed Samaritans; but this epithet belongs chiefly to the people sent into that part of the promised land by Salmanezer, king of Assyria, in the year of the world 3283, when he carried the Israelites that dwelt there captives beyond the Euphrates, and sent a mixed people, principally Cuthites, to dwell in their place. These were altogether heathens at first; but they afterwards incorporated the worship of the true God with that of their idols. See the whole account, 2 Kings 17:5, etc. From this time they feared Jehovah, and served other gods till after the Babylonish captivity. From Alexander the Great, Sanballat, their governor, obtained permission to build a temple upon Mount Gerizim, which the Jews conceiving to be in opposition to their temple at Jerusalem, hated them with a perfect hatred, and would have no fellowship with them. The Samaritans acknowledge the Divine authority of the law of Moses, and carefully preserve it in their own characters, which are probably the genuine ancient Hebrew; the character which is now called Hebrew being that of the Chaldeans. The Samaritan Pentateuch is printed in the London Polyglott, and is an undeniable record. A poor remnant of this people is found still at Naplouse, the ancient Shechem; but they exist in a state of very great poverty and distress, and probably will soon become extinct.

**Verse 6. *But go rather to the lost sheep, etc.***— The Jewish Church was the ancient fold of God; but the sheep had wandered from their Shepherd, and were lost. Our blessed Lord sends these under-shepherds to seek, find, and bring them back to the Shepherd and Overseer of their souls.

**Verse 7. *And as ye go, preach***— *πορευομενοι δε κηρυσσετε*, and as you proceed, proclaim like heralds—make this proclamation wherever ye go, and while ye are journeying. Preach and travel; and, as ye travel, preach—proclaim salvation to all you meet. Wherever the ministers of Christ go, they find lost, ruined souls; and, wherever they find them, they should proclaim Jesus, and his power to save. For an explanation of the word proclaim or preach, see on “Matthew 3:1”.

From this commission we learn what the grand subject of apostolic preaching was—THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND! This was the great message. “They preached,” says Quesnel, “to establish the faith; the kingdom, to animate the hope; of heaven, to inspire the love of heavenly



things, and the contempt of earthly; which is at hand, that men may prepare for it without delay.”

**Verse 8. *raise the dead***— This is wanting in the MSS. marked EKLMS of Griesbach, and in those marked BHV of Mathai, and in upwards of one hundred others. It is also wanting in the Syriac, (Vienna edition,) latter Persic, Sahidic, Armenian, Sclavonic, and in one copy of the Itala; also in Athanasius, Basil, and Chrysostom. There is no evidence that the disciples raised any dead person previously to the resurrection of Christ. The words should certainly be omitted, unless we could suppose that the authority now given respected not only their present mission, but comprehended also their future conduct. But that our blessed Lord did not give this power to his disciples at this time, is, I think, pretty evident from Matthew 10:1, and from Luke 9:6, 10; Luke 10:19, 20, where, if any such power had been given, or exercised, it would doubtless have been mentioned. Wetstein has rejected it, and so did Griesbach in his first edition; but in the second (1796) he has left it in the text, with a note of doubtfulness.

***Freely ye have received, freely give.***— A rule very necessary, and of great extent. A minister or laborer in the Gospel vineyard, though worthy of his comfortable support while in the work, should never preach for hire, or make a secular traffic of a spiritual work. What a scandal is it for a man to traffic with gifts which he pretends, at least, to have received from the Holy Ghost, of which he is not the master, but the dispenser. He who preaches to get a living, or to make a fortune, is guilty of the most infamous sacrilege.

**Verse 9. *Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass, in your purses***— εἰς τὰς ζώνας ὑμῶν, in your GIRDLES. It is supposed that the people of the east carry their money in a fold of their girdles. This is scarcely correct: they carry it in a purse in their bosom, under their girdles. This I have often observed.

In a thousand instances an apostolic preacher, who goes to the wilderness to seek the lost sheep, will be exposed to hunger and cold, and other inconveniences; he must therefore resign himself to God, depending on his providence for the necessities of life. If God have sent him, he is bound to support him, and will do it: anxiety therefore, in him, is a double crime, as

it insinuates a bad opinion of the Master who has employed him. Every missionary should make himself master of this subject.

Have no money in your purse, is a command, obedience to which was secured by the narrow circumstances of most of the primitive genuine preachers of the Gospel. Whole herds of friars mendicants have professed the same principle, and abandoned themselves to voluntary poverty; but if the money be in the heart it is a worse evil. In the former case, it may be a temptation to sin; in the latter, it must be ruinous.

**Verse 10. *Nor scrip for your journey***— To carry provisions. This was called תורמיל *tormil*, by the rabbins; it was a leathern pouch hung about their necks, in which they put their victuals. This was properly, the shepherd's bag.

***Neither two coats, etc.***— Nothing to encumber you

***Nor yet staves***— ραβδον, a staff, as in the margin, but, instead of ραβδον, staff, which is the common reading, all the following MSS. and versions have ραβδους, staves, and CEFGLMPS. V. ninety-three others, Coptic, Armenian, latter Syriac, one of the Itala, Chrysostom, and Theophylact. This reading is of great importance, as it reconciles this place with Luke 9:3, and removes the seeming contradiction from Mark 6:8; as if he had said: “Ye shall take nothing to defend yourselves with, because ye are the servants of the Lord, and are to be supported by his bounty, and defended by his power. In a word, be like men in haste, and eager to begin the important work of the ministry. The sheep are lost-ruined: Satan is devouring them: give all diligence to pluck them out of the jaws of the destroyer.”

***The workman is worthy of his meat.***— της τροφης αυτου, of his maintenance. It is a maintenance, and that only, which a minister of God is to expect, and that he has a Divine right to; but not to make a fortune, or lay up wealth: besides, it is the workman, he that labors in the word and doctrine, that is to get even this. How contrary to Christ is it for a man to have vast revenues, as a minister of the Gospel, who ministers no Gospel, and who spends the revenues of the Church to its disgrace and ruin!

**Verse 11. *Into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter***— In the commencement of Christianity, Christ and his preachers were all itinerant.

***Inquire who in it is worthy***— That is, of a good character; for a preacher of the Gospel should be careful of his reputation, and lodge only with those who are of a regular life.

***There abide till ye go thence.***— Go not about from house to house, Luke 10:7. Acting contrary to this precept has often brought a great disgrace on the Gospel of God. Stay in your own lodging as much as possible, that you may have time for prayer and study. Seldom frequent the tables of the rich and great; if you do, it will unavoidably prove a snare to you. The unction of God will perish from your mind, and your preaching be only a dry barren repetition of old things; the bread of God in your hands will be like the dry, mouldy, Gibeonitish crusts, mentioned Joshua 9:5. He who knows the value of time, and will redeem it from useless chit-chat, and trifling visits, will find enough for all the purposes of his own salvation, the cultivation of his mind, and the work of the ministry. He to whom time is not precious, and who lives not by rule, never finds time sufficient for any thing—is always embarrassed—always in a hurry, and never capable of bringing one good purpose to proper effect.

**Verse 12. *Salute it***— **λεγοντες ειρηνη εν τω οικω τουτω**, saying, “Peace be to this house.” This clause, which, as explanatory of the word **απασασθε**, is necessary to the connection in which it now stands, is added, by the MSS. D and L, and forty-three others, the Armenian, Ethiopic, Slavonic, Saxon, Vulgate, all the copies of the old Itala, Theophylact, and Hilary. The clause is also found in several modern versions. The modern Greek has **λεγοντες· ειρηνη εις το σκηπρι τουτο**. The Italian, by Matthew, of Erberg, and of Diodati, renders it thus: Pace sia a questa casa. Peace be to this house.

It is found also in Wickliff, and in my old MS. Seyinge, pees be to this hous. Some suppose it is an addition taken from Luke; but there is nearly as much reason to believe he took it from Matthew.

Peace, **שלום**, among the Hebrews, had a very extensive meaning:—it comprehended all blessings, spiritual and temporal. Hence that saying of the rabbins, **גדול שלום שכל הברכות כלולות בו** Gadai shalom, shecol haberacoth culoloth bo. Great is PEACE, for all other blessings are comprehended in it. To wish peace to a family, in the name and by the

authority of Christ, was in effect a positive promise, on the Lord's side, of all the good implied in the wish. This was paying largely even beforehand. Whoever receives the messengers of God into his house confers the highest honor upon himself, and not upon the preacher, whose honor is from God, and who comes with the blessings of life eternal to that man and his family who receives him.

In India, it is customary for a way-faring man, when night draws on, to enter a house, and simply say, "Sir, I am a guest with you this night." If the owner cannot lodge him, he makes an apology, and the traveler proceeds to another house.

**Verse 13. *If that house be worthy***— If that family be proper for a preacher to lodge in, and the master be ready to embrace the message of salvation.

***Your peace***— The blessings you have prayed for shall come upon the family: God will prosper them in their bodies, souls, and substance.

***But if it be not worthy***— As above explained.

***Let your peace***— The blessings prayed for, return to you. προς υμας επιστραφητω, it shall turn back upon yourselves. They shall get nothing, and you shall have an increase.

The trials, disappointments, insults, and wants of the followers of Christ become, in the hand of the all-wise God, subservient to their best interests: hence, nothing can happen to them without their deriving profit from it, unless it be their own fault.

**Verse 14. *Shake off the dust of your feet***.— The Jews considered themselves defiled by the dust of a heathen country, when was represented by the prophets as a polluted land, Am 7:17, when compared with the land of Israel, which was considered as a holy land, Ezekiel 45:1; therefore, to shake the dust of any city of Israel from off one's clothes or feet was an emblematical action, signifying a renunciation of all farther connection with them, and placing them on a level with the cities of the Heathen. See "Amos 9:7".

**Verse 15. *In the day of judgment***— Or, punishment, -κρισεως. Perhaps not meaning the day of general judgment, nor the day of the destruction of

the Jewish state by the Romans; but a day in which God should send punishment on that particular city, or on that person, for their crimes. So the day of judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah, was the time in which the Lord destroyed them by fire and brimstone, from the Lord out of heaven.

If men are thus treated for not receiving the preachers of the Gospel, what will it be to despise the Gospel itself—to decry it—to preach the contrary—to hinder the preaching of it—to abuse those who do preach it in its purity—or to render it fruitless by calumnies and lies! Their punishment, our Lord intimates, shall be greater than that inflicted on the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah!

**Verse 16.** *Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves*— He who is called to preach the Gospel is called to embrace a state of constant labor, and frequent suffering. He who gets ease and pleasure, in consequence of embracing the ministerial office, neither preaches the Gospel, nor is sent of God. If he did the work of an evangelist, wicked men and demons would both oppose him.

*Wise (φρονιμοι prudent) as serpents, and harmless as doves.*— This is a proverbial saying: so in Shir hashirim Rabba, fol. 16, “The holy blessed God said to the Israelites, Ye shall be towards me as upright as the doves; but, towards the Gentiles, as cunning as serpents.”

There is a beauty in this saying which is seldom observed. The serpent is represented as prudent to excess, being full of cunning, Genesis 3:1; 2 Corinthians 11:3; and the dove is simple, even to stupidity, Ho 7:11; but Jesus Christ corrects here the cunning of the serpent, by the simplicity of the dove; and the too great simplicity of the dove, by the cunning of the serpent. For a fine illustration of this text, see the account of the Boiga:-

“This species is remarkably beautiful, combining the richest colors of the finest gems with the splendor of burnished gold, mingled with dark brown shades, which contrast and heighten its brilliant ornaments. The whole under surface of the head and body is of a silver white, separated from the changing blue of the back by a golden chain on each side, the whole length of the body. This fine blue and silver, ornamented with gold, by no means give a full idea of the beautiful embroidery of the boiga. We must take in all the reflected tints of silver color, golden yellow, red, blue, green, and black,

mingled, and changing in the most extraordinary and beautiful manner possible; so that, when about to change its skin, it seems studded with a mixed assemblage of diamonds, emeralds, topazes, sapphires, and rubies, under a thin transparent veil of bluish crystal. Thus, in the rich and torrid plains of India, where the most splendid gems abound, nature seems to have chosen to reunite them all, together with the noble metals, to adorn the brilliant robe of the boiga. This is one of the most slender of serpents in proportion to its length. The specimens in the royal collection, which exceed three feet in length, are hardly a few lines in diameter. The tail is almost as long as the body, and at the end is like a needle for fineness; yet it is sometimes flattened above, below, and on the two sides, rendering it in some measure square. From the delicacy of its form, its movements are necessarily extremely agile; so that, doubling itself up several times, it can spring to a considerable distance, with great swiftness. It can twine and twist itself, most readily, and nimbly, around trees or other such bodies; climbing, or descending, or suspending itself, with the utmost facility. The boiga feeds on small birds, which it swallows very easily, notwithstanding the small diameter of its body, in consequence of the great distensibility of its jaws, throat, and stomach, common to it with other serpents. It conceals itself under the foliage of trees, on purpose to surprise the small birds, and is said to attract them by a peculiar kind of whistling, to which the term of song has been applied; but we must consider this as an exaggeration, as its long divided tongue, and the conformation of its other organs of sound, are only adapted for producing a hiss, or species of simple whistle, instead of forming a melodious assemblage of tones. Yet, if nature has not reckoned the boiga among the songsters of the woods, it seems to possess a more perfect instinct than other serpents, joined to more agile movements, and more magnificent ornament. In the isle of Borneo, the children play with the boiga, without the smallest dread. They carry it in their hands, as innocent as themselves, and twist it about their necks, arms, and bodies, in a thousand directions. This circumstance brings to recollection that fine emblem of Candour and Confidence imagined by the genius of the ancients: a child smiling on a snake, which holds him fast in his convolutions. But, in that beautiful allegory, the snake is supposed to conceal a deadly poison; while the boiga returns caress for caress to the Indian children who fondle it, and seems pleased to be twisted about their delicate hands. As the appearance of such nimble and innocent animals in

the forests must be extremely beautiful, displaying their splendid colors, and gliding swiftly from branch to branch, without possessing the smallest noxious quality, we might regret that this species should require a degree of heat greatly superior to that of our regions, and that it can only subsist near the tropics, in Asia, Africa, and America. It has usually a hundred and sixty-six large plates, and a hundred and twenty-eight pairs of small plates, but is subject to considerable variation.

“According to this representation, the boiga is not merely to be praised for its beauty, but may be said to fulfill the old maxim of combining the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove.” Cépède’s *Hist. of Oviparous Quadrupeds and Serpents*.

Instead of **ακεραιοι**, harmless, or as the *Etymol. Mag.* defines it, without mixture of evil, the *Cod. Bezae* reads **απλουστατοι**, simple-uncompounded,—so all the copies of the old *Itala*, the *Vulgate*, and the Latin fathers; but this curious and explanatory reading is found in no other Greek MS.

**Verse 17. *But beware of men***— Or, be on your guard against men, **των ανθρωπων** THESE men; i.e. your countrymen; those from whom you might have reasonably expected comfort and support; and especially those in power, who will abuse that power to oppress you.

**Councils**— **συνεδρια**, sanhedrins and synagogues. See on “Matthew 5:22. “By synagogues we may understand here, not the places of public worship, but assemblies where three magistrates, chosen out of the principal members of the synagogue, presided to adjust differences among the people: these had power, in certain cases, to condemn to the scourge, but not to death. See Acts 22:19; 2 Corinthians 11:24, compared with Luke 12:11.” See Lightfoot.

**Verse 18. *Ye shall be brought before governors, etc.***— “This affords a striking proof of the prescience of Christ. Who could have thought, at that time, that these despised and illiterate men could excite so much attention, and be called upon to apologize for the profession of their faith before the tribunals of the most illustrious personages of the earth?” Wakefield.

By governors and kings we may understand, the Roman proconsuls, governors of provinces, and the kings who were tributary to the Roman

government, and the emperors themselves, before whom many of the primitive Christians were brought.

***For a testimony against them and the Gentiles.***— That is, to render testimony, both to Jews and Gentiles, of the truth and power of my Gospel.

**Verse 19. *Take no thought how or what ye shall speak***— **μη μεριμνησετε**—Be not anxiously careful, because such anxiety argues distrust in God, and infallibly produces a confused mind. In such a state, no person is fit to proclaim or vindicate the truth. This promise, It shall be given you, etc., banishes all distrust and inquietude on dangerous occasions; but without encouraging sloth and negligence, and without dispensing with the obligation we are under to prepare ourselves by the meditation of sacred truths, by the study of the Holy Scriptures, and by prayer.

***It shall be given you in that same hour what***— This clause is wanting in the MSS. D and L, and several others, some versions, and several of the fathers: but it is found in Mark 13:11, without any various reading; and in substance in Luke 11:13.

**Verse 20. *For it is-the Spirit of your Father, etc.***— This was an extraordinary promise, and was literally fulfilled to those first preachers of the Gospel; and to them it was essentially necessary, because the New Testament dispensation was to be fully opened by their extraordinary inspiration. In a certain measure, it may be truly said, that the Holy Spirit animates the true disciples of Christ, and enables them to speak. The Head speaks in his members, by his Spirit; and it is the province of the Spirit of God to speak for God. Neither surprise, defect of talents, nor even ignorance itself, could hurt the cause of God, in the primitive times, when the hearts and minds of those Divine men were influenced by the Holy Spirit.

***Your Father***— This is added to excite and increase their confidence in God.

**Verse 21. *And the brother shall deliver up the brother, etc.***— What an astonishing enmity is there in the soul of man against God and goodness! That men should think they did God service, in putting to death those who



differ from them in their political or religious creed, is a thing that cannot be accounted for but on the principle of an indescribable depravity.

*O shame to men! devil with devil damn'd  
Firm concord holds, men only disagree  
Of creatures rational; though under hope  
Of heavenly grace; and, God proclaiming peace,  
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife  
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,  
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy!*  
PAR. Lost, b. ii. l. 496

**Verse 22. *Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake***— Because ye are attached to me, and saved from the corruption that is in the world; therefore the world will hate you. “The laws of Christ condemn a vicious world, and gall it to revenge.”

***He that endureth to the end shall be saved***— He who holds fast faith and a good conscience to the end, till the punishment threatened against this wicked people be poured out, he shall be saved, preserved from the destruction that shall fall upon the workers of iniquity. This verse is commonly understood to refer to the destruction of Jerusalem. It is also true that they who do not hold fast faith and a good conscience till death have no room to hope for an admission into the kingdom of God.

**Verse 23. *But when they persecute you***— It is prudence and humility (when charity or righteousness obliges us not to the contrary) to avoid persecution. To deprive those who are disposed to do evil of the opportunities of doing it; to convey the grace which they despise to others; to accomplish God's designs of justice on the former, and of mercy on the latter, are consequences of the flight of a persecuted preacher. This flight is a precept to those who are highly necessary to the Church of Christ, an advice to those who might imprudently draw upon themselves persecution, and of indulgence for those who are weak. But this flight is highly criminal in those mercenary preachers who, through love to their flesh and their property, abandon the flock of Christ to the wolf. See Quesnel.

***In this city, flee ye into another***— There is a remarkable repetition of this clause found in the MSS. DL and eight others; the Armenian, Saxon, all the Italia except three; Athan., Theodor., Tertul., August., Ambr., Hilar., and Juvenus. Bengel, in his gnomon approves of this reading. On the above authorities Griesbach has inserted it in the text. It probably made a portion of this Gospel as written by Matthew. The verse in the MSS. is as follows:-But when they shall persecute you in this city, flee ye into another; and if they persecute in the other, flee ye unto another.

***Ye shall not have gone over (ended or finished, margin) the cities, etc.***— The word **τελεσητε** here is generally understood as implying to go over or through, intimating that there should not be time for the disciples to travel over the cities of Judea before the destruction predicted by Christ should take place. But this is very far from being the truth, as there were not less than forty years after this was spoken, before Jerusalem was destroyed: **τελειων και μανθαναντων** are used by the Septuagint. 1 Chronicles 25:8, for those who teach and those who learn. And **τοις τελειοις** is used by the apostle, 1 Corinthians 2:6, for those who are perfectly instructed in the things of God. Ovid has used the Latin perficio, which answers to the Greek **τελειωω** in exactly the same sense.

Phillyrides puerum cithara perfecit Achillem.

“Chiron TAUGHT the young Achilles to play on the harp.” For these reasons some contend that the passage should be translated, Ye shall not have INSTRUCTED, i.e. preached the Gospel in the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come. The Greek divines call baptism **τελειωσις** or initiation. See Leigh. Crit. sacr. Edit. Amst. p. 326, 328.

Dr. Lightfoot supposes the meaning to be: “Ye shall not have traveled over the cities of Israel, preaching the Gospel, before the Son of man is revealed by his resurrection, Romans 1:4; compare Acts 3:19, 20; 5:26. To you first, God, raising up his Son, sent him to bless you, etc. The epoch of the Messiah is dated from the resurrection of Christ.” After all, the place may be understood literally; for **τελειν τας πολεις**, to finish the cities, is only a concise mode of speech, for **τελειν οδον δια τας πολεις**, to complete the journey through the cities. To finish the survey, to preach in every one:-till the Son of man be come, may refer either to the outpouring of the

Spirit on the day of pentecost, or to the subversion of the Jewish state. See Rosenmuller.

**Verse 24. *The disciple is not above his master***— Or in plainer terms, A scholar is not above his teacher. The saying itself requires no comment, its truth and reasonableness are self-evident, but to the spirit and design we should carefully attend. Jesus is the great teacher: we profess to be his scholars. He who keeps the above saying in his heart will never complain of what he suffers. How many irregular thoughts and affections is this maxim capable of restraining! A man is not a scholar of Christ unless he learn his doctrine; and he does not learn it as he ought unless he put it in practice.

**Verse 25. *It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master***— Can any man who pretends to be a scholar or disciple of Jesus Christ, expect to be treated well by the world? Will not the world love its own, and them only? Why, then, so much impatience under sufferings, such an excessive sense of injuries, such delicacy? Can you expect any thing from the world better than you receive? If you want the honor that comes from it, abandon Jesus Christ, and it will again receive you into its bosom. But you will, no doubt, count the cost before you do this. Take the converse, abandon the love of the world, etc., and God will receive you.

***Beelzebub***— This name is variously written in the MSS. Beelzeboul, Beelzeboun, Beelzebud, but there is a vast majority in favor of the reading Beelzebul, which should, by all means, be inserted in the text instead of Beelzebub. See the reasons below, and see the margin.

It is supposed that this idol was the same with **בעל זבוב** Baalzebub the god fly, worshipped at Ekron, 2 Kings 1:2, etc., who had his name changed afterwards by the Jews to **בעל זבול** Baal zebul, the dung god, a title expressive of the utmost contempt. It seems probable that the worship of this vile idol continued even to the time of our Lord; and the title, being applied by the Jews to our blessed Lord, affords the strongest proof of the inveteracy of their malice.

Dr. Lightfoot has some useful observations on this subject, which I shall take the liberty to subjoin.

“For the searching out the sense of this horrid blasphemy, these things are worthy observing,

“I. Among the Jews it was held, in a manner, for a matter of religion, to reproach idols, and to give them odious names. R. Akibah saith, Idolatry pollutes, as it is said, Thou shalt cast away the (idol) as something that is abominable, and thou shalt say to it, Get thee hence: (Isaiah 30:22.) R. Lazar saith, Thou shalt say to it, Get thee hence: that which they call the face of God, let them call the face of a dog. That which they call **עֵי כּוֹ** ein cos, the FOUNTAIN OF A CUP, let them call **עֵי קִיץ** ein kuts, the FOUNTAIN OF TOIL (or of flails.) That which they call **גִּדְיָה** gediyah, FORTUNE, let them call **גְּלִיָּא** geliya, a STINK, etc. That town which sometimes was called Bethel, was afterwards called Bethaven. See also the tract Schabbath.

“II. Among the ignominious names bestowed upon idols, the general and common one was **זְבוּל** Zebul, DUNG, or a DUNGHILL. ‘Even to them that have stretched out their hands **בְּזִבּוּל** bezebul in a dunghill, (that is, in an idol temple, or in idolatry,) there is hope. Thou canst not bring them (into the Church) because they have stretched forth their hands bezebul, in a dunghill. But yet you cannot reject them, because they have repented.’ And a little after, He that sees them dunging, **בְּזִבְלִי** (that is, sacrificing,) to an idol, let him say, Cursed be he that sacrifices to a strange god. Let them, therefore, who dare, form this word in Matthew into Beelzebub. I am so far from doubting that the Pharisees pronounced the word BEELZEBUL, and that Matthew so wrote it, that I doubt not but the sense fails if it be writ otherwise.

“III. Very many names of evil spirits, or devils, occur in the Talmud, which it is needless here to mention. Among all the devils, they esteemed that devil the worst, the foulest, as it were, the prince of the rest, who ruled over the idols, and by whom oracles and miracles were given forth among the Heathens and idolaters. And they were of this opinion for this reason, because they held idolatry, above all other things, chiefly wicked and abominable, and to be the prince and head of evil. This demon they called **בַּעַל זְבוּל** Baal-zebul, not so much by a proper name, as by one more general and common; as much as to say, the lord of idolatry: the

worst devil, and the worst thing; and they called him the prince of devils, because idolatry is the prince (or chief) of wickedness.”

**Verse 26. *Fear them not***— A general direction to all the persecuted followers of Christ. Fear them not, for they can make you suffer nothing worse than they have made Christ suffer; and under all trials he has promised the most ample support.

***For there is nothing covered, etc.***— God sees every thing; this is consolation to the upright and dismay to the wicked; and he will bring into judgment every work, and every secret thing, whether good or bad, Ecclesiastes 12:14.

**Verse 27. *What I tell you in darkness***— A man ought to preach that only which he has learned from God’s Spirit, and his testimonies; but let him not pretend to bring forth any thing new, or mysterious. There is nothing that concerns our salvation that is newer than the new covenant; and in that there are, properly speaking, no mysteries: what was secret before is now made manifest in the Gospel of the ever-blessed God. See Ephesians 3:1-12.

***What ye hear in the ear***— The doctor who explained the law in Hebrew had an interpreter always by him, in whose ears he softly whispered what he said; this interpreter spoke aloud what had been thus whispered to him. Lightfoot has clearly proved this in his *Horae Talmudicae*, and to this custom our Lord here evidently alludes. The spirit of our Lord’s direction appears to be this: whatever I speak to you is for the benefit of mankind,—keep nothing from them, declare explicitly the whole counsel of God; preach ye, (*κηρυξατε* proclaim,) on the house-tops. The houses in Judea were flat-roofed, with a ballustrade round about, which were used for the purpose of taking the air, prayer, meditation, and it seems, from this place, for announcing things in the most public manner. As there are no bells among the Turks, a crier proclaims all times of public worship from the house-tops. Whoever will give himself the trouble to consult the following scriptures will find a variety of uses to which these housetops were assigned. Deuteronomy 22:8; Joshua 2:6; Judges 9:51; Nehemiah 8:16; 2 Samuel 11:2; 2 Kings 23:12; Isaiah 15:3; Jeremiah 32:29, and Acts 10:9.

Lightfoot thinks that this may be an allusion to that custom, when the minister of the synagogue, on the Sabbath eve, sounded with a trumpet six times, upon the roof of a very high house, that from thence all might have notice of the coming in of the Sabbath. The first blast signified that they should heave off their work in the field: the second that they should cease from theirs in the city: the third that they should light the Sabbath candle, etc.

**Verse 28. *Fear not them which kill the body***— **των αποκτεινοντων.**

Those who slay with acts of cruelty, alluding probably to the cruelties which persecutors should exercise on his followers in their martyrdom. But are not able to kill the soul. Hence we find that the body and the soul are distinct principles, for the body may be slain and the soul escape; and, secondly, that the soul is immaterial, for the murderers of the body are not able, **μη δυναμενων**, have it not in their power, to injure it.

***Fear him***— It is, not hell-fire we are to fear, but it is God; without the stroke of whose justice hell itself would be no punishment, and whose frown would render heaven itself insupportable. What strange blindness is it to expose our souls to endless ruin, which should enjoy God eternally; and to save and pamper the body, by which we enjoy nothing but the creatures, and them only for a moment!

**Verse 29. *Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?***— **ασσαριον.** A Roman As was one-tenth of a DENARIUS, which was about sevenpence-halfpenny, and one-tenth of sevenpence-halfpenny makes just three farthings.

The word **ασσαριον**, which we translate farthing, is found among the rabbins in the word **עֵיֶר** aisar, which, according to Maimonides, is equal to four grains of silver, but is used among them to express a thing of the lowest, or almost no value. Our Lord seems to have borrowed the expression, One of them shall not fall on the ground, etc., from his own countrymen. In Bereshith Rabba, sec. 79, fol. 77, it is said: In the time in which the Jews were compelled to apostatize, Rab. Simeon, Ben. Jochai, and Eliezer his son hid themselves in a cave, and lived upon dry husks. After thirteen years they came out; and, sitting at the mouth of the cave, they observed a fowler stretching his nets to catch birds; and as often as

the Bath Kol said דִּמּוֹס dimos, escape! the bird escaped; but when it said פְּקוּלָא spicula, a dart, the bird was taken. Then the rabbin said, Even a bird is not taken without Heaven, i.e. without the will of God, how much less the life of man! The doctrine intended to be inculcated is this: The providence of God extends to the minutest things; every thing is continually under the government and care of God, and nothing occurs without his will or permission; if then he regards sparrows, how much more man, and how much more still the soul that trusts in him!

**Fall on the ground**— Instead of *ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν*, Origen, Clement, Chrysostom, Juvencus, and six MSS. of Mathai, read *εἰς τὴν παγίδα*, into a snare. Bengel conjectures that it might have been written at first, *ἐπὶ τὴν παγην*; that the first syllable *πα* being lost out of the word, *γῆν*, the earth, instead of *παγην*, snare, became the common reading.

**Without your Father.**— Without the will of your Father: *τῆς βουλῆς*, the will or counsel, is added here by Origen, Coptic, all the Arabic, latter Persic, Gothic, all the Itala except two; Tert., Iren., Cypr., Novatian, and other Latin fathers. If the evidence be considered as insufficient to entitle it to admission into the text, let it stand there as a supplementary italic word, necessary to make the meaning of the place evident.

All things are ordered by the counsel of God. This is a great consolation to those who are tried and afflicted. The belief of an all-wise, all-directing Providence, is a powerful support under the most grievous accidents of life. Nothing escapes his merciful regards, not even the smallest things of which he may be said to be only the creator and preserver; how much less those of whom he is the Father, Savior, and endless felicity! See on “Luke 12:7”.

**Verse 30. *But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.***— Nothing is more astonishing than the care and concern of God for his followers. The least circumstances of their life are regulated, not merely by that general providence which extends to all things, but by a particular providence, which fits and directs all things to the design of their salvation, causing them all to co-operate for their present and eternal good. Romans 5:1-5.

**Verse 31. *Fear ye not-ye are of more value***— None can estimate the value of a soul, for which Christ has given his blood and life! Have confidence in

his goodness; for he who so dearly purchased thee will miraculously preserve and save thee. Did the poet intend to contradict Christ when he said:-

*“He sees with equal eye, as God of all,  
A HERO perish, or a SPARROW fall?”*

How cold and meagre is this shallow deistical saying! But could the poet mean, that a sparrow is of as much worth in the sight of God, who regards (if we may believe him) things only in general, as an immortal soul, purchased by the sacrifice of Christ?

**Verse 32. *Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men***— That is, whosoever shall acknowledge me to be the Messiah, and have his heart and life regulated by my spirit and doctrine. It is not merely sufficient to have the heart right before God; there must be a firm, manly, and public profession of Christ before men. “I am no hypocrite,” says one; neither should you be. “I will keep my religion to myself” i.e. you will not confess Christ before men; then he will renounce you before God.

We confess or own Christ when we own his doctrine, his ministers, his servants, and when no fear hinders us from supporting and assisting them in times of necessity.

**Verse 33. *Whosoever shall deny me***— Whosoever prefers his worldly interest to his duty to God, sets a greater value on earthly than on heavenly things, and prefers the friendship of men to the approbation of GOD.

Let it be remembered, that to be renounced by Christ is to have him neither for a Mediator nor Savior. To appear before the tribunal of God without having Christ for our Advocate, and, on the contrary, to have him there as our Judge, and a witness against us, -how can a man think of this and not die with horror!

**Verse 34. *Think not that I am come to send peace, etc.***— The meaning of this difficult passage will be plain, when we consider the import of the word peace, and the expectation of the Jews. I have already had occasion to remark, (Matthew 10:12,) that the word שלום shalom, rendered by the Greeks ειρηνη, was used among the Hebrews to express all possible



blessings, temporal and spiritual; but especially the former. The expectation of the Jews was, that, when the Messiah should come, all temporal prosperity should be accumulated on the land of Judea; therefore *την γην*, in this verse, should not be translated the earth, but this land. The import of our Lord's teaching here is this, Do not imagine, as the Jews in general vainly do, that I am come to send forth, (*βαλλειν*,) by forcing out the Roman power, that temporal prosperity which they long for; I am not come for this purpose, but to send forth (*βαλλειν*) the Roman sword, to cut off a disobedient and rebellious nation, the cup of whose iniquity is already full, and whose crimes cry aloud for speedy vengeance. See also on "Luke 12:49". From the time they rejected the Messiah, they were a prey to the most cruel and destructive factions; they employed their time in butchering one another, till the Roman sword was unsheathed against them, and desolated the land.

**Verse 35. *I am come to set a man at variance***— The spirit of Christ can have no union with the spirit of the world. Even a father, while unconverted, will oppose a godly child. Thus the spirit that is in those who sin against God is opposed to that spirit which is in the followers of the Most High. It is the spirits then that are in opposition, and not the persons.

**Verse 36. *A man's foes shall be they of his own household.***— Our Lord refers here to their own traditions. So Sota, fol. 49. "A little before the coming of the Messiah, the son shall insult the father, the daughter rebel against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and each man shall have his own household for his enemies." Again, in Sanhedrin, fol. 97, it is said: "In the age in which the Messiah shall come, the young men shall turn the elders into ridicule; the elders shall rise up against the youth, the daughter against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and the man of that age shall be excessively impudent; nor shall the son reverence his father." These are most remarkable sayings, and, by them, our Lord shows them that he was the Messiah, for all these things literally took place shortly after their final rejection of Christ. See the terrible account, given by Josephus, relative to the desolations of those times. Through the just judgment of God, they who rejected the Lord that bought them became abandoned to every species of iniquity; they rejected the salvation of God, and fell into the condemnation of the devil.

Father Quesnel's note on this place is worthy of deep attention. "The father (says he) is the enemy of his son, when, through a bad education, an irregular love, and a cruel indulgence, he leaves him to take a wrong bias, instructs him not in his duty, and fills his mind with ambitious views. The son is the father's enemy, when he is the occasion of his doing injustice, in order to heap up an estate for him, and to make his fortune. The mother is the daughter's enemy, when she instructs her to please the world, breeds her up in excess and vanity, and suffers any thing scandalous or unseemly in her dress. The daughter is the mother's enemy, when she becomes her idol, when she engages her to comply with her own irregular inclinations, and to permit her to frequent balls and plays. The master is the enemy of his servant, and the servant that of his master, when the one takes no care of the other's salvation, and the latter is subservient to his master's passions."

**Verse 37. *He that loveth father or mother more than me***— He whom we love the most is he whom we study most to please, and whose will and interests we prefer in all cases. If, in order to please a father or mother who are opposed to vital godliness, we abandon God's ordinances and followers, we are unworthy of any thing but hell.

**Verse 38. *He that taketh not his cross***— i.e. He who is not ready, after my example, to suffer death in the cause of my religion, is not worthy of me, does not deserve to be called my disciple.

This alludes to the custom of causing the criminal to bear his own cross to the place of execution; so Plutarch, *εκάστος ρυς κακουργων εκφερει τον αυτου σταυρον*. Each of the malefactors carries on his own cross. See "John 19:17".

**Verse 39. *He that findeth his life, etc.***— i.e. He who, for the sake of his temporal interest, abandons his spiritual concerns, shall lose his soul; and he who, in order to avoid martyrdom, abjures the pure religion of Christ, shall lose his soul, and perhaps his life too. He that findeth his life shall lose it, was literally fulfilled in Archbishop Cranmer. He confessed Christ against the devil, and his eldest son, the pope. He was ordered to be burnt; to save his life he recanted, and was, notwithstanding, burnt. Whatever a man sacrifices to God is never lost, for he finds it again in God.

There is a fine piece on this subject in Juvenal, Sat. viii. l. 80, which deserves to be recorded here.

— *ambiguae si quando citabere testis  
Incertaeque rei, Phalaris liect imperet ut sis  
Falsus, et admoto dictet perjurio tauro,  
Summum crede nefas ANIMAM praeferre PUDORI  
Et propter VITAM VIVENDI perdere causas*

— *If ever call'd  
To give thy witness in a doubtful case,  
Though Phalaris himself should bid thee lie,  
On pain of torture in his flaming bull,  
Disdain to barter innocence for life;  
To which life owes its lustre and its worth  
Wakefield*

**Verse 40. *He that receiveth you***— Treats you kindly, receiveth me; I will consider the kindness as shown to myself; for he who receiveth me, as the true Messiah, receiveth that God by whose counsels and through whose love I am come.

**Verse 41. *He that receiveth a prophet***— *προφητην*, a teacher, not a foreteller of future events, for this is not always the meaning of the word; but one commissioned by God to teach the doctrines of eternal life. It is no small honor to receive into one's house a minister of Jesus Christ. Every person is not admitted to exercise the sacred ministry; but none are excluded from partaking of its grace, its spirit, and its reward. If the teacher should be weak, or even if he should be found afterwards to have been worthless, yet the person who has received him in the name, under the sacred character, of an evangelist, shall not lose his reward; because what he did he did for the sake of Christ, and through love for his Church. Many sayings of this kind are found among the rabbins, and this one is common: "He who receives a learned man, or an elder, into his house, is the same as if he had received the Shekinah." And again: "He who speaks against a faithful pastor, it is the same as if he had spoken against God himself." See Schoettgen.

**Verse 42. *A cup of cold water***— *υδατος*, of water, is not in the common text, but it is found in the Codex Bezae, Coptic, Armenian, Gothic, Anglo-Saxon, Slavonic, all copies of the Itala, Vulgate, and Origen. It is

necessarily understood; the ellipsis of the same substantive is frequent, both in the Greek and Latin writers. See Wakefield.

***Little ones***— My apparently mean and generally despised disciples.

But a cup of water in the eastern countries was not a matter of small worth. In India, the Hindoos go sometimes a great way to fetch it, and then boil it that it may do the less hurt to travelers when they are hot; and, after that, they stand from morning to night in some great road, where there is neither pit nor rivulet, and offer it, in honor of their god, to be drunk by all passengers. This necessary work of charity, in these hot countries, seems to have been practised by the more pious and humane Jews; and our Lord assures them that, if they do this in his name, they shall not lose their reward. See the Asiatic Miscellany, vol. ii. p. 142.

***Verily-he shall in no wise lose his reward.***— The rabbins have a similar saying: “He that gives food to one that studies in the law, God will bless him in this world, and give him a lot in the world to come.” Syn. Sohar.

Love heightens the smallest actions, and gives a worth to them which they cannot possess without it. Under a just and merciful God every sin is either punished or pardoned, and every good action rewarded. The most indigent may exercise the works of mercy and charity; seeing even a cup of cold water, given in the name of Jesus, shall not lose its reward. How astonishing is God’s kindness! It is not the rich merely whom he calls on to be charitable; but even the poor, and the most impoverished of the poor! God gives the power and inclination to be charitable, and then rewards the work which, it may be truly said, God himself hath wrought. It is the name of Jesus that sanctifies every thing, and renders services, in themselves comparatively contemptible, of high worth in the sight of God. See Quesnel.

## CHAPTER 11

*Christ, having finished his instructions to his disciples, departs to preach in different cities, 1. John sends two of his disciples to him to inquire whether he were the Christ, 2-6. Christ's testimony concerning John, 7-15. He upbraids the Jews with their capriciousness, 16-19. The condemnation of Chorazin, and Bethsaida, and Capernaum, for their unbelief and impenitence, 20-24. Praises the Divine wisdom for revealing the Gospel to the simple-hearted, 25, 26. Shows that none can know God but by the revelation of his Son, 27. Invites the distressed to come unto him, and gives them the promise of rest for their souls, 29-30.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 11

**Verse 1.** This verse properly belongs to the preceding chapter, from which it should on no account be separated; as with that it has the strictest connection, but with this it has none.

*To teach and to preach— To teach, to give private instructions to as many as came unto him; and to preach, to proclaim publicly, that the kingdom of God is at hand; two grand parts of the duty of a Gospel minister. Their cities—* The cities of the Jews.

**Verse 2. *John had heard in the prison***— John was cast into prison by order of Herod Antipas, Matthew 14:3, etc., (where see the notes,) a little after our Lord began his public ministry, Matthew 4:12; and after the first passover, John 3:24.

**Verse 3. *Art thou he that should come***— ο ερχομενος, he that cometh, seems to have been a proper name of the Messiah; to save or deliver is necessarily implied. See on Luke 7:19.

There is some difficulty in what is here spoken of John. Some have thought he was utterly ignorant of our Lord's Divine mission, and that he sent merely for his own information; but this is certainly inconsistent with his own declaration, Luke 3:15, etc.; John 1:15, 26, 33, 3:28, etc. Others

suppose he sent the message merely for the instruction of his disciples; that, as he saw his end approaching, he wished them to have the fullest conviction that Jesus was the Messiah, that they might attach themselves to him.

A third opinion takes a middle course between the two former, and states that, though John was at first perfectly convinced that Jesus was the Christ, yet, entertaining some hopes that he would erect a secular kingdom in Judea, wished to know whether this was likely to take place speedily. It is very probable that John now began, through the length of his confinement, to entertain doubts, relative to his kingdom, which perplexed and harassed his mind; and he took the most reasonable way to get rid of them at once, viz. by applying to Christ himself.

**Two of his disciples**— Instead of δύο, two, several excellent MSS., with both the Syriac, Armenian, Gothic, and one copy of the Itala, have δια, by; he sent by his disciples.

**Verse 4. Go and show John the things-ye do hear and see**— Christ would have men to judge only of him and of others by their works. This is the only safe way of judging. A man is not to be credited because he professes to know such and such things; but because he demonstrates by his conduct that his pretensions are not vain.

**Verse 5. The blind receive their sight, etc.**— ἀναβλεπωσι, look upwards, contemplating the heavens which their Lord hath made.

**The lame walk**— περιπατωσι, they walk about; to give the fullest proof to the multitude that their cure was real. These miracles were not only the most convincing proofs of the supreme power of Christ, but were also emblematic of that work of salvation which he effects in the souls of men. 1. Sinners are blind; their understanding is so darkened by sin that they see not the way of truth and salvation. 2. They are lame-not able to walk in the path of righteousness. 3. They are leprous, their souls are defiled with sin, the most loathsome and inveterate disease; deepening in themselves, and infecting others. 4. They are deaf to the voice of God, his word, and their own conscience. 5. They are dead in trespasses and sins; God, who is the life of the soul, being separated from it by iniquity. Nothing less than the power of Christ can redeem from all this; and, from all this, that power

of Christ actually does redeem every penitent believing soul. Giving sight to the blind, and raising the dead, are allowed by the ancient rabbins to be works which the Messiah should perform, when he should manifest himself in Israel.

***The poor have the Gospel preached to them.***— And what was this Gospel? Why, the glad tidings that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners: that he opens the eyes of the blind; enables the lame to walk with an even, steady, and constant pace in the way of holiness; cleanses the lepers from all the defilement of their sins; opens the ears of the deaf to hear his pardoning words; and raises those who were dead in trespasses and sins to live in union with himself to all eternity.

**Verse 6. *Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me.***— Or, Happy is he who will not be stumbled at me; for the word **σκανδαλιζεσθαι**, in its root, signifies to hit against or stumble over a thing, which one may meet with in the way. The Jews, as was before remarked, expected a temporal deliverer. Many might he tempted to reject Christ, because of his mean appearance, etc., and so lose the benefit of salvation through him. To instruct and caution such, our blessed Lord spoke these words. By his poverty and meanness he condemns the pride and pomp of this world. He who will not humble himself, and become base, and poor, and vile in his own eyes, cannot enter into the kingdom of God. It is the poor, in general, who hear the Gospel; the rich and the great are either too busy, or too much gratified with temporal things, to pay any attention to the voice of God.

**Verse 7. *What went ye out into the wilderness to see?***— The purport of our Lord's design, in this and the following verses, is to convince the scribes and Pharisees of the inconsistency of their conduct in acknowledging John Baptist for a divinely authorized teacher, and not believing in the very Christ which he pointed out to them. He also shows, from the excellencies of John's character, that their confidence in him was not misplaced, and that this was a farther argument why they should have believed in him, whom the Baptist proclaimed as being far superior to himself.

***A reed shaken with the wind?***— An emblem of an irresolute, unsteady mind, which believes and speaks one thing to-day, and another to-morrow.

Christ asks these Jews if they had ever found any thing in John like this: Was he not ever steady and uniform in the testimony he bore to me? The first excellency which Christ notices in John was his steadiness; convinced once of the truth, he continued to believe and assert it. This is essentially necessary to every preacher, and to every private Christian. He who changes about from opinion to opinion, and from one sect or party to another, is never to be depended on; there is much reason to believe that such a person is either mentally weak, or has never been rationally and divinely convinced of the truth.

**Verse 8. *A man clothed in soft raiment?***— A second excellency in John was, his sober and mortified life. A preacher of the Gospel should have nothing about him which savours of effeminacy and worldly pomp: he is awfully mistaken who thinks to prevail on the world to hear him and receive the truth, by conforming himself to its fashions and manners. Excepting the mere color of his clothes, we can scarcely now distinguish a preacher of the Gospel, whether in the establishment of the country, or out of it, from the merest worldly man. Ruffles, powder, and fribble seem universally to prevail. Thus the Church and the world begin to shake hands, the latter still retaining its enmity to God. How can those who profess to preach the doctrine of the cross act in this way? Is not a worldly-minded preacher, in the most peculiar sense, an abomination in the eyes of the Lord?

***Are in kings' houses.***— A third excellency in John was, he did not affect high things. He was contented to live in the desert, and to announce the solemn and severe truths of his doctrine to the simple inhabitants of the country. Let it be well observed, that the preacher who conforms to the world in his clothing, is never in his element but when he is frequenting the houses and tables of the rich and great.

**Verse 9. *A prophet? yea-and more than a prophet***— That is, one more excellent (περισσότερον) than a prophet; one greatly beyond all who had come before him, being the immediate forerunner of Christ, (see below,) and who was especially commissioned to prepare the way of the Lord. This was a fourth excellency: he was a prophet, a teacher, a man divinely commissioned to point out Jesus and his salvation; and more excellent than any of the old prophets, because he not only pointed out this Christ, but



saw him, and had the honor of dying for that sacred truth which he steadily believed and boldly proclaimed.

**Verse 10. *Behold, I send my messenger***— A fifth excellency of the Baptist was, his preparing the way of the Lord; being the instrument, in God's hand, of preparing the people's hearts to receive the Lord Jesus; and it was probably through his preaching that so many thousands attached themselves to Christ, immediately on his appearing as a public teacher.

**Verse 11. *A greater than John the Baptist***— A sixth excellency of the Baptist—he was greater than any prophet from the beginning of the world till that time:—1st. Because he was prophesied of by them, Isaiah 40:3, and Malachi 3:1, where Jesus Christ himself seems to be the speaker. 2ndly. Because he had the privilege of showing the fulfillment of their predictions, by pointing out that Christ has now come, which they foretold should come. And 3dly. Because he saw and enjoyed that salvation which they could only foretell. See Quesnel.

***Notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven***— By the kingdom of heaven in this verse is meant, the fullness of the blessings of the Gospel of peace; which fullness was not known till after Christ had been crucified, and had risen from the dead. Now the least in this kingdom, the meanest preacher of a crucified, risen, and glorified Savior, was greater than John, who was not permitted to live to see the plenitude of Gospel grace, in the pouring out of the Holy Spirit. Let the reader observe, 1st. That the kingdom of heaven here does not mean the state of future glory. See Matthew 3:2. 2dly. That it is not in holiness or devotedness to God that the least in this kingdom is greater than John; but 3dly. That it is merely in the difference of the ministry. The prophets pointed out a Christ that was coming; John showed that that Christ was then among them; and the preachers of the Gospel prove that this Christ has suffered, and entered into his glory, and that repentance and remission of sins are proclaimed through his blood. There is a saying similar to this among the Jews: “Even the servant maid that passed through the Red Sea, saw what neither Ezekiel, nor any other of the prophets had seen.”

**Verse 12. *The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence***— The tax-gatherers and heathens, whom the scribes and Pharisees think have no right to the

kingdom of the Messiah, filled with holy zeal and earnestness, seize at once on the proffered mercy of the Gospel, and so take the kingdom as by force from those learned doctors who claimed for themselves the chiefest places in that kingdom. Christ himself said, The tax-gatherers and harlots go before you into the kingdom of God. See the parallel place, Luke 7:28-30. He that will take, get possession of the kingdom of righteousness, peace, and spiritual joy, must be in earnest: all hell will oppose him in every step he takes; and if a man be not absolutely determined to give up his sins and evil companions, and have his soul saved at all hazards, and at every expense, he will surely perish everlastingly. This requires a violent earnestness.

**Verse 13. *All the prophets and the law prophesied until John.***— I believe προφητευσαν means here, they taught, or continued to instruct. They were the instructors concerning the Christ who was to come, till John came and showed that all the predictions of the one, and the types and ceremonies of the other were now about to be fully and finally accomplished; for Christ was now revealed. The word is taken in this sense, Matthew 7:22.

**Verse 14. *This is Elias, which was for to come.***— This should always be written Elijah, that as strict a conformity as possible might be kept up between the names in the Old Testament and the New. The Prophet Malachi, who predicted the coming of the Baptist in the spirit and power of Elijah, gave the three following distinct characteristics of him. First, That he should be the forerunner and messenger of the Messiah: Behold I send my messenger before me, Malachi 3:1. Secondly, That he should appear before the destruction of the second temple: Even the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, *ibid.* Thirdly, That he should preach repentance to the Jews; and that, some time after, the great and terrible day of the Lord should come, and the Jewish land be smitten with a curse, Malachi 4:5, 6. Now these three characters agree perfectly with the conduct of the Baptist, and what shortly followed his preaching, and have not been found in any one else; which is a convincing proof that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

**Verse 15. *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.***— As if our Lord had said, These things are so clear and manifest that a man has only to hear

them to be convinced and fully satisfied of their truth. But neither the Jews of that time nor of the succeeding times to the present day, have heard or considered, these things. When spoken to on these subjects, their common custom is to stop their ears, spit out, and blaspheme; this shows not only a bad, but a ruined cause. They are deeply and willfully blind. They will not come unto the light, lest their deeds should become manifest, that they are not wrought in God. They have ears but they will not hear.

**Verse 16. *But whereunto shall I liken this generation?***— That is, the Jewish people-*την γενεαν ταυτην*, this race: and so the word *γενεα* is often to be understood in the evangelists.

***In the markets***— Or, places of concourse, *αγοραις*, from *αγειρω*, I gather together; not a market-place only, but any place of public resort: probably meaning here, places of public amusement.

***Calling unto their fellows***— Or, companions. Instead of *εταιροις*, companions, many of the best MSS. have *ετεροις*, others. The great similarity of the words might have easily produced this difference.

There are some to whom every thing is useful in leading them to God; others, to whom nothing is sufficient. Every thing is good to an upright mind, every thing bad to a vicious heart.

**Verse 17. *We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced***— We have begun the music, which should have been followed by the dance, but ye have not attended to it.

***We have mourned-and ye have not lamented.***— Ye have not smote the breast: *ουκ εκοψασθε*, from *κοπτομαι*, to strike, or beat the breasts with the hands, particularly in lamentation. So used, Nahum 2:7; Luke 18:13; 23:48, and by the best Greek and Roman writers. There is an allusion here to those funeral lamentations explained Matthew 9:23.

**Verse 18. *For John came neither eating nor drinking***— Leading a very austere and mortified life: and yet, he did not receive him. A sinner will not be persuaded that what he has no mind to imitate can come from God. There are some who will rather blame holiness itself, than esteem it in those whom they do not like.

***He hath a devil.***— He is a vile hypocrite, influenced by a demon to deceive and destroy the simple.

**Verse 19. *The Son of man came eating and drinking***— That is, went wheresoever he was invited to eat a morsel of bread, and observed no rigid fasts: how could he, who had no corrupt appetites to mortify or subdue?

***They say, Behold a man gluttonous, etc.***— Whatever measures the followers of God may take, they will not escape the censure of the world: the best way is not to be concerned at them. Iniquity, being always ready to oppose and contradict the Divine conduct, often contradicts and exposes itself.

***But wisdom is justified of her children.***— Those who follow the dictates of true wisdom ever justify, point out as excellent, the holy maxims by which they are guided, for they find the way pleasantness, and the path, peace. Of, here, and in many places of our translation, ought to be written by in modern English. Some suppose that our blessed Lord applies the epithet of **ἡ σοφία**, that Wisdom to himself; as he does that of Son of man, in the first clause of the verse: and that this refers to the sublime description given of wisdom in Proverbs 8. Others have supposed that by the children or sons (**τεκνών**) of wisdom our Lord means John Baptist and himself, who came to preach the doctrines of true wisdom to the people, and who were known to be teachers come from God by all those who seriously attended to their ministry: they recommending themselves, by the purity of their doctrines, and the holiness of their lives, to every man's conscience in the sight of God. It is likely, however, that by children our Lord simply means the fruits or effects of wisdom, according to the Hebrew idiom, which denominates the fruits or effects of a thing, its children. So in Job 5:7, sparks emitted by coals are termed **בני רשף** beney resheph, the children of the coal. It was probably this well known meaning of the word, which led the Codex Vaticanus, one of the most ancient MSS. in the world, together with the Syriac, Persic, Coptic, and Ethiopic, to read **εργων**, works, instead of **τεκνών**, sons or children. Wisdom is vindicated by her works, i.e. the good effects prove that the cause is excellent.

The children of true wisdom can justify all God's ways in their salvation; as they know that all the dispensations of Providence work together for the good of those who love and fear God. See on Luke 7:35.

**Verse 20. *Then began he to upbraid the cities***— The more God has done to draw men unto himself, the less excusable are they if they continue in iniquity. If our blessed Lord had not done every thing that was necessary for the salvation of these people, he could not have reproached them for their impenitence.

**Verse 21. *Wo unto thee, Chorazin-Bethsaida!***— It would be better to translate the word *οὐαὶ σοὶ*, alas for thee, than wo to thee. The former is an exclamation of pity; the latter a denunciation of wrath. It is evident that our Lord used it in the former sense. It is not known precisely where Chorazin was situated; but as Christ joins it in the same censure with Bethsaida, which was in Upper Galilee, beyond the sea, Mark 6:45, it is likely that Chorazin was in the same quarter. Though the people in these cities were (generally) impenitent, yet there is little doubt that several received the word of life. Indeed, Bethsaida itself furnished not less than three of the twelve apostles, Philip, Andrew, and Peter. See John 1:44.

***Tyre and Sidon***— Were two heathen cities, situated on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, into which it does not appear that Christ ever went, though he was often very nigh to them; see Matthew 15:21.

***They would have repented long ago***— *παλαιο*, formerly, seems here to refer to the time of Ezekiel, who denounced destruction against Tyre and Sidon, Ezekiel 26, 27, and 28. Our Lord, then, intimates that, if Ezekiel had done as many miracles in those cities as himself had in Chorazin and Bethsaida, the inhabitants would have repented in sackcloth and ashes, with the deepest and most genuine sorrow.

A Hindoo who renounces the secular life, and becomes a religious mendicant, often covers himself with a coarse cloth sprinkled over with ashes. This is the sackcloth and ashes which our Lord refers to; and this covering was the outward sign of deep repentance, and forsaking of sin.

**Verse 22. *But-it shall be more tolerable***— Every thing will help to overwhelm the impenitent at the tribunal of God—the benefits and favors which they have received, as well as the sins which they have committed.

**Verse 23. *Thou, Capernaum-exalted unto heaven***— A Hebrew metaphor, expressive of the utmost prosperity, and the enjoyment of the

greatest privileges. This was properly spoken of this city, because that in it our Lord dwelt, and wrought many of his miraculous works.

***Shalt be brought down to hell***— Perhaps not meaning, here, the place of torment, but rather a state of desolation. The original word is Hades, **αδης**, from **α**, not, and **ιδειν**, to see; the invisible receptacle or mansion of the dead, answering to **שְׁאוֹל** sheol, in Hebrew; and implying often, 1st. the grave; 2dly. the state of separate souls, or unseen world of spirits, whether of torment, Luke 16:23, or, in general, Revelation 1:18; 6:8; 20:13, 14. The word hell, used in the common translation, conveys now an improper meaning of the original word; because hell is only used to signify the place of the damned. But, as the word hell comes from the Anglo-Saxon, *helan*, to cover, or hide, hence the tiling or slating of a house is called, in some parts of England (particularly Cornwall) *heling*, to this day; and the covers of books (in Lancashire) by the same name: so the literal import of the original word **αδης** was formerly well expressed by it. Here it means a state of the utmost wo, and ruin, and desolation, to which these impenitent cities should be reduced. This prediction of our Lord was literally fulfilled; for, in the wars between the Romans and the Jews, these cities were totally destroyed, so that no traces are now found of Bethsaida, Chorazin, or Capernaum. See Bp. PEARCE.

**Verse 24. *But-it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom***— **γη σοδομων**, the land of the Sodomites; i.e. the ancient inhabitants of that city and its neighborhood.

In Jude, Jude 7, we are told that these persons are suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah happened A. M. 2107, which was 1897 years before the incarnation. What a terrible thought is this! It will be more tolerable for certain sinners, who have already been damned nearly four thousand years, than for those who, live and die infidels under the Gospel! There are various degrees of punishments in hell, answerable to various degrees of guilt, and the contempt manifested to, and the abuse made of; the preaching of the Gospel, will rank semi-infidel Christians in the highest list of transgressors, and purchase them the hottest place in hell! Great God! save the reader from this destruction!

**Day of judgment**— May either refer to that particular time in which God visits for iniquity, or to that great day in which he will judge the world by the Lord Jesus Christ. The day of Sodom’s judgment was that in which it was destroyed by fire and brimstone from heaven, Genesis 19:24; and the day of judgment to Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, was the time in which they were destroyed by the Romans, Matthew 11:23. But there is a day of final judgment, when Hades itself, (sinners in a state of partial punishment in the invisible world) shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death. See Revelation 20:14.

**Verse 25. *I thank thee***— *εξομολογουμεαι σοι*, I fully agree with thee—I am perfectly of the same mind. Thou hast acted in all things according to the strictest holiness, justice, mercy, and truth.

**Wise and prudent**— The scribes and Pharisees, vainly puffed up by their fleshly minds, and having their foolish hearts darkened, refusing to submit to the righteousness of God (God’s method of saving man by Christ) and going about to establish their own righteousness, (their own method of saving themselves,) they rejected God’s counsel, and God sent the peace and salvation of the Gospel to others, called here babes, (his disciples,) simple-hearted persons, who submitted to be instructed and saved in God’s own way. Let it be observed, that our Lord does not thank the Father that he had hidden these things from the wise and prudent, but that, seeing they were hidden from them, he had revealed them to the others.

There is a remarkable saying in the Talmudists, which casts light upon this: “Rab. Jochanan said: ‘From the time in which the temple was destroyed, wisdom was taken away from the prophets, and give a to fools and children.’ Bava Bathra, fol. 12. Again: ‘In the days of the Messiah, every species of wisdom, even the most profound, shall, be revealed; and this even to children.’” Synop. Sohar. fol. 10.

**Verse 26. *Even so, Father***— *ναι ο πατηρ*. An emphatical ratification of the preceding address.

It was right that the heavenly wisdom, despised, rejected, and persecuted by the scribes and Pharisees, should be offered to the simple people, and afterwards to the foolish people, the Gentiles, who are the children of

wisdom, and justify God in his ways, by bringing forth that fruit of the Gospel of which the Pharisees refused to receive even the seed.

**Verse 27. *All things are delivered unto me of my Father***— This is a great truth, and the key of the science of salvation. The man Christ Jesus receives from the Father, and in consequence of his union with the eternal Godhead becomes the Lord and sovereign Dispenser of all things. All the springs of the Divine favor are in the hands of Christ, as Priest of God, and atoning Sacrifice for men: all good proceeds from him, as Savior, Mediator, Head, Pattern, Pastor, and sovereign Judge of the whole world.

***No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man, etc.***— None can fully comprehend the nature and attributes of God, but Christ; and none can fully comprehend the nature, incarnation, etc., of Christ, but the Father. The full comprehension and acknowledgment of the Godhead, and the mystery of the Trinity, belong to God alone.

**Verse 28. *Come unto me***— This phrase in the new covenant implies simply, believing in Christ, and becoming his disciple, or follower.

***All ye that labor and are heavy laden***— The metaphor here appears to be taken from a man who has a great load laid upon him, which he must carry to a certain place: every step he takes reduces his strength, and renders his load the more oppressive. However, it must be carried on; and he labors, uses his utmost exertions, to reach the place where it is to be laid down. A kind person passing by, and, seeing his distress, offers to ease him of his load, that he may enjoy rest.

The Jews, heavily laden with the burdensome rites of the Mosaic institution, rendered still more oppressive by the additions made by the scribes and Pharisees, who, our Lord says, (Matthew 23:4,) bound on heavy burdens; and laboring, by their observance of the law, to make themselves pleasing to God, are here invited to lay down their load, and receive the salvation procured for them by Christ.

Sinners, wearied in the ways of iniquity, are also invited to come to this Christ, and find speedy relief.

Penitents, burdened with the guilt of their crimes, may come to this Sacrifice, and find instant pardon.



Believers, sorely tempted, and oppressed by the remains of the carnal mind, may come to this blood, that cleanseth from all unrighteousness; and, purified from all sin, and powerfully succored in every temptation, they shall find uninterrupted rest in this complete Savior.

All are invited to come, and all are promised rest. If few find rest from sin and vile affections, it is because few come to Christ to receive it.

**Verse 29. *Take my yoke upon you***— Strange paradox! that a man already weary and overloaded must take a new weight upon him, in order to be eased and find rest! But this advice is similar to that saying, Psalm 55:22. Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee; i.e. trust thy soul and concerns to him, and he will carry both thyself and thy load.

***I am meek and lowly in heart***— Wherever pride and anger dwell, there is nothing but mental labor and agony; but, where the meekness and humility of Christ dwell, all is smooth, even, peaceable, and quiet; for the work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever. Isaiah 32:17.

**Verse 30. *For my yoke is easy***— My Gospel imposes nothing that is difficult; on the contrary, it provides for the complete removal of all that which oppresses and renders man miserable, viz. sin. The commandments of Christ are not grievous. Hear the whole: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself. Can any thing be more congenial to the nature of man than love?—such a love as is inspired by God, and in which the soul rests supremely satisfied and infinitely happy? Taste, and know, by experience, how good the Lord is, and how worthy his yoke is to be taken, borne, and loved. This most tender invitation of the compassionate Jesus is sufficient to inspire the most diffident soul with confidence. See on Mark 8:34.

Creeshna, the incarnate God of the Hindoos, is represented in the Geeta addressing one of his beloved disciples thus: “I am the creator of all things, and all things proceed from me. Those who are endued with spiritual wisdom, believe this, and worship me: their very hearts and minds are in me; they rejoice among themselves, and delight in speaking of my name, and teaching one another my doctrine. I gladly inspire those who are constantly employed in my service with that use of reason by which they

come unto me; and, in compassion, I stand in my own nature, and dissipate the darkness of their ignorance with the light of the lamp of wisdom.” Bhagvat Geeta, p. 84.

The word **עול** aval, among the Jews, which we properly enough translate yoke, signified not only that sort of neck-harness by which bullocks drew in wagons, carts, or in the plough; but also any kind of bond, or obligation, to do some particular thing, or to do some particular work. By them it is applied to the following things:-

1. The yoke of the KINGDOM of heaven, **עול מלכות השמים**-obedience to the revealed will of God.
2. The yoke of the LAW, **עול הורה**-the necessity of obeying all the rites, ceremonies, etc., of the Mosaic institution.
3. The yoke of the PRECEPT, **עול מצוה**-the necessity of performing that particular obligation by which any person had bound himself, such as that of the Nazarite, etc.
4. The yoke of REPENTANCE, **עול של השוכה**-without which, they knew, they could not enter into the kingdom of heaven. With the Jews, repentance not only implied forsaking sin, but fasting, mortification, etc.
5. The yoke of FAITH, **עול אמונה**-the necessity of believing in the promised Messiah.
6. The DIVINE yoke, **עול רלעילא**-the obligation to live a spiritual life; a life of thanksgiving and gratitude unto God.

In Shemoth Rabba it is said: “Because the ten tribes did not take the yoke of the holy and blessed God upon them, therefore Sennacherib led them into captivity.”

CHRIST’S yoke means, the obligation to receive him as the MESSIAH, to believe his doctrine, and to be in all things conformed to his Word and to his Spirit.

## CHAPTER 12

*Jesus and his disciples go through the cornfields on the Sabbath, and the latter pluck and eat some of the ears, at which the Pharisees take offense, 1, 2. Our Lord vindicates them, 3-8. The man with the withered hand cured, 9-13. The Pharisees seek his destruction, 14. He heals the multitudes, and fulfils certain prophecies, 15-21. Heals the blind and dumb demoniac, 22, 23. The malice of the Pharisees reproved by our Lord, 24-30. The sin against the Holy Ghost, 31, 32. Good and bad trees known by their fruits-evil and good men by their conduct, 33-37. Jonah, a sign of Christ's death and resurrection, 38-40. The men of Nineveh and the queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment against the Jews, 41, 42. Of the unclean spirit, 43-45. Christ's mother and brethren seek him, 46-50.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 12

**Verse 1.** *At that time Jesus went on the Sabbath-day through the corn—* “The time is determined by Luke in these words, *εν σαββατω δευτεροπρωτω*, that is, on the Sabbath from the second-first.

“1. Provision was made by the Divine law that the sheaf of first-fruits should be offered on the second day of the pass-over week, Leviticus 23:10, 11. On the morrow after the Sabbath, the priest shall shake (or wave) it. Not on the morrow after the ordinary Sabbath of the week, but the morrow after the first of the pass-over week, which was a Sabbatic day, Exodus 12:16; Leviticus 23:7. Hence the seventy, *επαυριον της πρωτης*, the morrow of the first day; the Chaldee, the morrow after the holy day. The rabbins, Solomon and Menachen, have it, On the morrow after the first day of the pass-over feast; of which mention had been made in the verses foregoing.

“But now, from the second day of the pass-over solemnity, wherein the sheaf was offered, were numbered seven weeks to pentecost: for the day of the sheaf, and the day of pentecost did mutually respect each other; for on this second day of the pass-over, the offering of the sheaf was

supplicatory, and by way of prayer, beseeching a blessing upon the new corn, and leave to eat it, and to put in the sickle into the standing corn. Now, the offering of the first-fruit loaves on the day of pentecost, (Leviticus 23:15-17,) did respect the giving of thanks for the finishing and housing of the barley-harvest. Therefore, in regard of this relation, these two solemnities were linked together, that both might respect the harvest; that, the harvest beginning; this, the harvest ended: this depended on that, and was numbered seven weeks after it. Therefore, the computation of the time coming between could not but carry with it the memory of that second day of the pass-over week; and hence pentecost is called the feast of weeks, Deuteronomy 16:10. The true calculation of the time between could not otherwise be retained, as to Sabbaths, but by numbering thus: this is **σαββατων δευτεροπρωτον**, the first Sabbath after the second day of the pass-over. This is **δευτεροδυρερον**, the second Sabbath after that second day. And so of the rest. In the Jerusalem Talmud, the word **שבת פרוטוגמייא** shebeth protogamiya, the Sabbath, **πρωτογαμιας**, of the first marriage, is a composition not very unlike.” Lightfoot.

***His disciples were an hungered***— Were hungry. The former is a mode of expression totally obsolete. How near does the translation of this verse come to our ancient mother-tongue, the Anglo-Saxon!-[AS]-The Healer went on rest-day over acres: truly his learning knights hungered, and they began to pluck the ear and eaten. We may well wonder at the extreme poverty of Christ and his disciples. He was himself present with them, and yet permitted them to lack bread! A man, therefore, is not forsaken of God because he is in want. It is more honorable to suffer the want of all temporal things in fellowship with Christ and his followers, than to have all things in abundance in connection with the world.

**Verse 2. *Thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do***— The Jews were so superstitious, concerning the observance of the Sabbath, that in their wars with Antiochus Epiphanes, and the Romans, they thought it a crime even to attempt to defend themselves on the Sabbath: when their enemies observed this, they deterred their operations to that day. It was through this, that Pompey was enabled to take Jerusalem. Dion. Cass. lib. xxxvi.

Those who know not the spirit and design of the divine law are often superstitious to inhumanity, and indulgent to impiety. An intolerant and

censorious spirit in religion is one of the greatest curses a man can well fall under.

**Verse 3. — 4. *Have ye not read what David did***— The original history is in 1 Samuel 21:1-6.

***When he was an hungered***— Here hearken to Kimchi, producing the opinion of the ancients concerning this story in these words: “Our rabbins of blessed memory say, that he gave him the shew-bread, etc. The interpretation also of the clause, Yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel, is this: It is a small thing to say, that it is lawful for us to eat THESE LOAVES, taken from before the Lord, when we are hungry; for it would be lawful to eat this very loaf which is now set on, which is also sanctified in the vessel, (for the table sanctifieth,) it would be lawful to eat even this, when another loaf is not present with you to give us, and we are so hunger-bitten. And a little after, There is nothing which may hinder taking care of life, beside idolatry, adultery, and murder. That is, a man, according to them, should do any thing but these in order to preserve life.” See Lightfoot.

***He entered into the house of God***— Viz. the house of Ahimelech the priest, who dwelt at Nob, with whom the tabernacle then was, in which the Divine presence was manifested.

***And did eat the shew-bread***— τους αρτους της προθεσεως—in Hebrew, לֶחֶם פָּנִים lechem panim—bread of the presence, or faces, because this bread was to be set continually, לפני יהוה lipney Yehovah, before the face of Jehovah. See the notes on Exodus 25:23, 30.

“Since part of the frankincense put in the bread was to be burnt on the altar for a memorial, Leviticus 24:7, and since Aaron and his sons were to eat it in the holy place, it is evident that this bread typified Christ, first presented as a sacrifice to, or in the presence of, Jehovah, and then becoming spiritual food to such as, in and through him, are spiritual priests to God. See Revelation 1:6; 5:10; 20:6; also 1 Peter 2:5.” Parkhurst.

**Verse 4.** See “Matthew 12:3”.

**Verse 5. *The priests-profane the Sabbath***— Profane, i.e. put it to what might be called a common use, by slaying and offering up sacrifices, and by

doing the services of the temple, as on common days, Exodus 29:38; Numbers 28:9.

**Verse 6. *In this place is one greater than the temple.***— Does not our Lord refer here to Malachi 3:1? Compare this with Hebrews 3:3. The Jews esteemed nothing greater than the temple, except that God who was worshipped in it. Christ, by asserting he was greater than the temple, asserts that he was God; and this he does, in still more direct terms, Matthew 12:8, The Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath—is Institutor and Governor of it. Compare this with Genesis 2:3, and see the notes there.

**Verse 7. *I will have mercy, etc.***— See this explained, Matthew 9:13. There are four ways in which positive laws may cease to oblige.

First, by the natural law of necessity.

Secondly, by a particular law, which is superior.

Thirdly, by the law of charity and mercy.

Fourthly, by the dispensation and authority of the Lawgiver.

These cases are all exemplified from Matthew 12:4-8.

**Verse 8. *The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath-day.***— The change of the Jewish into the Christian Sabbath, called the Lord's day, Revelation 1:10, shows that Christ is not only the Lord, but also the truth and completion of it. For it seems to have been by an especial providence that this change has been made and acknowledged all over the Christian world.

**Verse 10. *A man which had his hand withered.***— Probably through a partial paralysis. The man's hand was withered; but God's mercy had still preserved to him the use of his feet: He uses them to bring him to the public worship of God, and Jesus meets and heals him there. How true is the proverb—It is never so ill with us, but it might be much worse!

**Verse 11. *If it fall into a pit on the Sabbath-day, etc.***— It was a canon among the Jews: "We must take a tender care of the goods of an Israelite." Hence:-

"If a beast fall into a ditch, or into a pool of water, let (the owner) bring him food in that place if he can; but, if he cannot, let him bring clothes and

litter, and bear up the beast; whence, if he can come up, let him come up, etc.”

“If a beast or its foal fall into a ditch on a holy day, R. Lazar saith, Let him lift up the former to kill him, and let him kill him; but let him give fodder to the other, lest he die in that place. R. Joshua saith, Let him lift up the former with the intention of killing him, although he kill him not; let him lift up the other also, although it be not in his mind to kill him.” To these canons our Lord seems here very properly to appeal, in vindication of his intention to heal the distressed man. See Lightfoot.

Self-interest is a very decisive casuist, and removes abundance of scruples in a moment. It is always the first consulted, and the must readily obeyed. It is not sinful to hearken to it, but it must not govern nor determine by itself.

**Verse 12. *How much then is a man better than a sheep?***— Our Lord’s argument is what is called argumentum ad hominem; they are taken on their own ground, and confuted on their own maxims and conduct. There are many persons who call themselves Christians, who do more for a beast of burden or pleasure than they do for a man for whom Christ died! Many spend that on coursers, spaniels, and hounds, of which multitudes of the followers of Christ are destitute:—but this also shall come to judgment.

***Wherefore, it is lawful to do well, etc.***— This was allowed by a multitude of Jewish canons. See Schoettgen.

**Verse 13. *Stretch forth thine hand.***— The bare command of God is a sufficient reason of obedience. This man might have reasoned thus: “Lord, my hand is withered; how then can I stretch it out? Make it whole first, and afterwards I will do as thou commandest.” This may appear reasonable, but in his case it would have been foolishness. At the command of the Lord he made the effort, and in making it the cure was effected! Faith disregards apparent impossibilities, where there is a command and promise of God. The effort to believe is, often, that faith by which the soul is healed.

A little before (Matthew 12:6, 8) Jesus Christ had asserted his Godhead, in this verse he proves it. What but the omnipotence of the living God could have, in a moment, restored this withered hand? There could be no

collusion here; the man who had a real disease was instantaneously and therefore miraculously cured; and the mercy and power of God were both amply manifested in this business.

It is worthy of remark, that as the man was healed with a word, without even a touch, the Sabbath was unbroken, even according to their most rigid interpretation of the letter of the law.

**Verse 14. *Held a council against him***— Nothing sooner leads to utter blindness, and hardness of heart, than envy. There are many who abandon themselves to pleasure-taking and debauchery on the Sabbath, who condemn a poor man whom necessity obliges to work on what is termed a holiday, or a national fast.

**Verse 15. *Jesus-withdrew himself from thence***— It is the part of prudence and Christian charity not to provoke, if possible, the blind and the hardened; and to take from them the occasion of sin. A man of God is not afraid of persecution; but, as his aim is only to do good, by proclaiming every where the grace of the Lord Jesus, he departs from any place when he finds the obstacles to the accomplishment of his end are, humanly speaking, invincible, and that he can not do good without being the means of much evil. Yield to the stream when you cannot stem it.

***Great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all***— The rejection of the Gospel in one place has often been the means of sending it to and establishing it in another. Jesus healed all that followed him, i.e. all who had need of healing, and who desired to be healed; for thus the passage must be understood:- and is he not still the same? No soul shall ever implore his healing power in vain; but let it be remembered, that only those who follow Christ, and apply to him, are healed of their spiritual maladies.

**Verse 16. *Charged them that they should not make him known***— See Matthew 8:4. Jesus Christ, as GOD, could have easily concealed himself, but he chooses to do it as man, and to use no other than human means, as these were quite sufficient for the purpose, to teach us not to neglect them in our necessity. Indeed, he always used his power less on his own account, than on that of men.

**Verse 18. *Behold my servant***— This title was given to our blessed Lord in several prophecies. See Isaiah 42:1; 53:2. Christ assumes it, Psalm 40:7-9.



Compare these with John 17:4, and Philippians 2:7. God required an acceptable and perfect service from man; but man, being sinful, could not perform it. Jesus, taking upon him the nature of man, fully performed the whole will of God, and communicates grace to all his followers, to enable them perfectly to love and worthily to magnify their Maker.

***And he shall show judgment to the Gentiles.***— That is, He will publish the Gospel to the heathens; for the word **κρίσιν** here answers to the word **משפט** mishpat of the prophet, and it is used among the Hebrews to signify laws, precepts, and a whole system or body of doctrine. See Psalm 19:9; 119:30, 39; Isaiah 58:2.

**Verse 19. *He shall not strive, nor cry***— The spirit of Christ is not a spirit of contention, murmuring, clamor, or litigiousness. He who loves these does not belong to him. Christ therefore fulfilled a prophecy by withdrawing from this place, on account of the rage of the Pharisees.

**Verse 20. *A bruised reed shall he not break***— A reed is, in Scripture, the emblem of weakness, Ezekiel 29:6; and a bruised reed must signify that state of weakness that borders on dissolution and death.

***And smoking flax shall he not quench***— **λινον τυφομενον. λινος** means the wick of a lamp, and **τυφομενον** is intended to point out its expiring state, when the oil has been all burnt away from it, and nothing is left but a mere snuff, emitting smoke. Some suppose the Jewish state, as to ecclesiastical matters, is here intended, the prophecy declaring that Christ would not destroy it, but leave it to expire of itself, as it already contained the principles of its own destruction. Others have considered it as implying that great tenderness with which the blessed Jesus should treat the weak and the ignorant, whose good desires must not be stifled, but encouraged. The bruised reed may recover itself, if permitted to vegetate under the genial influences of heaven; and the life and light of the expiring lamp may be supported by the addition of fresh oil. Jesus therefore quenches not faint desires after salvation, even in the worst and most undeserving of men; for even such desires may lead to the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of peace.

***Judgment unto victory.***— See Matthew 12:18. By judgment, understand the Gospel, and by victory its complete triumph over Jewish opposition,

and Gentile impiety. He will continue by these mild and gentle means to work till the whole world is Christianized, and the universe filled with his glory.

**Verse 21. *And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.***—ἐλπιοῦσι, they shall hope. Jesus Christ is the sole hope and trust of mankind; to trust and hope in his name, JESUS, is to expect salvation and all things necessary from him alone, to despise, comparatively, all earthly promises, to esteem, love, and desire heavenly things only, and to bear with patience and tranquillity all the losses and evils of this life, upon the prospect and hope of that felicity which he has purchased for us.

**Verse 22. *One possessed with a devil, blind and dumb***— A person from whom the indwelling demon took away both sight and hearing. Satan makes himself master of the heart, the eyes, and the tongue of the sinner. His heart he fills with the love of sin; his eyes he blinds that he may not see his guilt, and the perdition which awaits him; and his tongue he hinders from prayer and supplication, though he gives it increasing liberty in blasphemies, lies, slanders, etc. None but Jesus can redeem from this threefold captivity.

**Verse 23. *Is not this the son of David?***— Is not this the true Messiah? Do not these miracles sufficiently prove it? See Isaiah 35:5.

**Verse 24. *Beelzebub***— See Matthew 10:25.

**Verse 25. *Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation***— Our Lord's argument was thus:—"The welfare of any kingdom, city, or family, depends on its concord and unanimity; Satan, like every other potentate, must wish to rule his empire in peace and security; how then can he be in league with me, who oppose his authority, and am destroying his kingdom?"

The reasoning of the Pharisees, Matthew 12:24, was not expressed, and Jesus, knowing their thoughts, gave them ample proof of his omniscience. This, with our Lord's masterly confutation of their reasonings, by a conclusion drawn from their own premises, one would have supposed might have humbled and convinced these men; but the most conclusive reasoning, and the most astonishing miracles, were lost upon a people who were obstinately determined to disbelieve every thing good, relative to

Christ. How true the saying-He came unto his own, and his own received him not!

**Verse 26. *If Satan cast out Satan***— A good cause will produce a good effect, and an evil cause an evil effect. Were I on Satan's side, I would act for his interest and confirm his influence among you; but I oppose his maxims by my doctrine, and his influence by my power.

**Verse 27. *By whom do your children cast them out?***— Children, or sons of the prophets, means the disciples of the prophets; and children or sons of the Pharisees, disciples of the Pharisees. From Acts 19:13, 14, it is evident there were exorcists among the Jews, and, from our Lord's saying here, it is also evident that the disciples of the Pharisees did cast out demons, or, at least, those who educated them wished to have it believed that they had such a power. Our Lord's argument here is extremely conclusive: If the man who casts out demons proves himself thereby to be in league with and influenced by Satan, then your disciples, and you who taught them, are all of you in league with the devil: ye must either give up your assertion, that I cast out demons by Beelzebul, or else admit this conclusion, in its fullest force and latitude, that ye are all children of the devil, and leagued with him against God.

Envy causes persons often to condemn in one, what they approve in another.

**Verse 28. *But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God***— Perhaps the Spirit of God is here mentioned by way of opposition to the magical incantations of the Jews; for it is well known that by fumigations and magical washings, they professed to cast out devils. See a case mentioned by Schoettgen on this verse.

***Then the kingdom of God***— For the destruction of the kingdom of Satan plainly implies the setting up of the kingdom of God.

***Is come unto you.***— Is come unexpectedly upon you. *εφθασεν*, from *φθανω*, to appear suddenly-unexpectedly.

They pretended to be in expectation of the kingdom of God, and consequently of the destruction of the kingdom of Satan. But, by being not prepared to receive Christ in these proofs of his Divine mission, they

showed that their expectation was but pretended. They were too carnal to mind spiritual things.

**Verse 29. *Else how can one enter into a strong man's house***— Men, through sin, are become the very house and dwelling place of Satan, having of their own accord surrendered themselves to this unjust possessor; for whoever gives up his soul to sin gives it up to the devil. It is Jesus, and Jesus alone, who can deliver from the power of this bondage. When Satan is cast out, Jesus purifies and dwells in the heart.

**Verse 30. *He that is not with me is against me***— In vain do men seek for methods to reconcile God and mammon. There is no medium between loving the Lord and being his enemy-between belonging to Christ or to Satan. If we be on the side of the devil, we must expect to go to the devil's hell; if we be on the side of Christ, we may expect to go to his heaven. When Christ, his truth, and his servants are assaulted, he who does not espouse their cause is not on Christ's side, but incurs the guilt of deserting and betraying him. There are many, (it is to be feared,) in the world who are really against Christ, and scatter abroad, who flatter themselves that they are workers together with him, and of the number of his friends!

***Scattereth abroad.***— This seems to have been a proverbial form of speech, and may be a metaphor taken from shepherds. He who does not help the true shepherd to gather his flock into the fold is, most likely, one who wishes to scatter them, that he may have the opportunity of stealing and destroying them. I do not find any parallel to this proverbial mode of speech in the Jewish rabbins, if it be one, nor have I met with it among the Greek or Roman writers.

**Verse 31. *All manner of sin and blasphemy***— βλασφημία, *injurious or impious speaking. [AS]*, mocking and deriding speech, Anglo-Saxon. See Matthew 9:3.

***But the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost***— Even personal reproaches, revilings, persecutions against Christ, were remissible; but blasphemy, or impious speaking against the Holy Spirit was to have no forgiveness: i.e. when the person obstinately attributed those works to the devil, which he had the fullest evidence could be wrought only by the Spirit of God. That this, and nothing else, is the sin against the Holy Spirit, is evident from the

connection in this place, and more particularly from Mark 3:28-30. “All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme; but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation; BECAUSE they said, He hath an unclean spirit.”

Here the matter is made clear beyond the smallest doubt—the unpardonable sin, as some term it, is neither less nor more than ascribing the miracles Christ wrought, by the power of God, to the spirit of the devil. Many sincere people have been grievously troubled with apprehensions that they had committed the unpardonable sin; but let it be observed that no man who believes the Divine mission of Jesus Christ, ever can commit this sin: therefore let no man’s heart fail because of it, from henceforth and for ever, Amen. See below.

**Verse 32. *Neither in this world, neither in the world to come.***— Though I follow the common translation, yet I am fully satisfied the meaning of the words is, neither in this dispensation, (viz. the Jewish,) nor in that which is to come, viz. the Christian. עולם הבא olam ha-bo, the world to come, is a constant phrase for the times of the Messiah in the Jewish writers. See below. The sin here spoken of by our Lord ranks high in the catalogue of presumptuous sins, for which there was no forgiveness under the Mosaic dispensation. See Numbers 15:30, 31; 35:31; Leviticus 20:10; 1 Samuel 2:25. When our Lord says that such a sin hath no forgiveness, is he not to be understood as meaning that the crime shall be punished under the Christian dispensation as it was under the Jewish, viz. by the destruction of the body? And is not this the same mentioned 1 John 1:7, called there the sin unto death; i.e. a sin that was to be punished by the death of the body, while mercy might be extended to the soul? The punishment for presumptuous sins, under the Jewish law, to which our Lord evidently alludes, certainly did not extend to the damnation of the soul, though the body was destroyed: therefore I think that, though there was no such forgiveness to be extended to this crime as to absolve the man from the punishment of temporal death, yet, on repentance, mercy might be extended to the soul; and every sin may be repented of under the Gospel dispensation.

Dr. Lightfoot has sufficiently vindicated this passage from all false interpretation. “They that endeavor hence to prove the remission of some sins after death, seem little to understand to what Christ had respect when he spake these words. Weigh well this common and, most known doctrine of the Jewish schools, and judge.

“He that transgresses an affirmative precept, if he presently repent, is not moved until the Lord pardon him; and of such it is said, Be ye converted, O back sliding children! and I will heal your backslidings. He that transgresses a negative precept, and repents, his repentance suspends judgment, and the day of expiation expiates him; as it is said, This day shall all your uncleannesses be expiated to you. He that transgresses to cutting off (by the stroke of God) or to death by the Sanhedrin, and repents, repentance and the day of expiation do suspend judgment, and the strokes that are laid upon him wipe off sin, as it is said, And I will visit their transgression with a rod, and their iniquity with scourges. But he by whom the name of God is profaned (or blasphemed) repentance is of no avail to him to suspend judgment, nor the day of expiation to expiate it, nor scourges (or corrections inflicted) to wipe it off, but all suspend judgment, and death wipes it off. Thus the Babylonian Gemara writes; but the Jerusalem thus: Repentance and the day of expiation expiate as to the third part, and corrections as to the third part, and death wipes it off, as it is said, And your iniquities shall not be expiated to you until ye die: behold, we learn that death wipes off. Note this, which Christ contradicts, concerning blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. It shall not be forgiven, saith he, neither in this world, nor in the world to come; that is, neither before death, nor, as you dream, by death. Jerus. Sanhed. fol. 37. and Bab. Yoma, fol. 86.

“In the world to come.-I. Some phrases were received into common use, by which, in common speech, they opposed the heresy of the Sadducees, who denied immortality, Of that sort were **עולם הבא** olam ha-ba, **αἰὼν ὁ μέλλων**, The world to come. **גן עד** gan aden, **παράδεισος**, paradise: **גן הנום** gei hinnom, **γεεννα**, hell, etc.

“At the end of all the prayers in the temple (as we observed before) they said **עד עולם** ad olam, for ever. But when the heretics (i.e. the Sadducees) brake in, and said there was NO AGE but one, then it was appointed to be

said for ever and ever. **ועד העולם מ העולם** min ha-olam, vead ha-olam. Bab. Beracoth, fol. 54. This distinction of **עולם הזה** olam hazeh, this world, and of **עולם הבא** olam ha-ba, the world to come, you may find almost in every page of the rabbins.

“The Lord recompense thee a good reward for this thy good work in this world, and let thy reward be perfected in the world to come. Targum on Ruth.

“It (that is, the history of the creation and of the Bible) therefore begins with the letter **ב** beth, (in the word **ברִישִׁית** bereshith,) because two worlds were created, this world and a world to come. Baal Turim.

“The world to come hints two things especially, (of which see Rambam, in Sanhed. cap. ii. Chelek.) I. The times of the Messiah: ‘Be mindful of the day wherein thou camest out of Egypt, all the days of thy life: the wise men say, by the days of thy life is intimated this world: by all the days of thy life, the days of the Messiah are superinduced.’ In this sense the apostle seems to speak, Hebrews 2:5; 6:5. II. The state after death: thus Rab. Tancum, The world to come, is when a man has departed out of this world.”

**Verse 33. *Either make the tree good***— That is, the effect will be always similar to the cause; a bad tree will produce bad fruit, and a good tree, good fruit.

The works will resemble the heart: nothing good can proceed from an evil spirit; no good fruit can proceed from a corrupt heart. Before the heart of man can produce any good, it must be renewed and influenced by the Spirit of God.

**Verse 34. *O generation of vipers***— These are apparently severe words; but they were extremely proper in reference to that execrable people to whom they were addressed: the whole verse is an inference from what was spoken before.

***Out of the abundance (περισσεύματος, the overflowings) of the heart***— Wicked words and sinful actions may be considered as the overflowings of a heart that is more than full of the spirit of wickedness; and holy words

and righteous deeds may be considered as the overflowings of a heart that is filled with the Holy Spirit, and running over with love to God and man.

**Verse 35. *A good man out of the good treasure of the heart***— της καρδίας, of the heart, is omitted by upwards of one hundred MSS., many of them of the greatest antiquity and authority; by all the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic; by the Slavonic, Saxon, Vulgate, and Itala, (except four,) and by several of the primitive fathers. It seems to have been added here by some copyist, merely to explain. The good heart is the good treasury, and the treasure that is in it is the love of God, and of all mankind. The bad heart is the bad treasury, and its treasure is the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, and ill-will to man.

**Verse 36. *Every idle word***— ρημα αργον, a word that does nothing, that neither ministers grace nor instruction to them who hear it. The word αργον corresponds to the Hebrew שוא shave, which signifies not only vain or empty, but also wicked and injurious, such as a false testimony against a neighbor, compare Deuteronomy 5:11, 20. Add to this, that Symmachus translates פגול piggul, polluted, Leviticus 19:7, by the very Greek word in the text. It was to explain this ambiguous meaning of the word, that ten MSS. have changed αργον Into πονηρον, evil. Our Lord must be understood here as condemning all false and injurious words: the scope of the place necessarily requires this meaning.

**Verse 37. *By thy words thou shalt be justified***— That is, the whole tenor of thy conversation will be an evidence for or against thee, in the great day. How many are there who count words for nothing! and yet eternity often depends on them. Lord, put a watch before the door of my lips! is a prayer proper for all men.

**Verse 38. *We would see a sign from thee.***— That is, we wish now to see thee work a miracle. Pride, vain curiosity, and incredulity, have never proof sufficient of the truth: for they will not be satisfied.

**Verse 39. *An evil and adulterous generation***— Or, race of people; for so γενα should be translated here, and in most other places in the Gospels; for our Lord, in general, uses it to point out the Jewish people. This translation is a key to unlock some very obscure passages in the evangelists.



**Seeketh after a sign**— Or, seeketh another sign, (ἐπιζητεῖ,) so I think this word should be translated. Our Lord had already given the Jews several signs; and here they desire sign upon sign.

Our Lord terms the Jews an adulterous race. Under the old covenant, the Jewish nation was represented as in a marriage contract with the Lord of hosts; as believers, in the new covenant, are represented as the spouse of Christ. All unfaithfulness and disobedience was considered as a breach of this marriage contract; hence the persons who were thus guilty are denominated adulterers and adulteresses. But, independently of this, there is the utmost proof, from their own writings, that in the time of our Lord they were most literally an adulterous race of people: for, at this very time, R. Jochanan ben Zacchai abrogated the trial by the bitter waters of jealousy, because so many were found to be thus criminal. See on John 8:3.

**Verse 40. Three days and three nights**— Our Lord rose from the grave on the day but one after his crucifixion: so that, in the computation in this verse, the part of the day on which he was crucified, and the part of that on which he rose again, are severally estimated as an entire day; and this, no doubt, exactly corresponded to the time in which Jonah was in the belly of the fish. Our Lord says, As Jonah was, so shall the Son of man be, etc. Evening and morning, or night and day, is the Hebrew phrase for a natural day, which the Greeks termed *νυξθημερον*, nuchthemeron. The very same quantity of time which is here termed three days and three nights, and which, in reality, was only one whole day, a part of two others, and two whole nights, is termed three days and three nights, in the book of Esther: Go; neither eat nor drink THREE DAYS, NIGHT or DAY, and so I will go in unto the king: Esther 4:16. Afterwards it follows, Esther 5:1. On the THIRD DAY, Esther stood in the inner court of the king's house. Many examples might be produced, from both the sacred and profane writers, in vindication of the propriety of the expression in the text. For farther satisfaction, the reader, if he please, may consult Whitby and Wakefield, and take the following from Lightfoot.

“I. The Jewish writers extend that memorable station of the unmoving sun, at Joshua's prayer, to six and thirty hours; for so Kimchi upon that place: ‘According to more exact interpretation, the sun and moon stood still for six and thirty hours: for when the fight was on the eve of the Sabbath,

Joshua feared lest the Israelites might break the Sabbath; therefore he spread abroad his hands, that the sun might stand still on the sixth day, according to the measure of the day of the Sabbath, and the moon according to the measure of the night of the Sabbath, and of the going out of the Sabbath, which amounts to six and thirty hours.’

“II. If you number the hours that pass from our Savior’s giving up the ghost upon the cross to his resurrection, you shall find almost the same number of hours; and yet that space is called by him three days and three nights, whereas two nights only came between, and one complete day. Nevertheless, while he speaks these words, he is not without the consent both of the Jewish schools and their computation. Weigh well that which is disputed in the tract Scabbath, concerning the separation of a woman for three days; where many things are discussed by the Gemarists, concerning the computation of this space of three days. Among other things these words occur: R. Ismael saith, Sometimes it contains four **אונות** onoth, sometimes five, sometimes six. But how much is the space of an **אונה** onah? R. Jochanan saith, Either a day or a night. And so also the Jerusalem Talmud: ‘R. Akiba fixed a DAY for an onah, and a NIGHT for an onah.’ But the tradition is, that R. Eliazar ben Azariah said, A day and a night make an onah: and a PART of an onah is as the WHOLE. And a little after, R. Ismael computed a part of the onah for the whole.” Thus, then, three days and three nights, according to this Jewish method of reckoning, included any part of the first day; the whole of the following night; the next day and its night; and any part of the succeeding or third day.

***In the whale’s belly***— That a fish of the shark kind, and not a whale, is here meant, Bochart has abundantly proved, vol. iii. col. 742, etc., edit. Leyd. 1692. It is well known that the throat of a whale is capable of admitting little more than the arm of an ordinary man; but many of the shark species can swallow a man whole, and men have been found whole in the stomachs of several. Every natural history abounds with facts of this kind. Besides, the shark is a native of the Mediterranean Sea, in which Jonah was sailing when swallowed by what the Hebrew terms **דג גדול** dag gadol, a great fish; but every body knows that whales are no produce of the Mediterranean Sea, though some have been by accident found there, as in most other parts of the maritime world: but, let them be found where

they may, there is none of them capable of swallowing a man. Instead of either whale or shark, some have translated דג גדול dag gadol, Jonah 1:17, by a fishing cove, or something of this nature; but this is merely to get rid of the miracle: for, according to some, the whole of Divine revelation is a forgery-or it is a system of metaphor or allegory, that has no miraculous interferences in it. But, independently of all this, the criticism is contemptible. Others say, that the great fish means a vessel so called, into which Jonah went, and into the hold of which he was thrown, where he continued three days and three nights. In short, it must be any thing but a real miracle, the existence of which the wise men, so called, of the present day, cannot admit. Perhaps these very men are not aware that they have scarcely any belief even in the existence of God himself!

**Verse 41. *The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment***— The voice of God, threatening temporal judgments, caused a whole people to repent, who had neither Moses nor Christ, neither the law nor the prophets; and who perhaps never had but this one preacher among them. What judgment may not we expect, if we continue impenitent, after all that God has bestowed upon us?

***A greater than Jonas is here.***— πλειον, for τι πλειον, something more. The evidence offered by Jonah sufficed to convince and lead the Ninevites to repentance; but here was more evidence, and a greater person; and yet so obstinate are the Jews that all is ineffectual. 1. Christ, who preached to the Jews, was infinitely greater than Jonah, in his nature, person, and mission. 2. Jonah preached repentance in Nineveh only forty days, and Christ preached among the Jews for several years. 3. Jonah wrought no miracles to authorize his preaching; but Christ wrought miracles every day, in every place where he went, and of every kind. And 4. Notwithstanding all this, the people of Judea did not repent, though the people of Nineveh did.

**Verse 42. *The queen of the south***— In 1 Kings 10:1, *this queen is said to be of Saba, which was a city and province of Arabia Felix, to the south, or south-east, of Judea. Uttermost parts of the earth*— περατων της γης-a form of speech which merely signifies, a great distance. See Deuteronomy 28:49.

**Verse 43. *When the unclean spirit***— If there had been no reality in demoniacal possessions, our Lord would have scarcely appealed to a case of this kind here, to point out the real state of the Jewish people, and the desolation which was coming upon them. Had this been only a vulgar error, of the nonsense of which the learned scribes and the wise Pharisees must have been convinced, the case not being one in point, because not true, must have been treated by that very people with contempt for whose conviction it was alone designed.

***He walketh through dry places***— δι' ανυδρων τοπων. There seems to be a reference here to the Orphic demonology, in which evil spirits were divided into various classes, according to the different regions of their abode, or places in which they delighted. These classes were five: 1. δαιμονες ουρανιοι, Celestial demons. 2. δαιμονες ηεριοι, Aerial. 3. δαιμονες ενυδριοι, Aquatic. 4. δαιμονες χθονιοι, Terrestrial. 5. και δαιμονες υποχθονιοι, And subterranean demons. See Orph. ad Mus. ap. Schott. The Platonists, the followers of Zoroaster, and the primitive Jews, made nearly the same distinctions.

***Seeking rest***— Or refreshment. Strange! a fallen corrupt spirit can have no rest but in the polluted human heart: the corruption of the one is suited to the pollution of the other, and thus like cleaves to like.

**Verse 44. *Into my house***— The soul of that person from whom he had been expelled by the power of Christ, and out of which he was to have been kept by continual prayer, faith, and watchfulness.

***He findeth it empty***— Unoccupied, σχολαζοντα, empty of the former inhabitant, and ready to receive a new one: denoting a soul that has lost the life and power of godliness, and the testimony of the Holy Spirit.

***Swept and garnished.***— As σχολαζω signifies to be idle, or unemployed, it may refer here to the person, as well as to his state. His affections and desires are no longer busied with the things of God, but gad about, like an idle person, among the vanities of a perishing world. Swept, from love, meekness, and all the fruits of the Spirit; and garnished, or adorned, κεκοσμημενον, decorated, with the vain showy trifles of folly and fashion. This may comprise also smart speeches, cunning repartees, etc., for which many who have lost the life of God are very remarkable.

**Verse 45. *Seven other spirits more wicked***— Seven was a favourite number with the Jews, implying frequently, with them, something perfect, completed, filled up, for such is the proper import of the Hebrew word שֵׁוֹעַ sheva or shevang: nearly allied in sound to our seven. And perhaps this meaning of it refers to the seventh day, when God rested from his work, having filled up, or completed the whole of his creative design. Seven demons-as many as could occupy his soul, harassing it with pride, anger, self-will, lust, etc., and torturing the body with disease.

***The last state of that man is worse than the first.***— His soul, before influenced by the Spirit of God, dilated and expanded under its heavenly influences, becomes more capable of refinement in iniquity, as its powers are more capacious than formerly. Evil habits are formed and strengthened by relapses; and relapses are multiplied, and become more incurable, through new habits.

***So shall it be also unto this wicked generation.***— And so it was: for they grew worse and worse, as if totally abandoned to diabolic influence; till at last the besom of destruction swept them and their privileges, national and religious, utterly away. What a terrible description of a state of apostasy is contained in these verses! May he who readeth understand!

**Verse 46. *His mother and his brethren***— These are supposed to have been the cousins of our Lord, as the word brother is frequently used among the Hebrews in this sense. But there are others who believe Mary had other children beside our Lord and that these were literally his brothers, who are spoken of here. And, although it be possible that these were the sons of Mary, the wife of Cleopas or Alpheus, his mother's sister, called his relations, Mark 3:31; yet it is as likely that they were the children of Joseph and Mary, and brethren of our Lord, in the strictest sense of the word. See on Matthew 13:55.

**Verse 48. *Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?***— The reason of this seeming disregard of his relatives was this: they came to seize upon him, for they thought he was distracted. See Mark 3:33.

**Verse 50. *Whosoever shall do the will of my Father, etc.***— Those are the best acknowledged relatives of Christ who are united to him by spiritual ties, and who are become one with him by the indwelling of his Spirit. We

generally suppose that Christ's relatives must have shared much of his affectionate attention; and doubtless they did: but here we find that whosoever does the will of God is equally esteemed by Christ, as his brother, sister, or even his virgin mother. What an encouragement for fervent attachment to God!

1. From various facts related in this chapter, we see the nature and design of the revelation of God, and of all the ordinances and precepts contained in it—they are all calculated to do man good: to improve his understanding, to soften and change his nature, that he may love his neighbor as himself. That religion that does not inculcate and produce humanity never came from heaven.

2. We have already seen what the sin against the Holy Ghost is: no soul that fears God can commit it: perhaps it would be impossible for any but Jews to be guilty of it, and they only in the circumstances mentioned in the text; and in such circumstances, it is impossible that any person should now be found.

## CHAPTER 13

*Christ teaches the multitudes out of a ship, they standing on the shore, 1, 2. The parable of the sower, 3-9. He gives his reasons for speaking in parables, 10-17. Explains the parable of the sower, 18-23. Parable of the tares and the wheat, 24-30. Of the grain of mustard seed, 31, 32. Of the leaven, 33. The prophecy fulfilled by this mode of teaching, 34, 35. He explains the parable of the tares and the wheat, 36-43. Parable of the treasure hid in a field, 44. Of the pearl-merchant, 45, 46. Of the dragnet, 47-50. His application of the whole, 51, 52. He teaches in his own country, and his neighbors take offense, 53-56. Our Lord's observations on this, 57. He works no miracle among them because of their unbelief. 58.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 13

**Verse 1. *The same day***— Our Lord scarcely ever appears to take any rest: he is incessant in his labors, and instant in season and out of season; and in this he has left all his successors in the ministry an example, that they should follow his steps: for he who wishes to save souls will find few opportunities to rest. As Satan is going about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, the messenger of God should imitate his diligence, that he may counteract his work. The gospels are journals of our Lord's life.

***Went Jesus out of the house***— This was the house of Peter. See Matthew 17:24.

***Sat by the sea side.***— The sea of Galilee, on the borders of which the city of Capernaum was situated.

**Verse 2. *Into a ship***— το πλοιον, THE vessel or boat. Mr. Wakefield supposes (which is very likely) that a particular vessel is uniformly specified, which seems to have been kept on the lake for the use of Christ and his apostles: it probably belonged to some of the fishermen, (see

Matthew 4:22,) who, he thinks, occasionally, at least, followed their former occupation. See John 21:3.

The thought of pious Quesnel on this verse should not be neglected. We see here a representation of the Church, which consists of the people united to their pastors. These, being more exposed to violent tossings and storms, are, as it were, in a ship, while those continue at ease on the shore.

**Verse 3. *He spake many things unto them in parables***— Parable, from *παρά*, near, and *βάλλω*, I cast, or put. A comparison or similitude, in which one thing is compared with another, especially spiritual things with natural, by which means these spiritual things are better understood, and make a deeper impression on an attentive mind. Or, a parable is a representation of any matter accommodated, in the way of similitude, to the real subject, in order to delineate it with the greater force and perspicuity. See more on this subject at the conclusion of this chapter. No scheme, says Dr. Lightfoot, of Jewish rhetoric was more familiarly used than that of parables; which, perhaps, creeping in from thence among the heathens, ended in fables.

It is said in the tract Sotah, chap. 9. “From the time that Rabbi Meri died, those that spake in parables ceased.” Not that this figure of rhetoric perished in the nation from that time; but because he surpassed all others in these flowers, as the gloss there from the tract Sanhedrin speaks. “A third part of his discourses was tradition; a third part allegory; and a third part parable.” The Jewish books every where abound with these figures, the nation inclining by a kind of natural genius to this kind of rhetoric. Their very religion might be called parabolical, folded up within the covering of ceremonies; and their oratory in their sermons was like to it. But is it not indeed a wonder, that they who were so much given to and delighted in parables, and so dexterous in unfolding them, should stick in the outward shell of ceremonies, and should not have brought out the parabolical and spiritual sense of them? Our Savior, who always spoke with the common people, uses the same kind of speech, and very often the same preface which they used, To what is it likened? See Lightfoot in loco. Though we find the basis of many of our Lord’s parables in the Jewish writings, yet not one of them comes through his hands without being



astonishingly improved. In this respect also, Surely never man spoke like this man.

Under the parable of the sower, our Lord intimates, 1. That of all the multitudes then attending his ministry, few would bring forth fruit to perfection. And 2. That this would be a general case in preaching the Gospel among men.

**Verse 4. *Some seeds fell by the way side***— The hard beaten path, where no plough had broken up the ground.

**Verse 5. *Stony places***— Where there was a thin surface of earth, and a rock at the bottom.

**Verse 7. *Among thorns***— Where the earth was ploughed up, but the brambles and weeds had not been cleared away.

**Verse 8. *Good ground***— Where the earth was deep, the field well ploughed, and the brambles and weeds all removed. See more on Matthew 13:18, etc., and see on Luke 8:15.

***Some a hundred-fold.***— For the elucidation of this text, I beg leave to introduce the following experiment. In 1816 I sowed, for a third crop, a field with oats, at Millbrook, in Lancashire; the grains weighed, on an average,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a grain each. One grain produced three stalks with three ears: the largest had 68 grains in it, the second 26, and the third 25.

Whole number of grains 119, which togetherweighed 82 grs.

The root separately, after washing and drying, weighed 13 \_.

The stalks and remaining leaves (for many had perished in the wet season) 630 \_.

Weight of the whole produce of one grain of oats 726 grs.

which was 725 times and one quarter more than the original weight.

The power of grain to multiply itself, even in the same year, is a subject as much of curiosity and astonishment as of importance and general utility. For the farther elucidation of this text, I shall give the following example from a practice in agriculture, or rural economy, which is termed filtering.

On the 2nd of June, 1766, Mr. C. Miller, of Cambridge, sowed some grains of the common, red wheat; and on the 8th of August a single plant was taken up, and separated into 18 parts, and each planted separately: these plants having pushed out several side shoots, about the middle of September some of them were taken up and divided; and the rest between that time and October. This second division produced 67 plants. These plants remained through the winter, and another division of them, made between the middle of March and the 12th of April, produced 500 plants. They were divided no farther, but permitted to remain in the field. These plants were in general stronger than any of the wheat in the field. Some of them produced upwards of 100 ears from a single root and many of the ears measured seven inches in length, and contained between sixty and seventy grains. The whole number of ears produced from the single plant was 21,109, which yielded three pecks and three-quarters of clear corn, weighing 47lbs. 7oz., and, from a calculation made by counting the grains in an ounce, the whole number of grains was about 576,840. Mr. Miller thinks that, had he made a second division in the spring, the number of plants would have amounted to 2000. Who can help admiring the wisdom and providence of God in this single grain of corn! He has, in some sort, impressed on it an idea of his own infinity; and an idea which, like the subject to which it refers, confounds our imagination and reason. How infinitely great is God, even in his minor works.

**Verse 9. *Who hath ears to hear, etc.***— Let every person who feels the necessity of being instructed in the things which concern his soul's welfare pay attention to what is spoken, and he shall become wise unto salvation.

**Verse 11. *It is given unto you to know the mysteries, etc.***— By mysteries, here, we may understand not only things concerning the scheme of salvation, which had not yet been revealed; but also the prophetic declarations concerning the future state of the Christian Church, expressed in the ensuing parables. It is not given to them to know the purport and design of these things—they are gross of heart, earthly and sensual, and do not improve the light they have received: but to you it is given, because I have appointed you not only to be the first preachers of my Gospel to sinners, but also the persons who shall transmit accounts of all these things to posterity. The knowledge of these mysteries, in the first instance, can be given only to a few; but when these faithfully write and

publish what they have heard and seen, unto the world, then the science of salvation is revealed and addressed to all. From Matthew 13:17, we learn, that many prophets and righteous men had desired to see and hear these things, but had not that privilege—to them it was not given; not because God designed to exclude them from salvation, but because HE who knew all things knew, either that they were not proper persons, or that that was not the proper time: for the choice of the PERSONS by whom, and the choice of the TIME in which it is most proper to reveal Divine things, must ever rest with the all-wise God.

**Verse 12. *Whosoever hath, to him shall be given***— This is an allusion to a common custom in all countries: he who possesses much or is rich, to such a person, presents are ordinarily given.

***Whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.***— That is, the poor man: he that has little may be easily made a prey of, and so lose his little. This is a proper sense of the word *εχειν* in sacred and profane writers. In 1 Corinthians 11:22, *τους μη εχοντας*, those who have not, means simply THE POOR: and Aristophanes uses *τους εξοντας*, those that have, for the RICH or OPULENT. See a variety of pertinent examples in Kypke on Luke 8:18. There is one example in Juvenal, Sat. iii. l. 208, 209, that expresses the whole of our Lords meaning, and is a beautiful illustration of this apparently difficult passage. NIL habuit Codrus: quis enim negat? et tamen illud Perdidit infelix TOTUM NIL.

*“Tis true, poor Codrus NOTHING had to boast,  
And yet poor Codrus ALL that NOTHING lost.”  
Dryden*

Now what was this NOTHING which, the poet said, Codrus had and lost? The five preceding lines tell you.

*Lectus erat Codro Procula minor, urceoli sex,  
Ornamentum abaci; necnon et parvulus infra  
Cantharus, et recubans sub eodem marmore Chiron;  
Jamque vetus Graecos servabat cista libellos,  
Et divina Opici rodebant carmina mures*

He had one small bed, six little pitchers, the ornament of a side-board; a small jug or tankard, the image of a centaur, and an old chest with some Greek books in it, on which the mice had already begun to make

depredations. And all this he lost; probably by continuing, in spite of his destiny, to be a poet. So those who devote not the light and power which God has given them to the purposes for which he has granted these gifts, from them shall be taken away these unemployed or prostituted blessings. This seems to have been a proverbial mode of speech, which our Lord here uses to inform his disciples, that he who does not improve the first operations of grace, howsoever small, is in danger of losing not only all the possible product, but even the principal; for God delights to heap benefits on those who properly improve them. See the note on Luke 8:18.

**Verse 13. *Therefore speak I to them in parables***— On this account, viz. to lead them into a proper knowledge of God. I speak to them in parables, natural representations of spiritual truths, that they may be allured to inquire, and to find out the spirit, which is hidden under the letter; because, seeing the miracles which I have wrought, they see not, i.e. the end for which I have wrought them; and hearing my doctrines, they hear not, so as to profit by what is spoken; neither do they understand, οὐδε συνιουσι, they do not lay their hearts to it. Is not this obviously our Lord's meaning? Who can suppose that he would employ his time in speaking enigmatically to them, on purpose that they might not understand what was spoken? Could the God of truth and sincerity act thus? If he had designed to act otherwise, he might have saved his time and labor, and not spoken at all, which would have answered the same end, viz. to leave them in gross ignorance.

**Verse 14. *In them is fulfilled***— αναπληρουνται, Is AGAIN fulfilled: this proper meaning of the Greek word has been generally overlooked. The evangelist means, that as these words were fulfilled in the Jews, in the time of the Prophet Isaiah, so they are now again fulfilled in these their posterity, who exactly copy their fathers example. These awful words may be again fulfilled in us, if we take not warning by the things which these disobedient people have suffered.

***By hearing ye shall hear***— Jesus Christ shall be sent to you, his miracles ye shall fully see, and his doctrines ye shall distinctly hear; but God will not force you to receive the salvation which is offered.

**Verse 15. *Heart is waxed gross***— *επαχυνθη*, is become fat-inattentive stupid, insensible. They hear heavily with their ears-are half asleep while the salvation of God is preached unto them.

***Their eyes they have closed***— Totally and obstinately resisted the truth of God, and shut their eyes against the light.

***Lest-they should see, etc.***— Lest they should see their lost estate, and be obliged to turn unto God, and seek his salvation. His state is truly deplorable who is sick unto death, and yet is afraid of being cured. The fault is here totally in the people, and not at all in that God whose name is Mercy and whose nature is love.

**Verse 16. *But blessed are your eyes***— Ye improve the light which God has given you; and you receive an increase of heavenly wisdom by every miracle and by every sermon.

**Verse 17. *Many prophets and righteous men***— These lived by and died in the faith of the promised Messiah: the fullness of the time was not then come for his manifestation in the flesh. See also on Matthew 13:11.

**Verse 19. *When any one heareth the word of the kingdom***— Viz. the preaching of the Gospel of Christ.

***And understandeth it not***— *μη συνιεντος*, perhaps more properly, regardeth it not, does not lay his heart to it.

***The wicked one***— *ο πονηρος*, from *πονος*, labor, toil, he who distresses and torments the soul. Mark, Mark 4:15, calls him *ο σατανας*, the adversary or opposer, because he resists men in all their purposes of amendment, and, to the utmost of his power opposes, in order to frustrate, the influences of Divine grace upon the heart. In the parallel place in Luke, Luke 8:12, he is called *ο διαβολος*, the devil, from *διαβαλλειν*, to shoot, or dart through. In allusion to this meaning of the name, St. Paul, Ephesians 6:16, speaks of the fiery DARTS of the wicked one. It is worthy of remark, that the three evangelists should use each a different appellation of this mortal enemy of mankind; probably to show that the devil, with all his powers and properties, opposes every thing that tends to the salvation of the soul.

***Catcheth away***— Makes the utmost haste to pick up the good seed, lest it should take root in the heart.

A careless inattentive hearer is compared to the way side—his heart is an open road, where evil affections, and foolish and hurtful desires, continually pass and repass, without either notice or restraint. “A heart where Satan has” (as one terms it) “ingress, egress, regress, and progress: in a word, the devil’s thoroughfare.”

**Verse 20. *But he that received the seed into stony places-is he***— That is, is a fit emblem of that man who, hearing the Gospel, is affected with its beauty and excellency, and immediately receiveth it with joy—is glad to hear what God has done to make man happy.

**Verse 21. *Yet hath he not root in himself***— His soul is not deeply convinced of its guilt and depravity; the fallow ground is not properly ploughed up, nor the rock broken. When persecution, etc., ariseth, which he did not expect, he is soon stumbled—seeks some pretext to abandon both the doctrine and followers of Christ. Having not felt his own sore, and the plague of his heart, he has not properly discovered that this salvation is the only remedy for his soul: thus he has no motive in his heart strong enough to counteract the outward scandal of the cross; so he endureth only for the time in which there is no difficulty to encounter, no cross to bear.

**Verse 22. *He also that received seed among the thorns***— In land ploughed, but not properly cleared and seeded. Is he— represents that person who heareth the word, but the cares, rather the anxiety, **ἡ μεριμνα**, the whole system of anxious carking cares. Lexicographers derive the word **μεριμνα** from **μεριζειν τον νοον**, dividing, or distracting the mind. Thus a poet,

Tot me impediunt curae quae meum animum diverse trahunt.

“So many cares hinder me which draw my mind different ways.” Terence.

***The deceitfulness of riches***— Which promise peace and pleasure, but can never give them.

***Choke the word***— The seed had taken root, and that these cares, etc., choked it in the root, before even the blade could show itself.

**Verse 23. *Good ground***— That which had depth of mould, was well ploughed, and well weeded.

***Is he that heareth***— Who diligently attends the ministry of the word.

***And understandeth it***— Lays the subject to heart, deeply weighing its nature, design, and importance.

***Which also beareth fruit***— His fruitfulness being an almost necessary consequence of his thus laying the Divine message to heart. Let it be observed, that to hear, to understand, and to bring forth fruit, are the three grand evidences of a genuine believer. He who does not hear the word of wisdom cannot understand what makes for his peace; and he who does not understand what the Gospel requires him to be and to perform, cannot bring forth fruit; and he who is not fruitful, very fruitful, cannot be a disciple of Christ—see John 15:8; and he who is not Christ's disciple cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

From the different portions of fruit produced by the good ground, a hundred, sixty, and thirty, we may learn that all sound believers are not equally fruitful; all hear, understand, and bring forth fruit, but not in the same degrees—occasioned, partly, by their situation and circumstances not allowing them such extensive opportunities of receiving and doing good; and, partly, by lack of mental capacity—for every mind is not equally improvable.

Let it be farther observed that the unfruitfulness of the different lands was not owing to bad seed or an unskilful sower—the same sower sows the same seed in all, and with the same gracious design—but it is unfruitful in many because they are careless, inattentive, and worldly-minded.

But is not the ground naturally bad in every heart? Undoubtedly. And can any but God make it good? None. But it is your business, when you hear of the justice and mercy of God, to implore him to work in you that which is pleasing in his sight. No man shall be condemned because he did not change his own heart, but because he did not cry to God to change it, who gave him his Holy Spirit for this very purpose, and which he, by his worldly-mindedness and impiety, quenched. Whoso hath ears to hear let him hear: and may the Lord save the reader from an impenitent and unfruitful heart!

**Verse 24. *The kingdom of heaven***— God’s method of managing the affairs of the world, and the concerns of his Church.

***Is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field***— In general, the world may be termed the field of God; and in particular, those who profess to believe in God through Christ are his field or farm; among whom God sows nothing but the pure unadulterated word of his truth.

**Verse 25. *But while men slept***— When the professors were lukewarm, and the pastors indolent, his enemy came and sowed tares, ζιζανία degenerate, or bastard wheat. The righteous and the wicked are often mingled in the visible Church. Every Christian society, how pure soever its principles may be, has its bastard wheat—those who bear a resemblance to the good, but whose hearts are not right with God. He who sows this bastard wheat among God’s people is here styled God’s enemy; and he may be considered also as a sower of them who permits them to be sown and to spring up through his negligence. Wo to the indolent pastors, who permit the souls under their care to be corrupted by error and sin! This word does not, I believe, occur in any of the Greek classics, nor in Dioscorides; but it may be seen in the Geoponica, or Greek writers Deuteronomy Revelation Rustica: see the edition by Niclas, vol. i. lib. ii. c. 43, where το ζιζανιον is said to be the same which the Greeks call αἶρα; and Florentinus, the author, says, το ζιζανιον, το λεγομενον αἶρα, φθειρει ζος σιτον, αρτοις δε μιγνυμενη, σκοτοι τους εσθιοντας. “Zizanian, which is called αἶρα, darnel, injures the wheat; and, mixed in the bread, causes dimness of the eyes to those who eat of it.” And the author might have added vertigo also. But this does not seem to be the grain to which our Lord alludes.

The word ζιζανία, zizania, which is here translated tares, and which should rather be translated bastard or degenerate wheat, is a Chaldee word; and its meaning must be sought in the rabbinical writers. In a treatise in the Mishna called Kelayim, which treats expressly on different kinds of seeds, the word זִנִּים zunim, or זִנִּין zunin, is used for bastard or degenerated wheat; that which was wholly a right seed in the beginning, but afterwards became degenerate—the ear not being so large, nor the grains in such quantity, as formerly, nor the corn so good in quality. In Psalm 144:13, the words מִזְּאֵל מִזְּאֵל mizzan al zen, are translated all manner of store; but they



properly signify, from species to species: might not the Chaldee word זָנָן *zunin*, and the Greek word ζιζάνια, *zizania*, come from the psalmist's זָנָן *zanzan*, which might have signified a mixture of grain of any kind, and be here used to point out the mixing bastard or degenerate wheat among good seed wheat? The Persic translator renders it [P] *telkh daneh*, bitter grain; but it seems to signify merely degenerate wheat. This interpretation throws much light on the scope and design of the whole passage. Christ seems to refer, first, to the origin of evil. God sowed good seed in his field; made man in his own image and likeness: but the enemy, the devil, (Matthew 13:30,) corrupted this good seed, and caused it to degenerate. Secondly, he seems to refer to the state of the Jewish people: God had sowed them, at first, wholly a right seed, but now they were become utterly degenerate, and about to be plucked up and destroyed by the Roman armies, which were the angels or messengers of God's justice, whom he had commissioned to sweep these rebellious people from the face of the land. Thirdly, he seems to refer also to the state in which the world shall be found, when he comes to judge it. The righteous and the wicked shall be permitted to grow together, till God comes to make a full and final separation.

**Verse 26. *When the blade was sprung up-then appeared the tares also.***—

Satan has a shoot of iniquity for every shoot of grace; and, when God revives his work, Satan revives his also. No marvel, therefore, if we find scandals arising suddenly to discredit a work of grace, where God has begun to pour out his Spirit.

**Verse 27. *So the servants-said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow***— A faithful and vigilant minister of Christ fails not to discover the evil, to lament it, and to address himself to God by prayer, in order to find out the cause of it, and to receive from him proper information how to behave on the occasion.

**Verse 28. *An enemy hath done this***— It is the interest of Satan to introduce hypocrites and wicked persons into religious societies, in order to discredit the work of God, and to favor his own designs.

***Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?***— A zeal which is rash and precipitate is as much to be feared as the total lack of strict discipline.

**Verse 29. *But he said, Nay***— God judges quite otherwise than men of this mixture of good and evil in the world; he knows the good which he intends to produce from it, and how far his patience towards the wicked should extend, in order to their conversion, or the farther sanctification of the righteous. Men often persecute a true Christian, while they intend only to prosecute an impious person. “A zeal for the extirpation of heretics and wicked men,” said a pious Papist, “not regulated by these words of our blessed Savior, allows no time for the one to grow strong in goodness, or to the other to forsake their evil courses. They are of a spirit very opposite to his, who care not if they root up the wheat, provided they can but gather up the tares.” The zeal which leads persons to persecute others for religious opinions is not less a seed of the devil than a bad opinion itself is.

**Verse 30. *Let both grow together***— Though every minister of God should separate from the Church of Christ every incorrigible sinner, yet he should proceed no farther: the man is not to be persecuted in his body or goods, because he is not sound in the faith—GOD tolerates him; so should men. False doctrines are against God—he alone is the judge and punisher of them—man has no right to interfere in this matter. They who burnt Vanini for atheism usurped the seat of judgment, and thus proved themselves to be not less a diabolical seed than the person they thus, without God’s leave, hurried into eternity. MARY, Queen of England, of execrable memory, and the inquisitorial tormentors she employed, were all of this diabolical sowing. See more on this parable at Matthew 13:37, etc.

**Verse 31. *The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed***— This parable is a representation of the progress of the Gospel in the world; and of the growth of grace in the soul. That grace which leads the soul to the fullness of glory may begin, and often does, in a single good desire—a wish to escape hell, or a desire to enjoy God in heaven.

**Verse 32. *Which indeed is the least of all seeds***— That is, of all those seeds which produce plants, whose stems and branches, according to the saying of the botanists, are apt *δενδριζειν*, arborescere, to grow into a ligneous or woody substance.

***Becometh a tree***— That is, it is not only the largest of plants which are produced from such small seeds, but partakes, in its substance, the close woody texture, especially in warm climates, where we are informed it

grows to an almost incredible size. The Jerusalem Talmud, tract Peah. fol. 20, says, "There was a stalk of mustard in Sichin, from which sprang out three boughs; one of which, being broken off, served to cover the tent of a potter, and produced three cabes of mustard seed. Rabbi Simeon ben Chalapha said, A stalk of mustard seed was in my field, into which I was want to climb, as men are wont to climb into a fig tree." See Lightfoot and Schoettgen. This may appear to be extravagant; and it is probable that, in the case of the three cabes of seed, there is considerable exaggeration; but, if it had not been usual for this plant to grow to a very large size, such relations as these would not have appeared even in the Talmud; and the parable of our Lord sufficiently attests the fact. Some soils being more luxuriant than others, and the climate much warmer, raise the same plant to a size and perfection far beyond what a poorer soil, or a colder climate, can possibly do. Herodotus says, he has seen wheat and barley in the country about Babylon which carried a blade full four fingers-breadth: and that the millet and sesamum grew to an incredible size. I have myself seen a field of common cabbages, in one of the Norman isles, each of which was from seven to nine feet in height; and one in the garden of a friend, which grew beside an apple-tree, though the latitude of the place is only about 48 deg. 13 min. north, was fifteen feet high, the stem of which is yet remaining, (September, 1798.) These facts, and several others which might be added, confirm fully the possibility of what our Lord says of the mustard-tree, however incredible such things may appear to those who are acquainted only with the productions of northern regions and cold climates.

**Verse 33. *The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven***— On the nature and effects of leaven, see the note on Exodus 12:8. As the property of leaven is to change, or assimilate to its own nature, the meal or dough with which it is mixed, so the property of the grace of Christ is to change the whole soul into its own likeness; and God intends that this principle should continue in the soul till all is leavened—till the whole bear the image of the heavenly, as it before bore the image of the earthly. Both these parables are prophetic, and were intended to show, principally, how, from very small beginnings, the Gospel of Christ should pervade all the nations of the world, and fill them with righteousness and true holiness.

**Verse 34. *All these things spoke Jesus-in parables***— Christ descends from Divine mysteries to parables, in order to excite us to raise our minds,

from and through natural things, to the great God, and the operations of his grace and Spirit. Divine things cannot be taught to man but through the medium of earthly things. If God should speak to us in that language which is peculiar to heaven, clothing those ideas which angelic minds form, how little should we comprehend of the things thus described! How great is our privilege in being thus taught! Heavenly things, in the parables of Christ, assume to themselves a body, and thus render themselves palpable.

**Verse 35. *By the prophet***— As the quotation is taken from Psalm 78:2, which is attributed to Asaph, he must be the prophet who is meant in the text; and, indeed, he is expressly called a prophet, 1 Chronicles 25:2. Several MSS. have ἠσαίου, Isaiah; but this is a manifest error. Jerome supposes that Asaph was first in the text, and that some ignorant transcriber, not knowing who this Asaph was, inserted the word Isaiah; and thus, by attempting to remove an imaginary error, made a real one.

**Verse 36. *Jesus-went into the house: and his disciples came***— Circumstances of this kind should not pass unnoticed: they are instructive and important. Those who attend only to the public preaching of the Gospel of God are not likely to understand fully the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. To understand clearly the purport of the Divine message, a man must come to God by frequent, fervent, secret prayer. It is thus that the word of God sinks into the heart, is watered, and brings forth much fruit.

***Declare (φρασον, explain) unto us the parable of the tares of the field.***— To what has already been spoken on this parable, the following general exposition may be deemed a necessary appendage:-

I. What is the cause of EVIL in the world?

1. We must allow that God, who is infinite in holiness, purity, and goodness, could not have done it. Nothing can produce what is not in itself. This is a maxim which every man subscribes to: God then could not have produced sin, forasmuch as his nature is infinite goodness and holiness. He made man at first in his own image, a transcript of his own purity: and, since sin entered into the world, He has done every thing consistent with his own perfections, and the freedom of the human mind, to drive it out, and to make and keep man holy.

2. After a thousand volumes are written on the origin of evil, we shall just know as much of it as Christ has told us here-An enemy hath done it, and this enemy is the devil, Matthew 13:39.

1. This enemy is represented as a deceitful enemy: a friend in appearance, soliciting to sin, by pleasure, honor, riches, etc.

2. A vigilant enemy. While men sleep he watches, Matthew 13:25.

3. A hidden or secret enemy. After having sown his seed, he disappears, Matthew 13:25. Did he appear as himself, few would receive solicitations to sin; but he is seldom discovered in evil thoughts, unholy desires, flattering discourses, bad books, etc.

## II. Why was evil permitted to enter into the world?

1. There are doubtless sufficient reasons in the Divine Mind for its permission; which, connected with his infinite essence, and extending to eternity, are not only unfathomable by us, but also, from their nature, incommunicable to men.

2. But it may be justly said, that hereby many attributes of the Divine Nature become manifest, which otherwise could not have been known; such as mercy, compassion, long-suffering, etc. All of which endear the Deity to men, and perfect the felicity of those who are saved.

## III. But why does he suffer this mixture of the good and bad seed now?

1. Because of the necessary dependence of one part of the creation on the other. Were the wicked all rooted up, society must fail-the earth be nearly desolated-noxious things greatly multiplied-and the small remnant of the godly, not being able to stand against the onsets of wild beasts, etc., must soon be extirpated; and then adieu to the economy of grace!

2. Did not the wicked exist, there would be no room for the exercise of many of the graces of the Spirit, on which our spiritual perfection greatly depends.

3. Nor could the grace of God be so manifest in supporting and saving the righteous; and consequently could not have that honor which now it justly claims.

4. Were not this evil tolerated, how could the wicked be converted? The bastard wheat, by being transplanted to a better soil, may become good wheat; so sinners may be engrafted in Christ, and become sons of God through faith in his name; for the longsuffering of God leads multitudes to repentance.

#### IV. Observe the end of the present state of things:

1. The wicked shall be punished, and the righteous rewarded.

The wicked are termed bastard-wheat-the children of the wicked one, Matthew 13:38, the very seed of the serpent.

Observe the place in which the wicked shall be punished,-a FURNACE. The instrument of this punishment, FIRE. This is an allusion to the punishment inflicted only on those supposed to be the very worst of criminals. See Daniel 3:6. They were cast into a burning fiery furnace. The effect of it, DESPAIR; weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, Matthew 13:42.

2. Observe the character and state of the righteous:

1. They are the children of the kingdom, a seed of God's sowing, Matthew 13:38.

2. As to their persons, they shall be like the sun.

3. The place of their felicity shall be the kingdom of heaven: and,

4. The object of it, GOD In the relation of FATHER, Matthew 13:43. This is a reference to Daniel 12:2, 3.

Some learned men are of opinion that the whole of this parable refers to the Jewish state and people; and that the words *συντελεια του αιωνος*, which are commonly translated the end of the world, should be rendered the end of the age, viz. the end of the Jewish polity. That the words have this meaning in other places there can be no doubt; and this may be their primary meaning here; but there are other matters in the parable which agree far better with the consummation of all things than with the end of the Jewish dispensation and polity. See on Mark 4:29.

**Verse 44.** *The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field—* *θησαυρω κεκρυμμενω*, to a hidden treasure. We are not to imagine that

the treasure here mentioned, and to which the Gospel salvation is likened, means a pot or chest of money hidden in the field, but rather a gold or silver mine, which he who found out could not get at, or work, without turning up the field, and for this purpose he bought it. Mr. Wakefield's observation is very just: "There is no sense in the purchase of a field for a pot of money, which he might have carried away with him very readily, and as honestly, too, as by overreaching the owner by an unjust purchase."

He hideth-i.e. he kept secret, told the discovery to no person, till he had bought the field. From this view of the subject, the translation of this verse, given above, will appear proper-a hidden treasure, when applied to a rich mine, is more proper than a treasure hid, which applies better to a pot of money deposited there, which I suppose was our translators' opinion; and kept secret, or concealed, will apply better to the subject of his discovery till he made the purchase, than hideth, for which there could be no occasion, when the pot was already hidden, and the place known only to himself.

Our Lord's meaning seems to be this:- The kingdom of heaven-the salvation provided by the Gospel-is like a treasure-something of inestimable worth-hidden in a field; it is a rich mine, the veins of which run in all directions in the sacred Scriptures; therefore, the field must be dug up, the records of salvation diligently and carefully turned over, and searched. Which, when a man hath found-when a sinner is convinced that the promise of life eternal is to him, he kept secret-pondered the matter deeply in his heart; he examines the preciousness of the treasure, and counts the cost of purchase; for joy thereof-finding that this salvation is just what his needy soul requires, and what will make him presently and eternally happy, went and sold all that he had-renounces his sins, abandons his evil companions, and relinquishes all hope of salvation through his own righteousness; and purchased that field-not merely bought the book for the sake of the salvation it described, but, by the blood of the covenant, buys gold tried in the fire, white raiment, etc.; in a word, pardon and purity, which he receives from God for the sake of Jesus. We should consider the salvation of God, 1. As our only treasure, and value it above all the riches in the world. 2. Search for it in the Scriptures, till we fully understand its worth and excellence. 3. Deeply ponder it in the secret of our souls. 4. Part with all we have in order to get it. 5. Place our whole joy

and felicity in it; and 6. Be always convinced that it must be bought, and that no price is accepted for it but the blood of the covenant; the sufferings and death of our only Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

**Verse 45. *A merchant man, seeking goodly pearls***— A story very like this is found in the Talmudical tract Shabbath: “Joseph, who sanctified the Sabbath, had a very rich neighbor; the Chaldeans said, All the riches of this man shall come to Joseph, who sanctifies the Sabbath. To prevent this, the rich man went and sold all that he had, and bought a pearl, and went aboard of a ship; but the wind carried the pearl away, it fell into the sea, and was swallowed by a fish. This fish was caught, and the day before the Sabbath it was brought into the market, and they proclaimed, Who wishes to buy this fish? The people said, Carry it to Joseph, the sanctifier of the Sabbath, who is accustomed to buy things of great value. They carried it to him, and he bought it, and when he cut it up he found the pearl, and sold it for thirteen pounds weight of golden denarii!” From some tradition of this kind, our Lord might have borrowed the simile in this parable.

The meaning of this parable is the same with the other; and both were spoken to impress more forcibly this great truth on the souls of the people:—eternal salvation from sin and its consequences is the supreme good of man, should be sought after above all things, and prized beyond all that God has made. Those merchants who compass sea and land for temporal gain, condemn the slothfulness of the majority of those called Christians, who, though they confess that this salvation is the most certain and the most excellent of all treasures, yet seek worldly possessions in preference to it! Alas, for him who expects to find any thing more amiable than God, more worthy to fill his heart, and more capable of making him happy!

**Verse 47. *Is like unto a net***— A drag-net. This is the proper meaning of *σῶννῃ*, which the Latins translate *verriculum*, a sweep net; *Quod in aquam jacitur ad pisces comprehendendos; imprimis, cujus usus est extrahendis iis a fundo.* MARTINIUS. “Which is cast into the water to catch fish, and the particular use of which is to drag them up from the bottom.” As this is dragged along it keeps gathering all in its way, both good and bad, small and great; and, when it is brought to the shore, those which are



proper for use are preserved, and those which are not are either destroyed or thrown back into the water.

By the net may be understood the preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom, which keeps drawing men into the profession of Christianity, and into the fellowship of the visible Church of Christ. By the sea may be represented that abyss of sin, error, ignorance, and wickedness in which men live, and out of which they are drawn, by the truth and Spirit of God, who cordially close in with the offers of salvation made to them in the preaching of the Gospel.

By drawing to shore, may be represented the consummation of all things, see Matthew 13:49, when a proper distinction shall be made between those who served God, and those who served him not; for many shall doubtless be found who shall bear the name without the nature of Christ. By picking out the good, and throwing away the bad, Matthew 13:48, is meant that separation which God shall make between false and true professors, casting the former into hell, and bringing the latter to heaven.

Instead of **τα καλα** the good, the Cod. Bezae, and five copies of the old Antehieronymian, or Itala version, read **τα καλλιστα**, the best, the very best. Every reader would naturally hope that this is not the true reading, or that it is not to be understood literally, as it seems to intimate that only the very best shall be at last saved.

It is probable that this parable also refers, in its primary meaning, to the Jewish state, and that, when Christ should come to judge and destroy them by the Roman power, the genuine followers of Christ only should escape, and the rest be overwhelmed by the general destruction. See Matthew 24:30, etc.

**Verse 50. *Into the furnace of fire***— See the note on Matthew 8:12.

**Verse 51. *Have ye understood all these things?***— Divine truths must not be lightly passed over.—Our Lord's question here shows them to be matters of the utmost weight and importance; and that they should be considered again and again, till they be thoroughly understood.

**Verse 52. *Every scribe***— Minister of Christ: who is instructed-taught of God; in the kingdom of heaven—in the mysteries of the Gospel of Christ:

out of his treasury-his granary or store-house; things new and old-a Jewish phrase for great plenty. A small degree of knowledge is not sufficient for a preacher of the Gospel. The sacred writings should be his treasure, and he should properly understand them. His knowledge does not consist in being furnished with a great variety of human learning, (though of this he should acquire as much as he can;) but his knowledge consists in being well instructed in the things concerning the kingdom of heaven, and the art of conducting men thither. Again, it is not enough for a man to have these advantages in possession: he must bring them forth, and distribute them abroad. A good pastor will not, like a miser, keep these things to himself to please his fancy; nor, like a merchant, traffic with them, to enrich himself; but, like a bountiful father or householder, distribute them with a liberal through judicious hand, for the comfort and support of the whole heavenly family.

A preacher whose mind is well stored with Divine truths, and who has a sound judgment, will suit his discourses to the circumstances and states of his hearers. He who preaches the same sermon to every congregation, gives the fullest proof that, however well he may speak, he is not a scribe who is instructed in the kingdom of heaven. Some have thought that old and new things here, which imply the produce of the past and the produce of the present year, may also refer to the old and new covenants-a proper knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures, and of the doctrines of Christ as contained in the New. No man can properly understand the Old Testament but through the medium of the New, nor can the New be so forcibly or successfully applied to the conscience of a sinner as through the medium of the Old. The law is still a schoolmaster to lead men to Christ-by it is the knowledge of sin, and, without it, there can be no conviction- where it ends, the Gospel begins, as by the Gospel alone is salvation from sin. See the whole of the comment on the Pentateuch.

**Verse 54. *And when he was come into his own country***— Probably Nazareth, where his parents lived, and where he had continued till his thirtieth year, though it appears he had a lodging in Peter's house at Capernaum.

***They were astonished***— It appears, hence, that our blessed Lord had lived in obscurity all the time above specified; for his countrymen appear not to

have heard his doctrines, nor seen his miracles, until now. It is a melancholy truth, that those who should know Christ best are often the most ignorant of himself, the doctrines of his word, and the operations of his Spirit.

**Verse 55. *Is not this the carpenter's son?***— Seven copies of the old Itala have, Is not this the son of JOSEPH the carpenter? But it is likely our Lord, during the thirty years of his abode at Nazareth, wrought at the same trade with Joseph; and perhaps this is what is intended, Luke 2:51. He went down with them (his parents) to Nazareth, and was SUBJECT unto them. An honest trade is no discredit to any man. He who spends his time in idleness is fit for any business in which the devil chooses to employ him.

***Is not his mother-Mary, and his brethren, James, etc.***— This insulting question seems to intimate that our Lord's family was a very obscure one; and that they were of small repute among their neighbors, except for their piety.

It is possible that brethren and sisters may mean here near relations, as the words are used among the Hebrews in this latitude of meaning; but I confess it does not appear to me likely. Why should the children of another family be brought in here to share a reproach which it is evident was designed for Joseph the carpenter, Mary his wife, Jesus their son, and their other children? Prejudice apart, would not any person of plain common sense suppose, from this account, that these were the children of Joseph and Mary, and the brothers and sisters of our Lord, according to the flesh? It seems odd that this should be doubted; but, through an unaccountable prejudice, Papists and Protestants are determined to maintain as a doctrine, that on which the Scriptures are totally silent, viz. the perpetual virginity of the mother of our Lord. See Matthew 1:25.

**Verse 57. *And they were offended in him.***— They took offense at him, *εσκανδαλιζοντο εν αυτω*, making the meanness of his family the reason why they would not receive him as a prophet, though they were astonished at his wisdom, and at his miracles, Matthew 13:54. So their pride and their envy were the causes of their destruction.

***A prophet is not without honor***— This seems to have been a proverbial mode of speech, generally true, but not without some exceptions. The

apparent meanness of our Lord was one pretense why they rejected him; and yet, God manifested in the flesh, humbling himself to the condition of a servant, and to the death of the cross, is the only foundation for the salvation of a lost world. Perhaps our Lord means, by prophet, in this place, himself alone, as if he had said, My ministry is more generally reputed, and my doctrine better received, in any other part of the land than in my own country, among my own relatives; because, knowing the obscurity of my birth, they can scarcely suppose that I have these things from heaven.

**Verse 58.** *And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief*— **δυναμεις**, miracles. So the word is used, Matthew 7:22; 11:20; Acts 19:11; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Galatians 3:5; Hebrews 2:4. The Septuagint translates **נִפְלְאוֹת אֱל** niphleoth el, the miraculous works of God, by **δυναμιν κυριου**.

Unbelief and contempt drive Christ out of the heart, as they did out of his own country. Faith seems to put the almighty power of God into the hands of men; whereas unbelief appears, to tie up even the hands of the Almighty. A man, generally speaking, can do but little good among his relatives, because it is difficult for them to look with the eyes of faith upon one whom they have been accustomed to behold with the eyes of the flesh.-QUESNEL.

See the notes at the beginning of this chapter. {Matthew 13:1}

## CHAPTER 14

*Herod, having heard the fame of Christ, supposes him to be John the Baptist, risen from the dead, 1, 2. A circumstantial account of the beheading of John the Baptist, 3-12. Five thousand men, besides women and children, fed with five loaves and two fishes, 13-21. The disciples take ship, and Jesus stays behind, and goes privately into a mountain to pray, 22, 23. A violent storm arises, by which the lives of the disciples are endangered, 24. In their extremity, Jesus appears to them, walking upon the water, 25-27. Peter, at the command of his Master, leaves the ship, and walks on the water to meet Christ, 28-31. They both enter the ship, and the storm ceases, 32, 33. They come into the land of Gennesaret, and he heals many diseased people, 34-36.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 14

**Verse 1. *Herod the tetrarch***— This was Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great. See the notes on Matthew 2:1, where an account is given of the Herod family. The word tetrarch properly signifies a person who rules over the fourth part of a country; but it is taken in a more general sense by the Jewish writers, meaning sometimes a governor simply, or a king; see Matthew 14:9. The estates of Herod the Great were not, at his death, divided into four tetrarchies, but only into three: one was given by the Emperor Augustus to Archelaus; the second to Herod Antipas, the person in the text; and the third to Philip: all three, sons of Herod the Great.

**Verse 2. *This is John the Baptist***— ον εγω απεκεφαλισα, Whom I beheaded. These words are added here by the Codex Bezae and several others, by the Saxon, and five copies of the Itala.—See the power of conscience! He is miserable because he is guilty; being continually under the dominion of self-accusation, reproach, and remorse. No need for the Baptist now: conscience performs the office of ten thousand accusers! But, to complete the misery, a guilty conscience offers no relief from God—points out no salvation from sin.

***He is risen from the dead***— From this we may observe: 1. That the resurrection of the dead was a common opinion among the Jews; and 2. That the materiality of the soul made no part of Herod's creed. Bad and profligate as he was, it was not deemed by him a thing impossible with God to raise the dead; and the spirit of the murdered Baptist had a permanent resurrection in his guilty conscience.

**Verse 3. *For Herodias' sake***— This infamous woman was the daughter of Aristobulus and Bernice, and grand-daughter of Herod the Great. Her first marriage was with Herod Philip, her uncle, by whom she had Salome: some time after, she left her husband, and lived publicly with Herod Antipas, her brother-in-law, who had been before married to the daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia Petraea. As soon as Aretas understood that Herod had determined to put away his daughter, he prepared to make war on him: the two armies met, and that of Herod was cut to pieces by the Arabians; and this, Josephus says, was supposed to be a judgment of God on him for the murder of John the Baptist. See the account in Josephus, *Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 7.*

**Verse 4. *For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her.***— Here is an instance of zeal, fidelity, and courage, highly worthy of imitation. Plainness, mildness, and modesty, are qualifications necessary to be observed when we reprove the great. The best service a subject can render his prince is to lay before him, in the plainest but most respectful manner, what the law of God requires of him, and what it forbids. How unutterable must the punishment of those be who are chaplains to princes, or great men, and who either flatter them in their vices, or wink at their sins!

**Verse 5. *He feared the multitude***— Miserable prince! who fears more to offend his people, than to sin against his God, by shedding innocent blood. When a man resists sin only by the help of human motives, he cannot long defend himself.

**Verse 6. *Herod's birth-day***— Either the day in which he was born, or the day on which he began to reign; for both were termed birth-days. See 1 Samuel 13:1, and Hosea 7:5. The kings of Persia were accustomed to reject no petition that was preferred to them during the entertainment. See Herodotus in Calliope, and Esther 5:3.

***The daughter-danced***— This was Salome, mentioned before. Danced: by a literal rendering of the saltavit of the Vulgate, in my old MS. of the English Bible, the whole of this business seems to be treated with sovereign contempt: for thus says the translator, Shee leped in the myddle.

**Verse 8. *Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.***— The word charger formerly signified a large dish, bowl, or drinking cup: the Saxon has [AS], a dish, Tindal, a platter; any thing is better than charger, which never conveyed much meaning, and now conveys none. The evangelist says she was instructed before, by her mother, to ask the Baptist's head! What a most infernal mother, to give such instructions to her child! and what a promising daughter to receive them! What a present for a young lady!-the bloody head of the murdered forerunner of Jesus! and what a gratification for an adulterous wife, and incestuous mother! The disturber of her illicit pleasures, and the troubler of her brother-husband's conscience, is no more! Short, however, was their glorying! See on Matthew 14:3.

**Verse 9. *The king was sorry***— He knew John to be a righteous man, and at first did many things gladly which John told him it was his duty to perform: Mark 6:20.

***Nevertheless, for the oath's sake***— The OATHS, *ορκους*-he had probably sworn again and again-one sin begets many.

***And them which sat with him at meat***— Who were probably such as himself, and would have considered it a breach of honor if he had not fulfilled his sworn promise: he therefore commanded it to be given!

**Verse 11. *His head was given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother.***— There is no person so revengeful as a lascivious woman when reproved and blamed. A preacher of the Gospel has most to fear from this quarter:-the first of this profession lost his life for the sake of truth and chastity; and others, especially those who have any thing to do with men in power who are profligates, may learn what they are to expect in return for a faithful discharge of their duty.

**Verse 12. *His disciples came, and took up the BODY***— The HEAD was in the possession of Herodias, who, 'tis probable, took a diabolic pleasure in viewing that speechless mouth which had often been the cause of planting thorns in her criminal bed; and in offering indignities to that tongue from

which she could no longer dread a reproof. Her character justifies every bad conjecture that can well be formed on this head: and St. Jerome positively says that, when she got it, she drew out the tongue, and thrust it through with her bodkin. On the whole we may observe:-

That the diversions of the world, feasting and dancing, are but too commonly the occasions of sin. After so fatal an example as this, can we doubt whether balls are not snares for souls; destructive of chastity, modesty, and sometimes even of humanity itself; and a pernicious invention to excite the most criminal passions! How many on such occasions have sacrificed their chastity, and then, to hide their shame, have stifled the feelings of the human being and the parent, and, by direct or indirect means, have put a period to the innocent offspring of their connections! Unhappy mother, who exposes her daughter to the same shipwreck herself has suffered, and makes her own child the instrument of her lust and revenge! Behold here, ye professedly religious parents, the fruits of what was doubtless called in those times, elegant breeding and accomplished dancing! Fix your eyes on that vicious mother, that prostituted daughter, and especially on that murdered ambassador of God, and then send your children to genteel boarding-schools, to learn the accomplishment of DANCING! where the fear of God makes no part of the education.

**Verse 13. *When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence***— Had the blessed Jesus continued in that place, it is probable the hand of this impure female murderer would have been stretched out against him also: he withdrew, therefore, not through fear, but to teach his messengers rather to yield to the storm than expose themselves to destruction, where, from circumstances, the case is evidently hopeless.

***The people-followed him on foot***— πεζῇ, or, by land, which is a common acceptance of the word in the best Greek writers. See many examples in Kypke.

**Verse 14. *Jesus-was moved with compassion***— ἐσπλαγχνισθε, he was moved with tender compassion, so I think the word should in general be translated: see the note on Matthew 9:36. As a verb, it does not appear to have been used by any but ecclesiastical writers. It always intimates that



motion of the bowels, accompanied with extreme tenderness and concern, which is felt at the sight of the miseries of another.

**Verse 15. *Send the multitude away, that they may go-and buy***— The disciples of Christ are solicitous for the people's temporal as well a spiritual welfare: and he is not worthy to be called a minister of Christ, who does not endeavor to promote both to the uttermost of his power. The preaching of Christ must have been accompanied with uncommon power to these people's souls, to have induced them to leave their homes to follow him from village to village, for they could never hear enough; and to neglect to make use of any means for the support of their lives, so that they might still have the privilege of hearing him. When a soul is either well replenished with the bread of life, or hungry after it, the necessities of the body are, for the time, little regarded.

**Verse 16. *They need not depart***— He that seeks first the kingdom of heaven is sure to have every temporal requisite. When a man ensures the first, God always takes care to throw the other into the bargain. He who has an interest in Jesus has in him an inexhaustible treasure of spiritual and temporal good. Though the means by which man may help his fellows have failed, we are not to suppose that the bounty of God is exhausted. When we are about to give up all hope of farther supply, the gracious word of Christ still holds good—They need not depart; give ye them to eat.

***Give ye them to eat.***— Should we say, Lord, how shall thy poor, feeble ministering servants feed so many hungry souls as attend thy word! Begin at the command of Jesus—make the attempt—divide what you have—and the bread of God shall be multiplied in your hands, and all shall eat and be satisfied.

**Verse 17. *We have here but five loaves and two fishes.***— When we are deeply conscious of our own necessities, we shall be led to depend on Jesus with a firmer faith. God often permits his servants to be brought low, that they may have repeated opportunities of proving the kindness and mercy of their gracious Lord and Master.

**Verse 18. *Bring them hither to me.***— No creature of God should be considered as good or safe without the blessing of God in it. If thou have but even a handful of meal and a few herbs, bring them to Christ by prayer

and faith, and he will make them a sufficiency for thy body, and a sacrament to thy soul. Let the minister of the Gospel attend also to this-let him bring all his gifts and graces to his Maker-let him ever know that his word can be of no use, unless the blessing of Christ be in it.

**Verse 19. *And took the five loaves, etc.***— This was the act of the father of a family among the Jews-his business it was to take the bread into his hands, and render thanks to God, before any of the family was permitted to taste of it.

***Looking up to heaven***— To teach us to acknowledge GOD as the Supreme Good, and fountain of all excellence.

***He blessed***— The word God should, I think, be rather inserted here than the word them, because it does not appear that it was the loaves which Christ blessed, but that God who had provided them; and this indeed was the Jewish custom, not to bless the food, but the God who gave it. However, there are others who believe the loaves are meant, and that he blessed them in order to multiply them. The Jewish form of blessing, or what we term grace, before and after meat, was as follows:-

#### BEFORE MEAT

ברוך אתה אלהינו מלך העולם המוצא לחם מ הארץ:

*Barnuc attah Elohinoo melec haolam hamoise lechem min haarets:*

*Blessed art thou, our God, King of the universe, who bringest bread out of the earth!*

#### AFTER MEAT

ברוך אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי הגפ

*Barnuc Elohinoo melec haolam bore peri hagephen:*

*Blessed art thou, our God, King of the universe, the Creator of the fruit of the vine!*

***And brake***— We read often in the Scriptures of breaking bread, never of cutting it: because the Jews made their bread broad and thin like cakes, and to divide such, being very brittle, there was no need of a knife.

**Verse 20. *They did all eat, and were filled***— Little or much is the same in the hands of Jesus Christ. Here was an incontestable miracle-five thousand men, besides women and children, fed with five cakes and two fishes! Here must have been a manifest creation of substance-the parts of the bread were not dilated to make them appear large, nor was there any delusion in the eating-for they all ate, and were all filled. Here then is one miracle of our Lord attested by at least five thousand persons! But did not this creation of bread prove the unlimited power of Jesus? Undoubtedly: and nothing less than eternal power and Godhead could have effected it.

***They took up-twelve baskets***— It was customary for many of the Jews to carry a basket with them at all times: and Mr. Wakefield's conjecture here is very reasonable:-“By the number here particularized, it should seem that each apostle filled his own bread basket.” Some think that the Jews carried baskets in commemoration of their Egyptian bondage, when they were accustomed to carry the clay and stubble to make the bricks, in a basket that was hung about their necks. This seems to be what Sidonius Apollinaris refers to in the following words, Epist. vii. 6. Ordinis res est, ut, (dum in allegorica versamur AEgypto) Pharaon incedat cum diademate, Israelita cum CAPHINO.

These words of Alcimus Avitus, lib. v. 30, are to the same effect:-

*Servitii longo lassatam pondere plebem,  
Oppressos caphinis humeros, attritaque collo*

It appears that a basket about the neck, and a bunch of hay, were the general characteristic of this long enslaved and oppressed people in the different countries where they sojourned.

Juvenal also mentions the BASKET and the hay:-

*Cum dedit ille locum, caphino faenoque relicto,  
Arcanam Judaea tremens mendicat in aurem  
Sat vi. 542*

*A gypsy Jewess whispers in your ear—  
Her goods a basket, and old hay her bed,  
She strolls, and telling fortunes, gains her bread  
Dryden*

And again, Sat iii. 13:-

*Nunc sacri fontis nemus, et delubra locantur  
Judaeis, quorum cophinus, faenumque supellex*

*Now the once hallowed fountain, grove, and fane,  
Are let to Jews, a wretched, wandering train,  
Whose wealth is but a basket stuff'd with hay  
Gifford*

The simple reason why the Jews carried baskets with them appears to be this:-When they went into Gentile countries, they carried their own provision with them, as they were afraid of being polluted by partaking of the meat of heathens. This also obliged them probably to carry hay with them to sleep on: and it is to this, in all likelihood, that Juvenal alludes.

After five thousand were fed, twelve times as much, at least, remained, as the whole multitude at first sat down to! See the note on Luke 9:16.

**Verse 22. *Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship***— Either they were afraid to return into the jurisdiction of Herod, or they were unwilling to embark without their Lord and Protector, and would not enter their boat till Christ had commanded them to embark.

From this verse it appears that Christ gave some advices to the multitudes after the departure of his disciples, which he did not wish them to hear.

***Unto the other side***— Towards Capernaum, Matthew 14:34. John 6:16, 17, or Bethsaida, see on Mark 6:45.

**Verse 23. *He went up into a mountain apart, to pray***— He whom God has employed in a work of mercy had need to return, by prayer, as speedily, to his Maker, as he can, lest he should be tempted to value himself on account of that in which he has no merit—for the good that is done upon earth, the Lord doth it alone. Some make this part of our Lord's conduct emblematic of the spirit and practice of prayer, and observe that the proper dispositions and circumstances for praying well are: 1. Retirement from the world. 2. Elevation of the heart to God. 3. Solitude. 4. The silence and quiet of the night. It is certain that in this also Christ has left us an example that we should follow his steps. Retirement from the world is often a means of animating, supporting, and spiritualizing prayer.

Other society should be shut out, when a soul comes to converse with God.

**Verse 24. *Tossed with waves***— Grievously agitated. This is the proper meaning of the word βασιανιζομενον; but one MS. reads βαπιζομενον, plunged under the waves, frequently covered with them; the waves often breaking over the vessel.

**Verse 25. *The fourth watch***— Anciently the Jews divided the night into three watches, consisting of four hours each. The first watch is mentioned, Lamenations 2:19; the second, Judges 7:19; and the third, Exodus 14:24; but a fourth watch is not mentioned in any part of the OLD Testament. This division the Romans had introduced in Judea, as also the custom of dividing the day into twelve hours: see John 11:9. The first watch began at six o'clock in the evening, and continued till nine; the second began at nine, and continued till twelve; the third began at twelve, and continued till three next morning; and the fourth began at three, and continued till six. It was therefore between the hours of three and six in the morning that Jesus made his appearance to his disciples.

***Walking on the sea.***— Thus suspending the laws of gravitation was a proper manifestation of unlimited power. Jesus did this by his own power; therefore Jesus showed forth his Godhead. In this one miracle we may discover three:-1. Though at a distance from his disciples, he knew their distress. 2. He found them out on the lake, and probably in the midst of darkness. 3. He walked upon the water. Job, speaking of those things whereby the omnipotence of God was demonstrated, says particularly, Job 9:8, He walketh upon the waves of the sea: intimating that this was impossible to any thing but Omnipotence.

**Verse 26. *It is a spirit***— That the spirits of the dead might and did appear, was a doctrine held by the greatest and holiest of men that ever existed; and a doctrine which the caviliers, free-thinkers and bound-thinkers, of different ages, have never been able to disprove.

**Verse 27. *It is I; be not afraid***— Nothing but this voice of Christ could, in such circumstances, have given courage and comfort to his disciples: those who are grievously tossed with difficulties and temptations require a

similar manifestation of his power and goodness. When he proclaims himself in the soul, all sorrow, and fear, and sin are at an end.

**Verse 28. *Bid me come unto thee on the water.***— A weak faith is always wishing for signs and miracles. To take Christ at his word, argues not only the perfection of faith, but also the highest exercise of sound reason. He is to be credited on his own word, because he is the TRUTH, and therefore can neither lie nor deceive.

**Verse 29. *Peter-walked on the water***— However impossible the thing commanded by Christ may appear, it is certain he will give power to accomplish it to those who receive his word by faith; but we must take care never to put Christ's power to the proof for the gratification of a vain curiosity; or even for the strengthening of our faith, when the ordinary means for doing that are within our reach.

**Verse 30. *When he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid***— It was by faith in the power of Christ he was upheld; when that faith failed, by which the laws of gravitation were suspended, no wonder that those laws returned to their wonted action, and that he began to sink. It was not the violence of the winds, nor the raging of the waves, which endangered his life, but his littleness of faith.

**Verse 31. *Jesus stretched forth his hand***— Every moment we stand in need of Christ: while we stand-we are upheld by his power only; and when we are falling, or have fallen, we can be saved only by his mercy. Let us always take care that we do not consider so much the danger to which we are exposed, as the power of Christ by which we are to be upheld; and then our mountain is likely to stand strong.

**Verse 32. *The wind ceased.***— Jesus is the Prince of peace, and all is peace and calm where he condescends to enter and abide.

**Verse 33. *Thou art the Son of God.***— It is probable that these words were spoken either by the sailors or passengers, and not by the disciples. Critics have remarked that, when this phrase is used to denominate the MESSIAH, both the articles are used, *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ*, and that the words without the articles mean, in the common Jewish phrase, a Divine person. It would have been a strange thing indeed, if the disciples, after all the miracles they had seen Jesus work-after their having left all to follow him,

etc., were only now persuaded that he was the promised Messiah. That they had not as yet clear conceptions concerning his kingdom, is evident enough; but that they had any doubts concerning his being the promised Messiah is far from being clear.

**Verse 34. *The land of Gennesaret.***— It was from this country that the sea or lake of Gennesaret had its name. In this district, on the western side of the lake, were the cities of Capernaum and Tiberias.

**Verse 35. *The men of that place had knowledge of him***— i.e. They knew him again. They had already seen his miracles; and now they collect all the diseased people they can find, that he may have the same opportunity of showing forth his marvellous power, and they of being the instruments of relieving their friends and neighbors.

***They brought unto him all that were diseased***— And Jesus received and healed every man and woman of them. And is not the soul, in the sight of God, of more value than the body? and will he withhold his healing power from the former, and grant it so freely to the latter? This cannot be. Let a man come himself to Jesus, and he shall be saved and afterwards let him recommend this Christ to the whole circle of his acquaintance, and they, if they come, shall also find mercy.

**Verse 36. *That they might only touch the hem of his garment***— What mighty influence must the grace and Spirit of Christ have in the soul, when even the border or hem of his garment produced such wonders in the bodies of those who touched it! Here is a man who has turned from sin to God through Christ, and the healing hand of Jesus is laid upon him. Then, no wonder that he knows and feels his sins forgiven, his soul purified, and his heart filled with the fullness of his Maker. Lord, increase our faith! and we shall see greater manifestations of thy power and glory! Amen.

## CHAPTER 15

*The Pharisees accuse the disciples of eating with unwashed hands, 1, 2. Our Lord answers, and convicts them of gross hypocrisy, 3-9. Teaches the people and the disciples what it is that renders men unclean, 10-20. Heals the daughter of a Canaanitish woman, 21-28. Heals many diseased people on a mountain of Galilee, 29-31. With seven loaves, and a few little fishes, he feeds 4,000 men, besides women and children, 32-38. Having dismissed the multitudes, he comes to the coast of Magdala, 39*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 15

**Verse 1. *The scribes and Pharisees-of Jerusalem***— Our Lord was now in Galilee, Matthew 14:34.

**Verse 2. *Elders*— *Rulers and magistrates among the Jews. For they wash not their hands***— What frivolous nonsense! These Pharisees had nothing which their malice could fasten on in the conduct or doctrine of our blessed Lord and his disciples, and therefore they must dispute about washing of hands! All sorts of Pharisees are troublesome people in religious society; and the reason is, they take more pleasure in blaming others than in amending themselves.

***The tradition of the elders***— The word *παράδοσις*, tradition, has occupied a most distinguished place, both in the Jewish and Christian Church. Man is ever fond of mending the work of his Maker; and hence he has been led to put his finishing hand even to Divine revelation! This supplementary matter has been called *παράδοσις*, from *παράδομαι*, to deliver from hand to hand-to transmit; and hence the Latin term, tradition, from *trado*, to deliver, especially from one to another;-to hand down. Among the Jews TRADITION signifies what is also called the oral law, which they distinguish from the written law: this last contains the Mosaic precepts, as found in the Pentateuch: the former, the traditions of the elders, i.e. traditions, or doctrines, that had been successively handed down from Moses through every generation, but not committed to writing. The Jews feign that, when GOD gave Moses the written law, he gave him



also the oral law, which is the interpretation of the former. This law, Moses at first delivered to Aaron then to his sons Eleazar and Ithamar; and, after these to the seventy-two elders, who were six of the most eminent men chosen out of each of the twelve tribes. These seventy-two, with Moses and Aaron, delivered it again to all the heads of the people, and afterwards to the congregation at large. They say also that, before Moses died, he delivered this oral law, or system of traditions, to JOSHUA, and Joshua to the ELDERS which succeeded him-THEY to the Prophets, and the PROPHETS to each other, till it came to JEREMIAH, who delivered it to BARUCH his scribe, who repeated it to EZRA, who delivered it to the men of the great synagogue, the last of whom was SIMON the Just. By Simon the Just it was delivered to ANTIGONUS of Socho; by him to JOSE the son of Jochanan; by him to JOSE, the son of Joezer; by him to NATHAN the Arbelite, and Joshua the son of Perachiah; and by them to JUDAH the son of Tabbai, and Simeon, the son of Shatah; and by them to SHEMAIAH and ABTALION; and by them to HILLEL; and by Hillel to SIMEON his son, the same who took Christ in his arms when brought to the temple to be presented to the Lord: by SIMEON it was delivered to GAMALIEL his son, the preceptor of St. Paul, who delivered it to SIMEON his son, and he to Rab. JUDAH HAKKODESH his son, who compiled and digested it into the book which is called the MISHNA; to explain which the two Talmuds, called the Jerusalem and Babylyonish Talmuds, were compiled, which are also called the Gemera or complement, because by these the oral law or Mishnah is fully explained. The Jerusalem Talmud was completed about A. D. 300; and the Babylyonish Talmud about the beginning of the sixth century. This Talmud was printed at Amsterdam in 12 vols. folio. These contain the whole of the traditions of the elders, and have so explained, or rather frittered away, the words of God, that our Lord might well say, Ye have made the word of God of no effect by your traditions. In what estimation these are held by the Jews, the following examples will prove: "The words of the scribes are lovely beyond the words of the law: for the words of the law are weighty and light, but the words of the scribes are all weighty." Hierus. Berac. fol. 3.

"He that shall say, There are no phylacteries, though he thus transgress the words of the law, he is not guilty; but he that shall say, There are five Totaphot, thus adding to the words of the scribes, he is guilty."

“A prophet and an elder, to what are they likened! To a king sending two of his servants into a province; of one he writes thus: Unless he show you my seal, believe him not; for thus it is written of the prophet: He shall show thee a sign; but of the elders thus: According to the law which they shall teach thee, for I will confirm their words.”-See Prideaux. Con. vol. ii. p. 465, and Lightfoot’s Hor. Talmud.

***They wash not their hands***— On washing of hands, before and after meat, the Jews laid great stress: they considered eating with unwashed hands to be no ordinary crime; and therefore, to induce men to do it, they feigned that an evil spirit, called Shibta שִׁבְתָּא, who sits on the hands by night, has a right to sit on the food of him who eats without washing his hands, and make it hurtful to him! They consider the person who undervalues this rite to be no better than a heathen, and consequently excommunicate him. See many examples of this doctrine in Schoettgen and Lightfoot.

**Verse 3. *Why do ye-transgress the commandment***— Ye accuse my disciples of transgressing the traditions of the elders-I accuse you of transgressing the commands of God, and that too in favor of your own tradition; thus preferring the inventions of men to the positive precepts of God. Pretenders to zeal often prefer superstitious usages to the Divine law, and human inventions to the positive duties of Christianity.

**Verse 4. *Honor thy father and mother***— This word was taken in great latitude of meaning among the Jews: it not only meant respect and submission, but also to take care of a person, to nourish and support him, to enrich. See Numbers 22:17; Judges 13:17; 1 Timothy 5:17. And that this was the sense of the law, as it respected parents, see Deuteronomy 27:16, and see the note on Exodus 20:12.

**Verse 5. *It is a gift***— קֶרֶב korban, Mark 7:11, an offering of approach; something consecrated to the service of God in the temple, by which a man had the privilege of approaching his Maker. This conduct was similar to the custom of certain persons who bequeath the inheritance of their children to Churches or religious uses; either through terror of conscience, thus striving to purchase the kingdom of glory; or through the persuasion of interested hireling priests. It was in this way that, in the days of popish influence, the principal lands in the nation had fallen into the hands of the

Church. In those charters, multitudes of which have passed through my hands, a common form was, pro salute meae, et pro salute antecessorum meorum, et pro salute successorum meorum, et pro solute uxoris meae, etc., etc., do, et concedo Deo et Ecclesiae, etc. “For my salvation, and for the salvation of my predecessors, and for the salvation of my successors, and for the salvation of my wife, etc., etc., I give and bequeath to God and his Church, etc.”

Though a world of literature was destroyed, and fine buildings ruined, by the suppression of the monasteries in England, yet this step, with the Stat. 23 Hen. VIII. c. 10, together with the Stat. 9 Geo. II. c. 36, were the means of checking an evil that had arrived at a pitch of unparalleled magnitude; an evil that was supplanting the atonement made by the blood of the covenant, and putting death-bed grants of land, etc., in the place of Jesus Christ, and throwing the whole secular power of the kingdom into the hands of the pope and the priests. No wonder then that they cried out, when the monasteries were suppressed! It is sacrilege to dedicate that to God which is taken away from the necessities of our parents and children; and the good that this pretends to will doubtless be found in the catalogue of that unnatural man’s crimes, in the judgment of the great day, who has thus deprived his own family of its due. To assist our poor relatives, is our first duty; and this is a work infinitely preferable to all pious legacies and endowments.

**Verse 7. *Hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you***— In every place where the proper names of the Old Testament occur, in the New, the same mode of orthography should be followed: I therefore write Isaiah with the Hebrew, not Esaias, with the Greek. This prophecy is found Isaiah 29:13. Our blessed Lord unmasks these hypocrites; and we may observe that, when a hypocrite is found out, he should be exposed to all; this may lead to his salvation: if he be permitted to retain his falsely acquired character, how can he escape perdition!

**Verse 8. *Their heart is far from me.***— The true worship of God consists in the union of the heart to him—where this exists not, a particle of the spirit of devotion cannot be found.

***This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth***— This clause, which is taken from Isaiah 29:13, is omitted by several excellent MSS., and by

several versions and fathers. Erasmus, Mill, Drusius, and Bengel, approve of the omission, and Griesbach has left it out of the text; but as I find it in the prophet, the place from which it is quoted, I dare not omit it, howsoever respectable the above authorities may appear.

**Verse 9. *In vain they do worship me, etc.***— By the traditions of the elders, not only the word of God was perverted, but his worship also was greatly corrupted. But the Jews were not the only people who have acted thus: whole Christian Churches, as well as sects and parties, have acted in the same way. Men must not mould the worship of God according to their fancy—it is not what they think will do—is proper, innocent, etc., but what God himself has prescribed, that he will acknowledge as his worship. However sincere a man may be in a worship of his own invention, or of man's commandment, yet it profits him nothing. Christ himself says it is in vain. To condemn such, may appear to some illiberal; but whatever may be said in behalf of sincere heathens, and others who have not had the advantages of Divine Revelation, there is no excuse for the man who has the BIBLE before him.

**Verse 10. *Hear and understand***— A most important command. Hear—make it a point of conscience to attend to the ministry of the word. Understand—be not satisfied with attending places of public worship merely; see that the teaching be of God, and that you lay it to heart.

**Verse 11. *Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth***— This is an answer to the carping question of the Pharisees, mentioned Matthew 15:2, Why do thy disciples eat with unwashed hands? To which our Lord here replies, That what goes into the mouth defiles not the man; i.e. that if, in eating with unwashed hands, any particles of dust, etc., cleaving to the hands, might happen to be taken into the mouth with the food, this did not defile, did not constitute a man a sinner; for it is on this alone the question hinges: thy disciples eat with unwashed hands; therefore they are sinners; for they transgress the tradition of the elders, i.e. the oral law, which they considered equal in authority to the written law; and, indeed, often preferred the former to the latter, so as to make it of none effect, totally to destroy its nature and design, as we have often seen in the preceding notes.

***That which cometh out of the mouth***— That is, what springs from a corrupt unregenerate heart-a perverse will and impure passions- these defile, i.e. make him a sinner.

**Verse 12. *The Pharisees were offended***— None so liable to take offense as formalists and hypocrites, when you attempt to take away the false props from the one, and question the sincerity of the other. Besides, a Pharisee must never be suspected of ignorance, for they are the men, and wisdom must die with them!

**Verse 13. *Every plant***— Every plantation. So I render φυτεια, and so it is translated in the Itala version which accompanies the Greek text in the Codex Bezae, omnis plantatio, and so the word is rendered by Suidas. This gives a different turn to the text. The Pharisees, as a religious body, were now a plantation of trees, which God did not plant, water, nor own: therefore, they should be rooted up, not left to wither and die, but the fellers, and those who root up, (the Roman armies,) should come against and destroy them, and the Christian Church was to be planted in their place. Since the general dispersion of the Jews, this sect, I believe, has ceased to exist as a separate body, among the descendants of Jacob. The first of the apostolical constitutions begins thus: θεου φυτεια η καθολικη εκκλησια, και αμπελων αυτου εκλεκτος. The Catholic Church is the plantation of God, and his chosen vineyard.

**Verse 14. *Let them alone***— αφετε αυτους, give them up, or leave them. These words have been sadly misunderstood. Some have quoted them to prove that blind and deceitful teachers should not be pointed out to the people, nor the people warned against them; and that men should abide in the communion of a corrupt Church, because that Church had once been the Church of God, and in it they had been brought up; and to prove this they bring Scripture, for, in our present translation, the words are rendered, let them alone: but the whole connection of the place evidently proves that our blessed Lord meant, give them up, have no kind of religious connection with them, and the strong reason for which he immediately adds, because they are blind leaders. This passage does not at all mean that blind leaders should not be pointed out to the people, that they may avoid being deceived by them; for this our Lord does frequently, and warns his disciples, and the people in general, against all such false

teachers as the scribes and Pharisees were; and though he bids men do that they heard those say, while they sat in the chair of Moses, yet he certainly meant no more than that they should be observant of the moral law when read to them out of the sacred book: yet neither does he tell them to do all these false teachers said; for he testifies in Matthew 15:6, that they had put such false glosses on the law, that, if followed, would endanger the salvation of their souls. The Codex Bezae, for **αφετε αυτους**, has **αφετε τους τυφλους**, give up these blind men. Amen! A literal attention to these words of our Lord produced the Reformation.

Probably the words may be understood as a sort of proverbial expression for-Don't mind them: pay no regard to them.-"They are altogether unworthy of notice."

***And if the blind lead the blind***— This was so self-evident a case that an apter parallel could not be found-if the blind lead the blind, both must fall into the ditch. Alas, for the blind teachers, who not only destroy their own souls, but those also of their flocks! Like priest, like people. If the minister be ignorant, he cannot teach what he does not know; and the people cannot become wise unto salvation under such a ministry-he is ignorant and wicked, and they are profligate. They who even wish such God speed; are partakers of their evil deeds. But shall not the poor deceived people escape? No: both shall fall into the pit of perdition together; for they should have searched the Scriptures, and not trusted to the ignorant sayings of corrupt men, no matter of what sect or party. He who has the Bible in his hand, or within his reach, and can read it, has no excuse.

**Verse 15. *Declare unto us this parable.***— Is it not strange to hear the disciples asking for the explanation of such a parable as this! The true knowledge of the spirit of the Gospel is a thing more uncommon than we imagine, among the generality of Christians, and even of the learned.

**Verse 16. *Are ye also yet without understanding?***— The word **ακμη**, which we translate yet, should be here rendered still: Are ye still void of understanding? and the word is used in this sense by several Greek writers. The authorities which have induced me to prefer this translation may be seen in Kypke.

**Verse 17. *Cast out into the draught***— εἰς ἀφεδρῶνα, [AS]. And beeth into the forthgoing a sent-what is not fit for nourishment is evacuated; is thrown into the sink. This I believe to be the meaning of this difficult and variously translated word, ἀφεδρῶν. Diodati translates it properly, nella latrina, into the privy. And the Persian translator has given a good paraphrase, and appears to have collected the general meaning [P] her teche der dehen ander ayeed, az nusheeb beeroon rood, we ber zemeen aftad: “Whatsoever enters into the mouth goes downward, and falls upon the ground.” Michaelis, and his annotator, Dr. Marsh, have been much perplexed with this perplexing passage. See Michaelis’s Introduction, vol. i. note 35. p. 458.

**Verse 19. *Out of the heart***— In the heart of an unregenerate man, the principles and seeds of all sin are found. And iniquity is always conceived in the heart before it be spoken or acted. Is there any hope that a man can abstain from outward sin till his heart, that abominable fountain of corruption, be thoroughly cleansed? I trow not.

***Evil thoughts***— διαλογισμοὶ πονηροὶ, wicked dialogues-for in all evil surmisings the heart holds a conversation, or dialogue, with itself. For φονοὶ, murders, two MSS. have φθονοὶ, envyings, and three others have both. Envy and murder are nearly allied: the former has often led to the latter.

***Blasphemies***— I have already observed, Matthew 9:3, that the verb βλάσφημεῶ, when applied to men, signifies to speak INJURIOUSLY of their persons, characters, etc., and, when applied to God, it means to speak IMPIOUSLY of his nature, works, etc.

**Verse 20. *These-defile a man***— Our Lord’s argument is very plain. What goes into the mouth descends into the stomach and other intestines;-part is retained for the nourishment of the body, and part is ejected, as being improper to afford nourishment. Nothing of this kind defiles the soul, because it does not enter into it; but the evil principles that are in it, producing evil thoughts, murders, etc., these defile the soul, because they have their seat and operation in it.

**Verse 21. *Departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.***— εἰς τὰ μέρη, towards the coasts or confines. It is not clear that our Lord ever left the

land of the Hebrews; he was, as the apostle observes, Romans 15:8, the minister of the circumcision according to the truth of God. Tyre and Sidon are usually joined together, principally because they are but a few miles distant from each other.

**Verse 22. *A woman of Canaan***— Matthew gives her this name because of the people from whom she sprung—the descendants of Canaan, Judges 1:31, 32; but Mark calls her a Syrophenician, because of the country where she dwelt. The Canaanites and Phoenicians have been often confounded. This is frequently the case in the Septuagint. Compare Genesis 46:10, with Exodus 6:15, where the same person is called a Phoenician in the one place, and a Canaanite in the other. See also the same version in Exodus 16:35; Joshua 5:12.

The state of this woman is a proper emblem of the state of a sinner, deeply conscious of the misery of his soul.

***Have mercy on me, etc.***— How proper is this prayer for a penitent! There are many excellencies contained in it; 1. It is short; 2. humble; 3. full of faith; 4. fervent; 5. modest; 6. respectful; 7. rational; 8. relying only on the mercy of God; 9. persevering. Can one who sees himself a slave of the devil, beg with too much earnestness to be delivered from his thralldom?

***Son of David***— An essential character of the true Messiah.

**Verse 23. *He answered her not a word.***— Seemed to take time to consider her request, and to give her the opportunity of exercising her faith, and manifesting her fervor.

**Verse 24. *I am not sent but unto the lost sheep***— By the Divine appointment, I am come to preach the Gospel to the Jews only. There are certain preachers who should learn a lesson of important instruction from this part of our Lord's conduct. As soon as they hear of a lost sheep being found by other ministers, they give all diligence to get that one into their fold: but display little earnestness in seeking in the wilderness for those that are lost. This conduct, perhaps, proceeds from a consciousness of their inability to perform the work of an evangelist; and leads them to sit down in the labors of others, rather than submit to the reproach of presiding over empty chapels. Such persons should either dig or beg



immediately, as they are a reproach to the pastoral office; for, not being sent of God, they cannot profit the people.

The wilderness of this world is sufficiently wide and uncultivated. Sinners abound every where; and there is ample room for all truly religious people, who have zeal for God, and love for their perishing fellow creatures, to put forth all their strength, employ all their time, and exercise all their talents, in proclaiming the Gospel of God; not only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but to a lost WORLD. Nor can such exertions be unsuccessful. There the pure truth of God is preached, many will be converted. Where that truth is preached, though with a mixture of error, some will be converted, for God will bless his own truth. But where nothing but false doctrine is preached, no soul is converted: for God will never sanction error by a miracle of his mercy.

**Verse 25. *Lord, help me.***— Let me also share in the deliverance afforded to Israel.

**Verse 26. *The children's bread***— The salvation provided for the Jews, who were termed the children of the kingdom. And cast it to the κυνάρκιοις, little dogs-to the curs; such the Gentiles were reputed by the Jewish people, and our Lord uses that form of speech which was common among his countrymen. What terrible repulses! and yet she still perseveres!

**Verse 27. *Truth, Lord***— ναὶ κύριε, Yes, Lord. This appears to be not so much an assent, as a bold reply to our Lord's reason for apparently rejecting her suit.

The little dogs share with the children, for they eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. I do not desire what is provided for these highly favored children, only what they leave: a single exertion of thy almighty power, in the healing of my afflicted daughter, is all that I wish for; and this the highly favored Jews can well spare, without lessening the provision made for themselves. Is not this the sense of this noble woman's reply?

**Verse 28. *O woman, great is thy faith***— The hinderances thrown in this woman's way only tended to increase her faith. Her faith resembles a river,

which becomes enlarged by the dykes opposed to it, till at last it sweeps them entirely away with it,

***Her daughter was made whole***— Persevering faith and prayer are next to omnipotent. No person can thus pray and believe, without receiving all his soul requires. This is one of the finest lessons in the book of God for a penitent, or for a discouraged believer. Look to Jesus! As sure as God is in heaven, so surely will he hear and answer thee to the eternal salvation of thy soul! Be not discouraged at a little delay: when thou art properly prepared to receive the blessing, then thou shalt have it. Look up; thy salvation is at hand. Jesus admires this faith, to the end that we may admire and imitate it, and may reap the same fruits and advantages from it.

**Verse 29. *Went up into a mountain***— το ορος, THE mountain.

“Meaning,” says Wakefield, “some particular mountain which he was accustomed to frequent; for, whenever it is spoken of at a time when Jesus is in Galilee, it is always discriminated by the article. Compare Matthew 4:18, with Matthew 5:1; and Matthew 13:54, with Matthew 14:23; and Matthew 28:16. I suppose it was mount Tabor.”

**Verse 30. *Those that were-maimed***— κυλλους. Wetstein has fully proved that those who had lost a hand, foot, etc., were termed κυλλοι by the Greeks. Kypke has shown, from Hippocrates, that the word was also used to signify those who had distorted or dislocated legs, knees, hands, etc. Mr. Wakefield is fully of opinion that it means here those who had lost a limb, and brings an incontestable proof from Matthew 18:8; Mark 9:43. “If thy hand cause thee to offend, CUT IT OFF; it is better for thee to enter into life (κυλλος) WITHOUT A LIMB, than, having thy TWO hands, to go away into hell.” What an astonishing manifestation of omnific and creative energy must the reproduction of a hand, foot, etc., be at the word or touch of Jesus! As this was a mere act of creative power, like that of multiplying the bread, those who allow that the above is the meaning of the word will hardly attempt to doubt the proper Divinity of Christ. Creation, in any sense of the word, i.e. causing something to exist that had no existence before, can belong only to God, because it is an effect of an unlimited power; to say that such power could be delegated to a person is to say that the person to whom it is delegated becomes, for the time being, the omnipotent God; and that God, who has thus clothed a creature with

his omnipotence, ceases to be omnipotent himself; for there cannot be two omnipotents, nor can the Supreme Being delegate his omnipotence to another, and have it at the same time. I confess, then, that this is to me an unanswerable argument for the Divinity of our blessed Lord. Others may doubt; I can't help believing.

**Verse 31. *The multitude wondered***— And well they might, when they had such proofs of the miraculous power and love of God before their eyes. Blessed be God! the same miracles are continued in their spiritual reference. All the disorders of the soul are still cured by the power of Jesus.

**Verse 32. *I have compassion, etc.***— See a similar transaction explained, Matthew 14:14-22.

**Verse 33. *Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, etc.***— Human foresight, even in the followers of Christ, is very short. In a thousand instances, if we supply not its deficiency by faith, we shall be always embarrassed, and often miserable. This world is a desert, where nothing can be found to satisfy the soul of man, but the salvation which Christ has procured.

**Verse 37. *They did all eat, and were filled***— *εχορτασθησαν*—they were satisfied. The husks of worldly pleasures may fill the man, but cannot satisfy the soul. A man may eat, and not be satisfied: it is the interest therefore of every follower of Christ to follow him till he be fed, and to feed on him till he be satisfied.

**Verse 38. *Four thousand***— Let the poor learn from these miracles to trust in God for support. Whatever his ordinary providence denies, his miraculous power will supply.

**Verse 39. *He sent away the multitude***— But not before he had instructed their souls, and fed and healed their bodies.

***The coasts of Magdala.***— In the parallel place, Mark 8:10, this place is called Dalmanutha. Either Magdala was formed by a transposition of letters from Dalman, to which the Syriac termination *atha* had been added, or the one of these names refers to the country, and the other to a town in that neighborhood. Jesus went into the country, and proceeded till he came

to the chief town or village in that district. Whitby says, "Magdala was a city and territory beyond Jordan, on the banks of Gadara. It readied to the bridge above Jordan, which joined it to the other side of Galilee, and contained within its precincts Dalmanutha." The MSS. and VV. read the name variously-Magada, Madega, Magdala; and the Syriac has Magdu. In Mark, Dalmanutha is read by many MSS. Melagada, Madegada, Magada, Magidan, and Magedam. Magdala, variously pronounced, seems to have been the place or country; Dalmanutha, the chief town or capital.

In this chapter a number of interesting and instructive particulars are contained.

1. We see the extreme superstition, envy, and incurable ill nature of the Jews. While totally lost to a proper sense of the spirituality of God's law, they are ceremonious in the extreme. They will not eat without washing their hands, because this would be a transgression of one of the traditions of their elders; but they can harbour the worst temper and passions, and thus break the law of God! The word of man weighs more with them than the testimony of Jehovah; and yet they pretend the highest respect for their God and sacred things, and will let their parents perish for lack of the necessities of life, that they may have goods to vow to the service of the sanctuary! Pride and envy blind the hearts of men, and cause them often to act not only the most wicked, but the most ridiculous, parts. He who takes the book of God for the rule of his faith and practice can never go astray: but to the mazes and perplexities produced by the traditions of elders, human creeds, and confessions of faith, there is no end. These evils existed in the Christian as well as in the Jewish Church; but the Reformation, thank God! has liberated us from this endless system of uncertainty and absurdity, and the Sun of righteousness shines now unclouded! The plantation, which God did not plant, in the course of his judgments, he has now swept nearly away from the face of the earth! Babylon is fallen!

2. We wonder at the dulness of the disciples, when we find that they did not fully understand our Lord's meaning, in the very obvious parable about the blind leading the blind. But should we not be equally struck with their prying, inquisitive temper? They did not understand, but they could not rest till they did. They knew that their Lord could say nothing that had not the most important meaning in it: this meaning, in the preceding

parable, they had not apprehended, and therefore they wished to have it farther explained by himself. Do we imitate their docility and eagerness to comprehend the truth of God? Christ presses every occurrence into a means of instruction. The dulness of the disciples in the present case, has been the means of affording us the fullest instruction on a point of the utmost importance-the state of a sinful heart, and how the thoughts and passions conceived in it defile and pollute it; and how necessary it is to have the fountain purified, that it may cease to send forth those streams of death.

3. The case of the Canaanitish woman is, in itself, a thousand sermons. Her faith-her prayers-her perseverance-her success-the honor she received from her Lord, etc., etc. How instructively-how powerfully do these speak and plead! What a profusion of light does this single case throw upon the manner in which Christ sometimes exercises the faith and patience of his followers! They that seek shall find, is the great lesson inculcated in this short history: God is ever the same. Reader, follow on after God-cry, pray, plead-all in Him is for thee!-Thou canst not perish, if thou continuest to believe and pray. The Lord will help THEE.

## CHAPTER 16

*The Pharisees insidiously require our Lord to give them a sign, 1. They are severely rebuked for their hypocrisy and wickedness, 2-5. The disciples are cautioned to beware of them and their destructive doctrine, 6-12. The different opinions formed by the people of Christ, 13, 14. Peter's confession, and our Lord's discourse on it, 15-20. He foretells his sufferings, and reproves Peter, 21-23. Teaches the necessity of self-denial, and shows the reasons on which it is founded, 24-26. Speaks of a future judgment, 27. And promises the speedy opening of the glory of his own kingdom on earth, 28.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 16

**Verse 1. *The Pharisees also with the Sadducees***— Though a short account of these has been already given in a note on Matthew 3:7, yet, as one more detailed may be judged necessary, I think it proper to introduce it in this place.

The PHARISEES were the most considerable sect among the Jews, for they had not only the scribes, and all the learned men of the law of their party, but they also drew after them the bulk of the people. When this sect arose is uncertain. Josephus, Antiq. lib. v. c. xiii. s. 9, speaks of them as existing about 144 years before the Christian era. They had their appellation of Pharisees, from פָּרָשׁ parash, to separate, and were probably, in their rise, the most holy people among the Jews, having separated themselves from the national corruption, with a design to restore and practice the pure worship of the most High. That they were greatly degenerated in our Lord's time is sufficiently evident; but still we may learn, from their external purity and exactness, that their principles in the beginning were holy. Our Lord testifies that they had cleansed the outside of the cup and the platter, but within they were full of abomination. They still kept up the outward regulations of the institution, but they had utterly lost its spirit; and hypocrisy was the only substitute now in their power for that

spirit of piety which I suppose, and not unreasonably, characterized the origin of this sect.

As to their religious opinions, they still continued to credit the being of a God; they received the five books of Moses, the writings of the prophets, and the hagiographa. The hagiographa or holy writings, from ἅγιος holy, and γράφω I write, included the twelve following books-Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles. These, among the Jews, occupied a middle place between the law and the prophets, as divinely inspired. The Pharisees believed, in a confused way, in the resurrection, though they received the Pythagorean doctrine of the metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls. Those, however, who were notoriously wicked, they consigned, on their death, immediately to hell, without the benefit of transmigration, or the hope of future redemption. They held also the predestinarian doctrine of necessity, and the government of the world by fate; and yet, inconsistently, allowed some degree of liberty to the human will. See Prideaux.

The SADDUCEES had their origin and name from one Sadoc, a disciple of Antigonus of Socho, president of the Sanhedrin, and teacher of the law in one of the great divinity schools in Jerusalem, about 264 years before the incarnation.

This Antigonus having often in his lectures informed his scholars, that they should not serve God through expectation of a reward, but through love and filial reverence only, Sadoc inferred from this teaching that there were neither rewards nor punishments after this life, and, by consequence, that there was no resurrection of the dead, nor angel, nor spirit, in the invisible world; and that man is to be rewarded or punished here for the good or evil he does.

They received only the five books of Moses, and rejected all unwritten traditions. From every account we have of this sect, it plainly appears they were a kind of mongrel deists, and professed materialists. See Prideaux, and the authors he quotes, Connex. vol. iii. p. 95, and 471, etc., and see the note on Matthew 3:7.

In Matthew 22:16, we shall meet with a third sect, called HERODIANS, of whom a few words may be spoken here, It is allowed on all hands that these did not exist before the time of Herod the Great, who died only three years after the incarnation of our Lord. What the opinions of these were is not agreed among the learned. Many of the primitive fathers believed that their distinguishing doctrine was, that they held Herod to be the Messiah; but it is not likely that such an opinion could prevail in our Savior's time, thirty years after Herod's death, when not one characteristic of Messiahship had appeared in him during his life. Others suppose that they were Herod's courtiers, who flattered the passions of their master, and, being endowed with a convenient conscience, changed with the times; but, as Herod was now dead upwards of thirty years, such a sect could not exist in reference to him; and yet all allow that they derived their origin from Herod the Great.

Our Lord says, Mark 8:15, that they had the leaven of Herod, i.e. a bad doctrine, which they received from him. What this was may be easily discovered: 1. Herod subjected himself and his people to the dominion of the Romans, in opposition to that law, Deuteronomy 17:15, Thou shalt not set a king over thee-which is not thy brother, i.e. one out of the twelve tribes. 2. He built temples, sat up images, and joined in heathenish worship, though he professed the Jewish religion; and this was in opposition to all the law and the prophets. From this we may learn that the Herodians were such as, first, held it lawful to transfer the Divine government to a heathen ruler; and, secondly, to conform occasionally to heathenish rites in their religious worship. In short, they appear to have been persons who trimmed between God and the world—who endeavored to reconcile his service with that of mammon—and who were religious just as far as it tended to secure their secular interests. It is probable that this sect was at last so blended with, that it became lost in, the sect of the Sadducees; for the persons who are called Herodians, Mark 8:15, are styled Sadducees in Matthew 16:6. See Prideaux, Con. vol. iii. p. 516, etc., and Josephus, Antiq. b. xv. c. viii. s. i. and x. s. iii. But it is very likely that the Herodians, mentioned c. xxii. 10, were courtiers or servants of Herod king of Galilee. See the note there.

**Show them a sign**— These sects, however opposed among themselves, most cordially unite in their opposition to Christ and his truth. That the



kingdom of Satan may not fall, all his subjects must fight against the doctrine and maxims of the kingdom of Christ.

***Tempting-him***— Feigning a desire to have his doctrine fully proved to them, that they might credit it, and become his disciples; but having no other design than to betray and ruin him.

**Verse 2. *When it is evening***— There are certain signs of fair and foul weather, which ye are in the constant habit of observing, and which do not fail.—The signs of the times: the doctrine which I preach, and the miracles which I work among you, are as sure signs that the day-spring from on high has visited you for your salvation; but if ye refute to hear, and continue in darkness, the red and gloomy cloud of vindictive justice shall pour out such a storm of wrath upon you as shalt sweep you from the face of the earth.

**Verse 3. *The sky is red and lowering.***— The signs of fair and foul weather were observed in a similar manner among the Romans, and indeed among most other people. Many treatises have been written on the subject: thus a poet:-

*Caeruleus pluviam denunciant, IGNEUS euros  
Sin MACULAE incipient RUTILO immiscerier IGNI,  
Omnia tunc pariter VENTO NIMBISQUE videbis  
Fervere VIRG. Geor. i. l. 453*

*“If fiery red his glowing globe descends,  
High winds and furious tempests he portends:  
But if his cheeks are swoll’n with livid blue,  
He bodes wet weather, by his watery hue*

*If dusky spots are varied on his brow,  
And streak’d with red a troubled color show,  
That sullen mixture shall at once declare,  
Wind, rain, and storms, and elemental war  
Dryden.*

**Verse 4. *Wicked and adulterous generation***— The Jewish people are represented in the Sacred Writings as married to the Most High; but, like a disloyal wife, forsaking their true husband, and uniting themselves to Satan and sin. Seeketh after a sign, *σημειον επιζητει*, seeketh sign upon sign, or, still another sign. Our blessed Lord had already wrought miracles sufficient to demonstrate both his Divine mission and his divinity; only

one was farther necessary to take away the scandal of his cross and death, to fulfill the Scriptures, and to establish the Christian religion; and that was, his resurrection from the dead, which, he here states, was typified in the case of Jonah.

**Verse 5. *Come to the other side***— Viz. the coast of Bethsaida, by which our Lord passed, going to Caesarea, for he was now on his journey thither. See Matthew 16:13, and Mark 8:22, 27.

**Verse 6. *Beware of the leaven***— What the leaven of Pharisees and Sadducees was has been already explained, see Matthew 16:1. Bad doctrines act in the soul as leaven does in meal; they assimilate the whole Spirit to their own nature. A man's particular creed has a greater influence on his tempers and conduct than most are aware of. Pride, hypocrisy, and worldly-mindedness, which constituted the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, ruin the major part of the world.

**Verse 7. *They reasoned***— For, as Lightfoot observes, the term leaven was very rarely used among the Jews to signify doctrine, and therefore the disciples did not immediately apprehend his meaning. In what a lamentable state of blindness is the human mind? Bodily wants are perceived with the utmost readiness, and a supply is sought with all speed. But the necessities of the soul are rarely discovered, though they are more pressing than those of the body, and the supply of them of infinitely more importance.

**Verse 8. *When Jesus perceived, he said***— *αὐτοῖς*, unto them, is wanting in BDKLMS, and twenty others; one of the Syriac, the Armenian, Ethiopia, Vulgate, and most of the Itala; also in Origen, Theophylact, and Lucifer Calaritanus. Mill approves of the omission, and Griesbach has left it out of the text.

***O ye of little faith***— There are degrees in faith, as well as in the other graces of the Spirit. Little faith may be the seed of great faith, and therefore is not to be despised. But many who should be strong in faith have but a small measure of it, because they either give way to sin, or are not careful to improve what God has already given.

**Verse 9. — 10. *Do ye not yet understand-the five loaves-neither the seven***— See the notes on Matthew 14:14, etc. How astonishing is it that

these men should have any fear of lacking bread, after having seen the two miracles which our blessed Lord alludes to above! Though men quickly perceive their bodily wants, and are querulous enough till they get them supplied, yet they as quickly forget the mercy which they had received; and thus God gets few returns of gratitude for his kindnesses. To make men, therefore, deeply sensible of his favors, he is induced to suffer them often to be in want, and then to supply them in such a way as to prove that their supply has come immediately from the hand of their bountiful Father.

**Verse 10.** See Clarke on “Matthew 16:9”

**Verse 11.** *How is it that ye do not understand*— We are not deficient in spiritual knowledge, because we have not had sufficient opportunities of acquainting ourselves with God; but because we did not improve the advantages we had. How deep and ruinous must our ignorance be, if God did not give line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little! They now perceived that he warned them against the superstition of the Pharisees, which produced hypocrisy, pride, envy, etc., and the false doctrine of the Sadducees, which denied the existence of a spiritual world, the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, and the providence of God.

**Verse 13.** *Casarea Philippi*— A city, in the tribe of Naphtali, near to Mount Libanus, in the province of Iturea. Its ancient name was Dan, Genesis 14:14; afterwards it was called Lais, Judges 18:7. But Philip the tetrarch, having rebuilt and beautified it, gave it the name of Cesarea, in honor of Tiberius Caesar, the reigning emperor: but to distinguish it from another Caesarea, which was on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and to perpetuate the fame of him who rebuilt it, it was called Caesarea Philippi, or Caesarea of Philip.

*When Jesus came*— ελθων δε ο ιησους—when Jesus was coming. Not, when Jesus came, or was come, for Mark expressly mentions that it happened εν τη οδω, in the way to Caesarea Philippi, Mark 8:27, and he is Matthew’s best interpreter.—WAKEFIELD.

*Whom do men say*— He asked his disciples this question, not because he was ignorant what the people thought and spoke of him; but to have the

opportunity, in getting an express declaration of their faith from themselves, to confirm and strengthen them in it: but see on Luke 9:20. Some, John the Baptist, etc. By this and other passages we learn, that the Pharisaic doctrine of the Metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, was pretty general; for it was upon this ground that they believed that the soul of the Baptist, or of Elijah, Jeremiah, or some of the prophets, had come to a new life in the body of Jesus.

**Verse 16. *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.***— Every word here is emphatic—a most concise, and yet comprehensive, confession of faith.

The Christ, or Messiah, points out his divinity, and shows his office; the Son-designates his person: on this account it is that both are joined together so frequently in the new covenant. Of the living God **του θεου, του ζωντος**, literally, of God the Living One. The C. Bezae has for **του ζωντος** the Living One, **του σωζοντος**, the Savior, and the Cant. Dei Salvatoris, of God the Savior.

Living—a character applied to the Supreme Being, not only to distinguish him from the dead idols of paganism, but also to point him out as the source of life, present, spiritual, and eternal. Probably there is an allusion here to the great name **יהוה** Yehve, or Yehovah, which properly signifies being or existence.

**Verse 17. *Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona***— Or Simon, son of Jonah; so Bar-jonah should be translated, and so it is rendered by our Lord, John 1:42. Flesh and blood—i.e. MAN;—no human being hath revealed this; and though the text is literal enough, yet every body should know that this is a Hebrew periphrasis for man; and the literal translation of it here, and in Galatians 1:16, has misled thousands, who suppose that flesh and blood signify carnal reason, as it is termed, or the unregenerate principle in man. Is it not evident, from our Lord's observation, that it requires an express revelation of God in a man's soul, to give him a saving acquaintance with Jesus Christ; and that not even the miracles of our Lord, wrought before the eyes, will effect this? The darkness must be removed from the heart by the Holy Spirit, before a man can become wise unto salvation.

**Verse 18. *Thou art Peter***— This was the same as if he had said, I acknowledge thee for one of my disciples—for this name was given him by our Lord when he first called him to the apostleship. See John 1:42.

Peter, **πετρος**, signifies a stone, or fragment of a rock; and our Lord, whose constant custom it was to rise to heavenly things through the medium of earthly, takes occasion from the name, the metaphorical meaning of which was strength and stability, to point out the solidity of the confession, and the stability of that cause which should be founded on THE CHRIST, the SON of the LIVING GOD. See the notes at “Luke 9:62”.

Upon this very rock, **επι ταυτη τη πετρα**-this true confession of thine-that I am THE MESSIAH, that am come to reveal and communicate THE LIVING GOD, that the dead, lost world may be saved-upon this very rock, myself, thus confessed (alluding probably to Psalm 118:22, The STONE which the builders rejected is become the HEAD-STONE of the CORNER: and to Isaiah 28:16, Behold I lay a STONE in Zion for a FOUNDATION)-will I build my Church, **μον την εκκλησιαν**, my assembly, or congregation, i.e. of persons who are made partakers of this precious faith. That Peter is not designed in our Lord's words must be evident to all who are not blinded by prejudice. Peter was only one of the builders in this sacred edifice, Ephesians 2:20 who himself tells us, (with the rest of the believers,) was built on this living foundation stone: 1 Peter 2: 4, 5, therefore Jesus Christ did not say, on thee, Peter, will I build my Church, but changes immediately the expression, and says, upon that very rock, **επι ταυτη τη πετρα**, to show that he neither addressed Peter, nor any other of the apostles. So, the supremacy of Peter, and the infallibility of the Church of Rome, must be sought in some other scripture, for they certainly are not to be found in this. On the meaning of the word Church, see at the conclusion of this chapter.

The gates of hell, **πυλαι αδου** i. e, the machinations and powers of the invisible world. In ancient times the gates of fortified cities were used to hold councils in, and were usually places of great strength. Our Lord's expression means, that neither the plots, stratagems, nor strength of Satan and his angels, should ever so far prevail as to destroy the sacred truths in the above confession. Sometimes the gates are taken for the troops which issue out from them: we may firmly believe, that though hell should open

her gates, and vomit out her devil and all his angels, to fight against Christ and his saints, ruin and discomfiture must be the consequence on their part; as the arm of the Omnipotent must prevail.

**Verse 19. *The keys of the kingdom***— By the kingdom of heaven, we may consider the true Church, that house of God, to be meant; and by the keys, the power of admitting into that house, or of preventing any improper person from coming in. In other words, the doctrine of salvation, and the full declaration of the way in which God will save sinners; and who they are that shall be finally excluded from heaven; and on what account. When the Jews made a man a doctor of the law, they put into his hand the key of the closet in the temple where the sacred books were kept, and also tablets to write upon; signifying, by this, that they gave him authority to teach, and to explain the Scriptures to the people.—Martin. This prophetic declaration of our Lord was literally fulfilled to Peter, as he was made the first instrument of opening, i.e. preaching the doctrines of the kingdom of heaven to the Jews, Acts 2:41; and to the Gentiles, Acts 10:44-47; 11:1; 15:7.

***Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth***— This mode of expression was frequent among the Jews: they considered that every thing that was done upon earth, according to the order of God, was at the same time done in heaven: hence they were accustomed to say, that when the priest, on the day of atonement, offered the two goats upon earth, the same were offered in heaven. As one goat therefore is permitted to escape on earth, one is permitted to escape in heaven; and when the priests cast the lots on earth, the priest also casts the lots in heaven. See Sohar. Leviticus fol. 26; and see Lightfoot and Schoettgen. These words will receive considerable light from Leviticus 13:3, 23: The priest shall look upon him (the leper) and pronounce him unclean. Hebrew וְטִמֵּא אֹתוֹ vetime otho, he shall pollute him, i.e. shall declare him polluted, from the evidences mentioned before. And in Leviticus 13:23: The priest shall pronounce him clean, חִבֵּה וְטַהַר vetiharo hacohen, the priest shall cleanse him, i.e. declare he is clean, from the evidences mentioned in the verse. In the one case the priest declared the person infected with the leprosy, and unfit for civil society; and, in the other, that the suspected person was clean, and might safely associate with his fellows in civil or religious assemblies. The disciples of

our Lord, from having the keys, i.e. the true knowledge of the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven, should be able at all times to distinguish between the clean and the unclean, and pronounce infallible judgment; and this binding and loosing, or pronouncing fit or unfit for fellowship with the members of Christ, being always according to the doctrine of the Gospel of God, should be considered as proceeding immediately from heaven, and consequently as Divinely ratified.

That binding and loosing were terms in frequent use among the Jews, and that they meant bidding and forbidding, granting and refusing, declaring lawful or unlawful, etc., Dr. Lightfoot, after having given numerous instances, thus concludes:-

“To these may be added, if need were, the frequent (shall I say?) or infinite use of the phrases, **אֹר וּמֹתָר** bound and loosed, which we meet with thousands of times over. But from these allegations the reader sees, abundantly enough, both the frequency and the common use of this phrase, and the sense of it also; namely, first, that it is used in doctrine, and in judgments, concerning things allowed or not allowed in the law. Secondly, that to bind is the same with, to forbid, or to declare forbidden. To think that Christ, when he used the common phrase, was not understood by his hearers in the common and vulgar sense, shall I call it a matter of laughter, or of madness?

To this, therefore, do these words amount: When the time was come wherein the Mosaic law, as to some part of it, was to be abolished, and left off, and, as to another part of it, was to be continued and to last for ever, he granted Peter here, and to the rest of the apostles, Matthew 18:18, a power to abolish or confirm what they thought good, and as they thought good; being taught this, and led by the Holy Spirit: as if he should say, Whatsoever ye shall bind in the law of Moses, that is, forbid, it shall be forbidden, the Divine authority confirming it; and whatsoever ye shall loose, that is, permit, or shall teach that it is permitted and lawful, shall be lawful and permitted. Hence they bound, that is forbade, circumcision to the believers; eating of things offered to idols, of things strangled, and of blood, for a time, to the Gentiles; and that which they bound on earth was confirmed in heaven. They loosed, that is, allowed purification to Paul, and to four other brethren, for the shunning of scandal; Acts 21:24 and, in a

word, by these words of Christ it was committed to them, the Holy Spirit directing, that they should make decrees concerning religion, as to the use or rejection of Mosaic rites and judgments, and that either for a time, or for ever.

“Let the words be applied by way of paraphrase to the matter that was transacted at present with Peter: ‘I am about to build a Gentile Church,’ saith Christ, and to thee, O Peter, do I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven, that thou mayest first open the door of faith to them; but if thou askest by what rule that Church is to be governed, when the Mosaic rule may seem so improper for it, thou shalt be so guided by the Holy Spirit, that whatsoever of the law of Moses thou shalt forbid them shall be forbidden; whatsoever thou grantest them shall be granted; and that under a sanction made in heaven.’ Hence, in that instant, when he should use his keys, that is, when he was now ready to open the gate of the Gospel to the Gentiles, Acts 10, he was taught from heaven that the consorting of the Jew with the Gentile, which before had been bound, was now loosed; and the eating of any creature convenient for food was now loosed, which before had been bound; and he in like manner looses both these.

“Those words of our Savior, John 20:23, Whose sins ye remit, they are remitted to them, for the most part are forced to the same sense with these before us, when they carry quite another sense. Here the business is of doctrine only, not of persons; there of persons, not of doctrine. Here of things lawful or unlawful in religion, to be determined by the apostles; there of persons obstinate or not obstinate, to be punished by them, or not to be punished.

“As to doctrine, the apostles were doubly instructed. 1. So long sitting at the feet of their Master, they had imbibed the evangelical doctrine.

“2. The Holy Spirit directing them, they were to determine concerning the legal doctrine and practice, being completely instructed and enabled in both by the Holy Spirit descending upon them. As to the persons, they were endowed with a peculiar gift, so that, the same Spirit directing them, if they would retain and punish the sins of any, a power was delivered into their hands of delivering to Satan, of punishing with diseases, plagues, yea, death itself, which Peter did to Ananias and Sapphira; Paul to Elymas, Hymeneus, and Philetus, etc.”



After all these evidences and proofs of the proper use of these terms, to attempt to press the word, into the service long assigned them by the Church of Rome, would, to use the words of Dr. Lightfoot, be “a matter of laughter or of madness.” No Church can use them in the sense thus imposed upon them, which was done merely to serve secular ends; and least of all can that very Church that thus abuses them.

**Verse 20. *Then charged he his disciples***— **διεστειλατο**, he strictly charged them. Some very good MSS. have **επειμησεν**, he severely charged-comminatus est,-he threatened. These are the readings of the Cod. Bezae, both in the Greek and Latin.

***The Christ.***— The common text has Jesus the Christ; but the word Jesus is omitted by fifty-four MSS., some of which are not only of the greatest authority, but also of the greatest antiquity. It is omitted also by the Syriac, later Persic, later Arabic, Slavonic, six copies of the Itala, and several of the fathers. The most eminent critics approve of this omission, and Griesbach has left it out of the text in both his editions. I believe the insertion of it here to be wholly superfluous and improper; for the question is, Who is this Jesus? Peter answers, He is, **ο χριστος**, the Messiah. The word Jesus is obviously improper. What our Lord says here refers to Peter’s testimony in Matthew 16:16: Thou art the Christ-Jesus here says, Tell no man that I am the Christ, i.e. the MESSIAH; as the time for his full manifestation was not yet come; and he was not willing to provoke the Jewish malice, or the Roman envy, by permitting his disciples to announce him as the Savior of a lost world. He chose rather to wait, till his resurrection and ascension had set this truth in the clearest light, and beyond the power of successful contradiction.

**Verse 21. *From that time forth began Jesus, etc.***— Before this time our Lord had only spoken of his death in a vague and obscure manner, see Matthew 12:40, because he would not afflict his disciples with this matter sooner than necessity required; but now, as the time of his crucifixion drew nigh, he spoke of his sufferings and death in the most express and clear terms. Three sorts of persons, our Lord intimates, should be the cause of his death and passion: the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes. Pious Quesnel takes occasion to observe from this, that Christ is generally persecuted by these three descriptions of men: rich men, who have their

portion in this life; ambitious and covetous ecclesiastics, who seek their portion in this life; and conceited scholars, who set up their wisdom against the wisdom of God, being more intent on criticising words than in providing for the salvation of their souls. The spirit of Christianity always enables a man to bear the ills of life with patience; to receive death with joy; and to expect, by faith, the resurrection of the body, and the life of the world to come.

**Verse 22. *Then Peter took him*—** **προσλαβομενος**-took him up-suddenly interrupted him, as it were calling him to order-see Wakefield. Some versions give **προσλαβομενος** the sense of calling him aside. The word signifies also to receive in a friendly manner-to embrace; but Mr. Wakefield's translation agrees better with the scope of the place. A man like Peter, who is of an impetuous spirit, and decides without consideration upon every subject, must of necessity be often in the wrong.

***Be it far from thee Lord*—** **ιλεως σοι κυριε**. Be merciful to thyself Lord: see the margin. {Pity thyself} So I think the original should be rendered. Peter knew that Christ had power sufficient to preserve himself from all the power and malice of the Jews; and wished him to exert that in his own behalf which he had often exerted in the behalf of others. Some critics of great note think the expression elliptical, and that the word **θεος**, God, is necessarily understood, as if Peter had said, God be merciful to thee! but I think the marginal reading is the sense of the passage. The French, Italian, and Spanish, render it the same way. Blind and ignorant man is ever finding fault with the conduct of God. Human reason cannot comprehend the incarnation of the Almighty's fellow, (Zechariah 13:7,) nor reconcile the belief of his divinity with his sufferings and death. How many Peters are there now in the world, who are in effect saying, This cannot be done unto thee-thou didst not give thy life for the sin of the world-it would be injustice to cause the innocent to suffer thus for the guilty. But what saith God? His soul shall be made an offering for sin-he shall taste death for every man-the iniquities of us all were laid upon him. Glorious truth! May the God who published it have eternal praises!

**Verse 23. *Get thee behind me, Satan*—** **υπαγε οπισω μου σατανα**. Get behind me, thou adversary. This is the proper translation of the Hebrew word שָׂטָן Satan, from which the Greek word is taken. Our blessed Lord

certainly never designed that men should believe he called Peter, DEVIL, because he, through erring affection, had wished him to avoid that death which he predicted to himself. This translation, which is literal, takes away that harshness which before appeared in our Lord's words.

***Thou art an offense unto me***— σκανδαλον μου ει Thou art a stumbling-block in my way, to impede me in the accomplishment of the great design.

***Thou savourest not***— That is, dost not relish, ου φρονεις, or, thou dost not understand or discern the things of God-thou art wholly taken up with the vain thought that my kingdom is of this world. He who opposes the doctrine of the atonement is an adversary and offense to Christ, though he be as sincere in his profession as Peter himself was. Let us beware of false friendships. Carnal relatives, when listened to, may prove the ruin of those whom, through their mistaken tenderness, they wish to save. When a man is intent on saving his own soul, his adversaries are often those of his own household.

**Verse 24. *Will come after me***— i.e. to be my disciple. This discourse was intended to show Peter and the rest of the disciples the nature of his kingdom; and that the honor that cometh from the world was not to be expected by those who followed Christ.

The principles of the Christian life are: First. To have a sincere desire to belong to Christ-If any man be WILLING to be my disciple, etc. Secondly. To renounce self-dependence, and selfish pursuits-Let him deny HIMSELF. Thirdly. To embrace the condition which God has appointed, and bear the troubles and difficulties he may meet with in walking the Christian road-Let him take up HIS CROSS. Fourthly. To imitate Jesus, and do and suffer all in his spirit-Let him FOLLOW ME.

***Let him deny himself***— απαρνησασθω may well be interpreted, Let him deny, or renounce, himself fully-in all respects- perseveringly. It is a compounded word, and the preposition απο abundantly increases the meaning. A follower of Christ will need to observe it in its utmost latitude of meaning, in order to be happy here, and glorious hereafter. A man's self is to him the prime cause of most of his miseries. See the note on Mark 8:34.

**Verse 25. *For whosoever will save his life***— That is, shall wish to save his life-at the expense of his conscience, and casting aside the cross, he shall lose it-the very evil he wishes to avoid shall overtake him; and he shall lose his soul into the bargain. See then how necessary it is to renounce one's self! But whatsoever a man loses in this world, for his steady attachment to Christ and his cause, he shall have amply made up to him in the eternal world.

**Verse 26. *Lose his own soul***— Or, lose his life, *την ψυχην αυτου*. On what authority many have translated the word *ψυχη*, in the 25th verse, life, and in this verse, soul, I know not, but am certain it means life in both places. If a man should gain the whole world, its riches, honors, and pleasures, and lose his life, what would all these profit him, seeing they can only be enjoyed during life? But if the words be applied to the soul, they show the difficulty-the necessity-and importance of salvation. The world, the devil, and a man's own heart are opposed to his salvation; therefore it is difficult. The soul was made for God, and can never be united to him, nor be happy, till saved from sin: therefore it is necessary. He who is saved from his sin, and united to God, possesses the utmost felicity that the human soul can enjoy, either in this or the coming world: therefore, this salvation is important. See also the note on Luke 9:25.

**Verse 27. *For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father***— This seems to refer to Daniel 7:13, 14. "Behold, one like the Son of man came-to the ancient of Days-and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages should serve him." This was the glorious Mediatorial kingdom which Jesus Christ was now about to set up, by the destruction of the Jewish nation and polity, and the diffusion of his Gospel through the whole world. If the words be taken in this sense, the angels or messengers may signify the apostles and their successors in the sacred ministry, preaching the Gospel in the power of the Holy Ghost. It is very likely that the words do not apply to the final judgment, to which they are generally referred; but to the wonderful display of God's grace and power after the day of pentecost.

**Verse 28. *There be some-which shall not taste of death***— This verse seems to confirm the above explanation, as our Lord evidently speaks of the establishment of the Christian Church after the day of pentecost, and

its final triumph after the destruction of the Jewish polity; as if he had said, “Some of you, my disciples, shall continue to live until these things take place.” The destruction of Jerusalem, and the Jewish economy, which our Lord here predicts, took place about forty-three years after this: and some of the persons now with him doubtless survived that period, and witnessed the extension of the Messiah’s kingdom; and our Lord told them these things before, that when they came to pass they might be confirmed in the faith, and expect an exact fulfillment of all the other promises and prophecies which concerned the extension and support of the kingdom of Christ.

To his kingdom, or in his kingdom. Instead of βασιλεια, kingdom, four MSS., later Syriac, Coptic, Ethiopic, Saxon, and one copy of the Itala, with several of the primitive fathers, read δοξη, glory: and to this is added, του πατρος αυτου, of his Father, by three MSS. and the versions mentioned before. This makes the passage a little more conformable to the passage already quoted from Daniel; and it must appear, very clearly, that the whole passage speaks not of a future judgment, but of the destruction of the Jewish polity, and the glorious spread of Christianity in the earth, by the preaching of Christ crucified by the apostles and their immediate successors in the Christian Church.

1. THE disciples, by being constantly with their Master, were not only guarded against error, but were taught the whole truth: we should neglect no opportunity of waiting upon God; while Jesus continues to teach, our ear and heart should be open to receive his instructions. That what we have already received may be effectual, we must continue to hear and pray on. Let us beware of the error of the Pharisees! They minded only external performances, and those things by which they might acquire esteem and reputation among men; thus, humility and love, the very soul of religion, were neglected by them: they had their reward—the approbation of those who were as destitute of vital religion as themselves. Let us beware also of the error of the Sadducees, who, believing no other felicity but what depended on the good things of this world, became the flatterers and slaves of those who could bestow them, and so, like the Pharisees, had their portion only in this life. All false religions and false principles conduct to the same end, however contrary they appear to each other. No two sects could be more opposed to each other than the Sadducees and Pharisees,

yet their doctrines lead to the same end-they are both wedded to this world, and separated from God in the next.

2. From the circumstance mentioned in the conclusion of this chapter, we may easily see the nature of the kingdom and reign of Christ: it is truly spiritual and Divine; having for its object the present holiness and future happiness of mankind. Worldly pomp, as well as worldly maxims, were to be excluded from it. Christianity forbids all worldly expectations, and promises blessedness to those alone who bear the cross, leading a life of mortification and self-denial. Jesus Christ has left us an example that we should follow his steps. How did he live?-What views did he entertain?-In what light did he view worldly pomp and splendor? These are questions which the most superficial reader may, without difficulty, answer to his immediate conviction. And has not Christ said that the disciple is not ABOVE the Master? If HE humbled himself, how can he look upon those who, professing faith in his name, are conformed to the world and mind earthly things? These disciples affect to be above their Lord; and as they neither bear his cross, nor follow him in the regeneration, they must look for another heaven than that in which he sits at the right hand of God. This is an awful subject; but how few of those called Christians lay it to heart!

3. The term CHURCH in Greek **ἐκκλησία**, occurs for the first time in Matthew 16:18. The word simply means an assembly or congregation, the nature of which is to be understood from connecting circumstances; for the word **ἐκκλησία**, as well as the terms congregation and assembly, may be applied to any concourse of people, good or bad; gathered together for lawful or unlawful purposes. Hence, it is used, Acts 19:32, for the mob, or confused rabble, gathered together against Paul, **ἐκκλησία συγκεχυμένη**, which the town-clerk distinguished, Acts 19:39, from a lawful assembly, **ἐννομῶ ἐκκλησία**. The Greek word **ἐκκλησία** seems to be derived from **ἐκκαλεῶ**, to call out of, or from, i.e. an assembly gathered out of a multitude; and must have some other word joined to it, to determine its nature: viz. the Church of God; the congregation collected by God, and devoted to his service. The Church of Christ: the whole company of Christians wheresoever found; because, by the preaching of the Gospel, they are called out of the spirit and maxims of the world, to live according to the precepts of the Christian religion. This is sometimes called the Catholic or universal Church, because constituted of all the professors of

Christianity in the world, to whatever sects or parties they may belong: and hence the absurdity of applying the term Catholic, which signifies universal, to that very small portion of it, the Church of Rome. In primitive times, before Christians had any stated buildings, they worshipped in private houses; the people that had been converted to God meeting together in some one dwelling-house of a fellow-convert, more convenient and capacious than the rest; hence the Church that was in the house of Aquila and Priscilla, Romans 16:3, 5, and 1 Corinthians 16:19, and the Church that was in the house of Nymphas, Colossians 4:15. Now, as these houses were dedicated to the worship of God, each was termed **κυρίου οίκος** kuriou oikos, the house of the Lord; which word, in process of time, became contracted into **κυριοικ** kurioik, and **κυριακη**, kuriake; and hence the kirk of our northern neighbors, and [AS] kirik of our Saxon ancestors, from which, by corruption, changing the hard Saxon c into ch, we have made the word church. This term, though it be generally used to signify the people worshipping in a particular place, yet by a metonymy, the container being put for the contained, we apply it, as it was originally, to the building which contains the worshipping people.

In the proper use of this word there can be no such thing as THE church, exclusively; there may be A church, and the CHURCHES, signifying a particular congregation, or the different assemblies of religious people: and hence, the Church of Rome, by applying it exclusively to itself, abuses the term, and acts as ridiculously as it does absurdly. Church is very properly defined in the 19th article of the Church of England, to be “a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered, according to Christ’s ordinance.”

## CHAPTER 17

*The transfiguration of Christ, 1-8. Christ's discourse with his disciples on the subject, 9-13. He heals a lunatic, 14-18. His discourse with his disciples on this subject also, 19-21. He foretells his own sufferings and death, 22, 23. He is required to pay tribute at Capernaum, 24-26; and provides the money by a miracle, 27.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 17

**Verse 1. *After six days***— Mark 9:2, has the same number; but Luke says, Luke 9:28, after eight days. The reason of this difference seems to be the following: Matthew and Mark reckon the days from that mentioned in the preceding chapter, to that mentioned in this; Luke includes both days, as well as the six intermediate: hence, the one makes eight, the other six, without any contradiction.

***Peter, James, and John***— He chose those that they might be witnesses of his transfiguration: two or three witnesses being required by the Scripture to substantiate any fact. Eminent communications of the Divine favor prepare for, and entitle to, great services and great conflicts. The same three were made witnesses of his agony in the garden, Matthew 26:37.

***A high mountain***— This was one of the mountains of Galilee; but whether Mount Tabor or not, is uncertain. Some think it was Mount Hermon. St. Luke says, Christ and his disciples went up into the mountain to pray, Luke 9:28.

**Verse 2. *Was transfigured***— That fullness of the Godhead, which dwelt bodily in Christ, now shone forth through the human nature, and manifested to his disciples not only that Divinity which Peter had before confessed, Matthew 16:16, but also the glorious resurrection body, in which they should exist in the presence of God to eternity.



**White as the light.**— But the Cod. Bezae, some of the ancient versions, and several of the fathers, read **ὡς χιὼν**, as snow; and this is the reading in Mark 9:3.

**Verse 3. *Moses and Elias***— Elijah came from heaven in the same body which he had upon earth, for he was translated, and did not see death, 2 Kings 2:11. And the body of Moses was probably raised again, as a pledge of the resurrection; and as Christ is to come to judge the quick and the dead, for we shall not all die, but all shall be changed, 1 Corinthians 15:51, he probably gave the full representation of this in the person of Moses, who died, and was thus raised to life, (or appeared now as he shall appear when raised from the dead in the last day,) and in the person of Elijah, who never tasted death. Both their bodies exhibit the same appearance, to show that the bodies of glorified saints are the same, whether the person had been translated, or whether he had died. It was a constant and prevalent tradition among the Jews, that both Moses and Elijah should appear in the times of the Messiah, and to this very tradition the disciples refer, Matthew 17:10.

We may conceive that the law in the person of Moses, the great Jewish legislator, and the prophets in the person of Elijah, the chief of the prophets, came now to do homage to Jesus Christ, and to render up their authority into his hands; as he was the END of the law, and the grand subject of the predictions of the prophets. This appears more particularly from what St. Luke says, Luke 9:31, that Moses and Elijah conversed with our Lord on his death, which he was about to accomplish, (**πληρουν** to fulfill,) because in it, all the rites, ceremonies, and sacrifices of the law, as well as the predictions of the prophets, were fulfilled.

**Verse 4. *Peter said-let us make, etc.***— That is, when he saw Moses and Elijah ready to depart from the mount, Luke 9:33, he wished to detain them, that he might always enjoy their company with that of his Lord and Master, still supposing that Christ would set up a temporal kingdom upon earth.

**Verse 5. *A bright cloud overshadowed them***— Or as six MSS. and Ephraim read it, a cloud of light, **νεφελη φωτος**; which reading GRIESBACH has admitted into the text. As a bright cloud, or a cloud of light could not overshadow, or cast any kind of shade, the word **επεσκιασεν** should be

translated, surrounded them. A cloud was frequently the symbol of the Divine presence; but such a cloud had always something very remarkable in its appearance. Ezekiel, Ezekiel 1:4, represents it as a great cloud, and a fire unfolding itself, and a brightness about it, and out of the midst thereof, as the color of amber out of the midst of the fire; and in Ezekiel 1:28, he tells us that this was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. See also Exodus 16:10; 40:33, etc.; Ezekiel 43:2, and 1 Chronicles 5:14. But it was generally in a thick, dark cloud, that God manifested himself under the law; see Exodus 19:9; 20:21. This might be designed as emblematical of the old covenant, which was but the shadow of the good things which were to come, Hebrews 10:1; and the cloud of light mentioned here, the emblem of that glorious display of God, in his Gospel, by which life and immortality were brought to light, 2 Timothy 1:10.

***This is my beloved Son***— οὗτος ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδοκῆσα, This is my Son, the beloved one, in who I have delighted, or, been well pleased. God adds his testimony of approbation to what was spoken of the sufferings of Christ by Moses and Elijah; thus showing that the sacrificial economy of the old covenant was in itself of no worth, but as it referred to the grand atonement which Jesus was about to make; therefore he says, In him HAVE I delighted, (εὐδοκῆσα,) intimating that it was in him alone, as typified by those sacrifices, that he HAD delighted through the whole course of the legal administration; and that it was only in reference to the death of his Son that he accepted the offerings and oblations made to him under the old covenant. Hear HIM. The disciples wished to detain Moses and Elijah that they might hear them: but God shows that the law which had been in force, and the prophets which had prophesied, until now, must all give place to Jesus; and he alone must now be attended to, as the way, the truth, and the life; for no man could now come unto the Father but through him. This voice seems also to refer to that prediction in Deuteronomy 18:15. The Lord shall raise up a Prophet like unto me: HIM SHALL YE HEAR. Go no more to the law, nor to the prophets, to seek for a coming Messiah; for behold he Is come! Hear and obey him, and him only.

This transfiguration must have greatly confirmed the disciples in the belief of a future state, and in the doctrine of the resurrection; they saw Moses

and Elijah still EXISTING, though the former had been gathered to his fathers upwards of 1400 years, and the latter had been translated nearly 900.

**Verse 6. *Fell on their face***— Dismayed by the voice, and dazzled by the glory of the cloud. So Daniel, Daniel 8:17, and Saul of Tarsus, Acts 9:4.

**Verse 7. *Jesus came and touched them***— Exactly parallel to this account is Daniel 8:18, I was in a deep sleep, i. e. (a trance) on my face towards the ground; but he TOUCHED me, and set me upright. From Jesus alone are we to expect Divine communications, and by his power only are we able to bear and improve them. It is very likely that this transfiguration took place in the night, which was a more proper season to show forth its glory than the day time, in which a part of the splendor must necessarily be lost by the presence of the solar light. Besides, St. Luke, Luke 9:37, expressly says, that it was on the next day after the transfiguration that our Lord came down from the mount.

**Verse 9. *Tell the vision to no man***— See the note on Matthew 16:20; and farther observe, that as this transfiguration was intended to show forth the final abolition of the whole ceremonial law, it was necessary that a matter which could not fail to irritate the Jewish rulers and people should be kept secret, till Jesus had accomplished vision and prophecy by his death and resurrection.

The whole of this emblematic transaction appears to me to be intended to prove, 1st. The reality of the world of spirits, and the immortality of the soul. 2dly. The resurrection of the body, and the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, see Matthew 16:27. 3dly. The abolition of the Mosaic institutions, and, the fulfillment of the predictions of the prophets relative to the person, nature, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ, and the glory that should follow. 4thly. The establishment of the mild, light-bringing, and life-giving Gospel of the Son of God. And 5thly. That as the old Jewish covenant and Mediatorship had ended, Jesus was now to be considered as the sole Teacher, the only availing offering for sin, and the grand Mediator between God and man. There are many very useful remarks on this transaction, by the late venerable Bp. Porteus.

**Verse 10. *His disciples***— instead of HIS disciples, some MSS., with the Coptic, Armenian, Vulgate, all the Itala except two, and Origen, read

simply, **οι μαθηται**, THE disciples, i.e. those only who had been with him on the mount, Peter, James, and John.

**Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?**— As the disciples saw that Elijah returned to heaven, knowing the tradition of the elders, and the prophecy on which the tradition was founded, Malachi 4:5, 6, Behold I send you Elijah the prophet, before the great and terrible day of the Lord shall come; and he shall turn the hearts, etc., it was natural enough for them to inquire what the meaning of the tradition, and the intention of the prophecy, were.

**Verse 11. *Elias-shall first come, and restore all things.***— Or will reform, **αποκαταστησει**; this word our Lord quotes from the Septuagint; who render the Hebrew **והשוב לב אבות על בנים** vehesheb leb aboth al banim, he will cause the heart of the fathers to turn to the children, by, **ος αποκαταστησει καρδιαν πατρος προς υιον, ωηο ωιλλ χονζερετ, or ρεστορε, της ηεαρτ οφ της φατηερ το της σον**. We are not therefore to understand the version of the Septuagint quoted by our Lord in any other sense than the Hebrew will allow. No fanciful restoration of all men, devils and damned spirits, is spoken of as either being done, or begun, by the ministry of John; but merely that he should preach a doctrine tending to universal reformation of manners, and should be greatly successful: see Matthew 3:1-7, and especially Luke 3:3-15, where we find that a general reformation had taken place, 1. among the common people; 2. among the tax-gatherers; and 3. among the soldiers. And as John announced the coming Christ, who was to baptize with the Holy Ghost, i.e. to enlighten, change, and purify the heart, that the reform might be complete, both outward and inward, he may be said, in the strictest sense of the word, to have fulfilled the prophecy: and that he was the Elijah mentioned by Malachi, the words of Gabriel to the virgin Mary prove; Luke 1:17. And he (John) shall go before him (Christ) in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, etc.; and that his ministry was powerfully effectual for this purpose, we have already seen.

**Verse 12. *Knew him not***— Or, **ουκ επιγνωσαν αυτον**, They have not acknowledged him. That is, the Jewish rulers have not acknowledged him, did not receive him as the forerunner of the Messiah. But it appears that

all the rest acknowledged him as such; and some, from the power and demonstration of his preaching, were inclined to think he was more, even the Messiah himself: see Luke 3:15.

**Verse 13. *Then the disciples understood***— When he spoke of the sufferings of this prophetic Elijah, and also of his own, which had been the subject of the conversation on the mount, during the transfiguration, they clearly apprehended that he spoke of John the Baptist.

**Verse 14. *When they were come to the multitude***— It appears that a congregation had been collected during our Lord's stay on the mount: how great must have been the desire of these people to hear the words of Christ! The assembly is self-collected, and no delay on the preacher's side discourages them—they continue to wait for him. In the present day how rare is this zeal! How few by the most pathetic invitation can be brought together, even at the most convenient times, to hear the same doctrines, and to get their souls healed by the same wonder-working Christ!

***Kneeling down to him***— Or falling at his knees, γονυπετων. The ancients consecrated the EAR to memory; the FOREHEAD to genius; the RIGHT HAND to faith; and the KNEES to mercy: hence those who entreated favor fell at and touched the knees of the person whose kindness they supplicated. See Wakefield's Commentary; and see the note on Exodus 9:29; where the subject is largely explained.

**Verse 15. *My son-is lunatic***— σεληνιαζεται. One who was most affected with this disorder at the change and full of the moon. See on Matthew 4:24. But this lunacy was occasioned by a demon, see Matthew 17:18, and Mark 9:17; Luke 9:38. In this case, the devil intended to hide himself under the appearance of a natural disorder, that no supernatural means might be resorted to for his expulsion. See a remarkable account on Luke 9:39.

***Falleth oftentimes into the fire, and oft into the water.***— The paroxysms of his disorder frequently recurred; and among his numerous falls, some were into the fire and some into the water: so that, on this account, his life was in continual danger. Those who are under the influence of the devil are often driven to extremes in every thing. Such are often driven into the fire of presumption, or the waters of despair. Satan takes advantage of our

natural temper, state of health, and outward circumstances, to plague and ruin our souls.

**Verse 16. *Thy disciples could not cure him.***— No wonder, when the cure must be effected by supernatural agency, and they had not faith enough to interest the power of God in their behalf, Matthew 17:20. A spiritual disorder must have a spiritual remedy: natural means, in such cases, signify just-nothing.

**Verse 17. *O faithless and perverse generation!***— These and the following words may be considered as spoken: 1. To the disciples, because of their unbelief, Matthew 17:20. 2. To the father of the possessed, who should have brought his son to Christ. 3. To the whole multitude, who were slow of heart to believe in him as the Messiah, notwithstanding the miracles which he wrought. See ΚΥΡΚΕ.

Perverse, *δυστραμμενη*, signifies-1. Such as are influenced by perverse opinions, which hinder them from receiving the truth: and, 2. Such as are profligate in their manners. ΚΥΡΚΕ. This last expression could not have been addressed to the disciples, who were certainly saved from the corruption of the world, and whose minds had been lately divinely illuminated by what passed at and after the transfiguration: but at all times the expression was applicable to the Jewish people.

**Verse 18. *Jesus rebuked the devil***— Deprived him of all power to torment the child; and obliged him to abandon his present usurped habitation.

There are some souls whose cure God reserves to himself alone, and to whom all the applications of his ministers appear to be utterly ineffectual. He sometimes does all without them, that they may know they can never do any good without him. QUESNEL.

**Verse 19. *Why could not we cast him out?***— They were confounded at their want of success-but not at their want of faith, which was the cause of their miscarriage! When the ministers of the Gospel find their endeavors, with respect to some places or persons, ineffectual, they should come, by private prayer, to Christ, humble themselves before him, and beg to be informed whether some evil in themselves have not been the cause of the unfruitfulness of their labors.

**Verse 20. *Because of your unbelief***— Are we preachers of the Gospel? Do the things of God rest upon our minds with a deep and steady conviction? Can we expect that a doctrine which we do not, from conviction, credit ourselves, can be instrumental in our hands of begetting faith in others? So we preached, and so ye believed. The word preached generally begets in the people the same spirit which the preacher possesses. Instead of **ἄπιστιαν**, unbelief, the famous Vatican MS. and Cod. Cyprius, six others, Coptic, Ethiopic, Armenian, and Arabic, Origen, and Chrysostom, read **ὀλιγοπιστιαν**, littleness of faith. The disciples had some faith, but not enough—they believed, but not fully.

***As a grain of mustard seed***— Some eminent critics think this a proverbial expression, intimating a GREAT DEGREE of faith, because removing mountains, which St. Paul, 1 Corinthians 13:2, attributes to ALL FAITH; i.e. the greatest possible degree of faith, is attributed here, by our Lord, to that faith which is as a grain of mustard seed. However this may be, there can be no doubt that our Lord means, as BISHOP PEARCE well remarks, a thriving and increasing faith; which like the grain of mustard seed, from being the least of seeds, becomes the greatest of all herbs; even a tree in whose branches the fowls of the air take shelter. See WAKEFIELD'S Comment, and the note on Matthew 13:32.

**Verse 21. *This kind goeth not out but by prayer, etc.***— **τοῦτο το γένος**, this kind, some apply to the faith which should be exercised on the occasion, which goeth not out, doth not exert itself, but by prayer and fasting; but this interpretation is, in my opinion, far from solid. However, there is great difficulty in the text. The whole verse is wanting in the famous Vatican MS., one of the most ancient and most authentic perhaps in the world; and in another one of Colbert's, written in the 11th or 12th century. It is wanting also in the Coptic, Ethiopic, Syriac, Hieros., and in one copy of the Itala. But all the MSS. acknowledge it in the parallel place, Mark 9:29, only the Vatican MS. leaves out **νηστεία**, fasting. I strongly suspect it to be an interpolation; but, if it be, it is very ancient, as Origen, Chrysostom, and others of the primitive fathers, acknowledged it. But while candour obliges me to acknowledge that I cannot account for the fact here alleged, that a certain class or genus of demons cannot be expelled but by prayer and fasting, while others may be ejected without them, I can give a sense to the passage which all my readers will easily understand:

viz. that there are certain evil propensities, in some persons, which pampering the flesh tends to nourish and strengthen; and that self-denial and fasting, accompanied by prayer to God, are the most likely means, not only to mortify such propensities, but also to destroy them. For other remarkable circumstances relative to this case, see the notes on Mark 9:17, etc.

**Verse 22. *They abode in Galilee***— Lower Galilee, where the city of Capernaum was.

***The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men***—

μελλει-παραδιδοσθαι εις χειρας-The Son of man is about to be delivered into the hands, etc. I am fully of the mind of two eminent critics, Grotius and Wakefield, that παραδιδοσθαι should be here translated delivered, or delivered up, not betrayed; and that the agency, in this case, should be referred to God, not to Judas. Jesus was delivered up, by the counsel of God, to be an atonement for the sin of the world. See Acts 4:27, 28. Against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed to do what thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done, Herod and Pontius Pilate-were gathered together.

**Verse 23. *They were exceeding sorry***— Since the conversation on the mount, with Moses and Elijah; Peter, James, and John could have no doubt that their Lord and Master must suffer, and that it was for this end he came into the world; but, while they submitted to the counsel of God, their affection for him caused them to feel exquisite distress.

**Verse 24. *They that received tribute***— This was not a tax to be paid to the Roman government; but a tax for the support of the temple. The law, Exodus 30:13, obliged every male among the Jews to pay half a shekel yearly; for the support of the temple; and this was continued by them wherever dispersed, till after the time of Vespasian, see Josephus, WAR, book 7. c. 6, who ordered it afterwards to be paid into the Roman treasury. The word in the text, which is generally translated tribute-τα διδραχμα, signifies the didrachma, or two drachms. This piece of money was about the value of two Attic drachms, each equal to fifteen pence of our money. The didrachma of the Septuagint, mentioned Exodus 30:13, was twice as heavy as the Attic, for it was equal to a whole shekel, this being the value of that piece of money at Alexandrina, the place where the Septuagint



translation was made; for the half shekel mentioned in the above passage, they render *ημισυ του διδαχμου*, the half of a didrachma.

**Verse 25. *He saith, Yes.***— From this reply of Peter, it is evident that our Lord customarily paid all taxes, tributes, etc., which were common among the people wherever he came. The children of God are subject to all civil laws in the places where they live -and should pay the taxes levied on them by public authority; and though any of these should be found unjust, THEY rebel not, as their business is not to reform the politics of nations, but the morals of the world.

**Verse 26. *Then are the children free***— As this money is levied for the support of that temple of which I am the Lord, then I am not obliged to pay the tax; and my disciples, like the priests that minister, should be exempted from the necessity of paying.

**Verse 27. *Lest we-offend them***— Be a stumbling-block to the priests, or rulers of the Jews, I will pay the tribute-go thou to the sea-cast a hook, and take the first fish-thou shalt find a piece of money, *στατηρα*, a stater. This piece of money was equal in value to four drachms, or two shekels, (five shillings of our money,) and consequently was sufficient to pay the tribute for our Lord and Peter, which amounted to about half-a-crown each. If the stater was in the mouth or belly of the fish before, who can help admiring the wisdom of Christ, that discovered it there? If it was not before in the mouth of the fish, who can help admiring the power of Christ, that impelled the fish to go where the stater had been lost in the bottom of the sea, take it up, come towards the shore where Peter was fishing, and, with the stater in its mouth or stomach, catch hold of the hook that was to draw it out of the water? But suppose there was no stater there, which is as likely as otherwise, then Jesus created it for the purpose, and here his omnipotence was shown; for to make a thing exist that did not exist before is an act of unlimited power, however small the thing itself may be. Some suppose that the haddock was the fish caught by Peter, because this fish has a blackish mark on each side of its neck or shoulders, as seems to exhibit the impression of a finger and thumb. The haddock is the *gadus eglesinus*. But this being a sea fish, could not be a native of the sea of Galilee or Tiberias, etc., for the river Jordan runs through the sea of Galilee, and falls into the Dead Sea, which has no outlet

to the ocean: no sea fish of any kind can be found there; and we may add to this, that Belzoni, a learned traveler, who examined the produce of the lake of Tiberias, found only trouts, pikes, chevins, and tenches. That it may, besides these, have some fishes peculiar to itself, as most extensive fresh water lakes have, need not be denied; but it could have no sea fish.

THE account of the transfiguration, the peculiar case of the lunatic, with his cure, and the miracle wrought to pay the tribute money, render this one of the most interesting and instructive chapters in the New Testament.

1. To what has already been said on the subject of the transfiguration, nothing need be added: I have given that sense to it which the circumstances of the case, the construction of the words, and the analogy of faith warrant. That others have understood the whole transaction differently, is readily granted. Some of the foreign critics, who are also called divines, have stripped it, by their mode of interpretation, of all its strength, use, and meaning. With them, it is thus to be understood:—"Jesus, with his disciples, Peter, James, and John, went by night into a mountain, for the purpose of prayer and meditation; while thus engaged, the animal spirits of the disciples were overcome by watching and fatigue, and they fell asleep: in this sleep they dreamed, or Peter only dreamed, that he saw his Master encompassed with a glorious light, and that Moses and Elijah were conversing with him. That early in the morning, just as the sun was rising, there happened some electric or thunder-like explosions (a thing not unfrequent near some mountains) by which the disciples were suddenly awoke; that Peter, whose mind was strongly impressed with his dream, seeing the rising sun shine gloriously upon his Master, and his strongly impressed senses calling to remembrance his late vision, he for a moment imagined he saw, not only the glory of which he had dreamed, but the persons also—Moses and Elijah, still standing on the mount with Christ; that not being as yet sufficiently awake, finding the images impressed on his imagination fleeting away with his returning exercise of reason, he cried out, before he was aware, Lord! it is good for us to be here, let us make three tabernacles, etc.; but in a short time, having recovered the regular use of his senses, he perceived that it was a dream; and, having told it to our Lord and his brother disciples, lest the Jews might take occasion of jealousy from it, he was desired to tell the vision to no man." This is the substance of that strange explanation given by those learned men to this

extraordinary transaction; a mode of interpretation only calculated to support that system which makes it an important point to deny and decry all supernatural and miraculous influence, and to explain away all the spirituality of the New Testament. Whatever ingenuity may be in this pretended elucidation, every unprejudiced person must see that it can never be brought to accord with the letter and concomitant circumstances of this most remarkable case.

2. The cure of the deaf and dumb lunatic has been treated, by the same critics, in nearly the same way, and for the same obvious design, namely, to exclude from the world all supernatural agency; and could they succeed in this, of what value, or, indeed, utility, could the whole New Testament be to mankind? We might be well astonished to find such a history, with such a great variety of curious and apparently interesting circumstances:-a wondrous person, laboring, preaching, suffering, dying, etc., etc., without having scarcely any thing in view, but a sort of merely moral reformation of the outward man! Truly, this:-

*“Is like an ocean into tempest toss’d,  
To waft a feather, or to drown a fly.”*

But the truth of God’s miraculous interpositions, the miracles of the New Testament, demoniacal possessions and influence, the atonement, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the regeneration of the corrupted human heart, etc., etc., must not be given up to please a certain description of persons, who have no commerce with God themselves, and cannot bear that others should either have or pretend to it.

3. The miracle wrought for the paying of the temple tribute money, is exceedingly remarkable. The note on Matthew 17:27, brings this particularly to view. To what is there said, it may be added, that our Lord seems to have wrought this miracle for the following purposes:-

1. More forcibly to impress the minds of his disciples, and his followers in general, with the necessity and propriety of being subject to all the laws of the different states, kingdoms, etc., wheresoever the providence of God might cast their lot.

2. To show forth his own unlimited power and knowledge, that they might be fully convinced that he knew all things, even to the most minute; and

could do whatsoever he pleased; and that both his wisdom and power were continually interested in behalf of his true disciples.

3. To teach all believers a firm trust and reliance on Divine Providence, the sources of which can never be exhausted; and which, directed by infinite wisdom and love, will make every provision essentially requisite for the comfort and support, of life. How many of the poor followers of Christ have been enabled to discern his kind hand, even in the means furnished them to discharge the taxes laid on them by the state! The profane and the unprincipled may deride, and mock on, but the people of God know it to be their duty, and their interest, to be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; and, while his grace and providence render this obedience, in things both spiritual and secular, possible, his love, which their hearts feel, renders their duty their delight. The accomplishment of such ends as these is worthy both of the wisdom and benevolence of Christ.

## CHAPTER 18

*The disciples inquiring who should be greatest in Christ's kingdom, 1. He takes occasion to recommend humility, simplicity, and disinterestedness, 2-6. Warns them against offenses, 7. Recommends mortification and self-denial, 8, 9. Charges them to avoid giving offense, 10, 11. Parable of him who had lost one sheep out of his flock consisting of one hundred, 12-14. How to deal with an offending brother, 15-18. A gracious promise to social prayer, 19, 20. How often an offending brother who expresses sorrow, and promises amendment, is to be forgiven, 21, 22. The parable of the king, who calls his servants to account, and finds one who owed him ten thousand talents, who, being unable to pay, and imploring mercy, is forgiven, 23-27. Of the same person, who treated his fellow-servant unmercifully, who owed him but a small sum, 28-30. Of the punishment inflicted on this unmerciful servant, 31-35.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 18

**Verse 1. *At the same time***— Or hour; but ωρα is frequently used to signify some particular time: however, instead of ωρα, three MSS., all the Itala but four, and Origen, read ημερα, day. Origen says both readings were extant in MSS. in his time.

***Who is the greatest***— Could these disciples have viewed the kingdom of Christ in any other light than that of a temporal one? Hence they wished to know whom he would make his prime minister-whom his general-whom his chief chancellor-whom supreme judge, etc., etc. Is it he who first became thy disciple, or he who is thy nearest relative, or he who has most frequently entertained thee, or he who is the oldest, merely as to years? Could this inquiry have proceeded from any but the nine disciples who had not witnessed our Lord's transfiguration? Peter, James, and John, were surely more spiritual in their views! And yet how soon did even these forget that his kingdom was not of this world! See Mark 10:35, etc.; John 18:10, etc. The disciples having lately seen the keys delivered to Peter, and found that he, with James and John, had been privileged with being present

at the transfiguration, it is no wonder if a measure of jealousy and suspicion began to work in their minds. From this inquiry we may also learn, that the disciples had no notion of Peter's supremacy; nor did they understand, as the Roman Catholics will have it, that Christ had constituted him their head, either by the conversation mentioned Matthew 16:18, 19, or by the act mentioned in the conclusion of the preceding chapter. Had they thought that any such superiority had been designed, their present question must have been extremely impertinent. Let this be observed.

**Verse 2. *A little child***— But this child could walk, for he called him to him. Nicephorus says, this was Ignatius, who was afterwards bishop of Antioch, and suffered martyrdom under, and by command of, the Roman Emperor Trojan, in the 107th year of our Lord. But this good father is not much to be depended on, being both weak and credulous.

**Verse 3. *Except ye be converted***— Unless ye be saved from those prejudices which are at present so baneful to your nation, (seeking a temporal and not a spiritual kingdom,) unless ye be clothed with the spirit of humility, ye cannot enter into the spirit, design, and privileges of my spiritual and eternal kingdom. The name of this kingdom should put you in mind of its nature.—1. The KING is heavenly; 2. His SUBJECTS are heavenly-minded; 3. Their COUNTRY is heavenly, for they are strangers and pilgrims upon earth; 4. The GOVERNMENT of this kingdom is wholly spiritual and divine. See on Matthew 3:2.

***And become as little children***— i.e. Be as truly without worldly ambition, and the lust of power, as little children are, who act among themselves as if all were equal. The following saying from the Boostan of the poet Saady is very appropriate. “The hearts of infants being free from avarice, what care they for a handful of silver more than for a handful of dust?”

**Verse 4. *Whosoever therefore shall humble himself***— So great is the disparity between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdoms of this world, that there is no way of rising to honors in the former, but by humility of mind, and continual self-abasement.

***The same is greatest***— Thus our Lord shows them that they were all equal, and that there could be no superiority among them, but what must come

from the deepest humility; he intimates also, that wherever this principle should be found, it would save its possessor from seeking worldly honors or earthly profits, and from seeking to be a ruler over his brethren, or a lord in God's heritage.

**Verse 5. *One such little child***— As our Lord in the preceding verses considers a little child an emblem of a genuine disciple, so by the term in this verse he means a disciple only. “Whosoever will receive, i.e. show unto such a child-like, unambitious disciple of mine, any act of kindness for my sake, I will consider it as done to myself.”

**Verse 6. *But whoso shall offend one of these little ones***— But, on the contrary, whosoever shall cause one of the least of those who believe in me to be stumbled-to go into the spirit of the world, or give way to sin-such a one shall meet with the most exemplary punishment.

Let those who act the part of the devil, in tempting others to sin, hear this declaration of our Lord, and tremble.

**A millstone**— *μυλος ονικος*, an ass's millstone, because in ancient times, before the invention of wind and water mills, the stones were turned sometimes by slaves, but commonly by asses or mules. The most ancient kind of mills among the inhabitants of the northern nations, was the quern, or hand-mill. In some places in Ireland, Scotland, and the Zetland Isles, these still exist.

**Drowned in the depth of the sea.**— It is supposed that in Syria, as well as in Greece, this mode of punishing criminals was practised; especially in cases of parricide; and when a person was devoted to destruction for the public safety, as in cases of plague, famine, etc. That this was the custom in Greece, we learn from the Scholiast on the Equites of Aristophanes, *οταν γαρ κατεποντουν τινας, βαρος απο των τραχηλων εκρεμων*. When a person was drowned, they hung a weight, (*υπερβολον λιθον*, Suidas,) a vast stone about his neck. See the ancient Scholia upon the Equites, lin. 1360, and Suidas, in *υπερβολον λιθον*. We find also that it was a positive institute of the ancient Hindoo law. “If a woman,” says the precept, “causes any person to take poison, sets fire to any person's house, or murders a man, then the magistrate, having bound a stone to her

neck, shall drown her.” Halhead’s Code of Gentoo Laws, 4to. edition, page 306.

**Verse 7. *Wo!***— Or, alas! **οὐαί**. It is the opinion of some eminent critics, that this word is ever used by our Lord to express sympathy and concern.

***Because of offenses***— Scandals, stumbling-blocks, persecutions, etc.

***For it must needs be that offenses come***— **αναγκη γαρ εστιν ελθειν τα σκανδαλα**, for the coming of offenses is unavoidable. Such is the wickedness of men, such their obstinacy, that they will not come unto Christ that they may have life, but desperately continue deceiving and being deceived. In such a state of things, offenses, stumbling-blocks, persecutions, etc., are unavoidable.

***Wo to that man***— He who gives the offense, and he who receives it, are both exposed to ruin.

**Verse 8. — 9. *If thy hand, etc.***— See the notes on Matthew 5:29, 30.

**Verse 9.** See “Matthew 18:8”.

**Verse 10. *One of these little ones***— One of my simple, loving, humble disciples.

***Their angels-always behold***— Our Lord here not only alludes to, but, in my opinion, establishes the notion received by almost all nations, viz. That every person has a guardian angel; and that these have always access to God, to receive orders relative to the management of their charge. See Psalm 34:8; Hebrews 1:14.

***Always behold the face***— Hence, among the Jews, the angels were styled **מלכי פנים**, malakey panim, angels of the face, and Michael is said to be **סר הפנים**, sar ha-panim the prince of the face. This is an allusion to the privilege granted by eastern monarchs to their chief favourites; a privilege which others were never permitted to enjoy. The seven princes of Media and Persia, who were the chief favourites and privy-counsellors of Ahasuerus, are said to see the king’s face. Esther 1:14; see also 2 Kings 25:19, and Jeremiah 51:25. Our Lord’s words give us to understand that humble-hearted, child-like disciples, are objects of his peculiar care, and



constant attention. The clause, *εν ουρανοις*, in the heavens, is wanting in several MSS., versions, and fathers.

**Verse 11. *For the Son of man, etc.***— This is added as a second reason, why no injury should be done to his followers. “The Son of man has so loved them as to come into the world to lay down his life for them.”

***That which was lost.***— *απολωλος*. In Revelation 9:11, Satan is called *απολλων*, Apolluon, the destroyer, or him who lays waste. This name bears a near relation to that state in which our Lord tells us he finds all mankind-lost, desolated, ruined. So it appears that Satan and men have the nearest affinity to each other-as the destroyer and the destroyed-the desolator and the desolated- the loser and the lost. But the Son of man came to save the lost. Glorious news! May every lost soul feel it! This verse is omitted by five MSS., two versions, and three of the fathers; but of its authenticity there can be no doubt, as it is found in the parallel place, Luke 19:10, on which verse there is not a single various reading found in any of the MSS. that have ever been discovered, nor in any of the ancient versions.

**Verse 12. *Doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains***— So our common translation reads the verse; others, Doth he not leave the ninety and nine UPON THE MOUNTAINS, and go, etc. This latter reading appears to me to be the best; because, in Luke 15:4, it is said, he leaveth the ninety and nine IN THE DESERT. The allusion, therefore, is to a shepherd feeding his sheep on the mountains, in the desert; not seeking the lost one ON the mountains.

Leaving the ninety and nine, and seeking the ONE strayed sheep:-This was a very common form of speech among the Jews, and includes no mystery, though there are some who imagine that our Lord refers to the angels who kept not their first estate, and that they are in number, to men, as NINETY are to ONE. But it is likely that our Lord in this place only alludes to his constant solicitude to instruct, heal, and save those simple people of the sea coasts, country villages, etc., who were scattered abroad, as sheep without a shepherd, (Matthew 9:36,) the scribes and Pharisees paying no attention to their present or eternal well-being. This may be also considered as a lesson of instruction and comfort to backsliders. How hardly does Christ give them up!

**Verse 13. *He rejoiceth more***— It is justly observed by one, on this verse, that it is natural for a person to express unusual joy at the fortunate accomplishment of an unexpected event.

**Verse 14. *It is not the will of your Father***— If any soul be finally lost, it is not because God's will or counsel was against its salvation, or that a proper provision had not been made for it; but that, though light came into the world, it preferred darkness to light, because of its attachment to its evil deeds.

**Verse 15. *If thy brother***— Any who is a member of the same religious society, sin against thee, 1. Go and reprove him alone,-it may be in person; if that cannot be so well done, by thy messenger, or in writing, (which in many cases is likely to be the most effectual.) Observe, our Lord gives no liberty to omit this, or to exchange it for either of the following steps. If this do not succeed,

**Verse 16. 2. *Take with thee one or two more***— Men whom he esteems, who may then confirm and enforce what thou sayest; and afterwards, if need require, bear witness of what was spoken. If even this do not succeed, then, and not before,

**Verse 17. 3. *Tell it unto the Church***— Lay the whole matter before the congregation of Christian believers, in that place of which he is a member, or before the minister and elders, as the representatives of the Church or assembly. If all this avail not, then,

***Let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.***— To whom thou art, as a Christian, to owe earnest and persevering good will, and acts of kindness; but have no religious communion with him, till, if he have been convicted, he acknowledge his fault. Whosoever follows this threefold rule will seldom offend others, and never be offended himself.-Rev. J. WESLEY.

Reproving a brother who had sinned was a positive command under the law. See Leviticus 19:17. And the Jews have a saying, that one of the causes of the ruin of their nation was, "No man reprov'd another." On the word Church, see Clarke at "Matthew 16:28".

**Verse 18. *Whatsoever ye shall bind, etc.***— Whatever determinations ye make, in conformity to these directions for your conduct to an offending

brother, will be accounted just, and ratified by the Lord. See on Matthew 16:19; and, to what is there said, the following observations may be profitably added.

**οσα εαν δησητε-και οσα εαν λυσητε.** Binding and loosing, in this place, and in Matthew 16:19, is generally restrained, by Christian interpreters, to matters of discipline and authority. But it is as plain as the sun, by what occurs in numberless places dispersed throughout the Mishna, and from thence commonly used by the later rabbins when they treat of ritual subjects, that binding signified, and was commonly understood by the Jews at that time to be, a declaration that any thing was unlawful to be done; and loosing signified, on the contrary, a declaration that any thing may be lawfully done. Our Savior spoke to his disciples in a language which they understood, so that they were not in the least at a loss to comprehend his meaning; and its being obsolete to us is no manner of reason why we should conclude that it was obscure to them. The words, bind and loose, are used in both places in a declaratory sense, of things, not of persons. It is **ο** and **οσα**, in the neuter gender, both in chap. 16, and here in this: i.e. Whatsoever thing or things ye shall bind or loose.

Consequently, the same commission which was given at first to St. Peter alone, (Matthew 16:19,) was afterwards enlarged to all the apostles. St. Peter had made a confession that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God. His confession of the Divinity of our Lord was the first that ever was made by man; to him, therefore, were given the keys of the kingdom of heaven: i.e. God made choice of him among all the apostles, that the Gentiles should first, by his mouth, hear the word of the Gospel, and believe. He first opened the kingdom of heaven to the Gentiles, when he preached to Cornelius. It was open to the Jews all along before; but if we should suppose that it was not, yet to them also did St. Peter open the kingdom of heaven, in his sermon at the great pentecost. Thus, then, St. Peter exercised his two keys: that for the Jews at the great pentecost; and that for the Gentiles, when he admitted Cornelius into the Church. And this was the reward of his first confession, in which he owned Jesus to be the promised Messiah. And what St. Peter loosed, i.e. declared as necessary to be believed and practised by the disciples here, was ratified above. And what he declared unlawful to be believed and practised, (i.e. what he bound,) was actually forbidden by God himself.

I own myself obliged to Dr. Lightfoot for this interpretation of the true notion of binding and loosing. It is a noble one, and perfectly agrees with the ways of speaking then in use among the Jews. It is observable that these phrases, of binding and loosing, occur no where in the New Testament but in St. Matthew, who is supposed to have written his Gospel first in Hebrew, from whence it was translated into Greek, and then the force and use of the expression will better appear. Dr. Wotton's *Miscell. Discourses*, vol. i. p. 309, etc., etc.

“The phrases to bind and to loose were Jewish, and most frequent in their writers. It belonged only to the teachers among the Jews to bind and to loose. When the Jews set any apart to be a preacher, they used these words, ‘Take thou liberty to teach what is BOUND and what is LOOSE.’” Strype's preface to the *Posthumous Remains of Dr. Lightfoot*, p. 38.

**Verse 19. *Again I say unto you***— The word *αμην*, verily, is added here, in ninety-eight MSS., (many of which are of the greatest antiquity and importance,) seven editions, all the Arabic, the Slavonic, and several of the Itala. The taking in or leaving out such a word may appear to some a matter of indifference; but, as I am fully convinced Jesus Christ never spoke a useless or a needless word, my maxim is, to omit not one syllable that I am convinced (from such authority as the above) he has ever used, and to take in nothing that he did not speak. It makes the passage much more emphatic—Again, VERILY I say unto you,

***If two of you shall agree***— *συμφωνησωσιν*, symphonize, or harmonize. It is a metaphor taken from a number of musical instruments set to the same key, and playing the same tune: here, it means a perfect agreement of the hearts, desires, wishes, and voices, of two or more persons praying to God. It also intimates that as a number of musical instruments, skilfully played, in a good concert, are pleasing to the ears of men, so a number of persons united together in warm, earnest, cordial prayer, is highly pleasing in the sight and ears of the Lord. Now this conjoint prayer refers, in all probability, to the binding and loosing in the preceding verse; and thus we see what power faithful prayer has with God!

***It shall be done for them***— What an encouragement to pray! even to two, if there be no more disposed to join in this heavenly work.

**Verse 20. *For where two-are gathered together in thy name***— There are many sayings among the Jews almost exactly similar to this, such as, Wherever even two persons are sitting in discourse concerning the law, the Divine presence is among them. See much more in Schoettgen. And the following, among the ancient Hindoos, is like unto it: “When Brahma, the Lord of creation, had formed mankind, and at the same time appointed his worship, he spoke and said, ‘With this worship pray for increase, and let it be that on which ye shall depend for the accomplishment of all your wishes. With this remember God, that God may remember you. Remember one another, and ye shall obtain supreme happiness. God, being remembered in worship, will grant you the enjoyment of your wishes: he who enjoyeth what hath been given unto him by God, and offereth not a portion unto him, is even as a thief. Know that good works come from Brahma, whose nature is incorruptible; wherefore, the omnipresent Brahma is PRESENT IN THE WORSHIP.” See the Bagvat Geeta, p. 45, 46.

***In my name***— Seems to refer particularly to a public profession of Christ and his Gospel.

***There am I in the midst***— None but God could say these words, to say them with truth, because God alone is every where present, and these words refer to his omnipresence. Wherever-suppose millions of assemblies were collected in the same moment, in different places of the creation, (which is a very possible case,) this promise states that Jesus is in each of them. Can any, therefore, say these words, except that God who fills both heaven and earth? But Jesus says these words: ergo-Jesus is God. Let it be observed, that Jesus is not among them to spy out their sins; or to mark down the imperfections of their worship; but to enlighten, strengthen, comfort, and save them.

**Verse 21. *Till seven times?***— Though seven was a number of perfection among the Hebrews, and often meant much more than the units in it imply, yet it is evident that Peter uses it here in its plain literal sense, as our Lord’s words sufficiently testify. It was a maxim among the Jews never to forgive more than thrice: Peter enlarges this charity more than one half; and our Lord makes even his enlargement septuple, see Matthew 18:22. Revenge is natural to man, i.e. man is naturally a vindictive being, and, in consequence, nothing is more difficult to him than forgiveness of injuries.

**Verse 22. *Seventy times seven.***— There is something very remarkable in these words, especially if collated with Genesis 4:24, where the very same words are used—“If any man kill LAMECH, he shall be avenged seventy times seven.” The just God punishes sin in an exemplary manner. Sinful man, who is exposed to the stroke of Divine justice, should be abundant in forgiveness, especially as the merciful only shall find mercy. See the note on Matthew 5:7, and on Matthew 6:14, 15. The sum seventy times seven makes four hundred and ninety. Now an offense, properly such, is that which is given wantonly, maliciously, and without ANY PROVOCATION. It is my opinion, that, let a man search ever so accurately, he will not find that he has received, during the whole course of his life, four hundred and ninety such offenses. If the man who receives the offense has given any cause for it, in that case, the half of the offense, at least, towards his brother, ceases.

**Verse 23. *Therefore is the kingdom***— In respect to sin, cruelty, and oppression, God will proceed in the kingdom of heaven (the dispensation of the Gospel) as he did in former times; and every person shall give an account of himself to God. Every sin is a debt contracted with the justice of God; men are all God’s own servants; and the day is at hand in which their Master will settle accounts with them, inquire into their work, and pay them their wages. Great Judge! what an awful time must this be, when with multitudes nothing shall be found but sin and insolvency!

By servant, in the text, we are to understand, a petty king, or tributary prince; for no hired servant could possibly owe such a sum as is here mentioned.

**Verse 24. *Ten thousand talents***— μυρίων ταλάντων, a myriad of talents, the highest number known in Greek arithmetical notation. An immense sum, which, if the silver talent be designed, amounts to 4,500,000 sterling; but if the gold talent be meant which is by far the most likely, then the amount is 67,500,000 sterling, a sum equal to the annual revenue of the British empire! See the note on Exodus 25:39. The margin above is incorrect.

**Verse 25. *He had not to pay***— That is not being able to pay. As there could not be the smallest probability that a servant, wholly dependent on his master, who was now absolutely insolvent, could ever pay a debt he

had contracted of more than 67 millions! -so is it impossible for a sinner, infinitely indebted to Divine justice, ever to pay a mite out of the talent.

**Commanded him to be sold-his wife-children, etc.**— Our Lord here alludes to an ancient custom among the Hebrews, of selling a man and his family to make payment of contracted debts. See Exodus 22:3; Leviticus 25:30, 47; 2 Kings 4:1. This custom passed from among the Jews to the Greeks and Romans. I have already remarked (see Genesis 47:19) that in the Burman empire the sale of whole families, to discharge debts, is very common.

**Verse 26. Fell down and worshipped him**— *προσεκυνει αυτω*, crouched as a dog before him, with the greatest deference, submission, and anxiety.

**Have patience with me**— *μακροθυμησον επ' εμοι*, be long-minded towards me-give me longer space.

The means which a sinner should use to be saved, are, 1. Deep humiliation of heart-he fell down. 2. Fervent prayer. 3. Confidence in the mercy of God-have patience. 4. A firm purpose to devote his soul and body to his Maker-I will pay thee all. A sinner may be said, according to the economy of grace, to pay all, when he brings the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus to the throne of justice, by faith; thus offering an equivalent for the pardon he seeks, and paying all he owes to Divine justice, by presenting the blood of the Lamb.

**Verse 27. Moved with compassion**— Or with tender pity. This is the source of salvation to a lost world, the tender pity, the eternal mercy of God.

**Verse 28. A hundred pence**— Rather denarii. The denarius was a Roman coin, worth about seven-pence halfpenny English. The original word should be retained, as our word penny does not convey the seventh part of the meaning. A hundred denarii would amount to about 3l. 2s. 6d. British, or, if reckoned as some do, at seven-pence three farthings, the sum would be 3l. 4s. 7d.

**Took him by the throat**— *κρατησας αυτον επνιγε*. There is no word I am acquainted with, which so fully expresses the meaning of the original,

ἐπνίγε, as the Anglo-saxon term throttle: it signified (like the Greek) to half choke a person, by seizing his throat.

**Verse 29. *Fell down at his feet***— This clause is wanting in several ancient MSS., versions, and fathers. Several printed editions also have omitted it; Griesbach has left it out of the text.

***Pay thee all.***— παντα, all, is omitted by a multitude of MSS., versions, and fathers.

**Verse 30. *And he would not, etc.***— To the unmerciful, God will show no mercy; this is an eternal purpose of the Lord, which never can be changed. God teaches us what to do to a fellow-sinner, by what HE does to us. Our fellow-servant's debt to us, and ours to God, are as one hundred denarii to ten thousand talents! When we humble ourselves before him, God freely forgives us all this mighty sum! And shall we exact from our brother recompense for the most trifling faults? Reader, if thou art of this unmerciful, unforgiving cast, read out the chapter.

*“All the souls that are were forfeit once,  
And he who might the ‘vantage best have took,  
Found out the remedy. How would you be,  
If HE, who is the top of judgment, should  
But judge you as you are? O! think on that,  
And mercy then will breathe within your lips  
Like man new made  
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,  
That, in the course of justice, none of us  
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;  
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render  
The deeds of Mercy.”*

**Verse 31. *His fellow-servants saw what was done***— An act of this kind is so dishonorable to all the followers of Christ, and to the spirit of his Gospel, that through the respect they owe to their Lord and Master, and through the concern they feel for the prosperity of his cause, they are obliged to plead against it at the throne of God.

**Verse 32. *His lord, after that he had called him***— Alas! how shall he appear! Confounded. What shall he answer? He is speechless!

**Verse 33. *Shouldest not thou also have had compassion***— οὐκ εἶδὲν καὶ σε, Did it not become thee also? What a cutting reproach! It became



ME to show mercy, when thou didst earnestly entreat me, because I am MERCIFUL, It became thee also to have shown mercy, because thou wert so deep in debt thyself, and hadst obtained mercy.

**Verse 34. *Delivered him to the tormentors***— Not only continued captivity is here intended, but the tortures to be endured in it. If a person was suspected of fraud, as there was reason for in such a case as that mentioned here, he was put to very cruel tortures among the Asiatics, to induce him to confess. In the punishments of China, a great variety of these appear; and probably there is an allusion to such torments in this place. Before, he and all that he had, were only to be sold. Now, as he has increased his debt, so he has increased his punishment; he is delivered to the tormentors, to the horrors of a guilty conscience, and to a fearful looking for of fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. But if this refers to the day of judgment, then the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched, are the tormentors.

**Verse 35. *So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you***— The goodness and indulgence of God towards us is the pattern we should follow in our dealings with others. If we take man for our exemplar we shall err, because our copy is a bad one; and our lives are not likely to be better than the copy we imitate. Follow Christ; be merciful as your Father who is in heaven is merciful. You cannot complain of the fairness of your copy. Reader, hast thou a child, or servant who has offended thee, and humbly asks forgiveness? Hast thou a debtor, or a tenant, who is insolvent, and asks for a little longer time? And hast thou not forgiven that child or servant? Hast thou not given time to that debtor or tenant? How, then, canst thou ever expect to see the face of the just and merciful God? Thy child is banished, or kept at a distance; thy debtor is thrown into prison, or thy tenant sold up: yet the child offered to fall at thy feet; and the debtor or tenant, utterly insolvent, prayed for a little longer time, hoping God would enable him to pay thee all; but to these things thy stony heart and seared conscience paid no regard! O monster of ingratitude! Scandal to human nature, and reproach to God! If thou canst, go hide thyself—even in hell, from the face of the Lord!

***Their trespasses.***— These words are properly left out by GREISBACH, and other eminent critics, because they are wanting in some of the very best

MSS. most of the versions, and in some of the chief of the fathers. The words are evidently an interpolation; the construction of them is utterly improper, and the concord false.

In our common method of dealing with insolvent debtors, we in some sort imitate the Asiatic customs: we put them in prison, and all their circumstances there are so many tormentors; the place, the air, the company, the provision, the accommodation, all destructive to comfort, to peace, to health, and to every thing that humanity can devise. If the person be poor, or comparatively poor, is his imprisonment likely to lead him to discharge his debt? His creditor may rest assured that he is now farther from his object than ever: the man had no other way of discharging the debt but by his labor; that is now impossible, through his confinement, and the creditor is put to a certain expense towards his maintenance. How foolish is this policy! And how much do such laws stand in need of revision and amendment! Imprisonment for debt, in such a case as that supposed above, can answer no other end than the gratification of the malice, revenge, or inhumanity of the creditor. Better sell all that he has, and, with his hands and feet untied, let him begin the world afresh. Dr. Dodd very feelingly inquires here, “Whether rigour in exacting temporal debts, in treating without mercy such as are unable to satisfy them-whether this can be allowed to a Christian, who is bound to imitate his God and Father? To a debtor, who can expect forgiveness only on the condition of forgiving others? To a servant, who should obey his Master?-and to a criminal, who is in daily expectation of his Judge and final sentence?” Little did he think, when he wrote this sentence, that himself should be a melancholy proof, not only of human weakness, but of the relentless nature of those laws by which property, or rather money, is guarded. The unfortunate Dr. Dodd was hanged for forgery, in 1777, and the above note was written only seven years before!

The unbridled and extravagant appetites of men sometimes require a rigour even beyond the law to suppress them. While, then, we learn lessons of humanity from what is before us, let us also learn lessons of prudence, sobriety, and moderation. The parable of the two debtors is blessedly calculated to give this information.

## CHAPTER 19

*Jesus leaves Galilee, and comes into the coasts of Judea, and is followed by great multitudes, whom he heals, 1, 2. The question of the Pharisees concerning divorce answered, and the doctrine of marriage explained, 3-9. The inquiry of the disciples on this subject, 10. Our Lord's answer, explaining the case of eunuchs, 11, 12. Little children brought to Christ for his blessing, 13-15. The case of the young man who wished to obtain eternal life, 16-22. Our Lord's reflections on this case, in which he shows the difficulty of a rich man's salvation, 23-26. What they shall possess who have left all for Christ's sake and the Gospel. 27-29 How many of the first shall be last, and the last first, 30.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 19

**Verse 1. *Beyond Jordan***— Or, by the side of Jordan. Matthew begins here to give an account of Christ's journey (the only one he mentions) to Jerusalem, a little before the passover, at which he was crucified. See Mark 10:1; Luke 9:51.

Jesus came from Galilee (which lay to the north of Judea) into the coasts of Judea; and from thence, in his way to Jerusalem, he went through Jericho, (Matthew 20:17, 29,) which lay at the distance of sixty furlongs, or seven miles and a half from Jordan, to the western side of it. See Joseph. WAR, book iv. chap. 8. sect. 3. It seems, therefore, most probable, that the course of Christ's journey led him by the side of the river Jordan, not beyond it. That the Greek word *πέραν*, especially with a genitive case as here, has sometimes this signification, see on John 6:22; see also Bp. Pearce.

**Verse 2. *Great multitudes followed him***— Some to be instructed-some to be healed-some through curiosity-and some to ensnare him.

**Verse 3. *Tempting him***— Trying what answer he would give to a question, which, however decided by him, would expose him to censure.

***Is it lawful-for every cause?***— Instead of **αἰτιαν**, fault, cause, reason, three MSS. and the Coptic version read **αμαρτιαν**, sin or transgression: this was probably the original reading-the first syllable being lost, **αρτιαν** alone would remain, which a subsequent transcriber would suppose to be a mistake for **αἰτιαν**, and so wrote it; hence this various reading. What made our Lord's situation at present so critical in respect to this question was: At this time there were two famous divinity and philosophical schools among the Jews, that of SHAMMAI, and that of HILLEL. On the question of divorce, the school of Shammai maintained, that a man could not legally put away his wife, except for whoredom. The school of Hillel taught that a man might put away his wife for a multitude of other causes, and when she did not find grace in his sight; i.e. when he saw any other woman that pleased him better. See the case of Josephus, mentioned in the note on Matthew 5:31, and Calmet's Comment, vol. i. part ii. p. 379. By answering the question, not from Shammai or Hillel, but from Moses, our blessed Lord defeated their malice, and confounded their devices.

**Verse 4. *He which made them at the beginning***— When Adam and Eve were the first of human kind.

***Made them male and female***— Merely through the design of matrimonial union, that the earth might be thus peopled. To answer a case of conscience, a man should act as Christ does here; pay no regard to that which the corruption of manners has introduced into Divine ordinances, but go back to the original will, purpose, and institution of God. Christ will never accommodate his morality to the times, nor to the inclinations of men. What was done at the beginning is what God judged most worthy of his glory, most profitable for man, and most suitable to nature.

**Verse 5. *For this cause***— Being created for this very purpose; that they might glorify their Maker in a matrimonial connection. A man shall leave (**καταλειψαι**, wholly give up) both father and mother-the matrimonial union being more intimate and binding than even paternal or filial affection;-and shall be closely united, **προσκολληθησεται**, shall be firmly cemented to his wife. A beautiful metaphor, which most forcibly intimates that nothing but death can separate them: as a well-glued board will break sooner in the whole wood, than in the glued joint. So also the Hebrew word **דבק** debak implies.

***And they twain shall be one flesh?***— Not only meaning, that they should be considered as one body, but also as two souls in one body, with a complete union of interests, and an indissoluble partnership of life and fortune, comfort and support, desires and inclinations, joys and sorrows. Farther, it appears to me, that the words in Genesis 2:24, **לבשר אחד** lebasar achad, for one flesh, which our Lord literally translates, mean also, that children, compounded as it were of both, should be the product of the matrimonial connection. Thus, they two (man and woman) shall be for the producing of one flesh, the very same kind of human creature with themselves. See the note on Genesis 2:24.

**Verse 6. *What therefore God hath joined together***— **συνεζευξεν**, yoked together, as oxen in the plough, where each must pull equally, in order to bring it on. Among the ancients, when persons were newly married, they put a yoke upon their necks, or chains upon their arms, to show that they were to be one, closely united, and pulling equally together in all the concerns of life. See **ΚΥΡΚΕ** in loco.

The finest allegorical representation of the marriage union I have met with, is that antique gem representing the marriage of Cupid and Psyche, in the collection of the duke of Marlborough: it may be seen also among Baron Stoch's gems, and casts or copies of it in various other collections. 1. Both are represented as winged, to show the alacrity with which the husband and wife should help, comfort and support each other; preventing, as much as possible, the expressing of a wish or want on either side, by fulfilling it before it can be expressed. 2. Both are veiled, to show that modesty is an inseparable attendant on pure matrimonial connections. 3. Hymen or Marriage goes before them with a lighted torch, leading them by a chain, of which each has a hold, to show that they are united together, and are bound to each other, and that they are led to this by the pure flame of love, which at the same instant both enlightens and warms them. 4. This chain is not iron nor brass, (to intimate that the marriage union is a state of thralldom or slavery,) but it is a chain of pearls, to show that the union is precious, beautiful, and delightful. 5. They hold a dove, the emblem of conjugal fidelity, which they appear to embrace affectionately, to show that they are faithful to each other, not merely through duty, but by affection, and that this fidelity contributes to the happiness of their lives. 6. A winged Cupid, or Love, is represented as having gone before them,

preparing the nuptial feast; to intimate that active affections, warm and cordial love, are to be to them a continual source of comfort and enjoyment; and that this is the entertainment they are to meet with at every step of their affectionate lives. 7. Another Cupid, or genius of love comes behind, and places on their heads a basket of ripe fruits; to intimate that a matrimonial union of this kind will generally be blessed with children, who shall be as pleasing to all their senses as ripe and delicious fruits to the smell and taste. 8. The genius of love that follows them has his wings shrivelled up, or the feathers all curled, so as to render them utterly unfit for flight; to intimate that love is to abide with them, that there is to be no separation in affection, but that they are to continue to love one another with pure hearts fervently. Thus love begins and continues this sacred union; as to end, there can be none, for God hath yoked them together.

A finer or more expressive set of emblems has never, I believe, been produced, even by modern refined taste and ingenuity. This group of emblematical figures is engraved upon an onyx by Tryphon, an ancient Grecian artist. A fine drawing was made of this by Cypriani, and was engraved both by Bartolozzi and Sherwin. See one of these plates in the second volume of Bryant's *Analysis of Ancient Mythology*, page 392.

**Verse 7. *Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement?***— It is not an unusual case for the impure and unholy to seek for a justification of their conduct from the law of God itself, and to wrest Scripture to their own destruction. I knew a gentleman, so called, who professed deep reverence for the sacred writings, and, strange as it may appear, was outwardly irreproachable in every respect but one; that was, he kept more women than his wife. This man frequently read the Bible, and was particularly conversant with those places that spoke of or seemed to legalize the polygamy of the patriarchs!

***A writing of divorcement***— See the form of it in the note on “Matthew 5:31”.

**Verse 8. *Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts***— It is dangerous to tolerate the least evil, though prudence itself may require it: because toleration, in this case, raises itself insensibly into permission, and permission soon sets up for command. Moses perceived that if divorce

were not permitted, in many cases, the women would be exposed to great hardships through the cruelty of their husbands: for so the word *σκληροκαρδια*, is understood in this place by some learned men.

***From the beginning it was not so***— The Jews named the books of the law from the first word in each. Genesis they always term Bereshith, *בראשית*, which is the first word in it, and signifies, In the beginning. It is probable that our Lord speaks in this way here, In Bereshith it was not so, intimating that the account given in Genesis is widely different. There was no divorce between Eve and Adam; nor did he or his family practice polygamy. But our Lord, by the beginning, may mean the original intention or design.

**Verse 9. *Except it be for fornication***— See on Matthew 5:32. The decision of our Lord must be very unpleasant to these men: the reason why they wished to put away their wives was, that they might take others whom they liked better; but our Lord here declares that they could not be remarried while the divorced person was alive, and that those who did marry, during the life of the divorced, were adulterers; and heavy judgments were, denounced, in their law, against such: and as the question was not settled by the schools of Shammai and Hillel, so as to ground national practice on it therefore they were obliged to abide by the positive declaration of the law, as it was popularly understood, till these eminent schools had proved the word had another meaning. The grand subject of dispute between the two schools, mentioned above, was the word in Deuteronomy 24:1, When a man hath taken a wife-and she find no grace in his sight, because of some UNCLEANNESS, *ערוה* eruath:-this the school of Shammai held to mean whoredom or adultery; but the school of Hillel maintained that it signified any corporeal defect, which rendered the person deformed, or any bad temper which made the husband's life uncomfortable. Any of the latter a good man might bear with; but it appears that Moses permitted the offended husband to put away the wife on these accounts, merely to save her from cruel usage.

In this discourse, our Lord shows that marriage, (except in one case,) is indissoluble, and should be so:-

1st, By Divine institution, Matthew 19:4.

2dly, By express commandment, Matthew 19:5.

3dly, Because the married couple become one and the same person, Matthew 19:6.

4thly, By the example of the first pair, Matthew 19:8; and

5thly, Because of the evil consequent on separation, Matthew 19:9. The importance of this subject will, I hope, vindicate or excuse, the length of these notes.

**Verse 10. *If the case of the man***— **του ανθρωπου**, of a husband, so I think the word should be translated here. The Codex Bezae, Armenian, and most of the Itala, have **του ανδρος**, which, perhaps, more properly signifies a husband, though both words are used in this sense.

Our word husband comes from the Anglo-Saxon, hus and band: the bond of the house, anciently spelt housebond, -so in my old MS. Bible. It is a lamentable case when the husband, instead of being the bond and union of the family, scatters and ruins it by dissipation, riot, and excess.

***It is not good to marry.***— That is, if a man have not the liberty to put away his wife when she is displeasing to him. God had said, Genesis 2:18, It is not good for man to be alone, i.e. unmarried. The disciples seem to say, that if the husband have not the power to divorce his wife when she is displeasing to him, it is not good for him to marry. Here was a flat contradiction to the decision of the Creator. There are difficulties and trials in all states; but let marriage and celibacy be weighed fairly, and I am persuaded the former will be found to have fewer than the latter. However, before we enter into an engagement which nothing but death can dissolve, we had need to act cautiously, carefully consulting the will and word of God. Where an unbridled passion, or a base love of money, lead the way, marriage is sure to be miserable.

**Verse 11. *All-cannot receive this saying***— A very wise answer, and well suited to the present circumstances of the disciples. Neither of the states is condemned. If thou marry, thou dost well-this is according to the order, will, and commandment of God. But if thou do not marry, (because of the present necessity, persecution, worldly embarrassments, or bodily infirmity,) thou dost better. See 1 Corinthians 7:25.



**Verse 12. Eunuchs**— ευνουχος, from ευνην εχειν, to have the care of the bed or bedchamber; this being the principal employment of eunuchs in the eastern countries, particularly in the apartments of queens and princesses. These are they whom our Lord says are made eunuchs by men, merely for the above purpose.

**So born from their mother's womb**— Such as are naturally incapable of marriage, and consequently should not contract any.

**For the kingdom of heaven's sake.**— I believe our Lord here alludes to the case of the ESSENES, one of the most holy and pure sects among the Jews. These abstained from all commerce with women, hoping thereby to acquire a greater degree of purity, and be better fitted for the kingdom of God: children they had none of their own, but constantly adopted those of poor people, and brought them up in their own way. PHILO, JOSEPHUS, and PLINY have largely described this very singular sect; and Dean PRIDEAUX, with his usual fidelity and perspicuity, has given the substance of what each has said. CONNEX. vol. iii. p. 483, etc.; edit. 1725. The account is very interesting, and well worthy the attention of every Christian. Among the rabbins we find these different kinds of eunuchs, not only mentioned, but circumstantially described, רִי חַמָּה saris chama, eunuchs of the sun, i.e. eunuchs by the hand of God; men born impotent. רִי אָדָם saris Adam, eunuchs of men, those who were castrated. And they add a third sort; those who make themselves eunuchs, abstain from marriage, etc., that they may give themselves UP to the study of the Divine law. See many examples in Schoettgen.

**He that is able to receive**— χωρειν χωρειτω. These words are variously translated: he who can take; let him take it; comprehend, let him comprehend it: admit, let him admit it. The meaning seems to be, Let the man who feels himself capable of embracing this way of life, embrace it; but none can do it but he to whom it is given, who has it as a gift from his mother's womb.

The great ORIGEN, understanding the latter clause of this verse (which I have applied to the Essenes) literally—O human weakness!—went, and literally fulfilled it on himself!

**Verse 13. *Then were there brought unto him little children***— These are termed by Luke, Luke 18:15, *τα βρεφη*, infants, very young children; and it was on this account, probably, that the disciples rebuked the parents, thinking them too young to receive good. See on Mark 10:16.

***That he should put his hands***— It was a common custom among the Jews to lay their hands on the heads of those whom they blessed, or for whom they prayed. This seems to have been done by way of dedication or consecration to God-the person being considered as the sacred property of God ever after. Often God added a testimony of his approbation, by communicating some extraordinary influence of the Holy Spirit. This rite has been long practised among Christians, when persons are appointed to any sacred office. But this consecration of children to God seems to have grown out of use. It is no wonder that the great mass of children are so wicked, when so few, are put under the care of Christ by humble, praying, believing parents. Let every parent that fears God bring up his children in that fear; and, by baptism, let each be dedicated to the holy trinity. Whatever is solemnly consecrated to God abides under his protection and blessing.

**Verse 14. *Of such is the kingdom of heaven.***— Or, the kingdom of heaven is composed of such. This appears to be the best sense of the passage, and utterly ruins the whole inhuman diabolic system of what is called non-elect infants' damnation; a doctrine which must have sprung from Moloch, and can only be defended by a heart in which he dwells. A great part of God's kingdom is composed of such literally; and those only who resemble little children shall be received into it: see on Matthew 18:3. Christ loves little children because he loves simplicity and innocence; he has sanctified their very age by passing through it himself-the holy Jesus was once a little child.

**Verse 15. *He-departed thence.***— That is, from that part of Judea which was beyond Jordan, Matthew 19:1; and then went to Jericho. See Matthew 20:29.

**Verse 16. *One came***— Instead of *εις* one, several MSS., the Slavonic version, and Hilary, read *νεανισκος τις*, a certain young man.

**Good, etc.**— Much instruction may be had from seriously attending to the conduct, spirit, and question of this person.

1. He came running, (Mark 10:17,) for he was deeply convinced of the importance of his business, and seriously determined to seek so as to find.
2. He kneeled, or caught him by the knees, thus evidencing his humility, and addressing himself only to mercy. See Matthew 17:14.
3. He came in the spirit of a disciple, or scholar, desiring to be taught a matter of the utmost importance to him—Good teacher.
4. He came in the spirit of obedience; he had worked hard to no purpose, and he is still willing to work, provided he can have a prospect of succeeding—What good thing shall I do?
5. His question was the most interesting and important that any soul can ask of God—How shall I be saved?

**Verse 17. *Why callest thou me good?***— Or, Why dost thou question me concerning that good thing? *τι με ερωτας περι του αγαθου*. This important reading is found in BDL, three others, the Coptic, Sahidic, Armenian, Ethiopic, latter Syriac, Vulgate, Saxon, all the Itala but one, Origen, Eusebius, Cyril, Dionysius Areop., Antiochus, Novatian, Jerome, Augustin, and Juvencus. Erasmus, Grotius, Mill, and Bengel approve of this reading. This authority appears so decisive to Griesbach that he has received this reading into the text of his second edition, which in the first he had interlined. And instead of, None is good but the one God, he goes on to read, on nearly the same respectable authorities, *εις εστιν ο αγαθος*. There is one who is good. Let it be observed also that, in the 16th verse, instead of *διδασκαλε αγαθε*, good teacher, *διδασκαλε* only is read by BDL, one other, one Evangelistarium, the Ethiopic, three of the Itala, Origen, and Hilary. The whole passage therefore may be read thus: O teacher! what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why dost thou question me concerning that good thing? There is one that is good. (Or he who is good is one.) But If thou art willing to enter into that life, keep the commandments. This passage, as it stood in the common editions, has been considered by some writers as an incontrovertible proof against the Divinity or Godhead of Christ. A very learned person, in his note on this place, thus concludes concerning it:

“Therefore our Savior cannot be GOD: and the notion of, I know not what, a trinity in unity, THREE Gods in ONE, is here proved beyond all controversy, by the unequivocal declaration of JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF, to be ERRONEOUS and IMPOSSIBLE.” Not so. One of the greatest critics in Europe, not at all partial to the Godhead of Christ, has admitted the above readings into his text, on evidence which he judged to be unexceptionable. If they be the true readings, they destroy the whole doctrine built on this text; and indeed the utmost that the enemies of the trinitarian doctrine can now expect from their formidable opponents, concerning this text, is to leave it neuter.

***Keep the commandments.***— From this we may learn that God’s great design, in giving his law to the Jews, was to lead them to the expectation and enjoyment of eternal life. But as all the law referred to Christ, and he became the end of the law for righteousness (justification) to all that believe, so he is to be received, in order to have the end accomplished which the law proposed.

**Verse 18. *Thou shalt do no murder, etc.***— But some say these commandments are not binding on us. Vain, deceived men! Can a murderer, an adulterer, a thief, and a liar enter into eternal life? No. The God of purity and justice has forbidden it. But we are not to keep these commandments in order to purchase eternal life. Right. Neither Jesus Christ, nor his genuine messengers, say you are. To save your souls, Christ must save you from your sins, and enable you to walk before him in newness of life.

**Verse 19. *Honour thy father and thy mother***— σου thy, is omitted by almost every MS. of respectability.

***Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself***— Self-love, as it is generally called, has been grievously declaimed against, even by religious people, as a most pernicious and dreadful evil. But they have not understood the subject on which they spoke. They have denominated that intense propensity which unregenerate men feel to gratify their carnal appetites and vicious passions, self-love; whereas it might be more properly termed self-hatred or self-murder. If I am to love my neighbor as myself and this “love worketh no ill to its neighbor,” then self-love, in the sense in which our Lord uses it, is something excellent. It is properly a disposition

essential to our nature, and inseparable from our being, by which we desire to be happy, by which we seek the happiness we have not, and rejoice in it when we possess it. In a word, it is a uniform wish of the soul to avoid all evil, and to enjoy all good. Therefore, he who is wholly governed by self-love, properly and Scripturally speaking, will devote his whole soul to God, and earnestly and constantly seek all his peace, happiness, and salvation in the enjoyment of God. But self-love cannot make me happy. I am only the subject which receives the happiness, but am not the object that constitutes this happiness; for it is that object, properly speaking, that I love, and love not only for its own sake, but also for the sake of the happiness which I enjoy through it. “No man,” saith the apostle, “ever hated his own flesh.” But he that sinneth against God wrongeth his own soul, both of present and eternal salvation, and is so far from being governed by self-love that he is the implacable enemy of his best and dearest interests in both worlds.

**Verse 20. *All these have I kept***— I have made these precepts the rule of my life. There is a difference worthy of notice between this and our Lord’s word. He says, Matthew 19:17, **τηρησον**, keep, earnestly, diligently, as with watch and ward; probably referring not only to the letter but to the spirit. The young man modestly says, all these (**εφυλαξα**) have I observed; I have paid attention to, and endeavored to regulate my conduct by them. I have kept them in custody.

***From my youth***— Several MSS., versions, and fathers, leave out these words. Grotius and Mill approve of the omission, and Griesbach leaves them in the text with a note of suspicion. Perhaps the young man meant no more than that he had in general observed them, and considered them of continual obligation.

***What lack I yet?***— He felt a troubled conscience, and a mind unassured of the approbation of God; and he clearly perceived that something was wanting to make him truly happy.

**Verse 21. *If thou wilt be perfect***— **τελειος ειναι**, To be complete, to have the business finished, and all hinderances to thy salvation removed, go and sell that thou hast-go and dispose of thy possessions, to which it is evident his heart was too much attached, and give to the poor-for thy goods will be a continual snare to thee if thou keep them; and thou shalt

have treasure in heaven—the loss, if it can be called such, shall be made amply up to thee in that eternal life about which thou inquirest; and come and follow me—be my disciple, and I will appoint thee to preach the kingdom of God to others. This was the usual call which Christ gave to his disciples. See Matthew 4:19; 8:22; 9:9; Mark 2:14; and it is pretty evident, from this, that he intended to make him a preacher of his salvation. How many, by their attachment to filthy lucre, have lost the honor of becoming or continuing ambassadors for the Most High! See on Mark 10:21.

**Verse 22. *Went away sorrowful***—Men undergo great agony of mind while they are in suspense between the love of the world and the love of their souls. When the first absolutely predominates, then they enjoy a factitious rest through a false peace: when the latter has the upper hand, then they possess true tranquillity of mind, through that peace of God that passeth knowledge.

***He had great possessions.***—And what were these in comparison of peace of conscience, and mental rest? Besides, he had unequivocal proof that these contributed nothing to his comfort, for he is now miserable even while he possesses them! And so will every soul be, who puts worldly goods in the place of the supreme God. See on Mark 10:22.

**Verse 23. *A rich man shall hardly enter***—That is, into the spirit and privileges of the Gospel in this world, and through them into the kingdom of glory. Earthly riches are a great obstacle to salvation; because it is almost impossible to possess them, and not to set the heart upon them; and they who love the world have not the love of the Father in them. 1 John 2:15. To be rich, therefore, is in general a great misfortune: but what rich man can be convinced of this? It is only God himself who, by a miracle of mercy, can do this. Christ himself affirms the difficulty of the salvation of a rich man, with an oath, verily; but who of the rich either hears or believes him!

**Verse 24. *A camel***—Instead of *καμηλον*, camel, six MSS. read *καμιλον*, cable, a mere gloss inserted by some who did not know that the other was a proverb common enough among the people of the east.

There is an expression similar to this in the Koran. “The impious, who in his arrogance shall accuse our doctrine of falsity, shall find the gates of

heaven shut: nor shall he enter there till a camel shall pass through the eye of a needle. It is thus that we shall recompense the wicked.” AL KORAN. Surat vii. ver. 37.

It was also a mode of expression common among the Jews, and signified a thing impossible. Hence this proverb: A camel in Media dances in a caba; a measure which held about three pints. Again, No man sees a palm tree of gold, nor an elephant passing through the eye of a needle. Because these are impossible things. “Rabbi Shesheth answered Rabbi Amram, who had advanced an absurdity, Perhaps thou art one of the Pembidithians who can make an elephant pass through the eye of a needle; that is, says the Aruch, ‘who speak things impossible.’” See Lightfoot and Schoettgen on this place.

**Go through**— But instead of *διελθειν*, about eighty MSS. with several versions and fathers, have *εισελθειν*, to enter in; but the difference is of little importance in an English translation, though of some consequence to the elegance of the Greek text.

**Verse 25. *Who can be saved?***— The question of the disciples seemed to intimate that most people were rich, and that therefore scarcely any could be saved. They certainly must have attached a different meaning to what constitutes a rich man, to what we in general do. Who is a rich man in our Lord’s sense of the word? This is a very important question, and has not, that I know of, been explicitly answered. A rich man, in my opinion, is not one who has so many hundreds or thousands more than some of his neighbors; but is one who gets more than is necessary to supply all his own wants, and those of his household, and keeps the residue still to himself, though the poor are starving through lack of the necessities of life. In a word, he is a man who gets all he can, saves all he can, and keeps all he has gotten. Speak, reason! Speak, conscience! (for God has already spoken) Can such a person enter into the kingdom of God? ALL, NO!!!

**Verse 26. *With men this is impossible***— God alone can take the love of the world out of the human heart. Therefore the salvation of the rich is represented as possible only to him: and indeed the words seem to intimate, that it requires more than common exertions of Omnipotence to save a rich man.

**Verse 27. *We have forsaken all***— “A poor all,” says one, “a parcel of rotten nets.” No matter—they were their ALL, whether rotten or sound; besides, they were the all they got their bread by; and such an all as was quite sufficient for that purpose: and let it be observed, that that man forsakes much who reserves nothing to himself, and renounces all expectations from this world, taking God alone for his portion. See Matthew 4:20.

To forsake all, without following Christ, is the virtue of a philosopher. To follow Christ in profession, without forsaking all, is the state of the generality of Christians. But to follow Christ and forsake all, is the perfection of a Christian.

***What shall we have therefore?***— τι αρα εσται ημιν, What REWARD shall we get? This Kypke proves to be the meaning of the words from some of the best Greek writers.

**Verse 28. *Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, etc.***— The punctuation which I have observed here, is that which is followed by the most eminent critics: the regeneration is thus referred to the time when Jesus shall sit on the throne of his glory, and not to the time of following him, which is utterly improper.

The regeneration, παλιγγενεσια. Some refer this to the time in which the new heavens and the new earth shall be created, and the soul and body united. The Pythagoreans termed that παλιγγενεσια, when, according to their doctrine of the transmigration or metempsychosis, the soul entered into a new body, and got into a new state of being. Clement, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, calls the restoration of the world, after the deluge, by the same name.

***Judging the twelve tribes***— From the parallel place, Luke 22:28-30, it is evident that sitting on thrones, and judging the twelve tribes, means simply obtaining eternal salvation, and the distinguishing privileges of the kingdom of glory, by those who continued faithful to Christ in his sufferings and death.

Judging, κρινοντες. Kypke has shown that κρινεσθαι is to be understood in the sense of governing, presiding, holding the first or most



distinguished place. Thus, Genesis 49:16, Dan shall JUDGE his people, i.e. shall preside in, or rule over them; shall occupy a chief place among the tribes. It is well known that the Judges among the Jews were moderators, captains, chief, or head men. The sense therefore of our Lord's words appears to be, that these disciples should have those distinguished seats in glory which seem to belong peculiarly to the first confessors and martyrs. See 1 Thessalonians 4:14, 16, and particularly Revelation 20:4-6.

The last-quoted passage brings into view the doctrine of the Millennium, when Jesus, after having formed the new heavens and the new earth, shall reign here gloriously among his ancients 365,000 years; for the thousand years referred to above are certainly prophetical years, in which, it is well known, each day stands for a year.

Others, of no mean note, are of opinion that the regeneration means the conversion of men by the preaching of the Gospel—that sitting on twelve thrones signifies the state of eminent dignity to which the apostles should be raised—and that judging the twelve tribes of Israel, means no more than exercising authority in the Church, and dispensing laws to the people of God. But I confess I do not see the propriety of this application of the terms, as the following verse seems to fix the meaning mentioned above.

**Verse 29. *Shall receive a hundredfold***— Viz. in this life, in value, though perhaps not in kind; and in the world to come everlasting life. A glorious portion for a persevering believer! The fullness of GRACE here, and the fullness of GLORY hereafter! See on Mark 10:30.

**Verse 30. *But many that are first, etc.***— The Jews, who have been the first and most distinguished people of God, will in general reject the Gospel of my grace, and be consequently rejected by me. The Gentiles, who have had no name among the living, shall be brought to the knowledge of the truth, and become the first, the chief, and most exalted people of God. That this prediction of our Lord has been literally fulfilled, the present state of the Christian and Jewish Churches sufficiently proves. To illustrate this fully, and to demonstrate that the Jews and Gentiles were now put on an equal footing by the Gospel, our Lord speaks the following parable, which has been unhappily divided from its connection by making it the beginning of a new chapter.



## CHAPTER 20

*The similitude of the householder hiring laborers into his vineyard, to show that the Gentiles should be preferred to the Jews, according to what was hinted at the close of the last chapter, 1-16. On the way going up to Jerusalem he predicts his sufferings and death, 17-19. The mother of Zebedee's children requests dignities for her sons, 20, 21. Christ, by his answer, shows that sufferings, not worldly honors, are to be the lot of his most faithful followers, and that seats in glory can be given only to those who are prepared for them, 22, 23. From this our Lord takes occasion to teach the necessity of humility, and to show that those who wished to be chief must be servants of all, 24-28. On his coming to Jericho, he restores sight to two blind men, who, being restored, follow him, 29-34.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 20

**Verse 1. *For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man-a householder***—The very commencement of this chapter shows it to be connected with the preceding. The manner of God's proceeding under the Gospel dispensation resembles a householder, who went out at day break, αμα πρωι, together with the morning; as the light began to go out of its chambers in the east, so he went out of his bed-room to employ laborers, that they might cultivate his vineyard. This was what was called, among the Jews and Romans, the first hour; answering to six o'clock in the morning.

***To hire laborers***—Some workmen, των εργατων—for he had not got all that was necessary, because we find him going out at other hours to hire more.

**Verse 2. *A penny***—A Roman coin, as noted before, Matthew 18:28, worth about seven-pence halfpenny or seven-pence three farthings of our money, and equal to the Greek drachma. This appears to have been the ordinary price of a day's labor at that time. See Tobit 5:14. In 1351 the price of labor was regulated in this country by parliament; and it is remarkable that “corn-weeders and hay-makers, without meat, drink, or other courtesy demanded,” were to have one penny per day! In 1314 the

pay of a chaplain to the Scotch bishops, who were then prisoners in England, was three halfpence per day. See Fleetwood's Chronicon Precios, p. 123, 129. This was miserable wages, though things at that time were so cheap that twenty-four eggs were sold for a penny, p. 72; a pair of shoes for four-pence, p. 71; a fat goose for two-pence halfpenny, p. 72; a hen for a penny, p. 72; eight bushels of wheat for two shillings, and a fat ox for six shillings and eight-pence! Ibid. In 1336, wheat per quarter, 2s.; a fat sheep 6d.; fat goose, 2d. and a pig, 1d., p. 75.

**Verse 3. *The third hour***— Nine o'clock in the morning.

***Market-place***— Where laborers usually stood till they were hired. I have often seen laborers standing in the market places of large towns in these countries, waiting to be employed.

**Verse 5. *The sixth hour***— Twelve o'clock. Ninth hour—three o'clock in the afternoon.

**Verse 6. *Eleventh***— Five o'clock in the evening, when there was only one hour before the end of the Jewish day, which, in matters of labor, closed at six.

**Verse 7. *No man hath hired us.***— This was the reason why they were all the day idle.

***And whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.***— Ye may expect payment in proportion to your labor, and the time ye spend in it; but this clause is wanting in some of the best MSS., versions, and fathers.

**Verse 8. *When the even was come***— Six o'clock, the time they ceased from labor, and the workmen came to receive their wages.

***Steward***— *ἐπιτροπος*. A manager of the household concerns under the master. The rabbinical writers use the very same word, in Hebrew letters, for the same office, *אפיטרופוס* epitropos. See Kypke.

**Verse 11. *They murmured***— The Jews made the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, a pretense why they should reject that Gospel; as they fondly imagined they were, and should be, the sole objects of the Divine approbation. How they murmured because the Gentiles were made partakers of the kingdom of God; see Acts 11:1, etc., and Acts 15:1, etc.

There are many similitudes of this kind among the Jews, where the principal part even of the phraseology of our Lord's parable may be found. Several of them may be seen in Schoettgen. Our Lord, however, as in all other cases, has greatly improved the language, scope, design, and point of the similitude. He was, in all cases, an eminent master of the sentences.

**Verse 13. *Friend, I do thee no wrong***— The salvation of the Gentiles can in itself become no impediment to the Jews; there is the same Jesus both for the Jew and for the Greek. Eternal life is offered to both through the blood of the cross; and there is room enough in heaven for all.

**Verse 15. *Is it not lawful for me***— As eternal life is the free gift of God, he has a right to give it in whatever proportions, at whatever times, and on whatever conditions he pleases.

***Is thine eye evil***— An evil eye among the Jews meant a malicious, covetous, or envious person.

Most commentators have different methods of interpreting this parable. Something was undoubtedly designed by its principal parts, besides the scope and design mentioned at the conclusion of the last chapter. The following, which is taken principally from the very pious Quesnel, may render it as useful to the reader as any thing else that has been written on it.

The Church is a vineyard, because it is a place of labor, where no man should be idle. Each of us is engaged to labor in this vineyard—to work out our salvation through him who worketh in us to will and to perform. Life is but a day, whereof childhood, or the first use of reason, is the day-break or first hour, Matthew 20:1, in which we receive the first CALL.

The promise of the kingdom of glory is given to all those who are workers together with him, Matthew 20:2.

The second call is in the time of youth, which is most commonly idle, or only employed in dissipation and worldly cares, Matthew 20:3.

The third call is at the age of manhood.

The fourth, in the decline of life, Matthew 20:5.

The fifth, when sickness and the infirmities of life press upon us. How many are there in the world who are just ready to leave it, before they properly consider for what end they were brought into it! Still idle, still unemployed in the things which concern their souls; though eternal life is offered to them, and hell moving from beneath to meet them! Matthew 20:6.

Others consider the morning the first dawn of the Gospel; and the first call to be the preaching of John Baptist.

The second call, the public preaching of our LORD; and that of the apostles when they got an especial commission to the Jews, Matthew 10:5, 6, together with that of the seventy disciples mentioned Luke 10:1.

The third call, which was at mid-day, represents the preaching of the fullness of the Gospel after the ascension of Christ, which was the meridian of evangelic glory and excellence.

The fourth call represents the mission of the apostles to the various synagogues of the Jews, in every part of the world where they were scattered; the history of which is particularly given in the Acts of the Apostles.

The fifth call, or eleventh hour, represents the general call of the Gentiles into the Church of Christ, when the unbelieving Jews were finally rejected. What makes this interpretation the more likely is, that the persons who are addressed at Matthew 20:7, say, No man hath hired us, i.e. We never heard the voice of a prophet announcing the true God, nor of an apostle preaching the Lord Jesus, until now. The Jews could not use this as an argument for their carelessness about their eternal interests.

**Verse 16. *So the last shall be first, and the first last***— The GENTILES, who have been long without the true God, shall now enjoy all the privileges of the new covenant; and the Jews, who have enjoyed these from the beginning, shall now be dispossessed of them; for, because they here rejected the Lord, he also hath rejected them.

***Many are called, etc.***— This clause is wanting in BL, one other, and in the Coptic and Sahidic versions. Bishop PEARCE thinks it is an interpolation from Matthew 22:14. The simple meaning seems to be: As those who did

not come at the invitation of the householder to work in the vineyard did not receive the denarius, or wages, so those who do not obey the call of the Gospel, and believe in Christ Jesus, shall not inherit eternal life.

This place seems to refer to the ancient Roman custom of recruiting their armies. Among this celebrated people, no one was forced to serve his country in a military capacity; and it was the highest honor to be deemed worthy of thus serving it. The youth were instructed, almost from their cradle, in military exercises. The Campus Martius was the grand field in which they were disciplined: there, they accustomed themselves to leaping, running, wrestling, bearing burdens, fencing, throwing the javelin, etc., and when, through these violent exercises, they were all besmeared with dust and sweat, in order to refresh themselves, they swam twice or thrice across the Tyber! Rome might at any time have recruited her armies by volunteers from such a mass of well-educated, hardy soldiers; but she thought proper, to use the words of the Abbe Mably, that the honor of being chosen to serve in the wars should be the reward of the accomplishments shown by the citizens in the Campus Martius, that the soldier should have a reputation to save; and that the regard paid him, in choosing him to serve, should be the pledge of his fidelity and zeal to discharge his duty. The age of serving in the army was from seventeen to forty-five, and the manner in which they were chosen was the following:-

After the creation of consuls, they every year named twenty-four military tribunes, part of whom must have served five years at least, and the rest eleven. When they had divided among them the command of the four legions to be formed, the consuls summoned to the capitol, or Campus Martius, all the citizens who, by their age, were obliged to bear arms. They drew up by tribes, and lots were drawn to determine in what order every tribe should present its soldiers. That which was the first in order chose the four citizens who were judged the most proper to serve in the war; and the six tribunes who commanded the first legion chose one of these four, whom they liked best. The tribunes of the second and third likewise made their choice one after another; and he that remained entered into the fourth legion. A new tribe presented other four soldiers, and the second legion chose first. The third and fourth legions had the same advantage in their turns. In this manner, each tribe successively chose four soldiers, till the legions were complete. They next proceeded to the creation of subaltern

officers, whom the tribunes chose from among the soldiers of the greatest reputation. When the legions were thus completed, the citizens who had been called, but not chosen, returned to their respective employments, and served their country in other capacities. None can suppose that these were deemed useless, or that, because not now chosen to serve their country in the field, they were proscribed from the rights and privileges of citizens, much less destroyed, because others were found better qualified to serve their country at the post of honor and danger. Thus many are called by the preaching of the Gospel, but few are found who use their advantages in such a way as to become extensively useful in the Church—and many in the Church militant behave so ill as never to be admitted into the Church triumphant. But what a mercy that those who appear now to be rejected may be called in another muster, enrolled, serve in the field, or work in the vineyard? How many millions does the long-suffering of God lead to repentance!

**Verse 17. *And Jesus going up***— From Jericho to Jerusalem, See “Matthew 19:15”.

**Verse 18. *The Son of man shall be betrayed***— Or, will be delivered up. This is the third time that our Lord informed his disciples of his approaching sufferings and death. This was a subject of the utmost importance, and it was necessary they should be well prepared for such an awful event.

**Verse 19. *Deliver him to the Gentiles to mock***— This was done by Herod and his Roman soldiers. See Luke 23:11.

***To scourge, and to crucify***— This was done by Pilate, the Roman governor. The punishment of the cross was Roman not Jewish; but the chief priests condemned him to it, and the Romans executed the sentence. How little did they know that they were, by this process, jointly offering up that sacrifice which was to make an atonement for the Gentiles and for the Jews; an atonement for the sin of the whole world? How often may it be literally said, The wrath of man shall praise thee!

**Verse 20. *The mother of Zebedee’s children***— This was Salome.

**Verse 21. *Grant that these my two sons***— James and John. See Mark 15:40. In the preceding chapter, Matthew 19:28, our Lord had promised



his disciples, that they should sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes. Salome, probably hearing of this, and understanding it literally, came to request the chief dignities in this new government for her sons; and it appears it was at their instigation that she made this request, for Mark, Mark 10:35, informs us that these brethren themselves made the request, i.e. they made it through the medium of their mother.

***One on thy right hand, and the other on (THY) left***— I have added the pronoun in the latter clause on the authority of almost every MS. and version of repute.

That the sons of Zebedee wished for ecclesiastical, rather than secular honors, may be thought probable, from the allusion that is made here to the supreme dignities in the great Sanhedrin. The prince of the Sanhedrin (HA-NASI) sat in the midst of two rows of senators or elders; on his right hand sat the person termed AB (the father of the Sanhedrin;) and on his left hand the CHACHAM, or sage. These persons transacted all business in the absence of the president. The authority of this council was at some periods very great, and extended to a multitude of matters both ecclesiastical and civil. These appear to have been the honors which James and John sought. They seem to have strangely forgot the lesson they had learned from the transfiguration.

**Verse 22. *Ye know not what ye ask.***— How strange is the infatuation, in some parents, which leads them to desire worldly or ecclesiastical honors for their children! He must be much in love with the cross who wishes to have his child a minister of the Gospel; for, if he be such as God approves of in the work, his life will be a life of toil and suffering; he will be obliged to sip, at least, if not to drink largely, of the cup of Christ. We know not what we ask, when, in getting our children into the CHURCH, we take upon ourselves to answer for their CALL to the sacred office, and for the salvation of the souls that are put under their care. Blind parents! rather let your children beg their bread than thrust them into an office to which God has not called them; and in which they will not only ruin their souls, but be the means of damnation to hundreds; for if God has not sent them, they shall not profit the people at all.

***And to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized, etc.***— This clause in this, and the next verse, is wanting in BDL, two others, (7 more in

Matthew 20:23,) Coptic, Sahidic, Ethiopic, Mr. WHEELOCK's Persic, Vulgate, Saxon, and all the Itala, except two. Grotius, Mill, and Bengel, think it should be omitted, and Griesbach has left it out of the text in both his editions. It is omitted also by Origen, Epiphanius, Hilary, Jerome, Ambrose, and Juvencus. According to the rules laid down by critics to appreciate a false or true reading, this clause cannot be considered as forming a part of the sacred text. It may be asked, Does not drink of my cup, convey the same idea? Does the clause add any thing to the perspicuity of the passage? And, though found in many good MSS., is not the balance of evidence in point of antiquity against it? Baptism among the Jews, as it was performed in the coldest weather, and the persons were kept under water for some time, was used not only to express death, but the most cruel kind of death. See Lightfoot. As to the term cup, it was a common figure, by which they expressed calamities, judgments, desolation, etc.

***They say unto him, We are able.***— Strange blindness! You can? No: one drop of this cup would sink you into utter ruin, unless upheld by the power of God. However, the man whom God has appointed to the work he will preserve in it.

**Verse 23. *Is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.***— The common translation, in which the words, it shall be given to them; are interpolated by our translators, utterly changes and destroys the meaning of the passage. It represents Christ (in opposition to the whole Scriptures) as having nothing to do in the dispensing of rewards and punishments; whereas, our Lord only intimates that, however partial he may be to these two brethren, yet seats in glory can only be given to those who are fitted for them. No favor can prevail here; the elevated seat is for him who is filled with the fullness of God. The true construction of the words is this: **οὐκ ἐστὶν ἐμὸν δοῦναι, ἀλλ' οἷς ἡτοιμῆσται ὑπο τοῦ ἀτρος μου**, To sit on my right hand and on my left, is not mine to give, except to them for whom it is prepared of my Father. According to the prediction of Christ, these brethren did partake of his afflictions: James was martyred by Herod, Acts 12:2; and John was banished to Patmos, for the testimony of Christ, Revelation 1:9.

**Verse 24. *When the ten heard it, they were moved***— The ambition which leads to spiritual lordship is one great cause of murmurings and animosities in religious societies, and has proved the ruin of the most flourishing Churches in the universe.

**Verse 25. *Exercise dominion-and-exercise authority upon them.***— They tyrannized and exercised arbitrary power over the people. This was certainly true of the governments in our Lord's time, both in the east and in the west. I have endeavored to express, as nearly as possible, the meaning of the two Greek verbs, *κατακυριεuousiv*, and *κατεξουσιαζουσiv*; and those who understand the genius of the language will perceive that I have not exhausted their sense, however some may think that no emphasis was intended, and that these compound verbs are used for the simple *κυριευειν*, and *εξουσιαζειν*. See Wakefield and Rosenmuller.

The government of the Church of Christ is widely different from secular governments. It is founded in humility and brotherly love: it is derived from Christ, the great Head of the Church, and is ever conducted by his maxims and spirit. When political matters are brought into the Church of Christ, both are ruined. The Church has more than once ruined the State; the State has often corrupted the Church: it is certainly for the interests of both to be kept separate. This has already been abundantly exemplified in both cases, and will continue so to be, over the whole world, wherever the Church and State are united in secular matters.

**Verse 26. *It shall not be so among you***— Every kind of lordship and spiritual domination over the Church of Christ, like that exercised by the Church of Rome, is destructive and anti-christian.

***Your minister***— Or, deacon, *διακονος*. I know no other word which could at once convey the meaning of the original, and make a proper distinction between it and *δουλος*, or servant, in Matthew 20:27. The office of a deacon, in the primitive Church, was to serve in the agapae, or love feasts, to distribute the bread and wine to the communicants; to proclaim different parts and times of worship in the churches; and to take care of the widows, orphans, prisoners, and sick, who were provided for out of the revenues of the Church. Thus we find it was the very lowest

ecclesiastical office. Deacons were first appointed by the apostles, Acts 6:1-6; they had the care of the poor, and preached occasionally.

**Verse 27. *Your servant***—δουλος the lowest secular office, as deacon was the lowest ecclesiastical office: δουλος is often put for slave.

From these directions of our Lord, we may easily discern what sort of a spirit his ministers should be of. 1. A minister of Christ is not to consider himself a lord over Christ's flock. 2. He is not to conduct the concerns of the Church with an imperious spirit. 3. He is to reform the weak, after Christ's example, more by loving instruction than by reproof or censure. 4. He should consider that true apostolic greatness consists in serving the followers of Christ with all the powers and talents he possesses. 5. That he should be ready, if required, to give up his life unto death, to promote the salvation of men.

**Verse 28. *A ransom for many***.—αυτρον αντι πολλων, or a ransom instead of many, -one ransom, or atonement, instead of the many prescribed in the Jewish law. Mr. Wakefield contends for the above translation, and with considerable show of reason and probability.

The word αυτρον is used by the Septuagint for the Hebrew פִּדְיוֹן, pidion, the ransom paid for a man's life: see Exodus 21:30; Numbers 3:49-51; and αυτρα is used Numbers 35:31, where a satisfaction (Hebrew כֹּפֶר copher, an atonement) for the life of a murderer is refused. The original word is used by Lucian in exactly the same sense, who represents Ganymede promising to sacrifice a ram to Jupiter, αυτρον υπερ εμου, as a ransom for himself, provided he would dismiss him.

The whole Gentile world, as well as the Jews, believed in vicarious sacrifices. Virgil, AEn. v. 85, has nearly the same words as those in the text. "UNUM PRO MULTIS dabitur CAPUT," -One man must be given for many. Jesus Christ laid down his life as a ransom for the lives and souls of the children of men. In the Codex Bezae, and in most of the Itala, the Saxon, and one of the Syriac, Hilary, Leo Magnus, and Juvenius, the following remarkable addition is found; "But seek ye to increase from a little, and to be lessened from that which is great. Moreover, when ye enter into a house, and are invited to sup, do not recline in the most eminent places, lest a more honorable than thou come after, and he who invited thee

to supper come up to thee and say, Get down yet lower; and thou be put to confusion. But if thou sit down in the lowest place, and one inferior to thee come after, he who invited thee to supper will say unto thee, Go and sit higher: now this will be advantageous to thee.” This is the largest addition found in any of the MSS., and contains not less than sixty words in the original, and eighty-three in the Anglo-Saxon. It may be necessary to remark, that Mr. Marshall, in his edition of the Gothic and Saxon Gospels, does not insert these words in the text, but gives them, p. 496 of his observations. This addition is at least as ancient as the fourth century, for it is quoted by Hilary, who did not die till about A. D. 367.

**Verse 30. *Two blind men***— Mark 10:46, and Luke 18:35, mention only one blind man, Bartimeus. Probably he was mentioned by the other evangelists, as being a person well known before and after his cure. Blindness of heart is a disorder of which, men seldom complain, or from which they desire to be delivered; and it is one property of this blindness, to keep the person from perceiving it, and to persuade him that his sight is good.

***Sitting by the way side***— In the likeliest place to receive alms, because of the multitudes going and coming between Jerusalem and Jericho.

***Cried out***— In the midst of judgments God remembers mercy. Though God had deprived them, for wise reasons, of their eyes, he left them the use of their speech. It is never so ill with us, but it might be much worse: let us, therefore, be submissive and thankful.

***Have mercy on us***— Hearing that Jesus passed by, and not knowing whether they should ever again have so good an opportunity of addressing him, they are determined to call, and call earnestly. They ask for mercy, conscious that they deserve nothing, and they ask with faith—Son of David, acknowledging him as the promised Messiah.

**Verse 31. *The multitude rebuked them***— Whenever a soul begins to cry after Jesus for light and salvation, the world and the devil join together to drown its cries, or force it to be silent. But let all such remember, Jesus is now passing by; that their souls must perish everlastingly, if not saved by him, and they may never have so good an opportunity again. While there is

a broken and a contrite heart, let it sigh its complaints to God, till he hear and answer.

***They cried the more***— When the world and the devil begin to rebuke, in this case, it is a proof that the salvation of God is nigh; therefore, let such cry out a great deal the more.

**Verse 32. *Jesus stood***— “The cry of a believing penitent,” says one, “is sufficient to stop the most merciful Jesus, were he going to make a new heaven and a new earth; for what is all the irrational part of God’s creation in worth, when compared with the value of one immortal soul!” See on Mark 10:50.

***What will ye that I shall do***— Christ is at all times infinitely willing to save sinners: when the desire of the heart is turned towards him, there can be little delay in the salvation. What is thy wish? If it be a good one, God will surely fulfill it.

**Verse 33. *That our eyes may be opened***.— He who feels his own sore, and the plague of his heart, has no great need of a prompter in prayer. A hungry man can easily ask bread; he has no need to go to a book to get expressions to state his wants in; his hunger tells him he wants food, and he tells this to the person from whom he expects relief. Helps to devotion, in all ordinary cases, may be of great use; in extraordinary cases they can be of little importance; the afflicted heart alone can tell its own sorrows, with appropriate pleadings.

**Verse 34. *So Jesus had compassion on them***— *επλαγχνιαθεις*, He was moved with tender pity. The tender pity of Christ met the earnest cry of the blind men, and their immediate cure was the result.

***They followed him***.— As a proof of the miracle that was wrought, and of the gratitude which they felt to their benefactor. For other particulars of this miraculous cure, see the notes on Mark 10:46, etc.

Reader, whosoever thou art, act in behalf of thy soul as these blind men did in behalf of their sight, and thy salvation is sure. Apply to the Son of David; lose not a moment; he is passing by, and thou art passing into eternity, and probably wilt never have a more favorable opportunity than the present. The Lord increase thy earnestness and faith!



## CHAPTER 21

*Christ rides into Jerusalem upon an ass, and the multitude receive him joyfully, 1-11. He enters the temple, and expels the money-changers, etc. 12, 13. The blind and the lame come to him and are healed, 14. The chief priests and scribes are offended, 15. Our Lord confounds them, and goes to Bethany, 16, 17. The barren fig-tree blasted, 18-22. While teaching in the temple, the chief priests and elders question his authority; he answers and confutes them, 23-27. The parable of the man and his two sons, 28-32. The parable of a vineyard let out to husbandmen, 33-42; applied to the priests and Pharisees, 43-45; who wish to kill him, but are restrained by the fear of the people, who acknowledge Christ for a prophet, 46.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 21

**Verse 1. *Bethphage***— A place on the west declivity of Mount Olivet, from which it is thought the whole declivity and part of the valley took their name. It is supposed to have derived its name from the fig-trees which grew there; **בֵּית** beeth, signifying a region as well as a house, and **פֶּנֶח** phag, a green fig.

**Verse 2. *Ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt***— Asses and mules were in common use in Palestine: horses were seldom to be met with. Our blessed Lord takes every opportunity to convince his disciples that nothing was hidden from him: he informs them of the most minute occurrence; and manifested his power over the heart in disposing the owner to permit the ass to be taken away.

**Verse 3. *The Lord (the proprietor of all things) hath need of them***— Jesus is continually humbling himself, to show us how odious pride is in the sight of God: but in his humility he is ever giving proofs of his almighty power, that the belief of his divinity may be established.

**Verse 4. *All this was done***— The word all, in this clause, is omitted by some MSS., versions, and fathers.



**Which was spoken**— The Spirit of God, which predicted those things that concerned the Messiah, took care to have them literally fulfilled: 1. To show the truth of prophecy in general; and, 2. To designate Christ as the person intended by that prophecy. See the note on Matthew 2:23.

**Verse 5. Tell ye the daughter of Sion**— The quotation is taken from Zechariah 9:9, but not in the precise words of the prophet.

This entry into Jerusalem has been termed the triumph of Christ. It was indeed the triumph of humility over pride and worldly grandeur; of poverty over affluence; and of meekness and gentleness over rage and malice.

He is coming now meek, full of kindness and compassion to those who were plotting his destruction! He comes to deliver up himself into their hands; their king comes to be murdered by his subjects, and to make his death a ransom price for their souls!

**Verse 7. And put on them their clothes**— Thus acknowledging him to be their king, for this was a custom observed by the people when they found that God had appointed a man to the kingdom. When Jehu sat with the captains of the army, and Elisha the prophet came, by the order of God, to anoint him king over Israel, as soon as he came out of the inner chamber into which the prophet had taken him to anoint him, and they knew what was done, every man took his garment, and spread it under him on the top of the steps, and blew the trumpets, saying, “Jehu is king.” 2 Kings 9:13.

**And they set him thereon.**— **καὶ ἐπεκάθισεν ἐπ’ αὐτὸν**, and he sat upon them; but instead of **ἐπ’ αὐτὸν**, upon THEM, the Codex Bezae, seven copies of the Itala, some copies of the Vulgate, and some others, read **ἐπ’ αὐτόν**, upon him, i.e. the colt. This is most likely to be the true reading; for we can scarcely suppose that he rode upon both by turns, -this would appear childish; or that he rode upon both at once, for this would be absurd. Some say he sat on both; for “the ass that was tied up was an emblem of the Jews bound under the yoke of the law; and the colt that had not been tied represented the Gentiles who were not under the law; and that Jesus Christ’s sitting on both represented his subjecting the Jews and the Gentiles to the sway of his evangelical scepter.” He who can receive this saying, let him receive it.

**Verse 8. *Cut down branches from the trees***— Carrying palm and other branches was emblematical of victory and success. See 1 Mac. xiii. 51; 2 Mac. x. 7; and Revelation 7:9.

The rabbins acknowledge that the prophecy in Zechariah refers to the Messiah; so Rab. Tancum, and Yalcut Rubeni has a strange story about the ass. “This ass is the colt of that ass which was created in the twilight of the sixth day. This is the ass which Abraham found when he went to sacrifice his son. This is the ass on which Moses rode when he went to Egypt; and this is the ass on which the Messiah shall ride.” Some of the Jews seem to think that the zebra is intended; for according to Bab. Sanhedr. fol. 98, when Shapoor, king of Persia, said to Rabbi Samuel: “You say your Messiah will come upon an ass; I will send him a noble horse.” To which the rabbi replied, “You have not a horse with a hundred spots (query, streaks) like his ass.” See Lightfoot and Schoettgen.

**Verse 9. *Hosanna to the son of David***— When persons applied to the king for help, or for a redress of grievances, they used the word hosanna, or rather from the Hebrew **הושיעה נא** HOSHIAH NA! Save now! or, Save, we beseech thee!-redress our grievances, and give us help from oppression! Thus both the words and actions of the people prove that they acknowledged Christ as their king, and looked to him for deliverance. How easily might he have assumed the sovereignty at this time, had he been so disposed! For instances of the use of this form of speech, see 2 Samuel 14:4; 2 Kings 6:26; Psalm 118:25.

***Son of David***— A well-known epithet of the Messiah. He who cometh in the name, etc. He who comes in the name and authority of the Most High.

***Hosanna in the highest***— Either meaning, Let the heavenly hosts join with us in magnifying this august Being!-or, Let the utmost degrees of hosanna, of salvation, and deliverance, be communicated to thy people! Probably there is an allusion here to the custom of the Jews in the feast of tabernacles. During the first seven days of that feast, they went once round the altar, each day, with palm and other branches in their hands, singing HOSANNA: but on the eighth day of that feast they walked seven times round the altar, singing the hosanna; and this was termed the hosanna rabba, the GREAT hosanna: i.e. Assist with the greatest succor. Probably answering to the **τοὺς ὑψίστους** of the evangelist, for on this day they beg

the most speedy and powerful help against their enemies, and likewise pray for a prosperous and fruitful year. See STEHLIN'S Jewish Traditions, vol. ii. p. 322.

**Verse 10. *All the city was moved***— Or, the whole city was in motion. *εσεισθη*, was in a tumult-they saw and heard plainly that the multitude had proclaimed Christ king, and Messiah. Who is this? Who is accounted worthy of this honor?

**Verse 11. *This is Jesus THE PROPHET***— ο *προφητης* THAT prophet whom Moses spoke of, Deuteronomy 18:18. I will raise them up a prophet-like unto thee, etc. Every expression of the multitude plainly intimated that they fully received our blessed Lord as the promised Messiah.-How strange is it that these same people (if the creatures of the high priest be not only intended) should, about five days after, change their hosannas for, Away with him! crucify him! crucify him! How fickle is the multitude! Even when they get right, there is but little hope that they will continue so long.

**Verse 12. *Jesus went into the temple of God, etc.***— “Avarice,” says one, “covered with the veil of religion, is one of those things on which Christ looks with the greatest indignation in his Church. Merchandize of holy things, simoniacal presentations, fraudulent exchanges, a mercenary spirit in sacred functions; ecclesiastical employments obtained by flattery, service, or attendance, or by any thing which is instead of money; collations, nominations, and elections made through any other motive than the glory of God; these are all fatal and damnable profanations, of which those in the temple were only a shadow.” QUESNEL.

***Money-changers***— Persons who furnished the Jews and proselytes who came from other countries, with the current coin of Judea, in exchange for their own.

**Verse 13. *My house shall be called the house of prayer***— This is taken from Isaiah 56:7.

***But ye have made it a den of thieves.***— This is taken from Jeremiah 7:11.

Our Lord alludes here to those dens and caves in Judea, in which the public robbers either hid or kept themselves fortified.

They who are placed in the Church of Christ to serve souls, and do it not, and they who enjoy the revenues of the Church, and neglect the service of it, are thieves and robbers in more senses than one.

Our Lord is represented here as purifying his temple; and this we may judge he did in reference to his true temple, the Church, to show that nothing that was worldly or unholy should have any place among his followers, or in that heart in which he should condescend to dwell. It is marvellous that these interested, vile men did not raise a mob against him: but it is probable they were overawed by the Divine power, or, seeing the multitudes on the side of Christ, they were afraid to molest him. I knew a case something similar to this, which did not succeed so well. A very pious clergyman of my acquaintance, observing a woman keeping a public standing to sell nuts, gingerbread, etc., at the very porch of his Church, on the Lord's day, "desired her to remove thence, and not defile the house of God, while she profaned the Sabbath of the Lord." She paid no attention to him. He warned her the next Sabbath, but still to no purpose. Going in one Lord's day to preach, and finding her still in the very entrance, with her stall, he overthrew the stall, and scattered the stuff into the street. He was shortly after summoned to appear before the royal court, which, to its eternal reproach, condemned the action, and fined the man of God in a considerable sum of money!

**Verse 14. *The blind and the lame came***— Having condemned the profane use of the temple, he now shows the proper use of it. It is a house of prayer, where God is to manifest his goodness and power in giving sight to the spiritually blind, and feet to the lame. The Church or chapel in which the blind and the lame are not healed has no Christ in it, and is not worthy of attendance.

**Verse 15. *The chief priests-were sore displeased***— Or, were incensed. Incensed at what! At the purification of the profaned temple! This was a work they should have done themselves, but for which they had neither grace nor influence; and their pride and jealousy will not suffer them to permit others to do it. Strange as it may appear, the priesthood itself, in all corrupt times, has been ever the most forward to prevent a reform in the Church. Was it because they were conscious that a reformer would find them no better than money-changers in, and profaners of, the house of

God, and that they and their system must be overturned, if the true worship of God were restored! Let him who is concerned answer this to his conscience.

**Verse 16. *Out of the mouth of babes***— The eighth Psalm, out of which these words are quoted, is applied to Jesus Christ in three other places in the new covenant, 1 Corinthians 15:27; Ephesians 1:22; Hebrews 2:6. Which proves it to be merely a prophetic psalm, relating to the Messiah.

It was a common thing among the Jews for the children to be employed in public acclamations; and thus they were accustomed to hail their celebrated rabbins. This shouting of the children was therefore no strange thing in the land: only they were exasperated, because a person was celebrated against whom they had a rooted hatred. As to the prophecy that foretold this, they regarded it not. Some imagine that babes and sucklings in the prophecy have a much more extensive meaning, and refer also to the first preachers of the Gospel of Christ.

**Verse 17. *And he left them (καταλιπων, finally leaving them) and went-into Bethany; and he lodged there.***— Bethany was a village about two miles distant from Jerusalem, by Mount Olivet, John 11:18; and it is remarkable that from this day till his death, which happened about six days after, he spent not one night in Jerusalem, but went every evening to Bethany, and returned to the city each morning. See Luke 21:37; 22:39; John 8:1, 2. They were about to murder the Lord of glory; and the true light, which they had rejected, is now departing from them.

***Lodged there.***— Not merely to avoid the snares laid for him by those bad men, but to take away all suspicion of his affecting the regal power. To the end of this verse is added by the Saxon, [AS]. And taught them of the kingdom of God. This same reading is found in some MSS., Missals, and one copy of the Itala. It appears also in Wickliff, and my old folio English MS. Bible, and taught hem of the kyngdom of God; and in two MS. copies of the Vulgate, in my possession: one, duodecimo, very fairly written, in 1300; the other a large folio, probably written in the 11th or 12th century, in which the words are, *IBIQUE docebat eos de regno Dei. AND THERE he taught them concerning the kingdom of God.*

**Verse 18. *Now in the morning, as he returned into the city***— Which was his custom from the time he wholly left Jerusalem, spending only the day time teaching in the temple; see Matthew 21:17. This was probably on Thursday, the 12th day of the month Nisan.

He hungered—Probably neither he, nor his disciples, had any thing but what they got from public charity; and the hand of that seems to have been cold at this time.

**Verse 19. *He saw a fig tree in the way***— επι της οδου, By the road side. As this fig tree was by the way side, it was no private property; and on this account our Lord, or any other traveler, had a right to take of its fruit. For a full explanation of this difficult passage, relative to this emblematic fig tree, see on Mark 11:13, etc.

***Let no fruit grow on thee***— Can a professor, who affords Christ nothing but barren words and wishes, expect any thing but his malediction? When the soul continues in unfruitfulness, the influences of grace are removed, and then the tree speedily withers from the very root.

**Verse 20. *How soon is the fig tree withered away!***— We often say to our neighbors, “How suddenly this man died! Who could have expected it so soon?” But who takes warning by these examples? What we say to-day of OTHERS, may be said to-morrow of OURSELVES. Be ye also ready! Lord, increase our faith!

**Verse 21. *If ye have faith, and doubt not***— See on Matthew 17:20. Removing mountains, and rooting up of mountains, are phrases very generally used to signify the removing or conquering great difficulties-getting through perplexities. So, many of the rabbins are termed rooters up of mountains, because they were dexterous in removing difficulties, solving cases of conscience, etc. In this sense our Lord’s words are to be understood. He that has faith will get through every difficulty and perplexity; mountains shall become molehills or plains before him. The saying is neither to be taken in its literal sense, nor is it hyperbolical: it is a proverbial form of speech, which no Jew could misunderstand, and with which no Christian ought to be puzzled.

**Verse 22. *All things-ye shall ask in prayer, believing***— In order to get salvation, there must be, 1. a conviction of the want of it: this begets, 2.

prayer, or warm desires, in the heart: then 3. the person asks, i.e. makes use of words expressive of his wants and wishes: 4. believes the word of promise, relative to the fulfillment of his wants: and 5. receives, according to the merciful promise of God, the salvation which his soul requires.

**Verse 23. *By what authority doest thou these things?***— The things which the chief priests allude to, were his receiving the acclamations of the people as the promised Messiah, his casting the traders out of the temple, and his teaching the people publicly in it.

***Who gave thee this authority?***— Not them: for, like many of their successors, they were neither teachers nor cleansers; though they had the name and the profits of the place.

**Verse 24. *I also will ask you one thing***— Our Lord was certainly under no obligation to answer their question: he had already given them such proofs of his Divine mission as could not possibly be exceeded, in the miracles which he wrought before their eyes, and before all Judea; and, as they would not credit him on this evidence, it would have been in vain to have expected their acknowledgment of him on any profession he would make.

**Verse 25. *The baptism of John***— Had John a Divine commission or not, for his baptism and preaching? Our Lord here takes the wise in their own cunning. He knew the estimation John was in among the people; and he plainly saw that, if they gave any answer at all, they must convict themselves: and so they saw, when they came to examine the question. See Matthew 21:25, 26.

**Verse 27. *We cannot tell.***— Simplicity gives a wonderful confidence and peace of mind; but double dealing causes a thousand inquietudes and troubles. Let a man do his utmost to conceal in his own heart the evidence he has of truth and innocence, to countenance his not yielding to it; God, who sees the heart, will, in the light of the last day, produce it as a witness against him, and make it his judge.

We cannot tell, said they; which, in the words of truth, should have been, We will not tell, for we will not have this man for the Messiah: because, if we acknowledge John as his forerunner, we must, of necessity, receive Jesus as the Christ.

They who are engaged against the truth are abandoned to the spirit of falsity, and scruple not at a lie. Pharisaical pride, according to its different interests, either pretends to know every thing, or affects to know nothing. Among such, we may meet with numerous instances of arrogance and affected humility. God often hides from the wise and prudent what he reveals unto babes; for, when they use their wisdom only to invent the most plausible excuses for rejecting the truth when it comes to them, it is but just that they should be punished with that ignorance to which, in their own defense, they are obliged to have recourse.

**Verse 28. *A certain man had two sons***— Under the emblem of these two sons, one of whom was a libertine, disobedient, and insolent, but who afterwards thought on his ways, and returned to his duty; and the second, a hypocrite, who promised all, and did nothing; our Lord points out, on the one hand, the tax-gatherers and sinners of all descriptions, who, convicted by the preaching of John and that of Christ, turned away from their iniquities and embraced the Gospel; and, on the other hand, the scribes, Pharisees, and self-righteous people, who, pretending a zeal for the law, would not receive the salvation of the Gospel.

**Verse 29. *I will not***— This is the general reply of every sinner to the invitations of God; and, in it, the Most High is treated without ceremony or respect. They only are safe who persist not in the denial.

**Verse 30. *I go, sir***— This is all respect, complaisance, and professed, obedience; but he went not: he promised well, but did not perform. What a multitude of such are in the world, professing to know God, but denying him in their works! Alas! what will such professions avail, when God comes to take away the soul?

**Verse 31. *The publicans and the harlots***— In all their former conduct they had said No. Now they yield to the voice of truth when they hear it, and enter into the kingdom, embracing the salvation brought to them in the Gospel. The others, who had been always professing the most ready and willing obedience, and who pretended to be waiting for the kingdom of God, did not receive it when it came, but rather chose, while making the best professions, to continue members of the synagogue of Satan.



**Verse 32. *John came unto you in the way of righteousness***— Proclaiming the truth, and living agreeably to it. Or, John came unto you, who are in the way of righteousness. This seems rather to be the true meaning and construction of this passage. The Jews are here distinguished from the Gentiles. The former were in the way of righteousness, had the revelation of God, and the ordinances of justice established among them; the latter were in the way of unrighteousness, without the Divine revelation, and iniquitous in all their conduct: John came to both, preaching the doctrine of repentance, and proclaiming Jesus the Christ. To say that it was John who came in the way of righteousness, and that to him the words refer, is, in my opinion, saying nothing; for this was necessarily implied: as he professed to come from God, he must not only preach righteousness, but walk in it.

It is very difficult to get a worldly minded and self-righteous man brought to Christ. Examples signify little to him. Urge the example of an eminent saint, he is discouraged at it. Show him a profligate sinner converted to God, him he is ashamed to own and follow; and, as to the conduct of the generality of the followers of Christ, it is not striking enough to impress him. John, and Christ, and the apostles preach; but, to multitudes, all is in vain.

**Verse 33. *There was a certain householder***— Let us endeavor to find out a general and practical meaning for this parable. A householder-the Supreme Being. The family-the Jewish nation. The vineyard-the city of Jerusalem. The fence-the Divine protection. The wine-press-the law and sacrificial rites. The tower-the temple, in which the Divine presence was manifested. The husbandmen-the priests and doctors of the law. Went from home-entrusted the cultivation of the vineyard to the priests, etc., with the utmost confidence; as a man would do who had the most trusty servants, and was obliged to absent himself from home for a certain time. Our Lord takes this parable from Isaiah 5:1, etc.; but whether our blessed Redeemer quote from the law, the prophets, or the rabbins, he reserves the liberty to himself to beautify the whole, and render it more pertinent.

Some apply this parable also to Christianity, thus:-The master or father-our blessed Lord. The family-professing Christians in general. The vineyard-the true Church, or assembly of the faithful. The hedge-the true

faith, which keeps the sacred assembly enclosed and defended from the errors of heathenism and false Christianity. The wine-press—the atonement made by the sacrifice of Christ, typified by the sacrifices under the law. The tower—the promises of the Divine presence and protection. The husbandmen—the apostles and all their successors in the ministry. The going from home—the ascension to heaven. But this parable cannot go on all fours in the Christian cause, as any one may see. In the case of the husbandmen, especially it is applicable; unless we suppose our Lord intended such as those inquisitorial Bonners, who always persecuted the true ministers of Christ, and consequently Christ himself in his members; and to these may be added the whole train of St. Bartholomew EJECTORS, and all the fire and faggot men of a certain Church, who think they do God service by murdering his saints. But let the persecuted take courage: Jesus Christ will come back shortly; and then he will miserably destroy those wicked men: indeed, he has done so already to several, and let out his vineyard to more faithful husbandmen.

***Dugged a wine-press***— *ωρυξε ληνον*. St. Mark has *υποληνιον*, the pit under the press, into which the liquor ran, when squeezed out of the fruit by the press.

**Verse 34. *He sent his servants***— Prophets, which, from time to time, he sent to the Jewish nation to call both priests and people back to the purity of his holy religion.

***Receive the fruits of it.***— Alluding to the ancient custom of paying the rent of a farm in kind; that is, by a part of the produce of the farm. This custom anciently prevailed in most nations; and still prevails in the highlands of Scotland, and in some other places. The Boldon book, a survey made of the state of the bishopric of Durham in 1183, shows how much of the rents was paid in cows, sheep, pigs, fowls, eggs, etc., the remaining part being made up chiefly by manual labor.

**Verse 35. *Beat one***— *εδειραν*, took his skin off, flayed him: probably alluding to some who had been excessively scourged.

***Killed another, etc.***— Rid themselves of the true witnesses of God by a variety of persecutions.

**Verse 36. *Other servants***— There is not a moment in which God does not shower down his gifts upon men, and require the fruit of them. Various instruments are used to bring sinners to God. There are prophets, apostles, pastors, teachers: some with his gift after this manner, and some after that. The true disciples of Christ have been persecuted in all ages, and the greatest share of the persecution has fallen upon the ministers of his religion; for there have always been good and bad husbandmen, and the latter have persecuted the former.

***More than the first***— Or, more honorable, so I think *πλειονας* should be translated; for, as the fullness of the time approached, each prophet more clearly and fully pointed out the coming of Christ.

Our translation, which says, more than the first, conveys no meaning at all. *πλειος* is the meaning I have given it above, in Matthew 6:25. *πλειον της τροφης*, of MORE VALUE than food; and in Numbers 22:15 *πλειους και εντιμοτερους*, persons higher in dignity and office.

**Verse 37. *Last of all he sent-his son***— This requires no comment. Our Lord plainly means himself.

***They will reverence***— *εντραπησονται*, they will reflect upon their conduct and blush for shame because of it, when they see my son. So the Syric and Persic.

**Verse 38. *Said among themselves***— Alluding to the conspiracies which were then forming against the life of our blessed Lord, in the councils of the Jewish elders and chief priests. See Matthew 27:1.

**Verse 39. *Cast him out of the vineyard***— Utterly rejected the counsel of God against themselves; and would neither acknowledge the authority of Christ, nor submit to his teaching. What a strange and unaccountable case is this!—a sinner, to enjoy a little longer his false peace, and the gratification of his sinful appetites, rejects Jesus, and persecutes that Gospel which troubles his sinful repose.

**Verse 41. *He will miserably destroy those wicked men***— So, according to this evangelist, our Lord caused them to pass that sentence of destruction upon themselves which was literally executed about forty years after. But Luke relates it differently: according to him, they said *μη γενοιτο*, God

forbid! The Codex Leicestrensis omits **οι λεγουσιν**, they say; so that the following words appear to be spoken by our Lord. Michaelis supposes that in the Hebrew original the word was **וַיֹּאמֶר** waiomer, he said; for which the Greek translator might have read **וַיֹּאמְרוּ** waiomeru, they said.

**Verse 42. *The stone***— R. Solom. Jarchi, on Micah 5., says, this stone means the Messiah, **אבן משיח**: Abarbanel is of the same opinion. This seems to have been originally spoken of David who was at first rejected by the Jewish rulers, but was afterwards chosen by the Lord to be the great ruler of his people Israel. The quotation is taken from Psalm 118:22.

As the Church is represented in Scripture under the name of the temple and house of God, in allusion to the temple of Jerusalem, which was a type of it, 1 Corinthians 3:16; Hebrews 3:6; 1 Peter 2:5; so Jesus Christ is represented as the foundation on which this edifice is laid, 1 Corinthians 3:11; Ephesians 2:20, 21.

***The builders***— The chief priests and elders of the people, with the doctors of the law.

***Rejected***— An expression borrowed from masons, who, finding a stone, which being tried in a particular place, and appearing improper for it, is thrown aside, and another taken; however, at last, it may happen that the very stone which had been before rejected, may be found the most suitable as the head stone of the corner.

This passage, as applied by our Lord to himself, contains an abridgment of the whole doctrine of the Gospel.

1. The Lord's peculiar work is astonishingly manifested in the mission of Jesus Christ.
2. He, being rejected and crucified by the Jews, became an atonement for the sin of the world.
3. He was raised again from the dead, a proof of his conquest over death and sin, and a pledge of immortality to his followers.
4. He was constituted the foundation on which the salvation of mankind rests, and the corner stone which unites Jews and Gentiles, beautifies,

strengthens, and completes the whole building, as the head stone, or uppermost stone in the corner does the whole edifice.

5. He is hereby rendered the object of the joy and admiration of all his followers and the glory of man. This was done by the Lord, and is marvellous in our eyes.

**Verse 43. *Therefore say I***— Thus showing them, that to them alone the parable belonged. The kingdom of God shall be taken from you-the Gospel shall be taken from you, and given to the Gentiles, who will receive it, and bring forth fruit to the glory of God.

***Bringing forth the fruits***— As in Matthew 21:34 an allusion is made to paying the landlord in kind, so here the Gentiles are represented as paying God thus. The returns which He expects for his grace are the fruits of grace; nothing can ever be acceptable in the sight of God that does not spring from himself.

**Verse 44.** The 44th verse should certainly come before ver. 43, otherwise the narration is not consecutive.

**Verse 42.** The stone which the builders rejected, is become the head of the corner, etc.

**Verse 44.** Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, etc. This is an allusion to the punishment of stoning among the Jews. The place of stoning was twice as high as a man; while standing on this, one of the witnesses struck the culprit on the loins, so that he fell over this scaffold; if he died by the stroke and fall, well; if not, the other witness threw a stone upon his heart, and despatched him. That stone thrown on the culprit was, in some cases, as much as two men could lift up. Tract Sanhed. and Bab. Gemara, and Lightfoot. See also the note on John 8:7.

He, whether Jew or Gentile, who shall not believe in the Son of God, shall suffer grievously in consequence; but on whomsoever the stone (Jesus Christ) falls in the way of judgment, he shall be ground to powder, **λικμησει αυτον**-it shall make him so small as to render him capable of being dispersed as chaff by the wind. This seems to allude, not only to the dreadful crushing of the Jewish state by the Romans, but also to that general dispersion of the Jews through all the nations of the world, which

continues to the present day. This whole verse is wanting in the Codex Bezae, one other, five copies of the Itala, and Origen; but it is found in the parallel place, Luke 20:18, and seems to have been quoted from Isaiah 8:14, 15. He shall be for a STONE of STUMBLING, and for a ROCK OF OFFENCE to both the houses of Israel-and many among them shall STUMBLE and FALL, and be BROKEN.

**Verse 45. *The chief priests-perceived that he spoke of them.***— The most wholesome advice passes for an affront with those who have shut their hearts against the truth. When that which should lead to repentance only kindles the flame of malice and revenge, there is but little hope of the salvation of such persons.

**Verse 46. *They sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude***— Restraining and preventing grace is an excellent blessing, particularly where it leads to repentance and salvation; but he who abstains from certain evils, only through fear of scandal or punishment, has already committed them in his heart, and is guilty before God. The intrepidity of our Lord is worthy of admiration and imitation; in the very face of his most inveterate enemies, he bears a noble testimony to the truth, reproves their iniquities, denounces the Divine judgments, and, in the very teeth of destruction, braves danger and death! A true minister of Christ fears nothing but God, when his glory is concerned: a hireling fears every thing, except Him whom he ought to fear.

This last journey of our Lord to Jerusalem is a subject of great importance; it is mentioned by all the four evangelists, and has been a subject of criticism and cavil to some unsanctified minds. He has been accused of “attempting, by this method, to feel how far the populace were disposed to favor his pretensions in establishing himself as a king in the land; or, at least, by his conduct in this business, he gave much cause for popular seditions.” Every circumstance in the case refutes this calumny.

1. His whole conduct had proved that his kingdom was not of this world, and that he sought not the honor that cometh from man.

2. He had in a very explicit manner foretold his own premature death, and particularly at this time.

3. It is evident, from what he had said to his disciples, that he went up to Jerusalem at this time for the express purpose of being sacrificed, and not of erecting a secular kingdom.
4. What he did at this time was to fulfill a declaration of God delivered by two prophets, upwards of 700 years before, relative to his lowliness, poverty, and total deadness to all secular rule and pomp. See Isaiah 62:11; Zechariah 9:9.
5. All the time he spent now in Jerusalem, which was about five days, he spent in teaching, precisely in the same way he had done for three years past; nor do we find that he uttered one maxim dissimilar to what he formerly taught, or said a word calculated to produce any sensation on the hearts of the populace, but that of piety towards God; and in the parable of the man and his two sons, the husbandmen and the vineyard, he spoke in such a way to the rulers of the people as to show that he knew they were plotting his destruction; and that, far from fleeing from the face of danger, or strengthening his party against his enemies, he was come to wait at the foot of the altar till his blood should be poured out for the sin of the world!
6. Had he affected any thing of a secular kind, he had now the fairest opportunity to accomplish his designs. The people had already received him as Jesus the prophet; now they acknowledge him as the Christ or MESSIAH, and sing the hosannah to him, as immediately appointed by Heaven to be their deliverer.
7. Though, with the character of the Messiah, the Jews had connected that of secular royalty, and they now, by spreading their clothes in the way, strewing branches, etc., treat him as a royal person, and one appointed to govern the kingdom; yet of this he appears to take no notice, farther than to show that an important prophecy was thus fulfilled: he went as usual into the temple, taught the people pure and spiritual truths, withdrew at night from the city, lodged in private at Mount Olivet; and thus most studiously and unequivocally showed that his sole aim was to call the people back to purity and holiness, and prepare them for that kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, which he was about, by his passion, death, resurrection, ascension, and the mission of the Holy Spirit, to set up in the earth.

8. Could a person who worked such miracles as he was in the daily habit of working-miracles which proved he possessed unlimited power and unerring wisdom, need subterfuges, or a colouring for any design he wished to accomplish? He had only to put forth that power essentially resident in himself, and all resistance to his will must be annihilated. In short, every circumstance of the case shows at once the calumny and absurdity of the charge. But, instead of lessening, or tendering suspicious this or any other part of our Lord's conduct, it shows the whole in a more luminous and glorious point of view; and thus the wrath of man praises him.

9. That he was a king, that he was born of a woman and came into the world for this very purpose, he took every occasion to declare; but all these declarations showed that his kingdom was spiritual: he would not even interfere with the duty of the civil magistrate to induce an avaricious brother to do justice to the rest of the family, Luke 12:13, when probably a few words from such an authority would have been sufficient to have settled the business; yet to prevent all suspicion, and to remove every cause for offense, he absolutely refused to interfere, and took occasion from the very circumstance to declaim against secular views, covetousness, and worldly ambition! O how groundless does every part of his conduct prove this charge of secular ambition to be! Such was the spirit of the Master: such must be the spirit of the disciple. He that will reign with Christ, must be humbled and suffer with him. This is the royal road. The love of the world, in its power and honors, is as inconsistent with the spirit of the Gospel as the love of the grossest vice. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Reader, take occasion from this refuted calumny, to imitate thy Lord in the spirituality of his life, to pass through things temporal so as not to lose those that are eternal, that thou mayest reign with him in the glory of his kingdom. Amen.



## CHAPTER 22

*The parable of the marriage of a king's son, 1-14. The Pharisees and Herodians question him concerning the lawfulness of paying tribute to Caesar, 15-22. The Sadducees question him concerning the resurrection, 23-33. A lawyer questions him concerning the greatest commandment in the law, 34-40. He asks them their opinion of the Christ, and confounds them, 41-46.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 22

**Verse 2. *The kingdom of heaven***— In Bereshith Rabba, sect. 62. fol. 60, there is a parable very similar to this, and another still more so in Sohar. Levit. fol. 40. But these rabbinical parables are vastly ennobled by passing through the hands of our Lord. It appears from Luke, Luke 14:15; etc., that it was at an entertainment that this parable was originally spoken. It was a constant practice of our Lord to take the subjects of his discourses from the persons present, or from the circumstances of times, persons, and places. See Matthew 16:6; John 4:7-10; John 6:26, 27; 7:37. A preacher that can do so can never be at a loss for text or sermon.

***A marriage for his son***— A marriage feast, so the word **γαμους** properly means. Or a feast of inauguration, when his son was put in possession of the government, and thus he and his new subjects became married together. See 1 Kings 1:5-9, 19, 25, etc., where such a feast is mentioned.

From this parable it appears plain, 1. That the KING means the great God. 2. His SON, the Lord Jesus. 3. The MARRIAGE, his incarnation, or espousing human nature, by taking it into union with himself. 4. The MARRIAGE FEAST, the economy of the Gospel, during which men are invited to partake of the blessings purchased by, and consequent on, the incarnation and death of our blessed Lord. 5. By those who HAD BEEN bidden, or invited, Matthew 22:3, are meant the Jews in general, who had this union of Christ with human nature, and his sacrifice for sin, pointed out by various rites, ceremonies, and sacrifices under the law; and who, by all the prophets, had been constantly invited to believe in and receive the

promised Messiah. 6. By the SERVANTS, we are to understand the first preachers of the Gospel, proclaiming salvation to the Jews. JOHN the Baptist and the seventy disciples (Luke 10:1,) may be here particularly intended. 7. By the OTHER SERVANTS, Matthew 22:4, the apostles seem to be meant, who, though they were to preach the Gospel to the whole world, yet were to begin at JERUSALEM (Luke 24:47) with the first offers of mercy. 8. By their making light of it, etc., Matthew 22:5, is pointed out their neglect of this salvation, and their preferring secular enjoyments, etc., to the kingdom of Christ. 9. By injuriously using some, and slaying others, of his servants, Matthew 22:6, is pointed out the persecution raised against the apostles by the Jews, in which some of them were martyred. 10. By sending forth his troops, Matthew 22:7, is meant the commission given to the Romans against Judea; and, burning up their city, the total destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, the son of Vespasian, which happened about forty-one years after.

On this parable it is necessary to remark, 1. That man was made at first in union with God. 2. That sin entered in, and separated between God and man. 3. That as there can be no holiness but in union with God, and no heaven without holiness, therefore he provided a way to reconcile and reunite man to himself. 4. This was effected by Christ's uniting himself to human nature, and giving his Spirit to those who believe. 5. That as the marriage union is the closest, the most intimate, solemn, and excellent, of all the connections formed among mortals, and that they who are thus united in the Lord are one flesh; so that mystical union which is formed between God and the soul through Jesus Christ, by the Eternal Spirit, is the closest, most intimate, solemn, and excellent, that can be conceived; for he who is thus joined unto the Lord is one spirit. 6. This contract is made freely: no man can be forced to it, for it is a union of will to will, heart to heart; and it is by willing and consenting that we come unto God through his Son. 7. That if this marriage do not take place here, an eternal separation from God, and from the glory of his power, shall be the fearful consequence. 8. That there are three states in which men run the risk of living without God and losing their souls. 1st. That of a soft, idle, voluptuous life, wherein a man thinks of nothing but quietly to enjoy life, conveniences, riches, private pleasures, and public diversions. They made light of it. 2dly. That of a man wholly taken up with agricultural or

commercial employments, in which the love of riches, and application to the means of acquiring them, generally stifle all thoughts of salvation. One went to his own field, and another to his traffic. 3dly. That of a man who is openly unjust, violent, and outrageously wicked, who is a sinner by profession, and not only neglects his salvation, but injuriously treats all those who bring him the Gospel of reconciliation. Seizing his servants, they treated them injuriously, etc.

**Verse 4. *Fatlings***— **τα σιτιστα** Properly, fatted rams, or wethers. 2 Samuel 6:13; 1 Chronicles 15:26.

**Verse 7. *But when the king***— HIMSELF or, this very king. I have added **εκεινος** on the authority of nine of the most ancient MSS. and nearly one hundred others; the later Syriac, six copies of the Itala, and some of the fathers. Several printed editions have it, and Griesbach has received it into the text.

**Verse 8. *Were not worthy***.— Because they made light of it, and would not come; preferring earthly things to heavenly blessings. Among the Mohammedans, refusal to come to a marriage feast, when invited, is considered a breach of the law of God. HEDAYAH, vol. iv. p. 91. Any one that shall be invited to a dinner, and does not accept the invitation, disobeys God, and his messenger: and any one who comes uninvited, you may say is a thief, and returns a plunderer.-Mischat ul Mesabih. It was probably considered in this light among all the oriental nations. This observation is necessary, in order to point out more forcibly the iniquity of the refusal mentioned in the text. A man may be said to be worthy of, or fit for, this marriage feast, when, feeling his wretchedness and misery, he comes to God in the way appointed, to get an entrance into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus.

**Verse 9. *Go ye therefore into the highways***— **διεξοδους των αδων**, cross or by-paths; the places where two or more roads met in one, leading into the city, where people were coming together from various quarters of the country. St. Luke adds hedges, to point out the people to whom the apostles were sent, as either miserable vagabonds, or the most indigent poor, who were wandering about the country, or sitting by the sides of the ways and hedges, imploring relief. This verse points out the final rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles. It was a custom among the

Jews, when a rich man made a feast, to go out and invite in all destitute travelers. See in Rab. Beracoth, fol. 43.

***As many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage***— God sends his salvation to every soul, that all may believe and be saved.

**Verse 10. *Gathered together all-both bad and good***— By the preaching of the Gospel, multitudes of souls are gathered into what is generally termed the visible Church of Christ. This Church is the FLOOR, where the wheat and the chaff are often mingled, Matthew 3:12. The FIELD, where the bastard wheat and the true grain grow together, Matthew 13:26, 27. The NET, which collects of all kinds, both good and bad, Matthew 13:48. The HOUSE in which the wise and foolish are found, Matthew 25:1, etc. And the FOLD, in which there are both sheep and goats, Matthew 25:33; etc.

**Verse 11. *When the king came***— When God shall come to judge the world.

***Wedding garment***— Among the orientals, long white robes were worn at public festivals; and those who appeared on such occasions with any other garments were esteemed, not only highly culpable, but worthy of punishment. Our Lord seems here to allude to Zephaniah 1:7, 8, The Lord hath prepared a SACRIFICE, he hath BIDDEN his guests. And it shall come to pass, in the day of the Lord's sacrifice, that I will PUNISH the princes, and the KING'S CHILDREN, and ALL SUCH as are clothed with STRANGE APPAREL. The person who invited the guests prepared such a garment for each, for the time being; and with which he was furnished on his application to the ruler of the feast. It was this which made the conduct of the person mentioned in the text inexcusable; he might have had a proper marriage garment, if he had applied for it.

To afford accidental guests clothing suitable to a marriage feast, was a custom among the ancient Greeks. Homer relates that Telemachus, and the son of Nestor, arriving at Lacedaemon when Menelaus was making a marriage feast for his son and daughter, were accommodated with garments suited to the occasion, after having been bathed and anointed.

τους δ' ἐπει οὖν δρῶμαι λουσαν καὶ χρίσαν ἐλαίῳ,  
 ἄμμοι δ' ἀρα χλαίνας οὐλας βαλον ἦδε χιτῶνας,  
 ἐς ῥα θρόνους ἐζόντο παρ' ἀτρείδην μενελάον  
 Odys. l. iv. ver. 49-51

*They entered each a bath, and by the hands  
 Of maidens laved, and oiled, and clothed again  
 With shaggy mantles and resplendent vests,  
 Sat both enthroned at Menelaus' side. COWPER*

Among the Asiatics, garments called caftans, great numbers of which each nobleman has ordinarily ready in his wardrobe, are given to persons whom he wishes to honor: to refuse to accept or wear such a dress would be deemed the highest insult.

This marriage feast or dinner (the communication of the graces of the Gospel in this life) prepares for the marriage supper of the Lamb, Revelation 19:7-9, the enjoyment of eternal blessedness in the kingdom of glory. Now, as without holiness no man can see the Lord, we may at once perceive what our Lord means by the marriage garment—it is HOLINESS of heart and life: the text last quoted asserts that the fine, white, and clean linen (alluding to the marriage garment above mentioned) was an emblem of the RIGHTEOUSNESS of the SAINTS. Mark this expression: the righteousness, the whole external conduct; regulated according to the will and word of God. Of the SAINTS, the holy persons, whose souls were purified by the blood of the Lamb.

**Verse 12. *He saith unto him, Friend***— Rather, companion: so *εταίρε* should be translated. As this man represents the state of a person in the visible Church, who neglects to come unto the master of the feast for a marriage garment, for the salvation which Christ has procured, he cannot be with any propriety called a friend, but may well be termed a companion, as being a member of the visible Church, and present at all those ordinances where Christ's presence and blessing are found, by all those who sincerely wait upon him for salvation.

***How camest thou in hither***— Why profess to be called by my name while living without a preparation for my kingdom?

***He was speechless.***— *εφίμωθη*, he was muzzled, or gagged. He had nothing to say in vindication of his neglect. There was a garment provided,

but he neither put it on, nor applied for it. His conduct, therefore, was in the highest degree insulting and indecorous. As this man is the emblem, by general consent, of those who shall perish in the last day, may we not ask, without offense, Where does the doctrine of absolute reprobation or preterition appear in his case? If Christ had never died for him, or if he had applied for the garment, and was refused, might he not well have alleged this in behalf of his soul?—and would not the just God have listened to it? But there is not the smallest excuse for him: Christ died, the sacrifice was offered, for him; the ministers of the Gospel invited him; the Holy Spirit strove with him; he might have been saved, but he was not: and the fault lies so absolutely at his own door that the just God is vindicated in his conduct, while he sends him to hell, not for the lack of what he could not get, but for the lack of what he might have had, but either neglected or refused it.

***Then said the king to the servants***— To the ministering angels, executors of the Divine will.

***Cast him into outer darkness***— The Jewish marriages were performed in the night season, and the hall where the feast was made was superbly illuminated; the outer darkness means, therefore, the darkness on the outside of this festal hall; rendered still more gloomy to the person who was suddenly thrust out into it from such a profusion of light. See all this largely treated of on Matthew 8:12.

**Verse 14. *Many are called, etc.***— This verse is wanting in one of Colbert's MSS., marked 33 in Griesbach. See the note on Matthew 20:16. Many are called by the preaching of the Gospel into the outward communion of the Church of Christ; but few, comparatively, are chosen to dwell with God In glory, because they do not come to the master of the feast for a marriage garment—for that holiness without which none can see the Lord. This is an allusion to the Roman custom of raising their militia; all were mustered, but only those were chosen to serve, who were found proper. See the note on Matthew 20:16. Reader! examine thy soul, and make sure work for eternity!

**Verse 15. *In his talk.***— *εν λογω*, by discourse: intending to ask him subtle and ensnaring questions; his answers to which might involve him either with the Roman government, or with the great Sanhedrin.

**Verse 16. *The Herodians***— For an account of this sect, see the note on Matthew 16:1. The preceding parable had covered the Pharisees with confusion: when it was ended they went out, not to humble themselves before God, and deprecate the judgments with which they were threatened; but to plot afresh the destruction of their teacher. The depth of their malice appears, 1. In their mode of attack. They had often questioned our Lord on matters concerning religion; and his answers only served to increase his reputation, and their confusion. They now shift their ground, and question him concerning state affairs, and the question is such as must be answered; and yet the answer, to all human appearance, can be none other than what may be construed into a crime against the people, or against the Roman government. 2. Their profound malice appears farther in the choice of their companions in this business, viz. the Herodians. Herod was at this very time at Jerusalem, whither he had come to hold the passover. Jesus, being of Nazareth, which was in Herod's jurisdiction, was considered as his subject. Herod himself was extremely attached to the Roman emperor, and made a public profession of it: all these considerations engaged the Pharisees to unite the Herodians, who, as the Syriac intimates, were the domestics of Herod, in this infernal plot. 3. Their profound malice appears, farther, in the praises they gave our Lord. Teacher, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God. This was indeed the real character of our blessed Lord; and now they bear testimony to the truth, merely with the design to make it subserve their bloody purposes. Those whose hearts are influenced by the spirit of the wicked one never do good, but when they hope to accomplish evil by it. Men who praise you to your face are ever to be suspected. The Italians have a very expressive proverb on this subject:-

*Che ti fa carezze piu che non suole,  
O t' ha ingannato, o ingannar ti vuole*

He who caresses thee more than he was wont to do, has either **DECEIVED** thee, or is **ABOUT TO DO IT**.

I have never known the sentiment in this proverb to fail; and it was notoriously exemplified in the present instance. Flatterers, though they speak the truth, ever carry about with them a base or malicious soul. 4. Their malice appears still farther in the question they propose. Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?-Matthew 22:17. The constitution of the

Jewish republic, the expectations which they had of future glory and excellence, and the diversity of opinions which divided the Jews on this subject, rendered an answer to this question extremely difficult:-

1. In the presence of the people, who professed to have no other king but God, and looked on their independence as an essential point of their religion.
2. In the presence of the Pharisees, who were ready to stir up the people against him, if his decision could be at all construed to be contrary to their prejudices, or to their religious rights.
3. In the presence of the Herodians, who, if the answer should appear to be against Caesar's rights, were ready to inflame their master to avenge, by the death of our Lord, the affront offered to his master the emperor.
4. The answer was difficult, because of the different sentiments of the Jews on this subject; some maintaining that they could not lawfully pay tribute to a heathen governor: while others held that as they were now under this strange government, and had no power to free themselves from it, it was lawful for them to pay what they had not power to refuse.
5. The answer was difficult, when it is considered that multitudes of the people had begun now to receive Jesus as the promised Messiah, who was to be the deliverer of their nation from spiritual and temporal oppression, and therefore had lately sung to him the Hosanna Rabba: see Matthew 21:9. If then he should decide the question in Caesar's favor, what idea must the people have of him, either as zealous for the law, or as the expected Messiah? If against Caesar, he is ruined. Who that loved Jesus, and was not convinced of his sovereign wisdom, could help trembling for him in these circumstances?

Jesus opposes the depth of his wisdom to the depth of their malice, and manifests it:- 1. By unmasking them, and showing that he knew the very secrets of their hearts. Ye HYPOCRITES! why tempt ye me? i.e. why do ye try me thus? This must cover them with confusion, when they saw their motives thus discovered; and tend much to lessen their influence in the sight of the people, when it was manifest that they acted not through a desire to receive information, by which to regulate their conduct, but merely to ensnare and ruin him.



2. Christ shows his profound wisdom in not attempting to discuss the question at large; but settled the business by seizing a maxim that was common among all people, and acknowledged among the Jews, That the prince who causes his image and titles to be stamped on the current coin of a country, is virtually acknowledged thereby as the governor. See Maimon. Gezel. c. v. in Wetstein. When Sultan MAHMOUD, king of Maveralnabar, Turquestan, and the Indies, wished to seize on the dominions of SEIDEH, queen of Persia, who governed in the place of her young son Megededde-vlet, about A. D. 909, he sent an ambassador to her with the following order: You must acknowledge me for your KING, cause the kootbah to be read, i.e. pray for me in all the mosques of the kingdom, and GET YOUR MONEY recoin, with the IMPRESSION THAT IS ON MINE: thus denoting that she must become absolutely subject to him. See Bibliot. Orient. de Galand. p. 453. Esau Afghan carried his conquest into Bhatti, into the viceroyalty of Bengal, and caused the kootbah to be read, and coin to be struck in the name of the Emperor Akbar. Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii p. 5. See also p. 38,92,94,130,139,187.

**Verse 19. *They brought unto him a penny.***— A denarius: probably the ordinary capitation tax, though the poll tax in the law, Exodus 30:13, 14, was half a shekel, about twice as much as the denarius. The Roman denarius had the emperor's image with a proper legend stamped on one side of it. It was not therefore the sacred shekel which was to be paid for the repairs of the temple which was now demanded, but the regular tribute required by the Roman government.

**Verse 20. *Whose is this image and superscription?***— He knew well enough whose they were; but he showed the excellency of his wisdom, 3dly, in making them answer to their own confusion. They came to ensnare our Lord in his discourse, and now they are ensnared in their own. He who digs a pit for his neighbor ordinarily falls into it himself.

**Verse 21. *They say unto him, Caesars.***— The image was the head of the emperor; the superscription, his titles. JULIUS CAESAR was the first who caused his image to be struck on the Roman coin. Tiberius was emperor at this time.

***Render therefore unto Caesar***— The conclusion is drawn from their own premises. You acknowledge this to be Caesar's coin; this coin is current, in

your land; the currency of this coin shows the country to be under the Roman government; and your acknowledgment that it is Caesar's proves you have submitted. Don't therefore be unjust; but render to Caesar the things which you acknowledge to be his; at the same time, be not impious, but render unto God the things which belong to God.

This answer is full of consummate wisdom. It establishes the limits, regulates the rights, and distinguishes the jurisdiction of the two empires of heaven and earth. The image of princes stamped on their coin denotes that temporal things belong all to their government. The image of God stamped on the soul denotes that all its faculties and powers belong to the Most High, and should be employed in his service.

But while the earth is agitated and distracted with the question of political rights and wrongs, the reader will naturally ask, What does a man owe to Caesar?-to the civil government under which he lives? Our Lord has answered the question-That which IS Caesar's. But what is it that is Caesar's? 1. Honour. 2. Obedience. And 3. Tribute. 1. The civil government under which a man lives, and by which he is protected, demands his honor and reverence. 2. The laws which are made for the suppression of evil doers, and the maintenance of good order, which are calculated to promote the benefit of the whole, and the comfort of the individual should be religiously obeyed. 3. The government that charges itself with the support and defense of the whole, should have its unavoidable expenses, however great, repaid by the people, in whose behalf they are incurred; therefore we should pay tribute. But remember, if Caesar should intrude into the things of God, coin a new creed, or broach a new Gospel, and affect to rule the conscience, while he rules the state, in these things Caesar is not to be obeyed; he is taking the things of God, and he must not get them. Give not therefore God's things to Caesar, and give not Caesar's things to God. That which belongs to the commonwealth should, on no account whatever, be devoted to religious uses; and let no man think he has pleased God, by giving that to charitable or sacred uses which he has purloined from the state. The tribute of half a shekel, which the law, (Exodus 30:13,14,) required every person above twenty years of age to pay to the temple, was, after the destruction of the temple, in the time of Vespasian, paid into the emperor's exchequer. This sum, Melanethon supposes, amounted annually to THREE TONS OF GOLD.

**Verse 22. *When they had heard these words, they marvelled***— And well they might—never man spake like this man. By this decision, CAESAR is satisfied—he gets his own to the uttermost farthing. GOD is glorified—his honor is in every respect secured. And the PEOPLE are edified—one of the most difficult questions that could possibly come before them is answered in such a way as to relieve their consciences, and direct their conduct. See L’Evangile Medite, and see my discourse entitled, The Rights of God and Caesar.

**Verse 23. *The same day— Malice is ever active; let it be defeated ever so often, it returns to the charge. Jesus and his Gospel give no quarter to vice; the vicious will give no quarter to him or it. The Sadducees***— For an account of these see on Matthew 16:1.

**Verse 24. *Raise up seed unto his brother.***— This law is mentioned Deuteronomy 25:5. The meaning of the expression is, that the children produced by this marriage should be reckoned in the genealogy of the deceased brother, and enjoy his estates. The word seed should be always translated children or posterity. There is a law precisely similar to this among the Hindoos.

**Verse 25. *Seven brethren***— It is very likely that the Sadducees increased the number, merely to make the question the more difficult.

**Verse 28. *Whose wife shall she be of the seven?***— The rabbins have said, That if a woman have two husbands in this world, she shall have the first only restored to her in the world to come. Sohar. Genes. fol. 24. The question put by these bad men is well suited to the mouth of a libertine. Those who live without God in the world have no other god than the world; and those who have not that happiness which comes from the enjoyment of God have no other pleasure than that which comes from the gratification of sensual appetites. The stream cannot rise higher than the spring: these men, and their younger brethren, atheists, deists, and libertines of all sorts, can form no idea of heaven as a place of blessedness, unless they can hope to find in it the gratification of their sensual desires. On this very ground Mohammed built his paradise.

**Verse 29. *Ye do err***— Or, Ye are deceived—by your impure passions: not knowing the scriptures, which assert the resurrection:—nor the miraculous

power of God (τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ θεοῦ) by which it is to be effected. In Avoda Sara, fol. 18, Sanhedrin, fol. 90, it is said: “These are they which shall have no part in the world to come: Those who say, the Lord did not come from heaven; and those who say, the resurrection cannot be proved out of the law.”

Their deception appeared in their supposing, that if there were a resurrection, men and women were to marry and be given in marriage as in this life; which our Lord shows is not the case: for men and women there shall be like the angels of God, immortal, and free from all human passions, and from those propensities which were to continue with them only during this present state of existence. There shall be no death; and consequently no need of marriage to maintain the population of the spiritual world.

**Verse 31. *Have ye not read***— This quotation is taken from Exodus 3:6, 16; and as the five books of Moses were the only part of Scripture which the Sadducees acknowledged as Divine, our Lord, by confuting them from those books, proved the second part of his assertion, “Ye are ignorant of those very scriptures which ye profess to hold sacred.”

**Verse 32. *I am the God of Abraham***— Let it be observed, that Abraham was dead upwards of 300 years before these words were spoken to Moses: yet still God calls himself the God of Abraham, etc. Now Christ properly observes that God is not the God of the dead, (that word being equal, in the sense of the Sadducees, to an eternal annihilation,) but of the living; it therefore follows that, if he be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, these are not dead, but alive; alive with God, though they had ceased, for some hundreds of years, to exist among mortals. We may see, from this, that our Lord combats and confutes another opinion of the Sadducees, viz. that there is neither angel nor spirit; by showing that the soul is not only immortal, but lives with God, even while the body is detained in the dust of the earth, which body is afterwards to be raised to life, and united with its soul by the miraculous power of God, of which power they showed themselves to be ignorant when they denied the possibility of a resurrection.

**Verse 33. *The multitude were astonished at his doctrine.***— God uses the infidelity of some for the edification of others. Had no false doctrine been broached in the world, we had not seen the full evidence of the true

teaching. The opposition of deists and infidels has only served to raise up men in behalf of the truth of God, who not only have refuted them, but shown, at the same time, that the sacred testimonies are infinitely amiable in themselves, and worthy of all acceptance. Truth always gains by being opposed.

**Verse 34. *They were gathered together.***— *ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό*-they came together with one accord, or, for the same purpose; i.e. of ensnaring him in his discourse, as the Sadducees had done, Matthew 22:23. The Codex Bezae and several of the Itala have *ἐπ' αὐτόν*, against him. Camen togidre into oon.-Old MS. Eng, Bib.

**Verse 35. *A lawyer***— *νομικός*, a teacher of the law. What is called lawyer, in the common translation, conveys a wrong idea to most readers: my old MS. renders the word in the same way I have done. These teachers of the law were the same as the scribes, or what Dr. Wotton calls letter-men, whom he supposes to be the same as the Karaites, a sect of the Jews who rejected all the traditions of the elders, and admitted nothing but the written word. See Wotton's Mishna, vol. i. p. 78. These are allowed to have kept more closely to the spiritual meaning of the law and prophets than the Pharisees did; and hence the question proposed by the lawyer, (Mark, Mark 12:28, calls him one of the scribes,) or Karaite, was of a more spiritual or refined nature than any of the preceding.

**Verse 36. *Which is the great commandment***— We see here three kinds of enemies and false accusers of Christ and his disciples; and three sorts of accusations brought against them.

1. The Herodians, or politicians and courtiers, who form their questions and accusations on the rights of the prince, and matters of state, Matthew 22:16.
2. The Sadducees, or libertines, who found theirs upon matters of religion, and articles of faith, which they did not credit, Matthew 22:23.
3. The Pharisees, lawyers, scribes, or Karaites, hypocritical pretenders to devotion, who found theirs on that vital and practical godliness (the love of God and man) of which they wished themselves to be thought the sole proprietors, Matthew 22:36.

**Verse 37. *Thou shalt love the Lord***— This is a subject of the greatest importance, and should be well understood, as our Lord shows that the whole of true religion is comprised in thus loving God and our neighbor.

It may not be unnecessary to inquire into the literal meaning of the word love. *αγαπη*, from *αγαπαω*, I love, is supposed to be compounded either of *αγαν* and *ποιειν*, to act vehemently or intensely; or, from *αγειν κατα παν*, because love is always active, and will act in every possible way; for he who loves is, with all his affection and desire, carried forward to the beloved object, in order to possess and enjoy it. Some derive it from *αγαν* and *παυεσθαι*, to be completely at rest, or, to be intensely satisfied; because he who loves is supremely contented with, and rests completely satisfied in, that which he loves. Others, from *αγαν* and *παω*, because a person eagerly embraces, and vigorously holds fast, that which is the object of his love. Lastly, others suppose it to be compounded of *αγαω*, I admire, and *παυομαι*, I rest, because that which a man loves intensely he rests in, with fixed admiration and contemplation. So that genuine love changes not, but always abides steadily attached to that which is loved.

Whatever may be thought of these etymologies, as being either just or probable, one thing will be evident to all those who know what love means, that they throw much light upon the subject, and manifest it in a variety of striking points of view. The ancient author of a MS. Lexicon in the late French king's library, under the word *αγαπη*, has the following definition: *ασπαστος προθεσις επι τη φιλια του φιλουμενου-σομψυχια*. "A pleasing surrender of friendship to a friend:-an identity or sameness of soul." A sovereign preference given to one above all others, present or absent: a concentration of all the thoughts and desires in a single object, which a man prefers to all others. Apply this definition to the love which God requires of his creatures, and you will have the most correct view of the subject. Hence it appears that, by this love, the soul eagerly cleaves to, affectionately admires, and constantly rests in God, supremely pleased and satisfied with him as its portion: that it acts from him, as its author; for him, as its master; and to him, as its end. That, by it, all the powers and faculties of the mind are concentrated in the Lord of the universe. That, by it, the whole man is willingly surrendered to the Most High: and that, through it, an identity, or sameness of spirit with the Lord is acquired-the man being made a partaker of the Divine nature,

having the mind in him which was in Christ, and thus dwelling in God, and God in him.

But what is implied in loving God with all the heart, soul, mind, strength, etc., and when may a man be said to do this? 1. He loves God with all his heart, who loves nothing in comparison of him, and nothing but in reference to him:-who is ready to give up, do, or suffer any thing in order to please and glorify him:-who has in his heart neither love nor hatred, hope nor fear, inclination, nor aversion, desire, nor delight, but as they relate to God, and are regulated by him.

2. He loves God with all his soul, or rather, *εν ολη τη ψυχη*, with all his life, who is ready to give up life for his sake-to endure all sorts of torments, and to be deprived of all kinds of comforts, rather than dishonor God:-who employs life with all its comforts, and conveniences, to glorify God in, by, and through all:-to whom life and death are nothing, but as they come from and lead to God, From this Divine principle sprang the blood of the martyrs, which became the seed of the Church. They overcame through the blood of the Lamb, and loved not their lives unto the death. See Revelation 12:11.

3. He loves God with all his strength (Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27) who exerts all the powers of his body and soul in the service of God:-who, for the glory of his Maker, spares neither labor nor cost-who sacrifices his time, body, health, ease, for the honor of God his Divine Master:-who employs in his service all his goods, his talents, his power, credit, authority, and influence.

4. He loves God with all his mind (intellect-*διανοια*) who applies himself only to know God, and his holy will:-who receives with submission, gratitude, and pleasure, the sacred truths which God has revealed to man:-who studies no art nor science but as far as it is necessary for the service of God, and uses it at all times to promote his glory-who forms no projects nor designs but in reference to God and the interests of mankind:-who banishes from his understanding and memory every useless, foolish, and dangerous thought, together with every idea which has any tendency to defile his soul, or turn it for a moment from the center of eternal repose. In a word, he who sees God in all things-thinks of him at all times-having his mind continually fixed upon God, acknowledging him in

all his ways—who begins, continues, and ends all his thoughts, words, and works, to the glory of his name:—this is the person who loves God with all his heart, life, strength, and intellect. He is crucified to the world, and the world to him: he lives, yet not he, but Christ lives in him. He beholds as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and is changed into the same image from glory to glory. Simply and constantly looking unto Jesus, the author and perfecter of his faith, he receives continual supplies of enlightening and sanctifying grace, and is thus fitted for every good word and work. O glorious state! far, far, beyond this description! which comprises an ineffable communion between the ever-blessed Trinity and the soul of man!

**Verse 38. *This is the first and great commandment.***— It is so,

1. In its antiquity, being as old as the world, and engraven originally on our very nature.
2. In dignity; as directly and immediately proceeding from and referring to God.
3. In excellence; being the commandment of the new covenant, and the very spirit of the Divine adoption.
4. In justice; because it alone renders to God his due, prefers him before all things, and secures to him his proper rank in relation to them.
5. In sufficiency; being in itself capable of making men holy in this life, and happy in the other.
6. In fruitfulness; because it is the root of all commandments, and the fulfilling of the law.
7. In virtue and efficacy; because by this alone God reigns in the heart of man, and man is united to God.
8. In extent; leaving nothing to the creature, which it does not refer to the Creator.
9. In necessity; being absolutely indispensable.
10. In duration; being ever to be continued on earth, and never to be discontinued in heaven.



**Verse 39. *Thou shalt love thy neighbor***— The love of our neighbor springs from the love of God as its source; is found in the love of God as its principle, pattern, and end; and the love of God is found in the love of our neighbor, as its effect, representation, and infallible mark. This love of our neighbor is a love of equity, charity, succor, and benevolence. We owe to our neighbor what we have a right to expect from him—"Do unto all men as ye would they should do unto you," is a positive command of our blessed Savior. By this rule, therefore, we should speak, think, and write, concerning every soul of man:-put the best construction upon all the words and actions of our neighbor that they can possibly bear. By this rule we are taught to bear with, love, and forgive him; to rejoice in his felicity, mourn in his adversity, desire and delight in his prosperity, and promote it to the utmost of our power: instruct his ignorance, help him in his weakness, and risk even our life for his sake, and for the public good. In a word, we must do every thing in our power, through all the possible varieties of circumstances, for our neighbors, which we would wish them to do for us, were our situations reversed.

This is the religion of Jesus! How happy would Society be, were these two plain, rational precepts properly observed! Love ME, and love thy FELLOWS! Be unutterably happy in me, and be in perfect peace, unanimity, and love, among yourselves. Great fountain and dispenser of love! fill thy creation with this sacred principle, for his sake who died for the salvation of mankind!

On the nature of self-love, see Matthew 19:19.

**Verse 40. *On these two-hang all the law and the prophets.***— They are like the first and last links of a chain, all the intermediate ones depend on them. True religion begins and ends in love to God and man. These are the two grand links that unite God to man, man to his fellows, and men again to God.

Love is the fulfilling of the law, says St. Paul, Romans 13:10; for he who has the love of God in him delights to obey the Divine precepts, and to do all manner of kindness to men for God's sake.

**Verse 41. *While the Pharisees were gathered together***— Jesus asks a question in his turn, utterly to confound them, and to show the people

that the source of all the captious questions of his opponents was their ignorance of the prophecies relative to the Messiah.

**Verse 42. *What think ye of Christ?***— Or, What are your thoughts concerning THE CHRIST-the Messiah; for to this title the emphatic article should always be added.

***Whose son is he?***— From what family is he to spring?

***They say unto him, The son of David.***— This was a thing well known among the Jews, and universally acknowledged, see John 7:42; and is a most powerful proof against them that the Messiah is come. Their families are now so perfectly confounded that they cannot trace back any of their genealogies with any degree of certainty: nor have they been capable of ascertaining the different families of their tribes for more than sixteen hundred years. Why, then, should the spirit of prophecy assert so often, and in such express terms, that Jesus was to come from the family of David; if he should only make his appearance when the public registers were all demolished, and it would be impossible to ascertain the family? Is it not evident that God designed that the Messiah should come at a time when the public genealogies might be inspected, to prove that it was he who was prophesied of, and that no other was to be expected? The evangelists, Matthew and Luke, were so fully convinced of the conclusiveness of this proof that they had recourse to the public registers; and thus proved to the Jews, from their own records, that Jesus was born of the family mentioned by the prophets. Nor do we find that a scribe, Pharisee, or any other, ever attempted to invalidate this proof, though it would have essentially subserved their cause, could they have done it. But as this has not been done, we may fairly conclude it was impossible to do it.

**Verse 43.** How then doth David in spirit (or by the Spirit-by the inspiration of the Spirit of God) call him Lord? saying,

**Verse 44. *The Lord (יהוה Yehve or Jehovah) said unto my Lord, (אדני Adni or Adonai, my prop, stay, master, support,) Sit thou on my right hand***— Take the place of the greatest eminence and authority. Till I make thine enemies thy footstool-till I subdue both Jews and Gentiles under thee, and cause them to acknowledge thee as their sovereign and Lord. This

quotation is taken from Psalm 110:1; and, from it, these two points are clear: 1. That David wrote it by the inspiration of God; and 2. That it is a prophetic declaration of the Messiah.

**Verse 45. *How is he his son?***— As the Jews did not attempt to deny the conclusion of our Lord's question, which was, the Messiah is not only the son of David according to the flesh, but he is the Lord of David according to his Divine nature, then it is evident they could not. Indeed, there was no other way of invalidating the argument, but by denying that the prophecy in question related to Christ: but it seems the prophecy was so fully and so generally understood to belong to the Messiah that they did not attempt to do this; for it is immediately added, No man was able to answer him a word—they were completely nonplussed and confounded.

**Verse 46. *Neither durst any ask him any more questions.***— “Thus,” says Dr. Wotton, “our Lord put the four great sects of the Jews to silence, in one day, successively. The Herodians and Pharisees wanted to know whether they might lawfully pay tribute to Caesar or not. The Sadducees were inquisitive to know whose wife the woman should be of the seven brethren, in the resurrection, who had her to wife. Then comes the scribe, (or karaite,) who owned no authority beyond or besides the written law, and asked which was the great commandment in the law. This lawyer deserves to be mentioned here, because he not only acquiesced in, but commended, what our Lord had said in answer to his question.” Wotton's *Miscellaneous Discourses*, vol. i. p. 78.

The Pharisees and Herodians were defeated, Matthew 22:15-22. The Sadducees were confounded, Matthew 22:29-33. The lawyers or karaites nonplussed, Matthew 22:37-40. And the Pharisees, etc., finally routed, Matthew 22:41-46. Thus did the wisdom of God triumph over the cunning of men.

From this time, we do not find that our Lord was any more troubled with their captious questions: their whole stock, it appears, was expended, and now they coolly deliberate on the most effectual way to get him murdered. He that resists the truth of God is capable of effecting the worst purpose of Satan.

The very important subjects of this chapter have been so amply discussed in the notes, and applied so particularly to their spiritual uses, that it does not appear necessary to add any thing by way of practical improvement. The explanation of the great command of the law is particularly recommended to the reader's notice. See on Matthew 22:36-40.

## CHAPTER 23

*The character of the scribes and Pharisees, and directions to the people and the disciples to receive the law from them, but not to follow their bad example, 1-7. The disciples exhorted to humility, 8-12. Different woes pronounced against the scribes and Pharisees for their intolerance, 13; rapacity, 14; false zeal, 15; superstition in oaths and tithes, 16-23; hypocrisy, 24-28. Their cruelty, 29-32. Their persecution of the apostles, etc. Their destruction foretold, 33-36. Christ's lamentation over Jerusalem, 37-39.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 23

**Verse 2. *The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat*—**

**ἐκαθίσαν.**—They sat there formerly by Divine appointment: they sit there now by Divine permission. What our Lord says here refers to their expounding the Scriptures, for it was the custom of the Jewish doctors to sit while they expounded the law and prophets, (Matthew 5:1; Luke 4:20-22,) and to stand up when they read them.

By the seat of Moses, we are to understand authority to teach the law. Moses was the great teacher of the Jewish people; and the scribes, etc., are here represented as his successors.

**Verse 3. *All therefore whatsoever*—** That is, all those things which they read out of the law and prophets, and all things which they teach consistently with them. This must be our Lord's meaning: he could not have desired them to do every thing, without restriction, which the Jewish doctors taught; because himself warns his disciples against their false teaching, and testifies that they had made the word of God of none effect by their traditions. See Matthew 15:6, etc. Besides, as our Lord speaks here in the past tense-whatsoever they HAVE commanded, **οσα ειπωσιν**, he may refer to the teaching of a former period, when they taught the way of God in truth, or were much less corrupted than they were now.

**Verse 4. *They bind heavy burdens***— They are now so corrupt that they have added to the ceremonies of the law others of their own invention, which are not only burdensome and oppressive, but have neither reason, expediency, nor revelation, to countenance them. In a word, like all their successors in spirit to the present day, they were severe to others, but very indulgent to themselves.

**Verse 5. *All their works they do for to be seen of men***— In pointing out the corruptions of these men, our Lord gives us the distinguishing characteristics of all false teachers, whether Jewish or Christian.

1. They live not according to the truths they preach. They say, and do not, Matthew 23:3.

2. They are severe to others, point out the narrowest road to heaven, and walk in the broad road themselves. They bind on burdens, etc., Matthew 23:4.

3. They affect to appear righteous, and are strict observers of certain rites, etc., while destitute of the power of godliness. They make broad their phylacteries, etc., Matthew 23:5.

4. They love worldly entertainments, go to feast wherever they are asked, and seek Church preferments. They love the chief places at feasts, and chief seats in the synagogues, Matthew 23:6.

5. They love and seek public respect and high titles, salutations in the market-place, (for they are seldom in their studies,) and to be called of men rabbi-eminent teacher, though they have no title to it, either from the excellence or fruit of their teaching. When these marks are found in a man who professes to be a minister of Christ, charity itself will assert he is a thief and a robber—he has climbed over the wall of the sheepfold, or broken it down in order to get in.

***Phylacteries***— *φυλακτηρια*, from *φυλασσω*, to keep or preserve. These were small slips of parchment or vellum, on which certain portions of the law were written. The Jews tied these about their foreheads and arms, for three different purposes.

1. To put them in mind of those precepts which they should constantly observe.

2. To procure them reverence and respect in the sight of the heathen. And
3. To act as amulets or charms to drive away evil spirits.

The first use of these phylacteries is evident from their name.

The second use appears from what is said on the subject from the Gemara, Beracoth, chap. 1., quoted by Kypke. “Whence is it proved that phylacteries, (תפילין, tephilin,) are the strength of Israel?-Ans. From what is written, Deuteronomy 28:10. All the, people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name [of יהוה Jehovah]-and they shall be afraid of thee.

The third use of them appears from the Targum, on Cant. So 8:3. His left hand is under my head, etc. “The congregation of Israel hath said, I am elect above all people, because I bind my phylacteries on my left hand, and on my head, and the scroll is fixed to the right side of my gate, the third part of which looks to my bed-chamber, that DAEMONS may not be permitted to INJURE me.”

An original phylactery lies now before me. It is a piece of fine vellum, about eighteen inches long, and an inch and quarter broad. It is divided into four unequal compartments: in the first is written, in a very fair character, with many apices, after the mode of the German Jews, the first ten verses of Exod. 10, (Exodus 13:1-10); in the second compartment is written, from the eleventh to the sixteenth verse of the same chapter (Exodus 13:11-16), inclusive in the third, from the fourth to the ninth verse (Deuteronomy 6:4-9), inclusive, of Deut. 6., beginning with, Hear, O Israel, etc.; in the fourth, from the thirteenth to the twenty-first verse, inclusive, of Deut. 11 (Deuteronomy 11:13-21).

These passages seem to be chosen in vindication of the use of the phylactery itself, as the reader will see on consulting them: Bind them for a SIGN upon thy HAND-and for FRONTLETS between thy EYES-write them upon the POSTS of thy HOUSE, and upon thy GATES; all which commands the Jews took in the most literal sense.

Even the phylactery became an important appendage to a Pharisee's character, insomuch that some of them wore them very broad, either that they might have the more written on them, or that, the characters being

larger, they might be the more visible, and that they might hereby acquire greater esteem among the common people, as being more than ordinarily religious. For the same reason, they wore the fringes of their garments of an unusual length. Moses had commanded (Numbers 15:38, 39) the children of Israel to put fringes to the borders of their garments, that, when they looked upon even these distinct threads, they might remember, not only the law in general, but also the very minutiae, or smaller parts of all the precepts, rites, and ceremonies, belonging to it. As these hypocrites were destitute of all the life and power of religion within, they endeavored to supply its place by phylacteries and fringes without. See the note on Exodus 13:9.

**Verse 7. *To be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.***— רַבִּי רַבִּי, i.e. My teacher! my teacher! The second rabbi is omitted by several excellent MSS., by most of the ancient versions, and by some of the fathers. Griesbach has left it in the text, with the note of doubtfulness.

There are three words used among the Jews as titles of dignity, which they apply to their doctors-Rabh, Rabbi, and Rabban; each of these terms has its particular meaning: rabban implies much more than rabbi, and rabbi much more than rabh.

They may be considered as three degrees of comparison: rabh great, rabbi greater, and rabban greatest. These rabbins were looked up to as infallible oracles in religious matters, and usurped not only the place of the law, but of God himself.

**Verse 8. *But be not ye called Rabbi***— As our Lord probably spoke in Hebrew, the latter word rabbi, in this verse, must have been in the plural; but as the contracted form of the plural sounds almost exactly like the singular, the Greek writer would naturally express them both in the same letters.

None of the prophets had ever received this title, nor any of the Jewish doctors before the time of Hillel and Shammai, which was about the time of our Lord; and, as disputes on several subjects had run high between these two schools, the people were of course divided; some acknowledging Hillel as rabbi, infallible teacher, and others giving this title to Shammai. The Pharisees, who always sought the honor that comes from men,



assumed the title, and got their followers to address them by it. See on Matthew 19:3.

***One is your Master***— Instead of *καθηγητης*, guide or leader, (the common reading here, and which occurs in Matthew 23:10,) the famous Vatican MS., upwards of fifty others, and most of the ancient versions, read *διδασκαλος*, master. The most eminent critics approve of this reading and, independently of the very respectable authority by which it is supported, it is evident that this reading is more consistent with the context than the other, - Be not ye called MASTERS, for one is your MASTER.

***Even Christ***— Griesbach has left this out of the text, because it is wanting in many of the most excellent MSS., versions, and fathers. Mill and Bengel approve of the omission. It might have been brought into this verse from Matthew 23:10. Our Lord probably alludes to Isaiah 54:13, All thy children shall be taught of the Lord.

***Ye are brethren.***— No one among you is higher than another, or can possibly have from me any jurisdiction over the rest. Ye are, in this respect, perfectly equal.

**Verse 9. *Call no man your FATHER***— Our Lord probably alludes to the AB, or father of the Sanhedrin, who was the next after the nasi, or president. See on Matthew 20:21. By which he gives his disciples to understand that he would have no SECOND, after himself, established in his Church, of which he alone was the head; and that perfect equality must subsist among them.

**Verse 10. *Neither be ye called masters***— *καθηγηται*, leaders. God is in all these respects jealous of his honor. To him alone it belongs to guide and lead his Church, as well as to govern and defend it. Jesus is the sole teacher of righteousness. It is he alone, (who is the word, light, and eternal truth,) that can illuminate every created mind; and who, as Savior and Redeemer, speaks to every heart by his Spirit.

Though the title of Rabbi, mentioned above, was comparatively recent in the time of our Lord, yet it was in great vogue, as were the others-father and master, mentioned in this and the following verse: some had all three titles, for thus in Bab. Maccoth, fol. 24. It is feigned,” says Dr. Lightfoot,

“that when King Jehosaphat saw a disciple of the wise men, he rose up out of his throne, and embraced him, and said, אֲבִי רַבִּי מֹרִי מֹרִי אֲבִי, Abbi, Abbi! Rabbi, Rabbi! Mori, Mori!-Father, Father! Rabbi, Rabbi! Master, Master!” Here then are the three titles which, in Matthew 23:7, 8, 10, our blessed Lord condemns; and these were titles that the Jewish doctors greatly affected.

**Verse 11. *Your servant.***— δῆακονος, deacon. See on Matthew 20:26.

**Verse 12. *Whosoever shall exalt himself, etc.***— The way to arrive at the highest degree of dignity, in the sight of God, is by being willing to become the servant of all. Nothing is more hateful in his sight than pride; to bring it into everlasting contempt, God was manifest in the flesh. He who was in the likeness of God took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man, and humbled himself unto death. After this, can God look upon any proud man without abasing him? Spiritual lordship and domination, ecclesiastical luxury, pomp, and pride, must be an abhorrence in the sight of that God who gave the above advices to his followers.

Another lesson, which our blessed Lord teaches here, is, that no man is implicitly to receive the sayings, doctrines, and decisions of any man, or number of men, in the things which concern the interests of his immortal soul. Christ, his Spirit, and his word, are the only infallible teachers. Every man who wishes to save his soul must search the Scriptures, by prayer and faith. Reader, take counsel with the pious; hear the discourses of the wise and holy: but let the book of God ultimately fix thy creed.

**Verse 13. — 14. *Wo unto you, scribes***— I think the fourteenth and thirteenth verses should be transposed. This transposition is authorized by some of the best MSS., versions, and fathers. The fourteenth is wanting in the BDL., and in many others of inferior note, as well as in several of the versions. Griesbach has left it out of the text, in his first edition; I hesitated, and left it in, thus transposed. I am happy to find that a more extensive collation of MSS., etc., afforded proof to that eminent critic that it should be restored to its place. In the second edition, he has transposed the two, just as I had done. The fifteenth reads best after the thirteenth.

**Verse 13. *Ye shut up the kingdom***— As a key by opening a lock gives entrance into a house, etc., so knowledge of the sacred testimonies,

manifested in expounding them to the people, may be said to open the way into the kingdom of heaven. But where men who are termed teachers are destitute of this knowledge themselves, they may be said to shut this kingdom; because they occupy the place of those who should teach, and thus prevent the people from acquiring heavenly knowledge.

In ancient times the rabbins carried a key, which was the symbol or emblem of knowledge. Hence it is written in Semachoth, chap. 8., "When Rab. Samuel the little died, his key and his tablets were hung on his tomb, because he died childless." See Schoettgen.

The kingdom of heaven here means the Gospel of Christ; the Pharisees would not receive it themselves, and hindered the common people as far as they could.

**Verse 14.** See Clarke at "Matthew 23:13.

**Verse 14. *Ye devour widows' houses***— On this subject I am in possession of nothing better than the following note of Dr. Whitby.

"This sect," says Josephus, (Ant. l. xvii. chap. 3,) "pretended to a more exact knowledge of the law, on which account the women were subject to them, as pretending to be dear to God. And when Alexandra obtained the government, (Jewish War, b. I. ch. 4,) they insinuated themselves into her favor, as being the exactest sect of the Jews, and the most exact interpreters of the law, and, abusing her simplicity, did as they listed, remove and dispose, bind and loose, and even cut off men. They were in vogue for their long prayers, which they continued sometimes three hours; that perhaps they sold them, as do the Roman priests their masses, or pretended others should be more acceptable to God for them; and so might spoil devout widows by the gifts or salaries they expected from them. Now this being only a hypocritical pretense of piety, must be hateful to God, and so deserve a greater condemnation."

***Long prayer***— For proofs of long prayers and vain repetitions among Jews, Mohammedans, and heathens, see the notes on Matthew 6:7.

**Verse 15. *Compass sea and land***— A proverbial expression, similar to ours, You leave no stone unturned; intimating that they did all in their power to gain converts, not to God, but to their sect. These we may

suppose were principally sought for among the Gentiles, for the bulk of the Jewish nation was already on the side of the Pharisees.

**Proselyte**— *προσηλυτος*, a stranger, or foreigner; one who is come from his own people and country, to sojourn with another. See the different kinds of proselytes explained in the note on Exodus 12:43.

**The child of hell**— A Hebraism for an excessively wicked person, such as might claim hell for his mother, and the devil for his father.

**Twofold-the child of**— The Greek word *διπλοτερον*, which has generally been translated twofold, *ΚΥΡΚΕ* has demonstrated to mean more deceitful. *απλους* is used by the best Greek writers for simple, sincere, *απλοτης* for simplicity, sincerity; so *διπλους*, deceitful, dissembling, and *διπλον*, hypocrisy, fraudulence, and *διπλοτερον*, more fraudulent, more deceitful, more hypocritical. See also Suidas in *διπλον*.

Dr. Lightfoot, and others, observe, that the proselytes were considered by the Jewish nation as the scabs of the Church, and hindered the coming of the Messiah; and Justin Martyr observes, that “the proselytes did not only disbelieve Christ’s doctrine, but were abundantly more blasphemous against him than the Jews themselves, endeavoring to torment and cut off the Christians wherever they could; they being in this the instruments of the scribes and Pharisees.”

**Verse 16. Whosoever shall swear by the gold**— The covetous man, says one, still gives preference to the object of his lust; gold has still the first place in his heart. A man is to be suspected when he recommends those good works most from which he receives most advantage.

Is bound thereby, i.e. to fulfill his oath.

**Verse 20. Whoso shall swear by the altar**— As an oath always supposes a person who witnesses it, and will punish perjury; therefore, whether they swore by the temple or the gold, (Matthew 23:16,) or by the altar or the gift laid on it, (Matthew 23:18,) the oath necessarily supposes the God of the temple, of the altar, and of the gifts, who witnessed the whole, and would, even in their exempt cases, punish the perjury.

**Verse 21. Whoso shall swear by the temple**— Perhaps it is to this custom of swearing by the temple, that Martial alludes, lib. xi. epist. 95.

Ecce negas, jurasque mihi per templa Tonantis; Non credo; jura, Verpe, per Anchialum.

“Behold, thou deniest, and swearest to me by the temples of Jupiter; I will not credit thee: swear, O Jew, by the temple of Jehovah.” This word probably comes from **יהיכל** heical Yah, the temple of Jehovah. This seems a better derivation than **אלהים אים ח'י** im chai Elohim, as God liveth, though the sound of the latter is nearer to the Latin.

**By him that dwelleth therein.**— The common reading is **κατοικουντι**, dwelleth or INHABITETH, but **κατοικησαντι**, dwelt or DID inhabit, is the reading of CDEFGHKLM, eighty-six others; this reading has been adopted in the editions of Complutum, Colineus, Bengel, and Griesbach. The importance of this reading may be perceived by the following considerations. In the first Jewish temple, God had graciously condescended to manifest himself—he is constantly represented as dwelling between the cherubim, the two figures that stood at each end of the ark of the covenant; between whom, on the mercy seat, the lid of the ark, a splendor of glory was exhibited, which was the symbol and proof of the Divine presence. This the Jews called **שכינה** Shekinah, the habitation of Jehovah. Now the Jews unanimously acknowledge that five things were wanting in the second temple, which were found in the first, viz., 1. The ark; 2. The holy spirit of prophecy; 3. The Urim and Thummim; 4. The sacred fire; and 5. The **שכינה** Shekinah. As the Lord had long before this time abandoned the Jewish temple, and had now made the human nature of Jesus the Shekinah, (see John 1:14, the Logos was made flesh, **εσαρκωσεν**, and made his tabernacle—made the Shekinah,—among us,) our Lord could not, with any propriety, say that the supreme Being did now inhabit the temple; and therefore used a word that hinted to them that God had forsaken their temple, and consequently the whole of that service which was performed in it, and had now opened the new and living way to the holiest by the Messiah. But all this was common swearing; and, whether the subject was true or false, the oath was unlawful. A common swearer is worthy of no credit, when, even in the most solemn manner he takes an oath before a magistrate; he is so accustomed to stake his truth, perhaps even his soul, to things whether true or false, that an oath cannot bind him, and indeed is as little respected by himself as it is by his

neighbor. Common swearing, and the shocking frequency and multiplication of oaths in civil cases, have destroyed all respect for an oath; so that men seldom feel themselves bound by it; and thus it is useless in many cases to require it as a confirmation, in order to end strife or ascertain truth. See the note on Matthew 5:37.

**Verse 23. *Ye pay tithe of mint, etc.***— They were remarkably scrupulous in the performance of all the rites and ceremonies of religion, but totally neglected the soul, spirit, and practice of godliness.

**Judgment**— Acting according to justice and equity towards all mankind. Mercy-to the distressed and miserable. And faith in God as the fountain of all righteousness, mercy, and truth. The scribes and Pharisees neither began nor ended their works in God, nor had they any respect unto his name in doing them. They did them to be seen of men, and they had their reward-human applause.

***These ought ye to have done, etc.***— Our Lord did not object to their paying tithe even of common pot-herbs-this did not affect the spirit of religion; but while they did this and such like, to the utter neglect of justice, mercy, and faith, they showed that they had no religion, and knew nothing of its nature.

**Verse 24. *Blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.***— This clause should be thus translated: Ye strain out the gnat, but ye swallow down the camel. In the common translation, Ye strain AT a gnat, conveys no sense. Indeed, it is likely to have been at first an error of the press, AT for OUT, which, on examination, I find escaped in the edition of 1611, and has been regularly continued since. There is now before me, “The Newe Testament, (both in Englyshe and in Laten,) of Mayster Erasmus translacion, imprynted by Wyllyam Powell, dwellynge in Flete strete: the yere of our Lorde M.CCCCC.XLVII. the fyrste yere of the kynges (Edwd. VI.) moste gracious reygne.” in which the verse stands thus: “Ye blinde gides, which strayne out a gnat, and swalowe a cammel.” It is the same also in Edmund Becke’s Bible, printed in London 1549, and in several others.-Clensynge a gnatte. -MS. Eng. Bib. So Wickliff. Similar to this is the following Arabic proverb [A]. He eats an elephant and is choked by a gnat.

**Verse 25. *Ye make clean the outside***— The Pharisees were exceedingly exact in observing all the washings and purifications prescribed by the law; but paid no attention to that inward purity which was typified by them. A man may appear clean without, who is unclean within; but outward purity will not avail in the sight of God, where inward holiness is wanting.

***Extortion and excess.***— ‘*αρπαγης και ακρασιας*, rapine and intemperance; but instead of *ακρασιας*, intemperance, many of the very best MSS., CEF GHKS, and more than a hundred others, the Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic, Slavonic, with Chrysostorn, Euthym., and Theophylact, have *αδικιας* injustice, which Griesbach has admitted into the text instead of *ακρασιας*. The latter Syriac has both. Several MSS. and versions have *ακαθαρσιας*, uncleanness; others have *πλεονεξιας*, covetousness; some have *πονηριας*, wickedness; and two of the ancients have iniquitate, iniquity. Suppose we put them all together, the character of the Pharisee will not be overcharged. They were full of rapine and intemperance, injustice and uncleanness, covetousness, wickedness, and iniquity.

**Verse 27. *For ye are like***— *παρομοιάζετε*, ye exactly resemble—the parallel is complete.

***Whited sepulchres***— White-washed tombs. As the law considered those unclean who had touched any thing belonging to the dead, the Jews took care to have their tombs white-washed each year, that, being easily discovered, they might be consequently avoided.

**Verse 28. *Even so ye also-appear righteous unto men***— But what will this appearance avail a man, when God sits in judgment upon his soul? Will the fair reputation which he had acquired among men, while his heart was the seat of unrighteousness, screen him from the stroke of that justice which impartially sends all impurity and unholiness into the pit of destruction? No. In the sin that he hath sinned, and in which he hath died, and according to that, shall he be judged and punished; and his profession of holiness only tends to sink him deeper into the lake which burns with unquenchable fire. Reader! see that thy heart be right with God.

**Verse 29. *Ye build the tombs of the prophets***— It appears that, through respect to their memory, they often repaired, and sometimes beautified, the tombs of the prophets. M. Deuteronomy la Valle, in his Journey to the

Holy Land, says, that when he visited the cave of Machpelah, he saw some Jews honoring a sepulchre, for which they have a great veneration, with lighting at it wax candles and burning perfumes. See Harmer, vol. iii. p. 416. And in ditto, p. 424, we are informed that building tombs over those reputed saints, or beautifying those already built, is a frequent custom among the Mohammedans.

**Verse 30. *We would not have been partakers***— They imagined themselves much better than their ancestors; but our Lord, who knew what they would do, uncovers their hearts, and shows them that they are about to be more abundantly vile than all who had ever preceded them.

**Verse 31. *Ye be witnesses***— Ye acknowledge that ye are the children of those murderers, and ye are about to give full proof that ye are not degenerated.

There are many who think that, had they lived in the time of our Lord, they would not have acted towards him as the Jews did. But we can scarcely believe that they who reject his Gospel, trample under foot his precepts, do despite to the Spirit of his grace, love sin, and hate his followers, would have acted otherwise to him than the murdering Jews, had they lived in the same times.

**Verse 32. *Fill ye up then***— Notwithstanding the profession you make, ye will fill up the measure of your fathers—will continue to walk in their way, accomplish the fullness of every evil purpose by murdering me; and then, when the measure of your iniquity is full, vengeance shall come upon you to the uttermost, as it did on your rebellious ancestors. The 31st verse should be read in a parenthesis, and then the 32d will appear to be, what it is, an Inference from the 30th.

Ye will fill up, or fill ye up—*πληρωσατε* but it is manifest that the imperative is put here for the future, a thing quite consistent with the Hebrew idiom, and frequent in the Scriptures. So John 2:19, Destroy this temple, etc., i.e. Ye will destroy or pull down this temple, and I will rebuild it in three days—Ye will crucify me, and I will rise again the third day. Two good MSS. have the word in the future tense: and my old MS. Bible has it in the present—Genesis (ye) fulfillen the mesure of youre (your) fadris.



**Verse 33. *Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers***— What a terrible stroke!-Ye are serpents, and the offspring of serpents. This refers to Matthew 23:31: they confessed that they were the children of those who murdered the prophets; and they are now going to murder Christ and his followers, to show that they have not degenerated-an accursed seed, of an accursed breed. My old MS. translates this passage oddly-Gee serpentis, fruytis of burrownyngis of eddris that sleen her modris. There seems to be here an allusion to a common opinion, that the young of the adder or viper which are brought forth alive eat their way through the womb of their mothers. Hence that ancient enigma attributed to LACTANTIUS:-

*Non possum nasci, si non occidero matrem  
Occidi matrem: sed me manet exitus idem  
Id mea mors faciet, quod jam mea fecit origo  
Cael. Firm. Symposium, N. xv*

*I never can be born, nor see the day,  
Till through my parent's womb I eat my way  
Her I have slain; like her must yield my breath;  
For that which gave me life, shall cause my death*

Every person must see with what propriety this was applied to the Jews, who were about to murder the very person who gave them their being and all their blessings.

**Verse 34. *Wherefore***— To show how my prediction, Ye will fill up the measure of your fathers, shall be verified, Behold, I send (I am just going to commission them) prophets, etc. and some ye will kill, (with legal process,) and some ye will crucify, pretend to try and find guilty, and deliver them into the hands of the Romans, who shall, through you, thus put them to death. See on Luke 11:49. By prophets, wise men, and scribes, our Lord intends the evangelists, apostles, deacons, etc., who should be employed in proclaiming his Gospel: men who should equal the ancient prophets, their wise men, and scribes, in all the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit.

**Verse 35. *Upon the earth***— *ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς*, upon this land, meaning probably the land of Judea; for thus the word is often to be understood. The national punishment of all the innocent blood which had been shed in the land, shall speedily come upon you, from the blood of Abel the just, the first prophet and preacher of righteousness, Hebrews 11:4; 2 Peter 2:5,

to the blood of Zachariah, the son of Barachiah. It is likely that our Lord refers to the murder of Zachariah, mentioned 2 Chronicles 24:20, who said to the people, Why transgress ye the commandments of God, so that ye cannot prosper? Because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath forsaken you. And they conspired against him and stoned him-at the commandment of the king, in the court of the house of the Lord. And when he died, he said, The Lord look upon and require it: 2 Chronicles 24:21, 22.

But it is objected, that this Zachariah was called the son of Jehoiada, and our Lord calls this one the son of Barachiah. Let it be observed,

1. That double names were frequent among the Jews; and sometimes the person was called by one, sometimes by the other. Compare 1 Samuel 9:1, with 1 Chronicles 8:33, where it appears that the father of Kish had two names, Abiel and Ner. So Matthew is called Levi; compare Matthew 9:9, with Mark 2:14. So Peter was also called Simon, and Lebbeus was called Thaddeus. Matthew 10:2, 3.

2. That Jerome says that, in the Gospel of the Nazarenes, it was Jehoiada, instead of Barachiah.

3. That Jehoiada and Barachiah have the very same meaning, the praise or blessing of Jehovah.

4. That as the Lord required the blood of Zachariah so fully that in a year all the princes of Judah and Jerusalem were destroyed by the Syrians, and Joash, who commanded the murder, slain by his own servants, 2 Chronicles 24:23-25, and their state grew worse and worse, till at last the temple was burned, and the people carried into captivity by Nebuzaradan:-so it should also be with the present race. The Lord would, after the crucifixion of Christ, visit upon them the murder of all those righteous men, that their state should grow worse and worse, till at last the temple should be destroyed, and they finally ruined by the Romans. See this prediction in the next chapter: and see Dr. Whitby concerning Zachariah, the son of Barachiah.

Some think that our Lord refers, in the spirit of prophecy, to the murder of Zacharias, son of Baruch, a rich Jew, who was judged, condemned, and massacred in the temple by Idumean zealots, because he was rich, a lover of liberty, and a hater of wickedness. They gave him a mock trial; and,

when no evidence could be brought against him of his being guilty of the crime they laid to his charge, viz. a design to betray the city to the Romans, and his judges had pronounced him innocent, two of the stoutest of the zealots fell upon him and slew him in the middle of the temple. See Josephus, WAR, b. iv. chap. 5. s. 5. See Crevier, vol. vi. p. 172, History of the Roman Emperors. Others imagine that Zachariah, one of the minor prophets, is meant, who might have been massacred by the Jews; for, though the account is not come down to us, our Lord might have it from a well known tradition in those times. But the former opinion is every way the most probable.

***Between the temple and the altar.***— That is, between the sanctuary and the altar of burnt-offerings.

**Verse 36. *Shall come upon this generation***— *ἐπὶ τὴν γενεάν ταύτην*, upon this race of men, viz. the Jews. This phrase often occurs in this sense in the evangelists.

**Verse 37. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem***— 1. It is evident that our blessed Lord seriously and earnestly wished the salvation of the Jews. 2. That he did every thing that could be done, consistently with his own perfections, and the liberty of his creatures, to effect this. 3. That his tears over the city, Luke 19:41, sufficiently evince his sincerity. 4. That these persons nevertheless perished. And 5. That the reason was, they would not be gathered together under his protection: therefore wrath, i.e. punishment, came upon them to the uttermost. From this it is evident that there have been persons whom Christ wished to save, and bled to save, who notwithstanding perished, because they would not come unto him, John 5:40. The metaphor which our Lord uses here is a very beautiful one. When the hen sees a beast of prey coming, she makes a noise to assemble her chickens, that she may cover them with her wings from the danger. The Roman eagle is about to fall upon the Jewish state-nothing can prevent this but their conversion to God through Christ-Jesus cries throughout the land, publishing the Gospel of reconciliation-they would not assemble, and the Roman eagle came and destroyed them. The hen's affection to her brood is so very strong as to become proverbial. The following beautiful Greek epigram, taken from the Anthologia, affords a very fine illustration of this text.

χειμεριαῖς νιφαδεσσι παλυνομενα τιθας ορνις  
 τεκνοῖς ευναιας αμφεχεε πτερυγας  
 μεσφα μεν ουρανιον κρυος ωλεσεν η γαρ εμεινεν  
 αιθερος ουρανιων αντιπαλος νεφεων  
 προκνη και μεδεια, κατ' αιδος αιδεσθητε,  
 μητερες, ορνιθων εργα διδασκομεναι  
 Anthol. lib. i. Titus. 87: edit. Bosch. p. 344

*Beneath her fostering wing the HEN defends  
 Her darling offspring, while the snow descends;  
 Throughout the winter's day unmoved defies  
 The chilling fleeces and inclement skies;  
 Till, vanquish'd by the cold and piercing blast,  
 True to her charge, she perishes at last!  
 O Fame! to hell this fowl's affection bear;  
 Tell it to Progne and Medea there:-  
 To mothers such as those the tale unfold,  
 And let them blush to hear the story told!-T. G*

This epigram contains a happy illustration, not only of our Lord's simile, but also of his own conduct. How long had these thankless and unholy people been the objects of his tenderest cares! For more than 2000 years, they engrossed the most peculiar regards of the most beneficent Providence; and during the three years of our Lord's public ministry, his preaching and miracles had but one object and aim, the instruction and salvation of this thoughtless and disobedient people. For their sakes, he who was rich became poor, that they through his poverty might be rich:- for their sakes, he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross! HE died, that THEY might not perish, but have everlasting life. Thus, to save their life, he freely abandoned his own.

**Verse 38. Behold, your house**—ο οἶκος, the temple:-this is certainly what is meant. It was once the Lord's temple, God's OWN house; but now he says, YOUR temple or house-to intimate that God had abandoned it. See the note on Matthew 23:21; see also on Luke 13:35.

**Verse 39. Ye shall not see me**—I will remove my Gospel from you, and withdraw my protection.

**Till ye shall say, Blessed**—Till after the fullness of the Gentiles is brought in, when the word of life shall again be sent unto you; then will ye rejoice,

and bless, and praise him that cometh in the name of the Lord, with full and final salvation for the lost sheep of the house of Israel. See Romans 11:26, 27.

Our Lord plainly foresaw that, in process of time, a spiritual domination would arise in his Church; and, to prevent its evil influence, he leaves the strong warnings against it which are contained in the former part of this chapter. As the religion of Christ is completely spiritual, and the influence by which it is produced and maintained must come from heaven; therefore, there could be no master or head but himself: for as the Church (the assemblage of true believers) is his body, all its intelligence, light, and life, must proceed from him alone. Our forefathers noted this well; and this was one of the grand arguments by which they overturned the papal pretensions to supremacy in this country. In a note on Matthew 23:9, in a Bible published by Edmund Becke in 1549, the 2nd of Edward VI., we find the following words:-Call no man your father upon the earth. Here is the Bishoppe of Rome declared a plaine Antichrist, in that he woulde be called the most holye father; and that all Christen men shoulde acknowledge hym for no lesse then their spyritual father, notwithstandinge these playne wordes of Christe. It is true, nothing can be plainer; and yet, in the face of these commands, the pope has claimed the honor; and millions of men have been so stupid as to concede it. May those days of darkness, tyranny, and disgrace, never return!

From the 13th to the 39th verse, our Lord pronounces eight woes, or rather pathetic declarations, against the scribes and Pharisees. 1. For their unwillingness to let the common people enjoy the pure word of God, or its right explanation: Ye shut up the kingdom, etc., Matthew 23:13.

2. For their rapacity, and pretended sanctity in order to secure their secular ends: Ye devour widows houses, etc., Matthew 23:14.

3. For their pretended zeal to spread the kingdom of God by making proselytes, when they had no other end in view than forming instruments for the purposes of their oppression and cruelty: Ye compass sea and land, etc., Matthew 23:15.

4. For their bad doctrine and false interpretations of the Scriptures, and their dispensing with the most solemn oaths and vows at pleasure: Ye

blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing, etc., Matthew 23:16-22.

5. For their superstition in scrupulously attending to little things, and things not commanded, and omitting matters of great importance, the practice of which God had especially enjoined: Ye pay tithe of mint and cummin, etc., Matthew 23:23, 24.

6. For their hypocrisy, pretended saintship, and endeavoring to maintain decency in their outward conduct, while they had no other object in view than to deceive the people, and make them acquiesce in their oppressive measures: Ye make clean the outside of the cup, Matthew 23:25, 26.

7. For the depth of their inward depravity and abomination, having nothing good, fair, or supportable, but the mere outside.-Most hypocrites and wicked men have some good: but these were radically and totally evil: Ye are like unto whited sepulchres-within full-of all uncleanness, Matthew 23:27, 28.

8. For their pretended concern for the holiness of the people, which proceeded no farther than to keep them free from such pollutions as they might accidentally and innocently contract, by casually stepping on the place where a person had been buried: and for their affected regret that their fathers had killed the prophets, while themselves possessed and cultivated the same murderous inclinations: Ye-garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been, etc., Matthew 23:29, 30.

It is amazing with what power and authority our blessed Lord reproves this bad people. This was the last discourse they ever heard from him; and it is surprising, considering their wickedness, that they waited even for a mock trial, and did not rise up at once and destroy him. But the time was not yet come in which he was to lay down his life, for no man could take it from him.

While he appears in this last discourse with all the authority of a lawgiver and judge, he at the same time shows the tenderness and compassion of a friend and a father: he beholds their awful state-his eye affects his heart, and he weeps over them! Were not the present hardness and final perdition of these ungodly men entirely of themselves? Could Jesus, as the Supreme God, have fixed their reprobation from all eternity by any necessitating

decree; and yet weep over the unavoidable consequences of his own sovereign determinations? How absurd as well as shocking is the thought! This is Jewish exclusion: *Credat Judaeus Apella-non ego*.

## CHAPTER 24

*Christ foretells the destruction of the temple, 1, 2. His disciples inquire when and what shall be the sign of this destruction, 3. Our Lord answers, and enumerates them—false Christs, 5. Wars, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes, 6-8. Persecution of his followers, 9. Apostasy from the truth, 10-13. General spread of the Gospel, 14. He foretells the investment of the city by the Romans, 15-18. The calamities of those times, 19-22. Warns them against seduction by false prophets, 23-26. The suddenness of these calamities, 27, 28. Total destruction of the Jewish polity, 29-31. The whole illustrated by the parable of the fig-tree, 32, 33. The certainty of the event, though the time is concealed, 34-36. Careless state of the people, 37-41. The necessity of watchfulness and fidelity, illustrated by the parable of the two servants, one faithful, the other wicked, 42-51*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 24

This chapter contains a prediction of the utter destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem, and the subversion of the whole political constitution of the Jews; and is one of the most valuable portions of the new covenant Scriptures, with respect to the evidence which it furnishes of the truth of Christianity. Every thing which our Lord foretold should come on the temple, city, and people of the Jews, has been fulfilled in the most correct and astonishing manner; and witnessed by a writer who was present during the whole, who was himself a Jew, and is acknowledged to be an historian of indisputable veracity in all those transactions which concern the destruction of Jerusalem. Without having designed it, he has written a commentary on our Lord's words, and shown how every tittle was punctually fulfilled, though he knew nothing of the Scripture which contained this remarkable prophecy. His account will be frequently referred to in the course of these notes; as also the admirable work of Bishop Newton on the prophecies.

**Verse 1.** *And Jesus went out, and departed from, the temple*— Or, And Jesus, going out of the temple, was going away. This is the arrangement of



the words in several eminent manuscripts, versions, and fathers; and is much clearer than that in the common translation. The Jews say the temple was built of white and green-spotted marble. See Lightfoot. Josephus says the stones were white and strong; fifty feet long, twenty-four broad, and sixteen thick. Antiq. b. 15. c. xi. See Mark 13:1.

**Verse 2. *See ye not all these things?***— The common text, and many manuscripts, have *ου βλέπετε*, Do ye not see, or consider? But the negative particle is omitted by several excellent manuscripts, by the Coptic, Sahidic, Armenian, Ethiopic, Slavonic, Vulgate, and Itala versions, and by some of the primitive fathers, who all read it thus, see, or consider all these things.

***There shall not be left here one stone***— These seem to have been the last words he spoke as he left the temple, into which he never afterwards entered; and, when he got to the mount of Olives, he renewed the discourse. From this mount, on which our Lord and his disciples now sat, the whole of the city, and particularly the temple, were clearly seen. This part of our Lord's prediction was fulfilled in the most literal manner. Josephus says, War, book vii. c. 1: "Caesar gave orders that they should now demolish the whole city and temple, *τε πολιν απασαν και τον νεων κατασκεπτειν*, except the three towers, Phaselus, Hippicus, and Mariamne, and a part of the western wall, and these were spared; but, for all the rest of the wall, it was laid so completely even with the ground, by those who dug it up to the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited." Maimonides, a Jewish rabbin, in Tract. Taanith, c. 4, says, "That the very foundations of the temple were digged up, according to the Roman custom." His words are these: "On that ninth day of the month Ab, fatal for vengeance, the wicked Turnus Rufus, of the children of Edom, ploughed up the temple, and the places round about it, that the saying might be fulfilled, Zion shall be ploughed as a field." This Turnus, or rather Terentius Rufus, was left general of the army by Titus, with commission, as the Jews suppose, to destroy the city and the temple, as Josephus observes.

The temple was destroyed 1st. Justly; because of the sins of the Jews. 2dly. Mercifully; to take away from them the occasion of continuing in Judaism: and 3dly. Mysteriously; to show that the ancient sacrifices were

abolished, and that the whole Jewish economy was brought to an end, and the Christian dispensation introduced.

**Verse 3. *Tell us, when shall these things be?***— There appear to be three questions asked here by the disciples. 1st. When shall these things be? viz. the destruction of the city, temple, and Jewish state. 2dly. What shall be the sign of thy coming? viz. to execute these judgments upon them, and to establish thy own Church: and 3dly. When shall this world end? When wilt thou come to judge the quick and the dead? But there are some who maintain that these are but three parts of the same question, and that our Lord's answers only refer to the destruction of the Jewish state, and that nothing is spoken here concerning the LAST or judgment day.

***End of the world***— **του αἰῶνος**; or, of the age, viz. the Jewish economy, which is a frequent accommodated meaning of the word **αἰών**, the proper meaning of which is, as Aristotle (Deuteronomy Caelo) observes, ETERNAL. **αἰών**, quasi **αἰεὶ ὦν** continual being: and no words can more forcibly point out eternity than these. See the note on Genesis 21:33.

**Verse 4. *Take heed that no man deceive you.***— The world is full of deceivers, and it is only by taking heed to the counsel of Christ that even his followers can escape being ruined by them. From this to Matthew 24:31, our Lord mentions the signs which should precede his coming.

The FIRST sign is false Christs.

**Verse 5. *For many shall come in my name***— 1. Josephus says, (War, b. ii. c. 13,) that there were many who, pretending to Divine inspiration, deceived the people, leading out numbers of them to the desert, pretending that God would there show them the signs of liberty, meaning redemption from the Roman power: and that an Egyptian false prophet led 30,000 men into the desert, who were almost all cut off by Felix. See Acts 21:38. It was a just judgment for God to deliver up that people into the hands of false Christs who had rejected the true one. Soon after our Lord's crucifixion, Simon Magus appeared, and persuaded the people of Samaria that he was the great power of God, Acts 8:9, 10; and boasted among the Jews that he was the son of God.

2. Of the same stamp and character was also Dositheus, the Samaritan, who pretended that he was the Christ foretold by Moses.

3. About twelve years after the death of our Lord, when Cuspius Fadus was procurator of Judea, arose an impostor of the name of Theudas, who said he was a prophet, and persuaded a great multitude to follow him with their best effects to the river Jordan, which he promised to divide for their passage; and saying these things, says Josephus, he deceived many: almost the very words of our Lord.

4. A few years afterwards, under the reign of Nero, while Felix was procurator of Judea, impostors of this stamp were so frequent that some were taken and killed almost every day. Joshua. Ant. b. xx. c. 4. and 7.

The SECOND sign, wars and commotions.

**Verse 6. *The next signs given by our Lord are wars and rumors of wars, etc.***— These may be seen in Josephus, Ant. b. xviii. c. 9; War, b. ii. c. 10; especially as to the rumors of wars, when Caligula ordered his statue to be set up in the temple of God, which the Jews having refused, had every reason to expect a war with the Romans, and were in such consternation on the occasion that they even neglected to till their land.

**Verse 7. *Nation shall rise against nation***— This portended the dissensions, insurrections and mutual slaughter of the Jews, and those of other nations, who dwelt in the same cities together; as particularly at Caesarea, where the Jews and Syrians contended about the right of the city, which ended there in the total expulsion of the Jews, above 20,000 of whom were slain. The whole Jewish nation being exasperated at this, flew to arms, and burnt and plundered the neighboring cities and villages of the Syrians, making an immense slaughter of the people. The Syrians, in return, destroyed not a less number of the Jews. At Scythopolis they murdered upwards of 13,000. At Ascalon they killed 2,500. At Ptolemais they slew 2000, and made many prisoners. The Tyrians also put many Jews to death, and imprisoned more: the people of Gadara did likewise; and all the other cities of Syria in proportion, as they hated or feared the Jews. As Alexandria the Jews and heathens fought, and 50,000 of the former were slain. The people of Damascus conspired against the Jews of that city, and, assaulting them unarmed, killed 10,000 of them. See Bishop Newton, and Dr. Lardner.

***Kingdom against kingdom***— This portended the open wars of different tetrarchies and provinces against each other. 1st. That of the Jews and Galileans against the Samaritans, for the murder of some Galileans going up to the feast of Jerusalem, while Cumanus was procurator. 2dly. That of the whole nation of the Jews against the Romans and Agrippa, and other allies of the Roman empire; which began when Gessius Florus was procurator. 3dly. That of the civil war in Italy, while Otho and Vitellius were contending for the empire. It is worthy of remark, that the Jews themselves say, “In the time of the Messiah, wars shall be stirred up in the world; nation shall rise against nation, and city against city.” Sohar Kadash. “Again, Rab. Eleasar, the son of Abina, said, When ye see kingdom rising against kingdom, then expect the immediate appearance of the Messiah.” Bereshith Rabba, sect. 42.

The THIRD sign, pestilence and famine.

***It is farther added, that There shall be famines, and pestilences***— There was a famine foretold by Agabus, (Acts 11:28,) which is mentioned by Suetonius, Tacitus, and Eusebius; which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar, and was so severe at Jerusalem that Josephus says (Ant. b. xx. c. 2.) many died for lack of food. Pestilences are the usual attendants of famines: as the scarcity and badness of provisions generally produce epidemic disorders.

The FOURTH sign, earthquakes or popular commotions.

***Earthquakes, in divers places.***— If we take the word σεισμοι from σειω to shake, in the first sense, then it means particularly those popular commotions and insurrections which have already been noted; and this I think to be the true meaning of the word: but if we confine it to earthquakes, there were several in those times to which our Lord refers; particularly one at Crete in the reign of Claudius, one at Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, Samos. See Grotius. One at Rome, mentioned by Tacitus; and one at Laodicea in the reign of Nero, in which the city was overthrown, as were likewise Hierapolis and Colosse. See Tacit. Annal. lib. xii. and lib. xiv. One at Campania, mentioned by Seneca; and one at Rome, in the reign of Galba, mentioned by Suetonius in the life of that emperor. Add to all these, a dreadful one in Judea, mentioned by Josephus (War, b. iv. c. 4.) accompanied by a dreadful tempest, violent winds, vehement showers, and

continual lightnings and thunders; which led many to believe that these things portended some uncommon calamity.

The FIFTH sign, fearful portents.

To these St. Luke adds that there shall be fearful sights and great signs from heaven (Luke 21:11.) Josephus, in his preface to the Jewish war, enumerates these. 1st. A star hung over the city like a sword; and a comet continued a whole year. 2d. The people being assembled at the feast of unleavened bread, at the ninth hour of the night, a great light shone about the altar and the temple, and this continued for half an hour. 3d. At the same feast, a cow led to sacrifice brought forth a lamb in the midst of the temple! 4th. The eastern gate of the temple, which was of solid brass, and very heavy, and could hardly be shut by twenty men, and was fastened by strong bars and bolts, was seen at the sixth hour of the night to open of its own accord! 5th. Before sun-setting there were seen, over all the country, chariots and armies fighting in the clouds, and besieging cities. 6th. At the feast of pentecost, when the priests were going into the inner temple by night, to attend their service, they heard first a motion and noise, and then a voice, as of a multitude, saying, LET US DEPART HENCE! 7th. What Josephus reckons one of the most terrible signs of all was, that one Jesus, a country fellow, four years before the war began, and when the city was in peace and plenty, came to the feast of tabernacles, and ran crying up and down the streets, day and night: “A voice from the east! a voice from the west! a voice from the four winds! a voice against Jerusalem and the temple! a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides! and a voice against all the people!” Though the magistrates endeavored by stripes and tortures to restrain him, yet he still cried, with a mournful voice, “Wo, wo to Jerusalem!” And this he continued to do for several years together, going about the walls and crying with a loud voice: “Wo, wo to the city, and to the people, and to the temple!” and as he added, “Wo, wo to myself!” a stone from some sling or engine struck him dead on the spot! It is worthy of remark that Josephus appeals to the testimony of others, who saw and heard these fearful things. Tacitus, a Roman historian, gives very nearly the same account with that of Josephus. Hist. lib. v.

**Verse 8. *All these are the beginning of sorrows.***—**ωδινων**, travelling pains. The whole land of Judea is represented under the notion of a woman

in grievous travail; but our Lord intimates, that all that had already been mentioned were only the first pangs and throes, and nothing in comparison of that hard and death-bringing labor, which should afterwards take place.

From the calamities of the nation in general, our Lord passes to those of the Christians; and, indeed, the sufferings of his followers were often occasioned by the judgments sent upon the land, as the poor Christians were charged with being the cause of these national calamities, and were cruelly persecuted on that account.

**Verse 9. *Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted***— Rather, Then they will deliver you up to affliction, *εις θλινιν*. By a bold figure of speech, affliction is here personified. They are to be delivered into affliction's own hand, to be harassed by all the modes of inventive torture.

***Ye shall be hated of all nations***— Both Jew and Gentile will unite in persecuting and tormenting you. Perhaps *παντων των εθνων* means all the Gentiles, as in the parallel places in Mark 13:9-11, and in Luke 21:12-15, the Jewish persecution is mentioned distinctly. Ye shall be delivered up to COUNCILS and be beaten in SYNAGOGUES, and ye shall stand before governors and kings for my name's sake-be not anxiously careful beforehand what ye shall speak-for ye are not the speakers, but the Holy Spirit will speak by you-I will give you utterance and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to contradict or resist. We need go no farther than the Acts of the Apostles for the completion of these particulars. Some were delivered to councils, as Peter and John, Acts 4:5. Some were brought before rulers and kings, as Paul before Gallio, Acts 18:12, before Felix, Acts 24, before Festus and Agrippa, Acts 25. Some had utterance and wisdom which their adversaries were not able to resist: so Stephen, Acts 6:10, and Paul, who made even Felix himself tremble, Acts 24:25. Some were imprisoned, as Peter and John, Acts 4:3. Some were beaten, as Paul and Silas, Acts 16:23. Some were put to death, as Stephen, Acts 7:59, and James the brother of John, Acts 12:2. But if we look beyond the book of the Acts of the Apostles, to the bloody persecutions under Nero, we shall find these predictions still more amply fulfilled: in these, numberless Christians fell, besides those two champions of the faith Peter and Paul. And it was, as says Tertullian, *nominis praelium*, a war against the very name of Christ; for he who was called

Christian had committed crime enough, in bearing the name, to be put to death. So true were our Savior's words, that they should be hated of all men for his NAME's sake.

But they were not only to be hated by the Gentiles, but they were to be betrayed by apostates.

**Verse 10. *Then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another***—

To illustrate this point, one sentence out of Tacitus (Annal. l. xv.) will be sufficient, who, speaking of the persecution under Nero, says, At first several were seized, who confessed, and then by THEIR DISCOVERY a great multitude of others were convicted and executed.

**Verse 11. *False prophets***— Also were to be raised up; such as Simon Magus and his followers; and the false apostles complained of by St. Paul, 2 Corinthians 11:13, who were deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. Such also were Hymeneus and Philetus, 2 Timothy 2:17, 18.

**Verse 12. *The love of many shall wax cold***.— By reason of these trials and persecutions from without, and those apostasies and false prophets from within, the love of many to Christ and his doctrine, and to one another, shall grow cold. Some openly deserting the faith, as Matthew 24:10; others corrupting it, as Matthew 24:11; and others growing indifferent about it, Matthew 24:12. Even at this early period there seems to have been a very considerable defection in several Christian Churches; see Galatians 3:1-4; 2 Thessalonians 3:1, etc.; 2 Timothy 1:15.

**Verse 13. *But he that shall endure***— The persecutions that shall come-unto the end; to the destruction of the Jewish polity, without growing cold or apostatizing-shall be saved, shall be delivered in all imminent dangers, and have his soul at last brought to an eternal glory. It is very remarkable that not a single Christian perished in the destruction of Jerusalem, though there were many there when Cestius Gallus invested the city; and, had he persevered in the siege, he would soon have rendered himself master of it; but, when he unexpectedly and unaccountably raised the siege, the Christians took that opportunity to escape. See Eusebius, Hist. Eccles lib. iii. c. 5, and Mr. Reading's note there; and see the note here on Matthew 24:20.

**Verse 14. *And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world***— But, notwithstanding these persecutions, there should be a universal publication of the glad tidings of the kingdom, for a testimony to all nations. God would have the iniquity of the Jews published every where, before the heavy stroke of his judgments should fall upon them; that all mankind, as it were, might be brought as witnesses against their cruelty and obstinacy in crucifying and rejecting the Lord Jesus.

In all the world, *εν ολη τη οικουμενη*. Perhaps no more is meant here than the Roman empire; for it is beyond controversy that *πασαν την οικουμενην*, Luke 2:1, means no more than the whole Roman empire: as a decree for taxation or enrolment from Augustus Caesar could have no influence but in the Roman dominions; but see on Luke 2:1. Tacitus informs us, Annal. l. xv., that, as early as the reign of Nero, the Christians were grown so numerous at Rome as to excite the jealousy of the government; and in other parts they were in proportion. However, we are under no necessity to restrain the phrase to the Roman empire, as, previously to the destruction of Jerusalem, the Gospel was not only preached in the lesser Asia, and Greece, and Italy, the greatest theatres of action then in the world; but was likewise propagated as far north as SCYTHIA; as far south as ETHIOPIA; as far east as PARTHIA and INDIA; and as far west as SPAIN and BRITAIN. On this point, Bishop Newton goes on to say, That there is some probability that the Gospel was preached in the British nations by St. Simon the apostle; that there is much greater probability that it was preached here by St. Paul; and that there is an absolute certainty that it was planted here in the times of the apostles, before the destruction of Jerusalem. See his proofs. Dissert. vol. ii. p. 235, 236. edit. 1758. St. Paul himself speaks, Colossians 1:6, 23, of the Gospel's being come into ALL THE WORLD, and preached TO EVERY CREATURE under heaven. And in his Epistle to the Romans, Romans 10:18, he very elegantly applies to the lights of the Church, what the psalmist said of the lights of heaven. Their sound went into ALL THE EARTH, and their words unto the END of the WORLD. What but the wisdom of God could foretell this? and what but the power of God could accomplish it?

***Then shall the end come.***— When this general publication of the Gospel shall have taken place, then a period shall be put to the whole Jewish economy, by the utter destruction of their city and temple.



**Verse 15. *The abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel***— This abomination of desolation, St. Luke, (Luke 21:20, 21,) refers to the Roman army; and this abomination standing in the holy place is the Roman army besieging Jerusalem; this, our Lord says, is what was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, in the ninth and eleventh chapters of his prophecy; and so let every one who reads these prophecies understand them; and in reference to this very event they are understood by the rabbins. The Roman army is called an abomination, for its ensigns and images, which were so to the Jews. Josephus says, (War, b. vi. chap. 6,) the Romans brought their ensigns into the temple, and placed them over against the eastern gate, and sacrificed to them there. The Roman army is therefore fitly called the abomination, and the abomination which maketh desolate, as it was to desolate and lay waste Jerusalem; and this army besieging Jerusalem is called by St. Mark, Mark 13:14, standing where it ought not, that is, as in the text here, the holy place; as not only the city, but a considerable compass of ground about it, was deemed holy, and consequently no profane persons should stand on it.

**Verse 16. *Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains***— This counsel was remembered and wisely followed by the Christians afterwards. Eusebius and Epiphanius say, that at this juncture, after Cestius Gallus had raised the siege, and Vespasian was approaching with his army, all who believed in Christ left Jerusalem and fled to Pella, and other places beyond the river Jordan; and so they all marvellously escaped the general shipwreck of their country: not one of them perished. See on Matthew 24:13.

**Verse 17. *Let him which is on the house top***— The houses of the Jews, as well as those of the ancient Greeks and Romans, were flat-roofed, and had stairs on the outside, by which persons might ascend and descend without coming into the house. In the eastern walled cities, these flat-roofed houses usually formed continued terraces from one end of the city to the other; which terraces terminated at the gates. He, therefore, who is walking on the house top, let him not come down to take any thing out of his house; but let him instantly pursue his course along the tops of the houses, and escape out at the city gate as fast as he can.

**Any thing**— Instead of **τι**, any thing, we should read **τα**, the things; which reading is supported by all the best MSS., versions, and fathers.

**Verse 18. *Neither let him which is in the field return back***— Because when once the army of the Romans sits down before the city, there shall be no more any possibility of escape, as they shall never remove till Jerusalem be destroyed.

**Verse 19. *And wo unto them (alas! for them) that are with child, etc.***— For such persons are not in a condition to make their escape; neither can they bear the miseries of the siege. Josephus says the houses were full of women and children that perished by the famine; and that the mothers snatched the food even out of their own children's mouths. See WAR, b. v. c. 10. But he relates a more horrid story than this, of one Mary, the daughter of Eliezar, illustrious for her family and riches, who, being stripped and plundered of all her goods and provisions by the soldiers, in hunger, rage, and despair, killed and boiled her own sucking child, and had eaten one half of him before it was discovered. This shocking story is told, WAR, b. vi. c. 3, with several circumstances of aggravation.

**Verse 20. *But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter***— For the hardness of the season, the badness of the roads, the shortness of the days, and the length of the nights, will all be great impediments to your flight. Rabbi Tanchum observes, “that the favor of God was particularly manifested in the destruction of the first temple, in not obliging the Jews to go out in the winter, but in the summer.” See the place in Lightfoot.

***Neither on the Sabbath-day***— That you may not raise the indignation of the Jews by travelling on that day, and so suffer that death out of the city which you had endeavored to escape from within. Besides, on the Sabbath-days the Jews not only kept within doors, but the gates of all the cities and towns in every place were kept shut and barred; so that their flight should be on a Sabbath, they could not expect admission into any place of security in the land.

Our Lord had ordered his followers to make their escape from Jerusalem when they should see it encompassed with armies; but how could this be done? God took care to provide amply for this. In the twelfth year of Nero, Cestius Gallus, the president of Syria, came against Jerusalem with a

powerful army. He might, says Josephus, WAR, b. ii. c. 19, have assaulted and taken the city, and thereby put an end to the war; but without any just reason, and contrary to the expectation of all, he raised the siege and departed. Josephus remarks, that after Cestius Gallus had raised the siege, “many of the principal Jewish people, πολλοι των επιφανων ιουδαιων, forsook the city, as men do a sinking ship.” Vespasian was deputed in the room of Cestius Gallus, who, having subdued all the country, prepared to besiege Jerusalem, and invested it on every side. But the news of Nero’s death, and soon after that of Galba, and the disturbances that followed, and the civil wars between Otho and Vitellius, held Vespasian and his son Titus in suspense. Thus the city was not actually besieged in form till after Vespasian was confirmed in the empire, and Titus was appointed to command the forces in Judea. It was in those incidental delays that the Christians, and indeed several others, provided for their own safety, by flight. In Luke 19:43, our Lord says of Jerusalem, Thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side. Accordingly, Titus, having made several assaults without success, resolved to surround the city with a wall, which was, with incredible speed, completed in three days! The wall was thirty-nine furlongs in length, and was strengthened with thirteen forts at proper distances, so that all hope of safety was cut off; none could make his escape from the city, and no provisions could be brought into it. See Josephus, WAR, book v. c. 12.

**Verse 21. *For then shall be great tribulation***—No history can furnish us with a parallel to the calamities and miseries of the Jews:—rapine, murder, famine, and pestilence within: fire and sword, and all the horrors of war, without. Our Lord wept at the foresight of these calamities; and it is almost impossible for any humane person to read the relation of them in Josephus without weeping also. St. Luke, Luke 21:22, calls these the days of vengeance, that all things which were written might be fulfilled. 1. These were the days in which all the calamities predicted by Moses, Joel, Daniel, and other prophets, as well as those predicted by our Savior, met in one common center, and were fulfilled in the most terrible manner on that generation. 2. These were the days of vengeance in another sense, as if God’s judgments had certain periods and revolutions; for it is remarkable that the temple was burned by the Romans in the same month, and on the

same day of the month, on which it had been burned by the Babylonians. See Josephus, WAR, b. vi. c. 4.

**Verse 22. *Except those days should be shortened***— Josephus computes the number of those who perished in the siege at eleven hundred thousand, besides those who were slain in other places, WAR, b. vi. c. 9; and if the Romans had gone on destroying in this manner, the whole nation of the Jews would, in a short time, have been entirely extirpated; but, for the sake of the elect, the Jews, that they might not be utterly destroyed, and for the Christians particularly, the days were shortened. These, partly through the fury of the zealots on one hand, and the hatred of the Romans on the other; and partly through the difficulty of subsisting in the mountains without houses or provisions, would in all probability have been all destroyed, either by the sword or famine, if the days had not been shortened. The besieged themselves helped to shorten those days by their divisions and mutual slaughters; and by fatally deserting their strong holds, where they never could have been subdued, but by famine alone. So well fortified was Jerusalem, and so well provided to stand a siege, that the enemy without could not have prevailed, had it not been for the factions and seditions within. When Titus was viewing the fortifications after the taking of the city, he could not help ascribing his success to God. “We have fought,” said he, “with God on our side; and it is God who pulled the Jews out of these strong holds: for what could machines or the hands of men avail against such towers as these?” WAR, b. vi. c. 9.

**Verse 23. *Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo here is Christ***— Our Lord had cautioned his disciples against false Christs and prophets before, Matthew 24:11; but he seems here to intimate that there would be especial need to attend to this caution about the time of the siege. And in fact many such impostors did arise about that time, promising deliverance from God; and the lower the Jews were reduced, the more disposed they were to listen to such deceivers. Like a man drowning, they were willing to catch even at a straw, while there was any prospect of being saved. But as it was to little purpose for a man to take upon him the character of the Christ, without miracles to avouch his Divine mission, so it was the common artifice of these impostors to show signs and wonders, **σημεία και τέρατα**; the very words used by Christ in this prophecy, and by Josephus in his history: ANT. b. xx. c. 7. Among these Simon Magus, and

Dositheus, mentioned before; and Barcocab, who, St. Jerome says, pretended to vomit flames. And it is certain these and some others were so dexterous in imitating miraculous works that they deceived many; and such were their works, that if the elect, the chosen persons, the Christians, had not had the fullest evidence of the truth of Christ's mission and miracles, they must have been deceived too: but, having had these proofs, they could not possibly be deceived by these impostors. This is simply the meaning of this place; and it is truly astonishing that it should be brought as a proof for the doctrine (whether true or false is at present out of the question) of the necessary and eternal perseverance of the saints! How abundant the Jews were in magic, divination, sorcery, incantation, etc., see proved by Dr. Lightfoot on this place.

**Verse 25. *Behold, I have told you before.***— That is, I have forewarned you.

**Verse 26. *If they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert***— Is it not worthy of remark that our Lord not only foretold the appearance of these impostors, but also the manner and circumstances of their conduct? Some he mentions as appearing in the desert. Josephus says, ANT. b. xx. c. 7, and WAR, book ii. c. 13: That many impostors and cheats persuaded the people to follow them to the desert, promising to show them signs and wonders done by the providence of God, is well attested. An Egyptian false prophet, mentioned by Josephus, ANT. b. xx. c. 7, and in the Acts, Acts 21:38, led out into the DESERT four thousand men, who were murderers, but these were all taken or destroyed by Felix. Another promised salvation to the people, if they would follow him to the DESERT, and he was destroyed by Festus, ANT. b. xx. c. 7. Also, one Jonathan, a weaver, persuaded a number to follow him to the DESERT, but he was taken and burnt alive by Vespasian. See WAR, b. vii. c. 11.

As some conducted their deluded followers to the DESERT, so did others to the secret chambers. Josephus mentions a false prophet, WAR, b. vi. c. 5, who declared to the people in the city, that God commanded them to go up into the temple, and there they should receive the signs of deliverance. A multitude of men, women, and children, went up accordingly; but,

instead of deliverance, the place was set on fire by the Romans, and 6,000 perished miserably in the flames, or in attempting to escape them.

**Verse 27. *For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west***— It is worthy of remark that our Lord, in the most particular manner, points out the very march of the Roman army: they entered into Judea on the EAST, and carried on their conquest WESTWARD, as if not only the extensiveness of the ruin, but the very route which the army would take, were intended in the comparison of the lightning issuing from the east, and shining to the west.

**Verse 28. *For wheresoever the carcass is***— *πτωμα*, the dead carcass. The Jewish nation, which was morally and judicially dead.

***There will the eagles***— The Roman armies, called so partly from their strength and fierceness, and partly from the figure of these animals which was always wrought on their ensigns, or even in brass, placed on the tops of their ensign-staves. It is remarkable that the Roman fury pursued these wretched men wheresoever they were found. They were a dead carcass doomed to be devoured; and the Roman eagles were the commissioned devourers. See the pitiful account in Josephus, WAR, b. vii. c. 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, and 11.

**Verse 29. *Immediately after the tribulation, etc.***— Commentators generally understand this, and what follows, of the end of the world and Christ's coming to judgment: but the word immediately shows that our Lord is not speaking of any distant event, but of something immediately consequent on calamities already predicted: and that must be the destruction of Jerusalem. "The Jewish heaven shall perish, and the sun and moon of its glory and happiness shall be darkened-brought to nothing. The sun is the religion of the Church; the moon is the government of the state; and the stars are the judges and doctors of both. Compare Isaiah 13:10; Ezekiel 32:7, 8, etc." Lightfoot.

In the prophetic language, great commotions upon earth are often represented under the notion of commotions and changes in the heavens:-

The fall of Babylon is represented by the stars and constellations of heaven withdrawing their light, and the sun and moon being darkened. See Isaiah 13:9, 10.

The destruction of Egypt, by the heaven being covered, the sun enveloped with a cloud, and the moon withholding her light. Ezekiel 32:7, 8.

The destruction of the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes is represented by casting down some of the host of heaven, and the stars to the ground. See Daniel 8:10.

And this very destruction of Jerusalem is represented by the Prophet Joel, Joel 2:30, 31, by showing wonders in heaven and in earth-darkening the sun, and turning the moon into blood. This general mode of describing these judgments leaves no room to doubt the propriety of its application in the present case.

The falling of stars, i.e. those meteors which are called falling stars by the common people, was deemed an omen of evil times. The heathens have marked this:-

*Saepe etiam stellas, vento impendente videbis  
Praecipites coelo labi, noctisque per umbram  
Flammarum longos a tergo albescere tractus  
VIRG. Geor. i. ver. 365*

*And oft before tempestuous winds arise  
The seeming stars fall headlong from the skies,  
And, shooting through the darkness, gild the night  
With sweeping glories, and long trails of light  
DRYDEN*

Again the same poet thus sings:-

*SOL tibi signa dabit: solem quis dicere falsum Audeat?  
Ille etiam coecos instare tumultus  
Saepe monet: fraudemque et operata tumescere bella  
Ille etiam extincto miseratus Caesare Romam,  
Cum caput obscura nitidum ferrugine textit,  
Impiaque aeternam timuerunt saecula noctem  
Ibid. ver. 462*

*The sun reveals the secrets of the sky,  
And who dares give the source of light the lie?  
The change of empires often he declares,  
Fierce tumults, hidden treasons, open wars  
He first the fate of Caesar did foretell,  
And pitied Rome, when Rome in Caesar fell:  
In iron clouds concealed the public light,  
And impious mortals found eternal night*

**Verse 30. *Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man***— The plain meaning of this is, that the destruction of Jerusalem will be such a remarkable instance of Divine vengeance, such a signal manifestation of Christ's power and glory, that all the Jewish tribes shall mourn, and many will, in consequence of this manifestation of God, be led to acknowledge Christ and his religion. By *της γης*, of the land, in the text, is evidently meant here, as in several other places, the land of Judea and its tribes, either its then inhabitants, or the Jewish people wherever found.

**Verse 31. *He shall send his angels***— *τους αγγελους*, his messengers, the apostles, and their successors in the Christian ministry.

***With a great sound of a trumpet***— Or, a loud-sounding trumpet—the earnest affectionate call of the Gospel of peace, life, and salvation.

***Shall gather together his elect***— The Gentiles, who were now chosen or elected, in place of the rebellious, obstinate Jews, according to Our Lord's prediction, Matthew 8:11,12, and Luke 13:28,29. For the children of the kingdom, (the Jews who were born with a legal right to it, but had now finally forfeited that right by their iniquities) should be thrust out. It is worth serious observation, that the Christian religion spread and prevailed mightily after this period: and nothing contributed more to the success of the Gospel than the destruction of Jerusalem happening in the very time and manner, and with the very circumstances, so particularly foretold by our Lord. It was after this period that the kingdom of Christ began, and his reign was established in almost every part of the world.

To St. Matthew's account, St. Luke adds, Luke 21:24, They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shalt be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. The number of those who fell by the sword was very great. ELEVEN HUNDRED THOUSAND perished during the siege. Many were slain at other places, and at other times. By the commandment of Florus, the first author of the war, there were slain at Jerusalem 3,600, Joshua. WAR, b. ii. c. 14. By the inhabitants of Caesarea, above 20,000. At Scythopolis, above 13,000. At Ascalon, 2,500. At Ptolemais, 2,000. At Alexandria, 50,000. At Joppa, when taken by Cestius Gallus, 8,400. In a



mountain called Asamon, near Sepporis, above 2,000. At Damascus, 10,000. In a battle with the Romans at Ascalon, 10,000. In an ambushade near the same place, 8,000. At Japha, 15,000. Of the Samaritans, on Mount Gerizim, 11,600. At Jotapa, 40,000. At Joppa, when taken by Vespasian, 4,200. At Tarichea, 6,500. And after the city was taken, 1,200. At Gamala, 4,000, besides 5,000 who threw themselves down a precipice. Of those who fled with John, of Gischala, 6,000. Of the Gadarenes, 15,000 slain, besides countless multitudes drowned. In the village of Idumea, above 10,000 slain. At Gerasa, 1,000. At Machaerus, 1,700. In the wood of Jarden, 3,000. In the castle of Masada, 960. In Cyrene, by Catullus the governor, 3,000. Besides these, many of every age, sex, and condition, were slain in the war, who are not reckoned; but, of those who are reckoned, the number amounts to upwards of 1,357,660, which would have appeared incredible, if their own historian had not so particularly enumerated them. See Josephus, WAR, book ii. c. 18, 20; book iii. c. 2, 7, 8, 9; book iv. c. 1, 2, 7, 8, 9; book vii. c. 6, 9, 11; and Bp. Newton, vol. ii. p. 288-290.

Many also were led away captives into all nations. There were taken at Japha, 2,130. At Jotapa, 1,200. At Tarichea, 6,000 chosen young men, who were sent to Nero; others sold to the number of 30,400, besides those who were given to Agrippa. Of the Gadarenes were taken 2,200. In Idumea above 1,000. Many besides these were taken in Jerusalem; so that, as Josephus says, the number of the captives taken in the whole war amounted to 97,000. Those above seventeen years of age were sent to the works in Egypt; but most were distributed through the Roman provinces, to be destroyed in their theatres by the sword, and by the wild beasts; and those under seventeen years of age were sold for slaves. Eleven thousand in one place perished for want. At Caesarea, Titus, like a thorough-paced infernal savage, murdered 2,500 Jews, in honor of his brother's birthday; and a greater number at Berytus in honor of his father's. See Josephus, WAR, b. vii. c. 3. s. 1. Some he caused to kill each other; some were thrown to the wild beasts; and others burnt alive. And all this was done by a man who was styled, The darling of mankind! Thus were the Jews miserably tormented, and distributed over the Roman provinces; and continue to be distressed and dispersed over all the nations of the world to the present day. Jerusalem also was, according to the prediction of our

Lord, to be trodden down by the Gentiles. Accordingly it has never since been in the possession of the Jews. It was first in subjection to the Romans, afterwards to the Saracens, then to the Franks, after to the Mamalukes, and now to the Turks. Thus has the prophecy of Christ been most literally and terribly fulfilled, on a people who are still preserved as continued monuments of the truth of our Lord's prediction, and of the truth of the Christian religion. See more in Bp. Newton's Dissert. vol. ii. p. 291, etc.

**Verse 32. *Learn a parable of the fig-tree***— That is, These signs which I have given you will be as infallible a proof of the approaching ruin of the Jewish state as the budding of the trees is a proof of the coming summer.

**Verse 34. *This generation shall not pass***— *ἡ γενεὰ αὐτῆς*, this race; i.e. the Jews shall not cease from being a distinct people, till all the counsels of God relative to them and the Gentiles be fulfilled. Some translate *ἡ γενεὰ αὐτῆς*, this generation, meaning the persons who were then living, that they should not die before these signs, etc., took place: but though this was true, as to the calamities that fell upon the Jews, and the destruction of their government, temple, etc., yet as our Lord mentions Jerusalem's continuing to be under the power of the Gentiles till the fullness of the Gentiles should come in, i.e. till all the nations of the world should receive the Gospel of Christ, after which the Jews themselves should be converted unto God, Romans 11:25, etc., I think it more proper not to restrain its meaning to the few years which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem; but to understand it of the care taken by Divine providence to preserve them as a distinct people, and yet to keep them out of their own land, and from their temple service. See on Mark 13:30. But still it is literally true in reference to the destruction of Jerusalem. John probably lived to see these things come to pass; compare Matthew 16:28, with John 21:22; and there were some rabbins alive at the time when Christ spoke these words who lived till the city was destroyed, viz. Rabban Simeon, who perished with the city; R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, who outlived it; R. Zadoch, R. Ismael, and others. See Lightfoot.

The war began, as Josephus says, Ant. b. xx. c. 11. s. 1, in the second year of the government of Gessius Florus, who succeeded Albinus, successor of Porcius Festus, mentioned Acts 24:27, in the month of May, in the

twelfth year of Nero, and the seventeenth of Agrippa, mentioned Acts 25 and 26, that is, in May, A. D. 66.

The temple was burnt August 10, A. D. 70, the same day and month on which it had been burnt by the king of Babylon: Josephus, Ant. b. xx. c. 11. s. 8.

The city was taken September 8, in the second year of the reign of Vespasian, or the year of Christ 70. Ant. b. vi. c. 10.

That was the end of the siege of Jerusalem, which began, as Josephus several times observes, about the fourteenth day of the month Nisan, or our April. See War, b. v. c. 3. s. 1, c. 13. s. 7; b. vi. c. 9. s. 3.

Dr. Lardner farther remarks, There is also an ancient inscription to the honor of Titus, “who, by his father’s directions and counsels, had subdued the Jewish nation and destroyed Jerusalem, which had never been destroyed by any generals, kings, or people, before.” The inscription may be seen in GRUTER, vol. i. p. 244. It is as follows:-

IMP. TITO. CAESARI. DIVI. VESPASIANI. F VESPASIANO. AUG. PONTIFICI.  
MAXIMO TRIB, POT. X. IMP. XVII. COS. VIII. P. P. PRINCIPI. SUO. S. P. Q.  
R

QUOD. PRAECEPTIS. PATRIS. CONSILIISQUE. ET AUSPICIIIS. GENTEM.  
JUDAEORUM. DOMUIT. ET URBEM. HIEROSOLYMAM. OMNIBUS. ANTE. SE  
DUCIBUS. REGIBUS. GENTIBUSQUE. AUT. FRUSTRA. PETITAM. AUT.  
OMNINO. INTENTATAM. DELEVIT

For this complete conquest of Jerusalem, Titus had a triumphal arch erected to his honor, which still exists. It stand on the Via Sacra, leading from the forum to the amphitheatre. On it are represented the spoils of the temple of God, such as the golden table of the show-bread, the golden candlestick with its seven branches, the ark of the covenant, the two golden trumpets, etc., etc.; for a particular account see the note on Exodus 25:31. On this arch, a correct model of which, taken on the spot, now stands before me, is the following inscription:-

SENATUS POPULUSQUE ROMANUS DIVO TITO. DIVI VESPASIANI. F  
VESPASIANO AUGUSTO

“The Senate and People of Rome, to the Divine Titus, son of the Divine Vespasian; and to Vespasian the Emperor.”

On this occasion, a medal was struck with the following inscription round a laureated head of the emperor:-IMP.erator J.ulus CAES.ar VESP.asianus AUG.ustus. P.ontifex M.aximus, TR.ibunitia, P.otestate P.ater P.atrice CO.nS.ul VIII.-On the obverse are represented a palm tree, the emblem of the land of Judaea; the emperor with a trophy standing on the left; Judea, under the figure of a distressed woman, sitting at the foot of the tree weeping, with her head bowed down, supported by her left hand, with the legend JUDAEA CAPTA. S.enatus C.onsultus. at the bottom. This is not only an extraordinary fulfillment of our Lord’s prediction, but a literal accomplishment of a prophecy delivered about 800 years before, Isaiah 3:26, And she, desolate, shall sit upon the ground.

**Verse 36. *But of that day and hour***— *ὡρα*, here, is translated season by many eminent critics, and is used in this sense by both sacred and profane authors. As the day was not known, in which Jerusalem should be invested by the Romans, therefore our Lord advised his disciples to pray that it might not be on a Sabbath; and as the season was not known, therefore they were to pray that it might not be in the winter; Matthew 24:20. See on Mark 13:32.

**Verse 37. — 38. *As the days of Noah-they were eating and drinking***— That is, they spent their time in rapine, luxury, and riot. The design of these verses seems to be, that the desolation should be as general as it should be unexpected.

**Verse 38.** See on Matthew 24:37.

**Verse 39. *And knew not***— They considered not-did not lay Noah’s warning to heart, till it was too late to profit by it: so shall it be-and so it was in this coming of the Son of man.

**Verse 40. — 41. *Then shall two men-two women-one shall be taken, and the other left***.— The meaning seems to be, that so general should these calamities be, that no two persons, wheresoever found, or about whatsoever employed, should be both able to effect their escape; and that

captivity and the sword should have a complete triumph over this unhappy people.

***Two women shall be grinding***— Women alone are still employed in grinding the corn in the east; and it is only when despatch is required, or the uppermost millstone is heavy, that a second woman is added. See Wakefield, and Harmer, Obs. vol. i. 253. That they were formerly thus employed, see Exodus 11:5, and the note there. See also Isaiah 47:2.

**Verse 41.** See on Matthew 24:40.

**Verse 42. *Watch therefore***— Be always on your guard, that you may not be taken unawares, and that you may be properly prepared to meet God in the way either of judgment or mercy, whensoever he may come. This advice the followers of Christ took, and therefore they escaped; the miserable Jews rejected it, and were destroyed. Let us learn wisdom by the things which they suffered.

**Verse 43. *If the good man of the house had known***— “As a master of a family who expected a thief at any time of the night, would take care to be awake, and ready to protect his house; so do ye, who know that the Son of man will come. Though the day and hour be uncertain, continue always in a state of watchfulness, that he may not come upon you unawares.”

WAKEFIELD.

**Verse 45. *Who then is a faithful and wise servant***— All should live in the same expectation of the coming of Christ, which a servant has with respect to the return of his master, who, in departing for a season, left the management of his affairs to him; and of which management he is to give an exact account on his master’s return.

Here is an abstract of the duties of a minister of Christ.

1. He is appointed, not by himself, but by the vocation and mission of his Master.
2. He must look on himself, not as the master of the family, but as the servant.
3. He must be scrupulously faithful and exact in fulfilling the commands of his Master.

4. His fidelity must be ever accompanied by wisdom and prudence.

5. He must give the domestics—the sacred family, their food; and this food must be such as to afford them true nourishment. And

6. This must be done in its season. There are certain portions of the bread of life which lose their effect by being administered out of proper season, or to improper persons.

**Verse 46. *Blessed is that servant***— His blessedness consists in his master's approbation.

**Verse 47. *He shall make him ruler over all his goods***.— O heavenly privilege of a faithful minister of Christ! He shall receive from God a power to dispense all the blessings of the new covenant; and his word shall ever be accompanied with the demonstration of the Holy Ghost to the hearts of all that hear it. Much of a preacher's usefulness may be lost by his unfaithfulness.

**Verse 48. *But, and if that evil servant***— Here are three characters of a bad minister. 1. He has little or no faith in the speedy coming of Christ, either to punish for wickedness, or to pardon and sanctify those who believe. It may be, he does not outwardly profess this, but he says it in his heart, and God searches his heart, and knows that he professes to teach what he does not believe. 2. He governs with an absolute dominion, oppressing his colleagues and doing violence to the followers of Christ. And shall begin to smite, etc. 3. He leads an irregular life does not love the company of the children of God, but eats and drinks with the drunkards, preferring the tables of the great and the rich, whose god is their belly, and thus feeds himself without fear. Great God! save thine inheritance from being ravaged by such wolves!

**Verse 50. *The lord of that servant***— Here are three punishments which answer to the three characteristics of the bad minister. 1. A sudden death, and the weight of God's judgments falling upon him, without a moment to avert it: this answers to his infidelity and forgetfulness. He shall come in a day in which he looked not for him. 2. A separation from the communion of saints, and from all the gifts which he has abused: this answers to the abuse of his authority in the Church of Christ. 3. He shall have tears and eternal pains, in company with all such hypocrites as himself: and this

answers to his voluptuous life, pampering the flesh at the expense of his soul.

**Verse 51. *Cut him asunder***— This refers to an ancient mode of punishment used in several countries. Isaiah is reported to have been sawed ASUNDER. That it was an ancient mode of punishment is evident from what Herodotus says: that Sabacus, king of Ethiopia, had a vision, in which he was commanded *μεσουσς διαταμειν*, to cut in two, all the Egyptian priests, lib. ii. And in lib. vii. where Xerxes ordered one of the sons of Pythius *μεσον διαταμειν*, to be cut in two, and one half placed on each side of the way, that his army might pass through between them. See Raphelius also, in his notes from Herodotus and Polybius. This kind of punishment was used among the Persians: see Daniel 2:5, 3:29. Story of Susannah, ver. 55, 59. See also 2 Samuel 12:31, and 1 Chronicles 20:3. It may also have reference to that mode of punishment in which the different members were chopped off seriatim, first the feet, then the hands, next the legs, then the arms, and lastly the head. This mode of punishment is still in use among the Chinese. But we find an exact parallel among the Turks, in the following passage from W. Lithgow's Travels, p. 153. London 4to. edit. "If a Turk should happen to kill another Turk, his punishment is thus: After he is adjudged to death, he is brought forth to the market place; and a block being brought hither of four foot high, the malifactor is stript naked, and then laid thereon with his belly downward; they draw in his middle together so small with running cords that they strike his body a-two with one blow: his hinder parts they cast to be eaten by hungry dogs kept for the same purpose; and the forequarters and head they throw into a grievous fire, made there for the same end. And this is the punishment for manslaughter."

This is the very same punishment, and for the same offense, as that mentioned by our Lord, the killing of a fellow servant—one of the same nation, and of the same religion.

THE reader has no doubt observed, in the preceding chapter, a series of the most striking and solemn predictions, fulfilled in the most literal, awful, and dreadful manner. Christ has foretold the ruin of the Jewish people, and the destruction of their polity; and in such a circumstantial manner as none else could do, but He, under whose eye are all events, and in whose hands

are the government and direction of all things. Indeed he rather declared what he would do, than predicted what should come to pass. And the fulfillment has been as circumstantial as the prediction. Does it not appear that the predicted point was so literally referred to by the occurring fact, by which it was to have its accomplishment, as to leave no room to doubt the truth of the prediction, or the certainty of the event by which it was fulfilled? Thus the wisdom of God, as also his justice and providence, have had a plenary manifestation.

But this wisdom appears, farther, in preserving such a record of the prediction, and such evidence of its accomplishment, as cannot possibly be doubted. The New Testament, given by the inspiration of God, and handed down uncorrupted from father to son, by both friends and enemies, perfect in its credibility and truth, inexpugnable in its evidences, and astonishingly circumstantial in details of future occurrences, which the wisdom of God alone could foreknow—that New Testament is the record of these predictions. The history of the Romans, written by so many hands; the history of the Jews, written by one of themselves; triumphal arches, coins, medals, and public monuments of different kinds, are the evidence by which the fulfillment of the record is demonstrated. Add to this the preservation of the Jewish people; a people scattered through all nations, yet subsisting as a distinct body, without temple, sacrifices, or political government; and who, while they attempt to suppress the truth, yet reluctantly stand forth as an unimpeachable collateral evidence, that the solemn record, already alluded to, is strictly and literally true! Who that has ever consulted the Roman historians of the reigns of Vespasian and Titus, the history of Josephus, and the 24th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, and who knows any thing of the present state of the Jews over the face of the earth, or even of those who sojourn in England, can doubt for a moment the truth of this Gospel, or the infinite and all-comprehensive knowledge of Him who is its author! Here then is one portion of Divine Revelation that is incontrovertibly and absolutely proved to be the truth of God. Reader! if he, who, while he predicted the ruin of this disobedient and refractory people, wept over their city and its inhabitants, has so, minutely fulfilled the threatenings of his justice on the unbelieving and disobedient, will he not as circumstantially fulfill the promises of his grace to all them that believe? The existence of his



revelation, the continuance of a Christian Church upon earth, the certainty that there is one individual saved from his sins by the grace of the Gospel, and walking worthy of his vocation are continued proofs and evidences that he is still the same; that he will fulfill every jot and tittle of that word on which he has caused thee to trust; and save to the uttermost all that come unto the Father by him. The word of the Lord endureth for ever; and they who trust in him shall never be confounded.

## CHAPTER 25

*The parable of the ten virgins, five of whom were wise, and five foolish, 1-12. The necessity of being constantly prepared to appear before God, 13. The parable of the talents, 14-30. The manner in which God shall deal with the righteous and the wicked in the judgment of the great day, 31-46.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 25

**Verse 1. *Then shall the kingdom of heaven***— The state of Jews and professing Christians-the state of the visible Church at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, and in the day of judgment: for the parable appears to relate to both those periods. And particularly at the time in which Christ shall come to judge the world, it shall appear what kind of reception his Gospel has met with. This parable, or something very like it, is found in the Jewish records: so in a treatise entitled RESHITH CHOCMAH, the beginning of wisdom, we read thus: “Our wise men of blessed memory say, Repent whilst thou hast strength to do it, whilst thy lamp burns, and thy oil is not extinguished; for if thy lamp be gone out, thy oil will profit thee nothing.” Our doctors add, in MEDRASH: “The holy blessed God said to Israel, My sons, repent whilst the gates of repentance stand open; for I receive a gift at present, but when I shall sit in judgment, in the age to come, I will receive none.” Another parable, mentioned by Kimchi, on Isaiah 65:13. “Rabbi Yuchanan, the son of Zachai, spoke a parable concerning a king, who invited his servants, but set them no time to come: the prudent and wary among them adorned themselves and, standing at the door of the king’s house, said, Is any thing wanting in the house of the king? (i.e. Is there any work to be done?) But the foolish ones that were among them went away, and working said, When shall the feast be in which there is no labor? Suddenly the king sought out his servants: those who were adorned entered in, and they who were still polluted entered in also. The king was glad when he met the prudent, but he was angry when he met the foolish: he said, Let the prudent sit down and eat-let the others stand and look on.” Rabbi Eliezer said, “Turn to God one day before your

death.” His disciples said, “How can a man know the day of his death?” He answered them, “Therefore you should turn to God to-day, perhaps you may die to-morrow; thus every day will be employed in returning.” See Kimchi in Isaiah 65:13.

**Virgins**— Denoting the purity of the Christian doctrine and character. In this parable, the bridegroom is generally understood to mean Jesus Christ. The feast, that state of felicity to which he has promised to raise his genuine followers. The wise, or prudent, and foolish virgins, those who truly enjoy, and those who only profess the purity and holiness of his religion. The oil, the grace and salvation of God, or that faith which works by love. The vessel, the heart in which this oil is contained. The lamp, the profession of enjoying the burning and shining light of the Gospel of Christ. Going forth; the whole of their sojourning upon earth.

**Verse 2. *Five of them were wise***— Or, provident, **φρονιμοι**-they took care to make a proper provision beforehand, and left nothing to be done in the last moment.

***Five were foolish***— **μωροι**, which might be translated careless, is generally rendered foolish; but this does not agree so well with **φρονιμοι**, provident, or prudent, in the first clause, which is the proper meaning of the word. **μωρος** in the Etymologicon, is thus defined, **μη ορα το δεον**, he who sees not what is proper or necessary. These did not see that it was necessary to have oil in their vessels, (the salvation of God in their souls,) as well as a burning lamp of religious profession, Matthew 25:3, 4.

**Verse 4. *Took oil in their vessels***— They not only had a sufficiency of oil in their lamps, but they carried a vessel with oil to recruit their lamps, when it should be found expedient. This the foolish or improvident neglected to do: hence, when the oil that was in their lamps burned out, they had none to pour into the lamp to maintain the flame.

**Verse 5. *The bridegroom tarried***— The coming of the bridegroom to an individual may imply his death: his coming to the world-the final judgment. The delay-the time from a man’s birth till his death, in the first case; in the second, the time from the beginning to the end of the world.

***Slumbered and slept.***— Or, **ενυσταξαν και εκαθευδον**, they became drowsy and fell asleep. As sleep is frequently used in the sacred writings

for death, so drowsiness, which precedes sleep, may be considered as pointing out the decays of the constitution, and the sicknesses which precede death. The other explanations which are given of this place must be unsatisfactory to every man who is not warped by some point in his creed, which must be supported at every expense. Carelessness disposed them to drowsiness, drowsiness to sleep, deep sleep, which rendered them as unconscious of their danger as they were before inattentive to their duty. The Anglo-Saxon has hit the meaning of the original well-[AS] of which my old MS. Bible gives a literal version, in the English of the 14th century: forsothe-alie nappeden and sleptyn.

**Verse 6. *At midnight there was a cry***— The Jewish weddings were generally celebrated in the night; yet they usually began at the rising of the evening star; but in this case there was a more than ordinary delay.

***Behold, the bridegroom cometh***— What an awful thing to be summoned to appear before the Judge of quick and dead! The following is an affecting relation, and fas est ab hoste doceri. “When Rabbi Jochanan ben Zachai was sick, his disciples came to visit him; and when he saw them he began to weep. They say to him, Rabbi! the light of Israel, the right hand pillar, the strong hammer, wherefore dost thou weep? He answered them, If they were carrying me before a king of flesh and blood, who is here today, and to-morrow in the grave; who, if he were angry with me, his anger would not last for ever: if he put me in prison, his prison would not be everlasting; if he condemned me to death, that death would not be eternal; whom I could soothe with words or bribe with riches; yet even in these circumstances I should weep. But now I am going before the King of kings, the holy and the blessed God, who liveth and endureth for ever and for ever; who, if he be angry with me, his anger will last for ever; if he put me in prison, his bondage will be everlasting; if he condemn me to death, that death will be eternal; whom I cannot soothe with words nor bribe with riches: when, farther, there are before me two ways, the one to hell and the other to paradise, and I know not in which they are carrying me, shall I not weep?” TALMUD Beracoth, fol. 29.

**Verse 7. *Trimmed their lamps***.— *εκοσμησαν*, adorned them. I have seen some of the eastern lamps or lanthorns, the body of which was a skeleton of wood and threads, covered with a very thin transparent membrane, or

very fine gauze, and decorated with flowers painted on it. It is probable that the nuptial lamps were highly decorated in this way; though the act mentioned here may mean no more than preparing the lamps for burning.

The following account of the celebration of a wedding in Persia, taken from the Zend Avesta, vol. ii. p. 558, etc., may cast some light on this place.

“The day appointed for the marriage, about five o’clock in the evening, the bridegroom comes to the house of the bride, where the mobed, or priest, pronounces for the first time the nuptial benediction. He then brings her to his own house, gives her some refreshment, and afterwards the assembly of her relatives and friends reconduct her to her father’s house. When she arrives, the mobed repeats the nuptial benediction, which is generally done about MIDNIGHT; immediately after, the bride, accompanied with a part of her attending troop, (the rest having returned to their own homes,) is reconducted to the house of her husband, where she generally arrives about three o’clock in the morning. Nothing can be more brilliant than these nuptial solemnities in India. Sometimes the assembly consists of not less than two thousand persons, all richly dressed in gold and silver tissue; the friends and relatives of the bride, encompassed with their domestics, are all mounted on horses richly harnessed. The goods, wardrobe, and even the bed of the bride, are carried in triumph. The husband, richly mounted and magnificently dressed, is accompanied by his friends and relatives, the friends of the bride following him in covered carriages. At intervals, during the procession, guns and rockets are fired, and the spectacle is rendered grand beyond description, by a prodigious number of LIGHTED TORCHES, and by the SOUND of a multitude of musical instruments.”

There are certain preparations which most persons believe they must make at the approach of death; but, alas! it is often too late. The lamp is defiled, the light almost out, and the oil expended; and what adorning is a wretched sinner, struggling in the agonies of death, capable of preparing for his guilty soul!

**Verse 8. *Our lamps are gone out.***—**σβεννυνται**, are going out. So then it is evident that they were once lighted. They had once hearts illuminated and warmed by faith and love; but they had backslidden from the salvation of God, and now they are excluded from heaven, because, through their

carelessness, they have let the light that was in them become darkness, and have not applied in time for a fresh supply of the salvation of God.

A Jewish rabbin supposes God addressing man thus:-I give thee my lamp, give thou me thy lamp; if thou keep my lamp I will keep thy lamp; but if thou extinguish my lamp I will extinguish thy lamp. That is, I give thee my WORD and testimonies to be a light unto thy feet and a lanthorn to thy steps, to guide thee safely through life; give me thy SOUL and all its concerns, that I may defend and save thee from all evil: keep my WORD, walk in my ways, and I will keep thy SOUL that nothing shall injure it; but if thou trample under foot my laws, I will cast thy soul into outer darkness.

**Verse 9. *Lest there be not enough for us and you***— These had all been companions in the Christian course, and there was a time when they might have been helpful to each other; but that time is now past for ever-none has a particle of grace to spare, not even to help the soul of the dearest relative! The grace which every man receives is just enough to save his own soul; he has no merits to bequeath to the Church; no work of supererogation which can be placed to the account of another.

***Go ye rather to them that sell, and buy***— By leaving out the particle  $\delta\epsilon$ , but, (on the indisputable authority of ABDGHKS, and HV, of Matthai, with sixteen others, the Armenian, Vulgate, and all the Itala but one,) and transposing a very little the members of the sentence, the sense is more advantageously represented, and the reading smoother: Rather go to them that sell, and buy for yourselves, lest there be not enough for us and you. Beza, Mill, Bengel, and Griesbach, approve of the omission of the particle  $\delta\epsilon$ .

**Verse 10. *While they went to buy, the bridegroom came***— What a dismal thing it is, not to discover the emptiness of one's heart of all that is good, till it is too late to make any successful application for relief! God alone knows how many are thus deceived.

***And they that were ready***— They who were prepared—who had not only a burning lamp of an evangelical profession, but had oil in their vessels, the faith that works by love in their hearts, and their lives adorned with all the fruits of the Spirit.

***The door was shut.***— Sinners on a death-bed too often meet with those deceitful merchants, who promise them salvation for a price which is of no value in the sight of God. Come unto me, says Jesus, and buy: there is no salvation but through his blood-no hope for the sinner but that which is founded upon his sacrifice and death. The door was shut-dreadful and fatal words! No hope remains. Nothing but death can shut this door; but death may surprise us in our sins, and then despair is our only portion.

**Verse 11. *Afterwards came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord***— Earnest prayer, when used in time, may do much good: but it appears, from this parable, that there may come a time when prayer even to Jesus may be too late!-viz. when the door is shut-when death has separated the body and the soul.

**Verse 12. *I know you not.***— As if he had said, Ye are not of my company-ye were neither with the bride nor the bridegroom: ye slept while the others were in procession. I do not acknowledge you for my disciples-ye are not like him who is love-ye refused to receive his grace-ye sinned it away when ye had it; now you are necessarily excluded from that kingdom where nothing but love and purity can dwell.

**Verse 13. *Watch therefore***— If to watch be to employ ourselves chiefly about the business of our salvation, alas! how few of those who are called Christians are there who do watch! How many who slumber! How many who are asleep! How many seized with a lethargy! How many quite dead!

***Wherein the Son of man cometh.***— These words are omitted by many excellent MSS., most of the versions, and several of the fathers. Griesbach has left them out of the text: Grotius, Hammond, Mill, and Bengel, approve of the omission.

**Verse 14. *Called his own servants***— God never makes the children of men proprietors of his goods. They are formed by his power, and upheld by his bounty; and they hold their lives and their goods, as in many of our ancient tenures, *quamdiu domino placuerit*-at the will of their Lord.

**Verse 15. *Unto one he gave five talents-to every man according to his several ability***— The duties men are called to perform are suited to their situations, and the talents they receive. The good that any man has he has received from God, as also the ability to improve that good. God's graces

and temporal mercies are suited to the power which a man has of improving them. To give eminent gifts to persons incapable of properly improving them, would be only to lead into a snare. The talent which each man has suits his own state best; and it is only pride and insanity which lead him to desire and envy the graces and talents of another. Five talents would be too much for some men: one talent would be too little. He who receives much, must make proportionate improvement; and, from him who has received little, the improvement only of that little will be required. As five talents, in one case, are sufficient to answer the purpose for which they were given; so also are two and one.

The man who improves the grace he has received, however small, will as surely get to the kingdom of God, as he who has received most from his master, and improved all.

There is a parable something like this in Sohar Chadash, fol. 47: "A certain king gave a deposit to three of his servants: the first kept it; the second lost it; the third spoiled one part of it, and gave the rest to another to keep. After some time, the king came and demanded the deposit. Him who had preserved it, the king praised, and made him governor of his house. Him who had lost it, he delivered to utter destruction, so that both his name and his possessions were blotted out. To the third, who had spoiled a part and given the rest to another to keep, the king said, Keep him, and let him not go out of my house, till we see what the other shall do to whom he has entrusted a part: if he shall make a proper use of it, this man shall be restored to liberty; if not, he also shall be punished." See Schoettgen. I have had already occasion to remark how greatly every Jewish parable is improved that comes through the hands of Christ.

In this parable of our Lord, four things may be considered:-

- I. The master who distributes the talents.
- II. The servants who improved their talents.
- III. The servant who buried his talent. And
- IV. His punishment.



1. The master's kindness. The servants had nothing-deserved nothing-had no claim on their master, yet he, in his KINDNESS, delivers unto them his goods, not for his advantage, but for their comfort and salvation.

2. The master distributes these goods diversely;-giving to one five, to another, two, and to another one. No person can complain that he has been forgotten; the master gives to each. None can complain of the diversity of the gifts; it is the master who has done it. The master has an absolute right over his own goods, and the servants cannot find fault with the distribution. He who has little should not envy him who has received much, for he has the greater labor, and the greater account to give. He who has much should not despise him who has little, for the sovereign master has made the distinction; and his little, suited to the ability which God has given him, and fitted to the place in which God's providence has fixed him, is sufficiently calculated to answer the purpose of the master, in the salvation of the servant's soul.

3. The master distributes his talents with WISDOM. He gave to each according to his several ability, i.e. to the power he had to improve what was given. It would not be just to make a servant responsible for what he is naturally incapable of managing; and it would not be proper to give more than could be improved. The powers which men have, God has given; and as he best knows the extent of these powers, so he suits his graces and blessings to them in the most wise, and effectual way. Though he may make one vessel for honor, (i.e. a more honorable place or office,) and another for dishonor, (a less honorable office,) yet both are for the master's use-both are appointed and capacitated to show forth his glory.

## II. The servants who improved their talents.

These persons are termed **δουλοι**, slaves, such as were the property of the master, who might dispose of them as he pleased. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded, Matthew 25:16.

1. The work was speedily begun-as soon as the master gave the talents and departed, so soon they began to labor. There is not a moment to be lost-every moment has its grace, and every grace has its employment, and every thing is to be done for eternity.

2. The work was perseveringly carried on; after a long time the lord of those servants cometh, Matthew 25:19. The master was long before he returned, but they did not relax. The longer time, the greater improvement. God gives every man just time enough to live, in this world, to glorify his Maker, and to get his soul saved. Many begin well, and continue faithful for a time-but how few persevere to the end! Are there none who seem to have outlived their glory, their character, their usefulness?

3. Their work was crowned with success. They doubled the sum which they had received. Every grace of God is capable of great improvement. Jesus himself, the pure, immaculate Jesus, grew in wisdom and favor with God, Luke 2:52.

4. They were ready to give in a joyful account when their master came and called for them. 1st. They come without delay: they expected his coming; and it was with an eye to this that they continued their labor-they endured as seeing him who is invisible. 2dly. They come without fear; the master before whom they appear has always loved them, and given them the fullest proofs of his affection for them: his love to them has begotten in them love to him; and their obedience to his orders sprung from the love they bore to him. He that loveth me, says Jesus, will keep my words. 3d. They render up their accounts without confusion: he who received five brought five others; and he who had received two brought two more: nothing was to be done when their master called; all their business was fully prepared. 4th. They gave up every thing to their master, without attempting to appropriate any thing. Their ability was his, the talents his, and the continued power to improve them, his. All is of God, and all must be returned to him.

5. Their recompense from their gracious master. 1st. They receive praise. Well done, good and faithful servants, Matthew 25:21. What a glorious thing to have the approbation of God, and the testimony of a good conscience! They were good, pure and upright within-faithful, using to God's glory the blessings he had given. 2d. They receive gracious promises. Ye have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much. These promises refer not only to a future glory, but to an increase of God's grace and mercy here; for the more faithfully a man improves what God has already given him, the more he shall have from his gracious

Master: for he giveth more grace, till he fills the faithful soul with his own fullness. 3d. They receive GLORY. Enter into the joy of your Lord. As ye were partakers of my nature on earth, be ye sharers of my glory in heaven. The joy, the happiness wherewith I am happy, shall be your eternal portion! O, what is all we can do, all we can suffer, even the most lingering and cruel martyrdom, in comparison of this unbounded, eternal joy!

### III. Of the servant who buried his talent.

He that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his Lord's money, Matthew 25:18.

1. See the ingratitude of this servant. His master gave him a talent, capable of being improved to his own present and eternal advantage; but he slights the mercy of his lord.
2. See his idleness. Rather than exert himself to improve what he has received, he goes and hides it.
3. See his gross error. He DIGS to hide it-puts himself to more trouble to render the mercy of God to him of none effect, than he would have had in combating and conquering the world, the devil, and the flesh.
4. See his injustice. He takes his master's money, and neither improves nor designs to improve it, even while he is living on and consuming that bounty which would have been sufficient for a faithful servant. How much of this useless lumber is to be found in the Church of Christ! But suppose the man be a preacher-what a terrible account will he have to give to God-consuming the provision made for a faithful pastor, and so burying, or misusing his talent, as to do no good, to immortal souls!
5. Hear the absurdity of his reasoning. Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard (or avaricious) man, reaping where thou hast not sown, etc., Matthew 25:24. See this meaning of [σκληρος](#) proved by Kypke. The wicked excuse of this faithless servant confuted itself and condemned him. Nevertheless it is on this very model that sinners in general seek to justify themselves; and the conclusion turns always against them. I knew thee to be a hard man. How awfully deceived and deeply depraved must that person be, who not only attempts to excuse his follies, but to charge his crimes on GOD himself!

I was afraid-Why? Because thou wert an enemy to thy soul, and to thy God.-I was afraid-of what? that he would require more than he did give. How could this be? Did he not give thee the talent freely, to show thee his benevolence? And did he not suit it to thy ability, that he might show thee his wisdom, justice, and goodness, in not making thee responsible for more than thou couldst improve?

IV. Behold the awful punishment of this faithless servant.

1. He is reproached. Thou wicked and slothful servant! Wicked-in thy heart: slothful-in thy work. THOU knewest that I reap where I sowed not. Thou art condemned by thy own mouth-whose is the unemployed talent? Did I not give thee this? And did I require the improvement of two when I gave thee but one?-Thou knowest I did not.

2. He is stripped of what he possessed. Take-the talent from him. O terrible word!-Remove the candlestick from that slothful, worldly-minded Church: take away the inspirations of the Holy Spirit from that lukewarm, Christless Christian, who only lives to resist them and render them of none effect. Dispossess that base, man-pleasing minister of his ministerial gifts; let his silver become brass, and his fine gold, dross. He loved the present world more than the eternal world, and the praise of men more than the approbation of God. Take away the talent from him!

3. He is punished with an everlasting separation from God and the glory of his power. Cast forth the unprofitable servant, Matthew 25:30. Let him have nothing but darkness, who refused to walk in the light: let him have nothing but misery-weeping and gnashing of teeth, who has refused the happiness which God provided for him.

Reader, if the careless virgin, and the unprofitable servant, against whom no flagrant iniquity is charged, be punished with an outer darkness, with a hell of fire: of what sorer punishment must he be judged worthy, who is a murderer, an adulterer, a fornicator, a blasphemer, a thief, a liar, or in any respect an open violater of the laws of God? The careless virgins, and the unprofitable servants, were saints in comparison of millions, who are, notwithstanding, dreaming of an endless heaven, when fitted only for an endless hell!

**Verse 27. *With usury.***— **συν τοκῷ**, with its produce-not usury; for that is unlawful interest, more than the money can properly produce.

**Verse 29. *Unto every one that hath shall be given***— See on Matthew 13:12.

**Verse 30. *Weeping and gnashing of teeth.***— See on Matthew 8:12, a note necessary for the illustration of this, and the foregoing parable.

**Verse 31. *When the Son of man shall come***— This must be understood of Christ's coming at the last day, to judge mankind: though all the preceding part of the chapter may be applied also to the destruction of Jerusalem.

***Holy angels***— The word **αγγελοι** is omitted by many excellent manuscripts, versions, and fathers. Mill and Bengel approve of the omission, and Griesbach has left it out of the text. It is supposed by some that our Lord will have other angels (messengers) with him in that day, besides the holy ones. The evil angels may be in attendance to take, as their prey, those who shall be found on his left hand.

***The throne of his glory***— That glorious throne on which his glorified human nature is seated, at the right hand of the Father.

**Verse 32. *All nations***— Literally, all the nations—all the Gentile world; the Jews are necessarily included, but they were spoken of in a particular manner in the preceding chapter.

***He shall separate them***— Set each kind apart by themselves.

***As a shepherd divideth, etc.***— It does not appear that sheep and goats were ever penned or housed together, though they might feed in the same pasture; yet even this was not done but in separate flocks; so Virgil, Eclog. vii. v. 2.

*Compulerantque greges Corydon et Thyrsis in unum;  
Thyrsis OVES, Corydon distentas lacte CAPELLAS*

*“Thyrsis and Corydon drove their flocks together:  
Thyrsin his sheep; and Corydon his goats, their udders distended with milk.”*

These two shepherds had distinct flocks, which fed in the same pasture, but separately; and they are only now driven together, for the convenience of the two shepherds, during the time of their musical contest.

**Verse 33. *He shall set the sheep, etc.***— The right hand signifies, among the rabbins, approbation and eminence: the left hand, rejection, and disapprobation. Hence in Sohar Chadash it is said, “The right hand is given, the left also is given-to the Israelites and the Gentiles are given paradise and hell-this world, and the world to come.” The right and left were emblematical of endless beatitude and endless misery among the Romans. Hence Virgil:-

*Hic locus est, partes ubi se via findit in ambas,  
Dextera, quae Ditis magni sub moenia tendit:  
Hac iter Elysium nobis; at laeva malorum  
Exercet poenas, et ad impia Tartara mittit  
AEn. vi. 540*

*Here in two ample roads the way divides,  
The right direct, our destined journey guides,  
By Pluto's palace, to the Elysian plains;  
The left to Tartarus, where bound in chains  
Loud howl the damn'd in everlasting pains. PITT*

Of the good and faithful servants he approves, and therefore exalts them to his glory; of the slothful and wicked he disapproves, and casts them into hell.

SHEEP, which have ever been considered as the emblems of mildness, simplicity, patience, and usefulness, represent here the genuine disciples of Christ.

GOATS, which are naturally quarrelsome, lascivious, and excessively ill-scented, were considered as the symbols of riotous, profane, and impure men. They here represent all who have lived and died in their sins. See Ezekiel 34:17, and Zechariah 10:3.

**Verse 34. *Ye blessed of my Father***— This is the king's address to his followers; and contains the reason why they were found in the practice of all righteousness, and were now brought to this state of glory-they were blessed-came as children, and received the benediction of the Father, and became, and continued to be, members of the heavenly family.

**Inherit**— The inheritance is only for the children of the family-if sons, then heirs, Galatians 4:7, but not otherwise. The sons only shall enjoy the father's estate.

**Prepared for you**— That is, the kingdom of glory is designed for such as you-you who have received the blessing of the Father, and were holy, harmless, undefiled, and separated from sinners.

**From the foundation of the world**— It was God's purpose and determination to admit none into his heaven but those who were made partakers of his holiness, Hebrews 12:14. The rabbins say, Seven things were created before the foundation of the world. 1. The law. 2. Repentance. 3. Paradise. 4. Hell. 5. The throne of God. 6. The temple; and 7. The name of the Messiah.

**Verse 35. I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat**— Every thing which is done to a follower of Christ, whether it be good or evil, he considers as done to himself, see Matthew 25:40; Acts 9:4, 5; Hebrews 6:10. Of all the fruits of the Spirit, none are mentioned here but those that spring from love, or mercy; because these give men the nearest conformity to God. Jesus had said, Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy; and he here shows how this promise shall be fulfilled. The rabbins say: "As often as a poor man presents himself at thy door, the holy blessed God stands at his right hand: if thou give him alms, know that he who stands at his right hand will give thee a reward. But if thou give him not alms, he who stands at his right hand will punish thee." *Vaiyikra Rabba*, s. 34, fol. 178.

**A stranger, and ye took me in**— συνηγάγετε με, ye entertained me: Kypke has fully proved that this is the meaning of the original. Literally, συνάγειν signifies to gather together. Strangers are sometimes so destitute as to be ready to perish for lack of food and raiment: a supply of these things keeps their souls and bodies together, which were about to be separated through lack of the necessities of life. The word may also allude to a provision made for a poor family, which were scattered abroad, perhaps begging their bread, and who by the ministry of benevolent people are collected, relieved, and put in a way of getting their bread. O blessed work! to be the instruments of preserving human life, and bringing comfort and peace into the habitations of the wretched!

While writing this, (Nov. 13, 1798,) I hear the bells loudly ringing in commemoration of the birth-day of E. Colson, Esq., a native of this city, (Bristol,) who spent a long life and an immense fortune in relieving the miseries of the distressed. His works still praise him in the gates; his name is revered, and his birth-day held sacred, among the inhabitants. Who has heard the bells ring in commemoration of the birth of any deceased hero or king? Of so much more value, in the sight even of the multitude, is a life of public usefulness than one of worldly glory or secular state. But how high must such a person rank in the sight of God, who, when Christ in his representatives was hungry, gave him food; when thirsty, gave him drink; when naked clothed him; when sick and in prison, visited him! Thou blessed of my Father! come. Thou hast been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, and now thou shalt eternally enjoy the true riches.

The Supreme God is represented in the Bhagvat Geeta as addressing mankind, when he had just formed them, thus: “Those who dress their meat but for themselves, eat the bread of sin.” Geeta, p. 46.

**Verse 36. *I was sick, and ye visited me***— Relieving the strangers, and visiting the sick, were in high estimation among the Jews. One of their sayings on this head is worthy of notice: “He who neglects to visit the sick is like him who has shed blood.” That is, as he has neglected, when it was in his power, to preserve life, he is as guilty in the sight of the Lord as he is who has committed murder. See Kypke in loco.

**Verse 37. *Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, etc.***— This barbarous expression, an hungered, should be banished out of the text, wheresoever it occurs, and the simple word hungry substituted for it. Whatever is done for Christ’s sake, is done through Christ’s grace; and he who does the work attributes to Jesus both the will and the power by which the work was done, and seeks and expects the kingdom of heaven not as a reward, but as a gift of pure unmerited mercy. Yet, while workers together with his grace, God attributes to them that which they do through his influence, as if they had done it independently of him. God has a right to form what estimate he pleases of the works wrought through himself: but man is never safe except when he attributes all to his Maker.

**Verse 40. *Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren***— The meanest follower of Christ is acknowledged by him as his



brother! What infinite condescension! Those, whom many would scorn to set with the dogs of their flock, are brothers and sisters of the blessed Jesus, and shall soon be set among the princes of his people.

**Verse 41. *Depart from me, ye cursed***— Or, Ye cursed! depart.—These words are the address of the king to the sinners; and contain the reason why they are to be separated from blessedness: Ye are cursed, because ye have sinned, and would not come unto me that ye might have life.—No work of piety has proceeded from your hand, because the carnal mind, which is enmity against me, reigned in your heart; and ye would not have me to reign over you. Depart! this includes what some have termed the punishment of loss or privation. Ye cannot, ye, shall not be united to me—Depart! O terrible word! and yet a worse is to come.

***Into everlasting fire***— This is the punishment of sense. Ye shall not only be separated from me, but ye shall be tormented, awfully, everlastingly tormented in that place of separation.

***Prepared for the devil and his angels***— The devil and his angels sinned before the creation of the world, and the place of torment was then prepared for them: it never was designed for human souls; but as the wicked are partakers with the devil and his angels in their iniquities, in their rebellion against God, so it is right that they should be sharers with them in their punishment. We see here, plainly, why sinners are destroyed, not because there was no salvation for them, but because they neglected to receive good, and do good. As they received not the Christ who was offered to them, so they could not do the work of righteousness which was required of them. They are cursed, because they refused to be blessed; and they are damned, because they refused to be saved.

**Verse 42. *I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat***— I put it in your power to do good, and ye would not. A variety of occasions offered themselves to you, but ye neglected them all, so that my blessings in your hands, not being improved, according to my order, became a curse to you.

**Verse 43. *I was a stranger***— If men were sure that Jesus Christ was actually somewhere in the land, in great personal distress, hungry, thirsty, naked, and confined, they would doubtless run unto and relieve him. Now Christ assures us that a man who is hungry, thirsty, naked, etc., is his

representative, and that whatever we do to such a one he will consider as done to himself; yet this testimony of Christ is not regarded! Well, he will be just when he judges, and righteous when he punishes.

**Verse 44. *Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, etc.***— It is want of faith which in general produces hard-heartedness to the poor. The man who only sees with eyes of flesh is never likely to discover Christ in the person of a man destitute of the necessities of life. Some pretend not to know the distressed; because they have no desire to relieve them; but we find that this ignorance will not avail them at the bar of God.

**Verse 46. *And these shall go away into everlasting punishment***— No appeal, no remedy, to all eternity! No end to the punishment of those whose final impenitence manifests in them an eternal will and desire to sin. By dying in a settled opposition to God, they cast themselves into a necessity of continuing in an eternal aversion from him.

But some are of opinion that this punishment shall have an end: this is as likely as that the glory of the righteous shall have an end: for the same word is used to express the duration of the punishment, **κολασιν αιωνιον**, as is used to express the duration of the state of glory: **ζων αιωνιον**. I have seen the best things that have been written in favor of the final redemption of damned spirits; but I never saw an answer to the argument against that doctrine, drawn from this verse, but what sound learning and criticism should be ashamed to acknowledge. The original word **αιων** is certainly to be taken here in its proper grammatical sense, continued being, **αιων**, NEVER ENDING. Some have gone a middle way, and think that the wicked shall be annihilated. This, I think, is contrary to the text; if they go into punishment, they continue to exist; for that which ceases to be, ceases to suffer. See the note on Genesis 21:33, where the whole subject is explained.

A very good improvement of the parable of the wise and foolish virgins is made by Salvian, a very pious writer of the fifth century, (Epist. ad. Ecclus. Cath. lib. ii.,) the substance of which, in Mr. Bulkley's translation, is as follows:-

Ego unum scio, etc. "One thing I know, that the lamps of the foolish virgins are said to have gone out for want of the oil of good works; but

thou, whoever thou art, thinkest that thou hast oil in abundance, and so did they; for, if they had not believed themselves to have had it, they would have provided themselves with it; for since afterwards, as the Lord says, they would gladly have borrowed, and sought it so eagerly, no doubt they would have done so before, had they not been deceived by the confidence of having it. Thou thinkest thyself wise, and these did not imagine themselves to be foolish: thou thinkest that thy lamp has light, and they lost their light because they thought they should have it. For why did they prepare their lamps if they did not think they should be lighted? In a word, their lamps, I suppose, must have afforded some degree of light; for since we read of their being afraid that their lamps should go out, they certainly had something which they feared would be extinguished. Nor was it a groundless fear; their lamps did go out, and that pure light of virginity which appeared profited them nothing, for want of a supply of oil. From whence we understand that what is but a little, is in a manner nothing. You have therefore need of a lamp plentifully filled, that your light may be lasting. And if those which we light up here for a short time so soon fail, unless copiously supplied with oil, how much must thou stand in need of that thy lamp may shine to eternity?"

This writer was a priest of Marseilles, in 430. He bewailed the profligacy of his times so much, and so pathetically, that he has been styled the Jeremiah of the fifth century. Were he still upon earth, he would find equal reason to deplore the wickedness and carelessness of mankind.

From what our Lord has here said, we may see that God indispensably requires of every man to bring forth good fruit; and that a fruitless tree shall be inevitably cut down, and cast into the fire. Let it be also remarked that God does not here impute to his own children the good works which Jesus Christ did for them. No! Christ's feeding the multitudes in Judea will not be imputed to them, while persons in their own neighborhood are perishing through want, and they have wherewithal to relieve them. He gives them a power that they may glorify his name by it and have, in their own souls, the continued satisfaction which arises from succouring the distressed. Let it be farther remarked, that Christ does not say here that they have purchased the eternal life by these good deeds. No! for the power to work, and the means of working, came both from God. They first had redemption through his blood, and then his Spirit worked in them

to will and to do. They were therefore only workers together with him, and could not be said, in any sense of the word, to purchase God's glory, with his own property. But though God works in them, and by them, he does not obey for them. The works of piety and mercy THEY perform, under the influence and by the aid of his grace. Thus God preserves the freedom of the human soul, and secures his own glory at the same time. Let it be remarked, farther, that the punishment inflicted on the foolish virgins, the slothful servant, and the cursed who are separated from God, was not because of their personal crimes; but because they were not good, and were not useful in the world. Their lives do not appear to have been stained with crimes,-but they were not adorned with virtues. They are sent to hell because they did no good. They were not renewed in the image of God; and hence did not bring forth fruit to his glory. If these harmless people are sent to perdition, what must the end be of the wicked and profligate!

## CHAPTER 26

*Christ predicts his being betrayed and crucified, 1, 2. The chief priests, scribes, and elders consult about his death, 3-5. A woman anoints his head at Bethany, at which the disciples are offended, but Christ vindicates her conduct, 6-13. Judas, for thirty pieces of silver, engages with the chief priests to betray him, 14-16. He eats a passover with his disciples, and assures them of his approaching death, and that one of them would betray him, 17-21. On each asking, Is it I? Christ asserts that Judas is the traitor, 22-25. Having eaten his last supper, he institutes the eucharist, to be observed in his Church as a memorial of his sacrificial death, 26-29. They sing a hymn, go to the mount of Olives, and he again announces his approaching death and resurrection, 30-32. Peter asserts his resolution to be faithful to his Master, and Christ foretells his denial and apostasy, 33-35. He goes to Gethsemane; the transactions there, 36-46. Judas comes with the high priest's mob and betrays him with a kiss, 47-50. Peter cuts off the ear of the high priest's servant; Christ discourses with the multitude, 51-55. The disciples flee, and he is led to Caiaphas, 56, 57. Peter follows at a distance, 58. They seek false witnesses, and question our Lord, who declares himself to be the Christ, 59-64. They accuse him of blasphemy, and abuse him, 65-68. Peter's denial and repentance, 69-75.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 26

**Verse 1.** *When Jesus had finished all these sayings*— He began these sayings on Mount Olivet, Matthew 24:1, and continued them till he entered into Bethany, whither he was going.

**Verse 2.** *The passover*— A feast instituted in Egypt, to commemorate the destroying angel's passing over the houses of the Israelites, when he slew the firstborn of the Egyptians. See the whole of this business largely explained in the Notes on Exodus 12:1-27. This feast began on the fourteenth day of the first moon, in the first month, Nisan, and it lasted only one day; but it was immediately followed by the days of unleavened

bread, which were seven, so that the whole lasted eight days, and all the eight days are sometimes called the feast of the passover, and sometimes the feast or days of unleavened bread. See Luke 22:1-7. The three most signal benefits vouchsafed to the Israelites were,

1. The deliverance from the slavery of Egypt; to commemorate which they kept the feast of unleavened bread, and the passover.
2. The giving of the law; to commemorate which, they kept the feast of weeks.
3. Their sojourning in the wilderness, and entrance into the promised land; to commemorate which, they kept the feast of tabernacles.

See these largely explained, Exodus 23:14; Leviticus 23:2-40.

***The Son of man is betrayed, (rather delivered up,) to be crucified.***— With what amazing calmness and precision does our blessed Lord speak of this awful event! What a proof does he here give of his prescience in so correctly predicting it; and of his love in so cheerfully undergoing it! Having instructed his disciples and the Jews by his discourses, edified them by his example, convinced them by his miracles, he now prepares to redeem them by his blood! These two verses have no proper connection with this chapter, and should be joined to the preceding.

**Verse 3. *Then assembled together the chief priests***— That is, during the two days that preceded the passover.

***The high priest, who was called Caiaphas***— Caiaphas succeeded Simon, son of Camith, about A. D. 16, or, as Calmet thinks, 25. He married the daughter of Annas, who was joined with him in the priesthood. About two years after our Lord's crucifixion, Caiaphas and Pilate were both deposed by VITELLIUS, then governor of Syria, and afterwards emperor. Caiaphas, unable to bear this disgrace, and the stings of his conscience for the murder of Christ, killed himself about A. D. 35. See Joseph. Ant. b. xviii. c. 2-4.

**Verse 4. *And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty***— The providence of God frustrated their artful machinations; and that event which they wished to conduct with the greatest privacy and silence was transacted with all possible celebrity, amidst the thousands who resorted to Jerusalem, at this season, for the keeping of the passover. It was,

doubtless, of the very first importance that the crucifixion of Christ, which was preparatory to the most essential achievement of Christianity, viz. his resurrection from the grave, should be exhibited before many witnesses, and in the most open manner, that infidelity might not attempt, in future, to invalidate the evidences of the Christian religion, by alleging that these things were done in a corner. See WAKEFIELD in loco.

**Verse 5. *Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar***— It was usual for the Jews to punish criminals at the public festivals; but in this case they were afraid of an insurrection, as our Lord had become very popular. The providence of God directed it thus, for the reason given in the preceding note.

He who observes a festival on motives purely human violates it in his heart, and is a hypocrite before God. It is likely they feared the Galileans, as being the countrymen of our Lord, more than they feared the people of Jerusalem.

**Verse 6. *In Bethany***— For a solution of the difficulties in this verse, about the time of the anointing, see the observations at the end of this chapter.

***Simon the LEPER***— This was probably no more than a surname, as Simon the CANAANITE, Matthew 10:4, and Barsabas JUSTUS, Acts 1:23, and several others. Yet it might have been some person that Christ had healed of this disease. See Matthew 11:5.

**Verse 7. *There came unto him a woman***— There is much contention among commentators about the transaction mentioned here, and in John 12:3; some supposing them to be different, others to be the same. Bishop Newcome's view of the subject I have placed at the end of the chapter.

Some think that the woman mentioned here was Mary, the sister of Lazarus; others Mary Magdalene; but against the former opinion it is argued that it is not likely, had this been Mary the sister of Lazarus, that Matthew and Mark would have suppressed her name. Besides, say they, we should not confound the repast which is mentioned here, with that mentioned by John, John 12:3. This one was made only two days before the passover, and that one six days before: the one was made at the house of Simon the leper, the other at the house of Lazarus, John 12:1, 2. At this,

the woman poured the oil on the head of Christ; at the other, Mary anointed Christ's feet with it. See on Mark 14:3, and see the notes at the end of this chapter. {Matthew 26:75}

**Verse 8. *His disciples***— One of them, viz. Judas. This mode of speaking was common among the Hebrews. So, Matthew 27:44, the thieves also, i.e. one of them. So, Matthew 28:17, some doubted, i.e. one, Thomas. See also Genesis 8:4; Judges 12:7; Nehemiah 6:7, etc. By a figure called among rhetoricians enallage, the plural is put for the singular; it is, however, possible that Judas, who made the objection, was followed in the sentiment by the rest of the disciples.

**Verse 9. *And given to the poor.***— How often does charity serve as a cloak for covetousness! God is sometimes robbed of his right under the pretense of devoting what is withheld to some charitable purpose, to which there was no intention ever to give it.

**Verse 10. *Why trouble ye the woman?***— Or, Why do ye put the woman to pain? See this sense of *κοπους παρεχειν*, established by Kypke in loco. A generous mind is ever pained when it is denied the opportunity of doing good, or when its proffered kindness is refused.

**Verse 11. *Ye have the poor always with you***— And, consequently, have the opportunity of doing them good at any time; but me ye have not always; my bodily presence is about to be removed from you for ever. The woman, under a presentiment of my death is preparing me for my burial.

**Verse 12. *She did it for my burial.***— Or, She hath done it to embalm me-*ενταφιασαι με*. The Septuagint use *ενταφιαστης* for the person whose office it was to embalm, Genesis 50:2, and *ενταφιαζω* for the Hebrew *מִנְחָה* which signifies to prepare with spices, or aromatics, Genesis 50:3. Our Lord took this opportunity to tell them, once more, that he was shortly to die.

**Verse 13. *Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached***— Another remarkable proof of the prescience of Christ. Such a matter as this, humanly speaking, depended on mere fortuitous circumstances, yet so has God disposed matters, that the thing has continued, hitherto, as firm and regular as the ordinances of heaven.



**For a memorial of her.**— As embalming preserves the body from corruption, and she has done this good work to embalm and preserve this body, so will I order every thing concerning this transaction to be carefully recorded, to preserve her memory to the latest ages. The actions which the world blames, through the spirit of envy, covetousness, or malice, God takes delight to distinguish and record.

**Verse 14. *Then-Judas***— After this supper at Bethany, Judas returned to Jerusalem, and made his contract with the chief priests.

**Verse 15. *Thirty pieces of silver.***— *τριακοντα αργυρια*, thirty silverlings; but *στατηρας*, staters, is the reading of the Codex Bezae, three copies of the Itala, Eusebius, and Origen sometimes; and *στατηρας αργυριον*, silver staters, is the reading of the famous Basil MS. No. 1, in Griesbach, and one copy of the Itala.

A stater was the same as the shekel, and worth about 3s. English money, according to Dean Prideaux: a goodly price for the Savior of the world! Thirty staters, about 4l. 10s. the common price for the meanest slave! See Exodus 21:32. The rabbins say, thirty *לֶעִי* selain of pure silver was the standard price for a slave, whether good or bad, male or female. See tract Erachin, fol. 14, and Shekalim, cap. 1. Each selaa weighed 384 barley-corns; the same number was contained in a shekel; and therefore the shekel and the selaa were the same. See the notes on Genesis 20:16, and Exodus 38:24.

**Verse 16. *He sought opportunity***— *ευκαιριαν*, a convenient or fit opportunity. Men seldom leave a crime imperfect: when once sin is conceived, it meets, in general, with few obstacles, till it brings forth death. How deceitful, how deeply damning, is the love of money! Well might a heathen exclaim, while contemplating the grave of a person who was murdered for the sake of his wealth:-

— *Quid non mortalia pectora cogis*  
*AURI SACRA FAMES? VIRG. AEn. iii. 56*

“O! cursed lust of gold! what wilt thou not compel the human heart to perpetrate?” Judas is deservedly considered as one of the most infamous of men, his conduct base beyond description, and his motives vile. But how many, since his time, have walked in the same way! How many, for

the sake of worldly wealth, have renounced the religion of their Lord and Master, and sold Jesus, and their interest in heaven, for a short-lived portion of secular good! From John 12:6, we learn that Judas, who was treasurer to our Lord and his disciples, (for he carried the bag,) was a thief, and frequently purloined a portion of what was given for the support of this holy family. Being disappointed of the prey he hoped to have from the sale of the precious ointment, Matthew 26:9, he sold his Master to make up the sum. A thorough Jew!

**Verse 17. *Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread***— As the feast of unleavened bread did not begin till the day after the passover, the fifteenth day of the month, Leviticus 23:5, 6; Numbers 28:16, 17, this could not have been, properly, the first day of that feast; but as the Jews began to eat unleavened bread on the fourteenth, Exodus 12:18, this day was often termed the first of unleavened bread. The evangelists use it in this sense, and call even the paschal day by this name. See Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7.

***Where wilt thou that we prepare***— How astonishing is this, that HE who created all things, whether visible or invisible, and by whom all things were upheld, should so empty himself as not to be proprietor of a single house in his whole creation, to eat the last passover with his disciples! This is certainly a mystery, and so, less or more is every thing that God does. But how inveterate and destructive must the nature of sin be, when such emptying and humiliation were necessary to its destruction! It is worthy of note what the Talmudists say, that the inhabitants of Jerusalem did not let out their houses to those who came to the annual feasts; but afforded all accommodations of this kind gratis. A man might therefore go and request the use of any room, on such an occasion, which was as yet unoccupied. The earthen jug, and the skin of the sacrifice, were left with the host. See Lightfoot, vol. ii. p. 21.

**Verse 18. *Go-to such a man***— *τον δεινα* It is probable that this means some person with whom Christ was well acquainted, and who was known to the disciples. Grotius observes that the Greeks use this form when they mean some particular person who is so well known that there is no need to specify him by name. The circumstances are more particularly marked in Luke 22:8, etc.

***My time is at hand***— That is, the time of my crucifixion. Kypke has largely shown that **καιρος** is often used among the Greeks for affliction and calamity. It might be rendered here, the time of my crucifixion is at hand.

**Verse 19. *And the disciples did***— The disciples that were sent on this errand were Peter and John. See Luke 22:8.

***They made ready the passover***— That is, they provided the lamb, etc., which were appointed by the law for this solemnity. Mr. Wakefield justly observes, “that the Jews considered the passover as a sacrificial rite; Josephus calls it **θυσιαν**, A SACRIFICE; and Trypho, in Justin Martyr, speaks of **προβατον του πασχα θυειν**, SACRIFICING the paschal lamb. But what comes nearer to the point is this, that Maimonides, one of the most eminent of the Jewish rabbins, has a particular treatise on the paschal sacrifice; and throughout that piece, speaks of the lamb as a victim, and of the solemnity itself as a sacrifice. And R. Bechai, in his commentary on Leviticus 2:11, says that the paschal sacrifice was of a piacular nature, in order to expiate the guilt contracted by the idolatrous practices of the Israelites In Egypt.” It was highly necessary that this should be considered as an expiatory sacrifice, as it typified that Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. For much more on this important subject than can, with propriety, be introduced into these notes, see a Discourse on the Eucharist, lately published by the author of this work.

**Verse 20. *Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.***—

It is a common opinion that our Lord ate the passover some hours before the Jews ate it; for the Jews, according to custom, ate theirs at the end of the fourteenth day, but Christ ate his the preceding even, which was the beginning of the same sixth day, or Friday; the Jews begin their day at sunset, we at midnight. Thus Christ ate the passover on the same day with the Jews, but not on the same hour. Christ kept this passover the beginning of the fourteenth day, the precise day and hour in which the Jews had eaten their first passover in Egypt. See Exodus 12:6-12. And in the same part of the same day in which the Jews had sacrificed their first paschal lamb, viz. between the two evenings, about the ninth hour, or 3 o'clock, Jesus Christ our passover was sacrificed for us: for it was at this hour that he yielded up his last breath; and then it was that, the sacrifice

being completed, Jesus said, *IT IS FINISHED*. See Exodus 12:6, etc., and Deuteronomy 16:6, etc. See on John 18:28, and the Treatise on the Eucharist, referred to Matthew 26:19; and see the notes on Matthew 26:26 and following verses.

**Verse 21. *One of you shall betray me.***— Or, will deliver me up. Judas had already betrayed him, Matthew 26:15, and he was now about to deliver him into the hands of the chief priests, according to the agreement he had made with them.

**Verse 22. *They were exceeding sorrowful***— That is, the eleven who were innocent; and the hypocritical traitor, Judas, endeavored to put on the appearance of sorrow. Strange! Did he not know that Christ knew the secrets of his soul! Or had his love of money so far blinded him, as to render him incapable of discerning even this, with which he had been before so well acquainted?

**Verse 23. *He that dippeth his hand***— As the Jews ate the passover a whole family together, it was not convenient for them all to dip their bread in the same dish; they therefore had several little dishes or plates, in which was the juice of the bitter herbs, mentioned Exodus 12:8, on different parts of the table; and those who were nigh one of these, dipped their bread in it. As Judas is represented as dipping in the same dish with Christ, it shows that he was either near or opposite to him. If this man's heart had not been hardened, and his conscience seared beyond all precedent, by the deceitfulness of his sin, would he have showed his face in this sacred assembly, or have thus put the seal to his own perdition, by eating of this sacrificial lamb? Is it possible that he could feel no compunction? Alas! having delivered himself up into the hands of the devil, he was capable of delivering up his Master into the hands of the chief priests; and thus, when men are completely hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, they can outwardly perform the most solemn acts of devotion, without feeling any sort of inward concern about the matter.

**Verse 24. *The Son of man goeth***— That is, is about to die. Going, going away, departing, etc., are frequently used in the best Greek and Latin writers, for death, or dying. The same words are often used in the Scriptures in the same sense.

***It had been good for that man***— Can this be said of any sinner, in the common sense in which it is understood, if there be any redemption from hell's torments? If a sinner should suffer millions of millions of years in them, and get out at last to the enjoyment of heaven, then it was well for him that he had been born, for still he has an eternity of blessedness before him. Can the doctrine of the non-eternity of hell's torments stand in the presence of this saying? Or can the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked consist with this declaration? It would have been well for that man if he had never been born! Then he must be in some state of conscious existence, as non-existence is said to be better than that state in which he is now found. It was common for the Jews to say of any flagrant transgressor, It would have been better for him had he never been born. See several examples in Schoettgen. See the case of Judas argued at the end of Acts 1.

**Verse 25. *Judas-said, Master, is it I?***— What excessive impudence! He knew, in his conscience, that he had already betrayed his Master, and was waiting now for the servants of the chief priests, that he might deliver him into their hands; and yet he says, (hoping that he had transacted his business so privately that it had not yet transpired,) Master, is it I? It is worthy of remark, that each of the other disciples said **κύριε**, LORD, is it I? But Judas dares not, or will not, use this august title, but simply says **ραββι**, TEACHER, is it I?

***Thou hast said.***— **σὺ εἶπας**, or **אָתָּה אָמַרְתָּ** atun amaritun, “Ye have said,” was a common form of expression for YES. IT IS so. “When the Zipporenses inquired whether Rabbi Judas was dead? the son of Kaphra answered, Ye have said,” i.e. He is dead. See Schoettgen. Hor. Hebr. p. 225.

**Verse 26. *Jesus took bread***— This is the first institution of what is termed the LORD'S SUPPER. To every part of this ceremony, as here mentioned, the utmost attention should be paid.

To do this, in the most effectual manner, I think it necessary to set down the text of the three evangelists who have transmitted the whole account, collated with that part of St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians which speaks of the same subject, and which, he assures us, he received by Divine revelation. It may seem strange that, although (John 13:1-38)

mentions all the circumstances preceding the holy supper, and, from Matthew 14:1-36 the circumstances which succeeded the breaking of the bread, and in chapters 15, 16, and 17, the discourse which followed the administration of the cup; yet he takes no notice of the Divine institution at all. This is generally accounted for on his knowledge of what the other three evangelists had written; and on his conviction that their relation was true, and needed no additional confirmation, as the matter was amply established by the conjoint testimony of three such respectable witnesses.

Matthew 26:26. And as they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed it (**ευλογησας** and blessed God) and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my body.

Mark 14:22. And as they did eat, Jesus took bread and blessed (**ευλογησας**, blessed God) and brake it, and to them, and said, Take, eat, this is my body.

Luke 22:19. And he took bread and gave thanks, (**ευχαριστησας**, i.e. to God,) and gave brake it, and gave unto them, saying:

This is my body which is given for you: This do in remembrance of me.

1 Corinthians 11:23. The Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; V. 24. And when he had given thanks (**και ευχαριστησας**, i.e. to God) he brake it, and said, Take, eat, this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

After giving the bread, the discourse related, John 14:1-31, inclusive, is supposed by Bishop Newcome to have been delivered by our Lord, for the comfort and support of his disciples under their present and approaching trials.

Matthew 26:27. And he took the cup, and gave thanks (**ευχαριστησας**,) and gave it to them, saying: Drink ye all of it. V. 28. For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many or the remission of sins. V. 29. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

Mark 14:23. And he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, (**ευχαριστησας**,) he gave it to them; and they all drank of it. V. 24. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed

for many. V. 25. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

Luke 22:20. Likewise also the cup, after supper, saying: This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

1 Corinthians 11:25. After the same manner also, he took the cup, when he had supped, saying: This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

After this, our Lord resumes that discourse which is found in the 15th, 16th, and 17th chapters of John, beginning with the last verse of chap. 14, Arise, let us go hence. Then succeed the following words, which conclude the whole ceremony.

Matthew 26:30. And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.

Mark 14:26. And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.

Luke 22:39. And he came out, and went as he was wont to the Mount of Olives. And his disciples also followed him.

John 14:1. When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Kedron.

From the preceding harmonized view of this important transaction, as described by three EVANGELISTS and one APOSTLE, we see the first institution, nature, and design of what has been since called THE LORD'S SUPPER. To every circumstance, as set down here, and the mode of expression by which such circumstances are described, we should pay the deepest attention.

**Verse 26. *As they were eating***— Either an ordinary supper, or the paschal lamb, as some think. See the observations at the end of this chapter.

***Jesus took bread***— Of what kind? Unleavened bread, certainly, because there was no other kind to be had in all Judea at this time; for this was the first day of unleavened bread, (Matthew 26:17,) i.e. the 14th of the month Nisan, when the Jews, according to the command of God, (Exodus 12:15-20; 23:15; 34:25,) were to purge away all leaven from their houses;

for he who sacrificed the passover, having leaven in his dwelling, was considered to be such a transgressor of the Divine law as could no longer be tolerated among the people of God; and therefore was to be cut off from the congregation of Israel. Leo of Modena, who has written a very sensible treatise on the customs of the Jews, observes, "That so strictly do some of the Jews observe the precept concerning the removal of all leaven from their houses, during the celebration of the paschal solemnity, that they either provide vessels entirely new for baking, or else have a set for the purpose, which are dedicated solely to the service of the passover, and never brought out on any other occasion."

To this divinely instituted custom of removing all leaven previously to the paschal solemnity, St. Paul evidently alludes, 1 Corinthians 5:6-8. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the UNLEAVENED bread of sincerity and truth.

Now, if any respect should be paid to the primitive institution, in the celebration of this Divine ordinance, then, unleavened, unyeasted bread should be used. In every sign, or type, the thing signifying or pointing out that which is beyond itself should either have certain properties, or be accompanied with certain circumstances, as expressive as possible of the thing signified. Bread, simply considered in itself, may be an emblem apt enough of the body of our Lord Jesus, which was given for us; but the design of God was evidently that it should not only point out this, but also the disposition required in those who should celebrate both the antetype and the type; and this the apostle explains to be sincerity and truth, the reverse of malice and wickedness. The very taste of the bread was instructive: it pointed out to every communicant, that he who came to the table of God with malice or ill-will against any soul of man, or with wickedness, a profligate or sinful life, might expect to eat and drink judgment to himself, as not discerning that the Lord's body was sacrificed for this very purpose, that all sin might be destroyed; and that sincerity, **ειλικρινεια**, such purity as the clearest light can discern no stain in, might be diffused through the whole soul; and that truth, the law of righteousness and true holiness, might regulate and guide all the actions of



life. Had the bread used on these occasions been of the common kind, it would have been perfectly unfit, or improper, to have communicated these uncommon significations; and, as it was seldom used, its rare occurrence would make the emblematical representation more deeply impressive; and the sign, and the thing signified, have their due correspondence and influence.

These circumstances considered, will it not appear that the use of common bread in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is highly improper? He who can say, "This is a matter of no importance," may say with equal propriety, the bread itself is of no importance; and another may say, the wine is of no importance; and a third may say, "neither the bread nor wine is any thing, but as they lead to spiritual references; and, the spiritual reference being once understood, the signs are useless." Thus we may, through affected spirituality, refine away the whole ordinance of God; and, with the letter and form of religion, abolish religion itself. Many have already acted in this way, not only to their loss, but to their ruin, by showing how profoundly wise they are above what is written. Let those, therefore, who consider that man shall live by every word which proceeds from the mouth of God, and who are conscientiously solicitous that each Divine institution be not only preserved, but observed in all its original integrity, attend to this circumstance. The Lutheran Church makes use of unleavened bread to the present day.

**And blessed it**— Both St. Matthew and St. Mark use the word **ευλογησας**, blessed, instead of **ευχαριστησας**, gave thanks, which is the word used by St. Luke and St. Paul. But instead of **ευλογησας**, blessed, **ευχαριστησας**, gave thanks, is the reading of ten MSS. in uncial characters, of the Dublin Codex rescriptus, published by Dr. Barrett, and of more than one hundred others, of the greatest respectability. This is the reading also of the Syriac and Arabic, and is confirmed by several of the primitive fathers. The terms, in this case, are nearly of the same import, as both blessing and giving thanks were used on these occasions. But what was it that our Lord blessed? Not the bread, though many think the contrary, being deceived by the word IT, which is improperly supplied in our version. In all the four places referred to above, whether the word blessed or gave thanks is used, it refers not to the bread, but to God, the dispenser of every good. Our Lord here conforms himself to that constant

Jewish custom, viz. of acknowledging God as the author of every good and perfect gift, by giving thanks on taking the bread and taking the cup at their ordinary meals. For every Jew was forbidden to eat, drink, or use any of God's creatures without rendering him thanks; and he who acted contrary to this command was considered as a person who was guilty of sacrilege. From this custom we have derived the decent and laudable one of saying grace (gratas thanks) before and after meat. The Jewish form of blessing, probably that which our Lord used on this occasion, none of my readers will be displeased to find here, though it has been mentioned once before. On taking the bread they say:- מלך העולם המוצא לחם מ הארץ Baruch atta Elohinoo, Melech, haolam, ha motse Lechem min haarets.

Blessed be thou, our God, King of the universe, who bringest forth bread out of the earth!

Likewise, on taking the cup, they say:-

ברוך אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי הגפ: Baruch Elohinoo, Melech, haolam, Bore perey haggephen.

Blessed be our God, the King of the universe, the Creator of the fruit it of the vine!

The Mohammedans copy their example, constantly saying before and after meat:- [-Arabic-] Bismillahi arahmani arraheemi.

In the name of God, the most merciful, the most compassionate.

No blessing, therefore, of the elements is here intended; they were already blessed, in being sent as a gift of mercy from the bountiful Lord; but God the sender is blessed, because of the liberal provision he has made for his worthless creatures. Blessing and touching the bread are merely Popish ceremonies, unauthorized either by Scripture or the practice of the pure Church of God; necessary of course to those who pretend to transmute, by a kind of spiritual incantation, the bread and wine into the real body and blood of Jesus Christ; a measure the grossest in folly, and most stupid in nonsense, to which God in judgment ever abandoned the fallen spirit of man.

***And brake it***— We often read in the Scriptures of breaking bread, but never of cutting it. The Jewish people had nothing similar to our high-raised loaf: their bread was made broad and thin, and was consequently very brittle, and, to divide it, there was no need of a knife.

The breaking of the bread I consider essential to the proper performance of this solemn and significant ceremony: because this act was designed by our Lord to shadow forth the wounding, piercing, and breaking of his body upon the cross; and, as all this was essentially necessary to the making a full atonement for the sin of the world, so it is of vast importance that this apparently little circumstance, the breaking of the bread, should be carefully attended to, that the godly communicant may have every necessary assistance to enable him to discern the Lord's body, while engaged in this most important and Divine of all God's ordinances. But who does not see that one small cube of fermented, i.e. leavened bread, previously divided from the mass with a knife, and separated by the fingers of the minister, can never answer the end of the institution, either as to the matter of the bread, or the mode of dividing it? Man is naturally a dull and heedless creature, especially in spiritual things, and has need of the utmost assistance of his senses, in union with those expressive rites and ceremonies which the Holy Scripture, not tradition, has sanctioned, in order to enable him to arrive at spiritual things, through the medium of earthly similitudes.

***And gave it to the disciples***— Not only the breaking, but also the DISTRIBUTION, of the bread are necessary parts of this rite. In the Romish Church, the bread is not broken nor delivered to the people, that THEY may take and eat; but the consecrated wafer is put upon their tongue by the priest; and it is generally understood by the communicants, that they should not masticate, but swallow it whole.

“That the breaking of this bread to be distributed,” says Dr. Whitby, “is a necessary part of this rite is evident, first, by the continual mention of it by St. Paul and all the evangelists, when they speak of the institution of this sacrament, which shows it to be a necessary part of it. 2dly, Christ says, Take, eat, this is my body, BROKEN for you, 1 Corinthians 11:24. But when the elements are not broken, it can be no more said, This is my body broken for you, than where the elements are not given. 3dly, Our

Lord said, Do this in remembrance of me: i.e. ‘Eat this bread, broken in remembrance of my body broken on the cross:’ now, where no body broken is distributed, there, nothing can be eaten in memorial of his broken body. Lastly, The apostle, by saying, The bread which we BREAK, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? sufficiently informs us that the eating of his broken body is necessary to that end, 1 Corinthians 10:10. Hence it was that this rite, of distributing bread broken, continued for a thousand years, and was, as Humbertus testifies, observed in the Roman Church in the eleventh century.” WHITBY in loco. At present, the opposite is as boldly practised as if the real Scriptural rite had never been observed in the Church of Christ.

***This is my body.***— Here it must be observed that Christ had nothing in his hands, at this time, but part of that unleavened bread which he and his disciples had been eating at supper, and therefore he could mean no more than this, viz. that the bread which he was now breaking represented his body, which, in the course of a few hours, was to be crucified for them. Common sense, unsophisticated with superstition and erroneous creeds, and reason, unawed by the secular sword of sovereign authority, could not possibly take any other meaning than this plain, consistent, and rational one, out of these words. “But,” says a false and absurd creed, “Jesus meant, when he said, HOC EST CORPUS MEUM, This is my body, and HIC EST CALIX SANGUINIS MEI, This is the chalice of my blood, that the bread and wine were substantially changed into his body, including flesh, blood, bones, yea, the whole Christ, in his immaculate humanity and adorable divinity!” And, for denying this, what rivers of righteous blood have been shed by state persecutions and by religious wars! Well it may be asked, “Can any man of sense believe, that, when Christ took up that bread and broke it, it was his own body which he held in his own hands, and which himself broke to pieces, and which he and his disciples ate?” He who can believe such a congeries of absurdities, cannot be said to be a volunteer in faith; for it is evident, the man can neither have faith nor reason, as to this subject.

Let it be observed, if any thing farther is necessary on this point, that the paschal lamb, is called the passover, because it represented the destroying angel’s passing over the children of Israel, while he slew the firstborn of the Egyptians; and our Lord and his disciples call this lamb the passover,

several times in this chapter; by which it is demonstrably evident, that they could mean no more than that the lamb sacrificed on this occasion was a memorial of, and REPRESENTED, the means used for the preservation of the Israelites from the blast of the destroying angel.

Besides, our Lord did not say, *hoc est corpus meum*, (this is my body,) as he did not speak in the Latin tongue; though as much stress has been laid upon this quotation from the Vulgate as if the original of the three evangelists had been written in the Latin language. Had he spoken in Latin, following the idiom of the Vulgate, he would have said, *Panis hic corpus meum significat*, or, *Symbolum est corporis mei: hoc poculum sanguinem meum representat*, or, *symbolum est sanguinis mei: this bread signifies my body; this cup represents my blood*. But let it be observed that, in the Hebrew, Chaldee, and Chaldeo-Syriac languages, as used in the Bible, there is no term which expresses to mean, signify, denote, though both the Greek and Latin abound with them: hence the Hebrews use a figure, and say, it is, for, it signifies. So Genesis 41:26, 27. The seven kine ARE (i.e. represent) seven years. This IS (represents) the bread of affliction which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt. Daniel 7:24. The ten horns ARE (i.e. signify) ten kings. They drank of the spiritual Rock which followed them, and the Rock WAS (represented) Christ. 1 Corinthians 10:4. And following this Hebrew idiom, though the work is written in Greek, we find in Revelation 1:20, The seven stars ARE (represent) the angels of the seven Churches: and the seven candlesticks ARE (represent) the seven Churches. The same form of speech is used in a variety of places in the New Testament, where this sense must necessarily be given to the word. Matthew 13:38, 39. The field IS (represents) the world: the good seed ARE (represent or signify) the children of the kingdom: the tares ARE (signify) the children of the wicked one. The enemy IS (signifies) the devil: the harvest IS (represents) the end of the world: the reapers ARE (i.e. signify) the angels. Luke 8:9. What might this parable BE? **τις ειη η παραβολη αυτη**:- What does this parable SIGNIFY? John 7:36. **τις εστιν αυτος ο λογος**: What is the SIGNIFICATION of this saying? John 10:6. They understood not what things they WERE, **τινα ην**, what was the SIGNIFICATION of the things he had spoken to them. Acts 10:17. **τι αν ειη οραμα**, what this vision MIGHT BE; properly rendered by our translators, what this vision should MEAN. Galatians 4:24. For these ARE the two

covenants, *αυται γαρ εισιν αι δυο διαθηκαι*, these SIGNIFY the two covenants. Luke 15:26. He asked, *τι ειη ταυτα*, what these things MEANT. See also Luke 18:36. After such unequivocal testimony from the Sacred writings, can any person doubt that, This bread is my body, has any other meaning than, This bread REPRESENTS my body?

The Latins use the verb, *sum*, in all its forms, with a similar latitude of meaning. So, *Esse oneri ferendo*, he is ABLE to bear the burthen: *bene Esse*, to LIVE sumptuously: *male Esse*, to LIVE miserably: *recte Esse*, to ENJOY good health: *Est mihi fistula*, I POSSESS a flute: *Est hodie in rebus*, he now ENJOYS a plentiful fortune: *Est mihi namque domi pater*, I HAVE a father at home, etc.: *Esse solvendo*, to be ABLE to pay: *Fuimus Troes*, *Fuit Ilium*; the Trojans are EXTINCT, Troy is NO MORE.

In Greek also, and Hebrew, it often signifies to live, to die, to be killed. *ουκ ειμι*, I am DEAD, or a dead man. Matthew 2:18: Rachel weeping for her children, *οτι ουκ εισι*, because they WERE MURDERED. Genesis 42:36: Joseph is not, *יֹסֵף אֵין* Yoseph einennu, *ιωσηφ ουκ εστιν*, Sept., Joseph is DEVoured by a WILD BEAST. Romans 4:17: Calling the things that ARE not, as if they were ALIVE. So Plutarch in Laconicis: “This shield thy father always preserved; preserve thou it, or may thou not BE,” *η μη εσο*, may thou PERISH. *ουκ οντες νομοι*, ABROGATED laws. *ειμι εν εμοι*, I POSSESS a sound understanding. *εις πατερα υμιν εσομαι*, I will PERFORM the PART of a father to you. *ειμι της πολεως της δε*, I AM an INHABITANT of that city. 1 Timothy 1:7: Desiring to BE teachers of the law, *θελοντες ειναι νομοδιδασκαλοι*, desiring to be REPUTED teachers of the law, i.e. ABLE divines. *τα οντα*, the things that ARE, i.e. NOBLE and HONORABLE men: *τα μη οντα*, the things that are not, viz. the VULGAR, or those of IGNOBLE BIRTH.

Tertullian seems to have had a correct notion of those words of our Lord, *Acceptum panem et distributum discipulis, corpus illum suum fecit, Hoc Est Corpus Meum* dicendo, id est, *Figura corporis mei*. Advers. Marc. l. v. c. 40. “Having taken the bread, and distributed that body to his disciples, he made it his body by saying, This is my body, i.e. a FIGURE of my body.”

That our Lord neither spoke in Greek nor Latin, on this occasion, needs no proof. It was, most probably, in what was formerly called the Chaldaic,

now the Syriac, that our Lord conversed with his disciples. Through the providence of God, we have complete versions of the Gospels in this language, and in them it is likely we have the precise words spoken by our Lord on this occasion. In Matthew 26:26, 27, the words in the Syriac version are, [S] hanau pagree, This is my body, [S] hanau demee, This is my blood, of which forms of speech the Greek is a verbal translation; nor would any man, even in the present day, speaking in the same language, use, among the people to whom it was vernacular, other terms than the above to express, This represents my body, and this represents my blood.

As to the ancient Syrian Church on the Malabar coast, it is a fact that it never held the doctrine of transubstantiation, nor does it appear that it was ever heard of in that Church till the year 1599, when Don Alexis Menezes, Archbishop of Goa, and the Jesuit Francis Rez, invaded that Church, and by tricks, impostures, and the assistance of the heathen governors of Cochin, and other places, whom they gained over by bribes and presents, overthrew the whole of this ancient Church, and gave the oppressed people the rites, creeds, etc., of the papal Catholic Church in its place. Vid. La Croz. Hist. du Ch. des Indes.

This was done at the Synod of Diamper, which began its sessions at Agomale, June 20, 1599. The tricks of this unprincipled prelate, the tool of Pope Clement VIII., and Philip II., King of Portugal, are amply detailed by Mr. La Croze, in the work already quoted.

But this form of speech is common, even in our own language, though we have terms enow to fill up the ellipsis. Suppose a man entering into a museum, enriched with the remains of ancient Greek sculpture: his eyes are attracted by a number of curious busts; and, on inquiring what they are, he learns, this is Socrates, that Plato, a third Homer; others Hesiod, Horace, Virgil, Demosthenes, Cicero, Herodotus, Livy, Caesar, Nero, Vespasian, etc. Is he deceived by this information? Not at all: he knows well that the busts he sees are not the identical persons of those ancient philosophers, poets, orators, historians, and emperors, but only REPRESENTATIONS of their persons in sculpture, between which and the originals there is as essential a difference as between a human body, instinct with all the principles of rational vitality, and a block of marble. When, therefore, Christ took up a piece of bread, brake it, and said, This IS

my body, who, but the most stupid of mortals, could imagine that he was, at the same time, handling and breaking his own body! Would not any person, of plain common sense, see as great a difference between the man Christ Jesus, and the piece of bread, as between the block of marble and the philosopher it represented, in the case referred to above? The truth is, there is scarcely a more common form of speech in any language than, This IS, for, This REPRESENTS or SIGNIFIES. And as our Lord refers, in the whole of this transaction, to the ordinance of the passover, we may consider him as saying: “This bread is now my body, in that sense in which the paschal lamb has been my body hitherto; and this cup is my blood of the New Testament, in the same sense as the blood of bulls and goats has been my blood under the Old: Exodus 24; Hebrews 9. That is, the paschal lamb and the sprinkling of blood represented my sacrifice to the present time this bread and this wine shall represent my body and blood through all future ages; therefore, Do this in remembrance of me.”

St. Luke and St. Paul add a circumstance here which is not noticed either by St. Matthew or St. Mark. After, this is my body, the former adds, which is given for you; the latter, which is broken for you; the sense of which is: “As God has in his bountiful providence given you bread for the sustenance of your lives, so in his infinite grace he has given you my body to save your souls unto life eternal. But as this bread must be broken and masticated, in order to its becoming proper nourishment, so my body must be broken, i.e. crucified, for you, before it can be the bread of life to your souls. As, therefore, your life depends on the bread which God’s bounty has provided for your bodies, so your eternal life depends on the sacrifice of my body on the cross for your souls.” Besides, there is here an allusion to the offering of sacrifice—an innocent creature was brought to the altar of God, and its blood (the life of the beast) was poured out for, or in behalf of, the person who brought it. Thus Christ says, alluding to the sacrifice of the paschal lamb, This is my body, **το υπερ υμων διδομενον**, which IS GIVEN in your stead, or in your behalf; a free GIFT, from God’s endless mercy, for the salvation of your souls. This is my body, **το υπερ υμων κλωμενον**, (1 Corinthians 11:24,) which is broken-sacrificed in your stead; as without the breaking (piercing) of the body, and spilling of the blood, there was no remission.



In this solemn transaction we must weigh every word, as there is none without its appropriate and deeply emphatic meaning. So it is written, Ephesians 5:2. Christ hath loved us, and given himself, *επερ ημων*, on our account, or in our stead, an offering and a SACRIFICE (*θυσια*) to God for a sweet-smelling savor; that, as in the sacrifice offered by Noah, Genesis 8:21, (to which the apostle evidently alludes,) from which it is said, The Lord smelled a sweet savor, *רִיחַ הַנִּיחֹחַ* riach hanichoach, a savor of rest, so that he became appeased towards the earth, and determined that there should no more be a flood to destroy it; in like manner, in the offering and sacrifice of Christ for us, God is appeased towards the human race, and has in consequence decreed that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

**Verse 27. *And he took the cup***—*μετα το δειπνησαι*, after having supped, Luke 22:20, and 1 Corinthians 11:25. Whether the supper was on the paschal lamb, or whether it was a common or ordinary meal, I shall not wait here to inquire: see at the end of this chapter. In the parallel place, in Luke 22, we find our Lord taking the cup, Luke 22:17, and again Luke 22:19; by the former of which was probably meant the cup of blessing, *כו הברכה* kos haberah, which the master of a family took, and, after blessing God, gave to each of his guests by way of welcome: but this second taking the cup is to be understood as belonging to the very important rite which he was now instituting, and on which he lays a very remarkable stress. With respect to the bread, he had before simply said, Take, eat, this is my body; but concerning the cup he says, Drink ye all of this: for as this pointed out the very essence of the institution, viz. the blood of atonement, it was necessary that each should have a particular application of it; therefore he says, Drink ye ALL of THIS. By this we are taught that the cup is essential to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; so that they who deny the cup to the people sin against God's institution; and they who receive not the cup are not partakers of the body and blood of Christ. If either could without mortal prejudice be omitted, it might be the bread; but the cup, as pointing out the blood poured out, i.e. the life, by which alone the great sacrificial act is performed, and remission of sins procured, is absolutely indispensable. On this ground it is demonstrable, that there is not a priest under heaven, who denies the cup to the people, that can be said to celebrate the Lord's Supper at all; nor is there one of

their votaries that ever received the holy sacrament. All pretension to this is an absolute farce, so long as the cup, the emblem of the atoning blood, is denied. How strange is it, that the very men who plead so much for the bare literal meaning of this is my body, in the preceding verse, should deny all meaning to drink YE ALL of this cup, in this verse! And though Christ has in the most positive manner enjoined it, they will not permit one of the laity to taste it! O, what a thing is man—a constant contradiction to reason and to himself.

I have just said that our blessed Lord lays remarkable stress on the administration of the cup, and on that which himself assures us is represented by it. As it is peculiarly emphatic, I beg leave to set down the original text, which the critical reader will do well minutely to examine: **τουτο γαρ εστι το αιμα μου το της καινης διαθηκης, το περι πολλων εκχυνομενον εις αφεσιν αμαρτιων**. The following literal translation and paraphrase do not exceed its meaning:-

For THIS is THAT blood of mine which was pointed out by all the sacrifices under the Jewish law, and particularly by the shedding and sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb. THAT blood of the sacrifice slain for the ratification of the new covenant. THE blood ready to be poured out for the multitudes, the whole Gentile world as well as the Jews, for the taking away of sins; sin, whether original or actual, in all its power and guilt, in all its internal energy and pollution.

**And gave thanks**— See the form used on this occasion, on Matthew 26:26; and see the MISHNA, TRACT **ברכות** Beracoth.

**Verse 28. For this is my blood of the New Testament**— This is the reading both here and in St. Mark; but St. Luke and St. Paul say, This cup is the New Testament in my blood. This passage has been strangely mistaken: by New Testament, many understand nothing more than the book commonly known by this name, containing the four Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, apostolical Epistles, and book of the Revelation; and they think that the cup of the New Testament means no more than merely that cup which the book called the New Testament enjoins in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. As this is the case, it is highly necessary that this term should be explained. The original, **η καινη διαθηκη**, which we translate, The New Testament, and which is the general title of all the contents of

the book already described, simply means, the new COVENANT. Covenant, from con, together, and venio, I come, signifies an agreement, contract, or compact, between two parties, by which both are mutually bound to do certain things, on certain conditions and penalties. It answers to the Hebrew בְּרִית berith, which often signifies, not only the covenant or agreement, but also the sacrifice which was slain on the occasion, by the blood of which the covenant was ratified; and the contracting parties professed to subject themselves to such a death as that of the victim, in case of violating their engagements. An oath of this kind, on slaying the covenant sacrifice, was usual in ancient times: so in Homer, when a covenant was made between the Greeks and the Trojans, and the throats of lambs were cut, and their blood poured out, the following form of adjuration was used by the contracting parties:-

ζεῦ κυδιστε, μεγιστε, και αθανατοι θεοι αλλοι,  
οποτεροι προτεροι υπερ ορκια πημηνειαν,  
οδε σφ' εγκεφαλος χαμαδις ρεοι, ως οδε οινος,  
αυτων, και τεκεων· αλοχοι δ' αλλοισι μιγειεν

*All glorious Jove, and ye, the powers of heaven!  
Whoso shall violate this contract first,  
So be their blood, their children's and their own,  
Poured out, as this libation, on the ground  
And let their wives bring forth to other men!*  
ILIAD I. iii. v. 298-301

Our blessed Savior is evidently called the διαθηκη, בְּרִית berith, or covenant sacrifice, Isaiah 42:6; 49: 8; Zechariah 9:11. And to those Scriptures he appears to allude, as in them the Lord promises to give him for a covenant (sacrifice) to the Gentiles, and to send forth, by the blood of this covenant (victim) the prisoners out of the pit. The passages in the sacred writings which allude to this grand sacrificial and atoning act are almost innumerable. See the Preface to Matthew.

In this place, our Lord terms his blood the blood of the NEW covenant; by which he means that grand plan of agreement, or reconciliation, which God was now establishing between himself and mankind, by the passion and death of his Son, through whom alone men could draw nigh to God; and this NEW covenant is mentioned in contradistinction from the OLD covenant, η παλαια διαθηκη, 2 Corinthians 3:14, by which appellation

all the books of the Old Testament were distinguished, because they pointed out the way of reconciliation to God by the blood of the various victims slain under the law; but now, as the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, was about to be offered up, a NEW and LIVING way was thereby constituted, so that no one henceforth could come unto the Father but by HIM. Hence all the books of the New Testament, which bear unanimous testimony to the doctrine of salvation by faith through the blood of Jesus, are termed, **η καινη διαθηκη**, The NEW covenant. See the Preface.

Dr. Lightfoot's Observations on this are worthy of serious notice. "This is my blood of the New Testament. Not only the seal of the covenant, but the sanction of the new covenant. The end of the Mosaic economy, and the confirming of a new one. The confirmation of the old covenant was by the blood of bulls and goats, Exodus 24, Hebrews 9, because blood was still to be shed: the confirmation of the new was by a cup of wine, because under the new covenant there is no farther shedding of blood. As it is here said of the cup, This cup is the New Testament in my blood; so it might be said of the cup of blood, Exodus 24, That cup was the Old Testament in the blood of Christ: there, all the articles of that covenant being read over, Moses sprinkled all the people with blood, and said, This is the blood of the covenant which God hath made with you; and thus the old covenant or testimony was confirmed. In like manner, Christ, having published all the articles of the new covenant, he takes the cup of wine, and gives them to drink, and saith. This is the New Testament in my blood; and thus the new covenant was established."-Works, vol. ii. p. 260.

**Which is shed** (**εκχυνομενον, poured out**) **for many**— **εκχεω** and **εκχυνω**, to pour out, are often used in a sacrificial sense in the Septuagint, and signify to pour out or sprinkle the blood of the sacrifices before the altar of the Lord, by way of atonement. See 2 Kings 16:15; Leviticus 8:15; 9:9; Exodus 29:12; Leviticus 4:7, 14, 17, 30, 34; and in various other places. Our Lord, by this very remarkable mode of expression, teaches us that, as his body was to be broken or crucified, **υπερ ημων**, in our stead, so here the blood was to be poured out to make an atonement, as the words, remission of sins, sufficiently prove for without shedding of blood there was no remission, Hebrews 9:22, nor any remission by shedding of

blood, but in a sacrificial way. See the passages above, and on Matthew 26:26.

The whole of this passage will receive additional light when collated with Isaiah 53:11, 12. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify MANY, for he shall bear their iniquities-because he hath POURED OUT his soul unto death, and he bare the sin of MANY. The pouring out of the soul unto death, in the prophet, answers to, this is the blood of the new covenant which is poured out for you, in the evangelists; and the רַבִּים, rabbim, multitudes, in Isaiah, corresponds to the MANY, πολλων, of Matthew and Mark. The passage will soon appear plain, when we consider that two distinct classes of persons are mentioned by the prophet. 1. The Jews. Isaiah 53:4. Surely he hath borne OUR griefs, and carried OUR sorrows. Isaiah 53:5. But he was wounded for OUR transgressions, he was bruised for OUR iniquities, the chastisement of OUR peace was upon him. Isaiah 53:6. All WE like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of US all. 2. The GENTILES. Isaiah 53:11. By his knowledge, בְּדַעְתּוֹ bedaato, i.e. by his being made known, published as Christ crucified among the Gentiles, he shall justify רַבִּים rabbim, the multitudes, (the GENTILES,) for he shall (also) bear THEIR offenses, as well as OURS, the Jews, Isaiah 53:4, etc. It is well known that the Jewish dispensation, termed by the apostle as above, ἡ παλαια διαθηκη, the OLD covenant, was partial and exclusive. None were particularly interested in it save the descendants of the twelve sons of Jacob: whereas the Christian dispensation, ἡ καινη διαθηκη, the NEW covenant, referred to by our Lord in this place, was universal; for as Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for EVERY man, Hebrews 2:9, and is that Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the WORLD, John 1:29, who would have ALL MEN to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth, 1 Timothy 2:4, even that knowledge of Christ crucified, by which they are to be justified, Isaiah 53:11, therefore he has commanded his disciples to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to EVERY CREATURE, Mark 16:15. The reprobate race, those who were no people, and not beloved, were to be called in; for the Gospel was to be preached to all the world, though it was to begin at Jerusalem, Luke 24:47. For this purpose was the blood of the new covenant sacrifice poured out for the

multitudes, that there might be but one fold, as there is but one Shepherd; and that God might be ALL and in ALL.

**For the remission of sins.**— εἰς ἀφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν, for (or, in reference to) the taking away of sins. For, although the blood is shed, and the atonement made, no man's sins are taken away until, as a true penitent, he returns to God, and, feeling his utter incapacity to save himself, believes in Christ Jesus, who is the justifier of the ungodly.

The phrase, ἀφεσις τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν, remission of sins, (frequently used by the Septuagint,) being thus explained by our Lord, is often used by the evangelists and the apostles; and does not mean merely the pardon of sins, as it is generally understood, but the removal or taking away of sins; not only the guilt, but also the very nature of sin, and the pollution of the soul through it; and comprehends all that is generally understood by the terms justification and sanctification. For the use and meaning of the phrase ἀφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν, see Mark 1:4; Luke 1:77; 3:3; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18; Colossians 1:14; Hebrews 10:18.

Both St. Luke and St. Paul add, that, after giving the bread, our Lord said, Do this in remembrance of me. And after giving the cup, St. Paul alone adds, This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. The account, as given by St. Paul, should be carefully followed, being fuller, and received, according to his own declaration, by especial revelation from God. See 1 Corinthians 11:23, For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, etc. See the harmonized view above.

**Verse 29. I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine**— These words seem to intimate no more than this: We shall not have another opportunity of eating this bread and drinking this wine together; as in a few hours my crucifixion shall take place.

**Until that day when I drink it new with you**— That is, I shall no more drink of the produce of the vine with you; but shall drink new wine—wine of a widely different nature from this—a wine which the kingdom of God alone can afford. The term new in Scripture is often taken in this sense. So the NEW heaven, the NEW earth, the NEW covenant, the NEW man—mean a heaven, earth, covenant, man, of a very different nature from the former. It was our Lord's invariable custom to illustrate heavenly things by those of

earth, and to make that which had last been the subject of conversation the means of doing it. Thus he uses wine here, of which they had lately drunk, and on which he had held the preceding discourse, to point out the supreme blessedness of the kingdom of God. But however pleasing and useful wine may be to the body and how helpful soever, as an ordinance of God. It may be to the soul in the holy sacrament; yet the wine of the kingdom, the spiritual enjoyments at the right hand of God, will be infinitely more precious and useful. From what our Lord says here, we learn that the sacrament of his supper is a type and a pledge, to genuine Christians, of the felicity they shall enjoy with Christ in the kingdom of glory.

**Verse 30. *And when they had sung a hymn***— ὑμνησαντες means, probably, no more than a kind of recitative reading or chanting. As to the hymn itself, we know, from the universal consent of Jewish antiquity, that it was composed of Psalms 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, and 118, termed by the Jews הלל halel, from הללויהּ halelu-yah, the first word in Psalm 113. These six Psalms were always sung at every paschal solemnity. They sung this great hillel on account of the five great benefits referred to in it; viz.

1. The Exodus from Egypt, Psalm 114:1. When Israel went out of Egypt, etc.
2. The miraculous division of the Red Sea, Psalm 114:3. The sea saw it and fled.
3. The promulgation of the law, Psalm 114:4. The mountains skipped like lambs.
4. The resurrection of the dead, Psalm 116:9. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.
5. The passion of the Messiah, Psalm 115:1. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, etc.

See Schoettgen, Hor. Hebr. p. 231, and my Discourse on the nature and design of the Eucharist, 8vo. Lond. 1808.

**Verse 31. *All ye shall be offended***— Or rather, Ye will all be stumbled-*παντες υμεις σκανδαλισθησεσθε*-ye will all forsake me, and lose in a great measure your confidence in me.

***This night***— The time of trial is just at hand.

***I will smite the shepherd***— It will happen to you as to a flock of sheep, whose shepherd has been slain-the leader and guardian being removed, the whole flock shall be scattered, and be on the point of becoming a prey to ravenous beasts.

**Verse 32. *But after I am risen again***— Don't lose your confidence; for though I shall appear for a time to be wholly left to wicked men, and be brought under the power of death, yet I will rise again, and triumph over all your enemies and mine.

***I will go before you***— Still alluding to the case of the shepherd and his sheep. Though the shepherd has been smitten and the sheep scattered, the shepherd shall revive again, collect the scattered flock, and go before them, and lead them to peace, security, and happiness.

**Verse 33. *Peter-said unto him, Though all men shall be offended-yet will I never***— The presumptuous person imagines he can do every thing, and can do nothing: thinks he can excel all, and excels in nothing: promises every thing, and performs nothing. The humble man acts a quite contrary part. There is nothing we know so little of as ourselves-nothing we see less of than our own weakness and poverty. The strength of pride is only for a moment. Peter, though vainly confident, was certainly sincere-he had never been put to a sore trial, and did not know his own strength. Had this resolution of his been formed in the strength of God, he would have been enabled to maintain it against earth and hell. This most awful denial of Christ, and his abandoning him in the time of trial, was sufficient to have disqualified him for ever from being, in any sense, head of the Church, had such a supremacy been ever designed him. Such a supremacy was never given him by Christ; but the fable of it is in the Church of Rome, and the mock Peter, not Peter the apostle, is there and there only to be found.

**Verse 34. *Jesus said***— Our Lord's answer to Peter is very emphatic and impressive. Verily-I speak a solemn weighty truth, thou wilt not only be stumbled, fall off, and forsake thy Master, but thou wilt even deny that



thou hast, or ever had, any knowledge of or connection with me; and this thou wilt do, not by little and little, through a long process of time, till the apostasy, daily gathering strength, shall be complete; but thou wilt do it this very night, and that not once only, but thrice; and this thou wilt do also in the earlier part of the night, before even a cock shall crow. Was not this warning enough to him not to trust in his own strength, but to depend on God?

**Verse 35. *Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.***— He does not take the warning which his Lord gave him—he trusts in the warm, sincere attachment to Christ which he now feels, not considering that this must speedily fail, unless supported by the power of God.

**Verse 36. *A place called Gethsemane***— A garden at the foot of the mount of Olives. The name seems to be formed from גֶּתְּ (gath, a press, and שֶׁמֶן (shemen, oil; probably the place where the produce of the mount of Olives was prepared for use. The garden of the oilpress, or olive-press.

***Sit ye here***— Or, stay in this place, while I go and pray yonder: and employ ye the time as I shall employ it—in watching unto prayer.

**Verse 37. *And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee***— That is, James and John; the same persons who had beheld his transfiguration on the mount—that they might contemplate this agony in the light of that glory which they had there seen; and so be kept from being stumbled by a view of his present humiliation.

***Began to be sorrowful***— λυπείσθαι, from λυω, to dissolve—exquisite sorrow, such as dissolves the natural vigor, and threatens to separate soul and body.

***And very heavy.***— Overwhelmed with anguish—αδημονεῖν. This word is used by the Greeks to denote the most extreme anguish which the soul can feel—excruciating anxiety and torture of spirit.

**Verse 38. *Then saith he***— Then saith-Jesus:—I have added the word Jesus, **ο ιησους**, on the authority of a multitude of eminent MSS. See them in Griesbach.

***My soul is exceeding sorrowful, (or, is surrounded with exceeding sorrow,) even unto death.***— This latter word explains the two former: My soul is so dissolved in sorrow, my spirit is filled with such agony and anguish, that, if speedy succor be not given to my body, death must be the speedy consequence.

Now, the grand expiatory sacrifice begins to be offered: in this garden Jesus enters fully into the sacerdotal office; and now, on the altar of his immaculate divinity, begins to offer his own body-his own life—a lamb without spot, for the sin of the world. St. Luke observes, Luke 22:43, 44, that there appeared unto him an angel from heaven strengthening him; and that, being in an agony, his sweat was like great drops of blood falling to the ground. How exquisite must this anguish have been, when it forced the very blood through the coats of the veins, and enlarged the pores in such a preternatural manner as to cause them to empty it out in large successive drops! In my opinion, the principal part of the redemption price was paid in this unprecedented and indescribable agony.

Bloody sweats are mentioned by many authors; but none was ever such as this—where a person in perfect health, (having never had any predisposing sickness to induce a debility of the system,) and in the full vigor of life, about thirty-three years of age, suddenly, through mental pressure, without any fear of death, sweat great drops of blood; and these continued, during his wrestling with God to fall to the ground.

To say that all this was occasioned by the fear he had of the ignominious death which he was about to die confutes itself—for this would not only rob him of his divinity, for which purpose it is brought, but it deprives him of all excellency, and even of manhood itself. The prospect of death could not cause him to suffer thus, when he knew that in less than three days he was to be restored to life, and be brought into an eternity of blessedness. His agony and distress can receive no consistent explication but on this ground—He SUFFERED, the JUST for the UNJUST, that he might BRING us to GOD. O glorious truth! O infinitely meritorious suffering! And O! above all, the eternal love, that caused him to undergo such sufferings for the sake of SINNERS!

**Verse 39. *Fell on his face***— See the note on Luke 22:44. This was the ordinary posture of the supplicant when the favor was great which was

asked, and deep humiliation required. The head was put between the knees, and the forehead brought to touch the earth-this was not only a humiliating, but a very painful posture also.

***This cup***— The word cup is frequently used in the Sacred Writings to point out sorrow, anguish, terror, death. It seems to be an allusion to a very ancient method of punishing criminals. A cup of poison was put into their hands, and they were obliged to drink it. Socrates was killed thus, being obliged by the magistrates of Athens to drink a cup of the juice of hemlock. To death, by the poisoned cup, there seems an allusion in Hebrews 2:9, Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, TASTED death for every man. The whole world are here represented as standing guilty and condemned before the tribunal of God; into every man's hand the deadly cup is put, and he is required to drink off the poison-Jesus enters, takes every man's cup out of his hand, and drinks off the poison, and thus tastes or suffers the death which every man otherwise must have undergone.

***Pass from me***— Perhaps there is an allusion here to several criminals standing in a row, who are all to drink of the same cup; but, the judge extending favor to a certain one, the cup passes by him to the next.

Instead of **προελθων μικρον**, going a little forward, many eminent MSS. have **προσελθων**, coming a little forward-but the variation is of little moment. At the close of this verse several MSS. add the clause in Luke 22:43,

There appeared an angel, etc.

**Verse 40. *He-saith unto Peter***— He addressed himself more particularly to this apostle, because of the profession he had made, Matthew 26:33; as if he had said: "Is this the way you testify your affectionate attachment to me? Ye all said you were ready to die with me; what, then, cannot you watch ONE hour?"

Instead of **ουκ ισχυσατε**, could YE not, the Codex Alexandrinus, the later Syriac in the margin, three of the Itala, and Juvenius, read **ουκ ισχυσας**, couldst THOU not-referring the reproach immediately to Peter, who had made the promises mentioned before.

**Verse 41. *That ye enter not into temptation***— If ye cannot endure a little fatigue when there is no suffering, how will ye do when the temptation, the great trial of your fidelity and courage, cometh? Watch-that ye be not taken unawares; and pray-that when it comes ye may be enabled to bear it.

***The spirit-is willing, but the flesh is weak***— Your inclinations are good-ye are truly sincere; but your good purposes will be overpowered by your timidity. Ye wish to continue steadfast in your adherence to your Master; but your fears will lead you to desert him.

**Verse 42. *O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me***— If it be not possible-to redeem fallen man, unless I drink this cup, unless I suffer death for them; thy will be done-I am content to suffer whatever may be requisite to accomplish the great design. In this address the humanity of Christ most evidently appears; for it was his humanity alone that could suffer; and if it did not appear that he had felt these sufferings, it would have been a presumption that he had not suffered, and consequently made no atonement. And had he not appeared to have been perfectly resigned in these sufferings, his sacrifice could not have been a free-will but a constrained offering, and therefore of no use to the salvation of mankind.

**Verse 43. *Their eyes were heavy***.— That is, they could not keep them open. Was there nothing preternatural in this? Was there no influence here from the powers of darkness?

**Verse 44. *Prayed the third time***— So St. Paul-I besought the Lord THRICE that it might depart from me, 2 Corinthians 12:8. This thrice repeating the same petition argues deep earnestness of soul.

**Verse 45. *Sleep on now, and take your rest***— Perhaps it might be better to read these words interrogatively, and paraphrase them thus: Do ye sleep on still? Will no warnings avail? Will no danger excite you to watchfulness and prayer? My hour-in which I am to be delivered up, is at hand; therefore now think of your own personal safety.

***The Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.***— *αμαρτωλων*, viz. the Gentiles or heathens, who were generally distinguished by this appellation from the Jews. Here it probably means the Roman cohort that was stationed on festivals for the defense of the temple. By the Romans he

was adjudged to death; for the Jews acknowledged that they had no power in capital cases. See the note on Matthew 9:10.

**Verse 46. *Rise, let us be going***— That is, to meet them, giving thereby the fullest proof that I know all their designs, and might have, by flight or otherwise, provided for my own safety; but I go willingly to meet that death which their malice designs me, and, through it, provide for the life of the world.

**Verse 47. *Judas, one of the twelve***— More deeply to mark his base ingratitude and desperate wickedness—HE was ONE of the TWELVE—and he is a TRAITOR, and one of the vilest too that ever disgraced human nature.

***A great multitude with swords and staves***— They did not come as officers of justice, but as a desperate mob. Justice had nothing to do in this business. He who a little before had been one of the leaders of the flock of Christ is now become the leader of ruffians and murderers! What a terrible fall!

**Verse 48. *Gave them a sign***— How coolly deliberate is this dire apostate! The man whom I shall kiss—how deeply hypocritical! That is he, hold him fast, seize him—how diabolically malicious!

***Hail, Master***— A usual compliment among the Jews. Judas pretends to wish our Lord continued health while he is meditating his destruction! How many compliments of this kind are there in the world! Judas had a pattern in Joab, who, while he pretends to inquire tenderly for the health of Amasa, thrust him through with his sword; but the disciple here vastly outdoes his master, and through a motive, if possible, still more base. Let all those who use unmeaning or insidious compliments rank for ever with Joab and Judas.

***And kissed him.***— And tenderly kissed him—this is the proper meaning of the original word *κατεφιλησεν*, he kissed him again and again—still pretending the most affectionate attachment to him, though our Lord had before unmasked him.

**Verse 50. *Jesus said—Friend***— Rather, companion, *εταίρε*, (not FRIEND,) wherefore, rather, against whom (*εφ' ὃ*, the reading of all the best MSS.) art thou come? How must these words have cut his very soul, if he had

any sensibility left! Surely, thou, who hast so long been my companion, art not come against me, thy Lord, Teacher and Friend! What is the human heart not capable of, when abandoned by God, and influenced by Satan and the love of money!

**Laid hands on Jesus**— But not before they had felt that proof of his sovereign power by which they had all been struck down to the earth, John 18:6. It is strange that, after this, they should dare to approach him; but the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

**Verse 51. One of them which were with Jesus**— This was Peter-struck a servant of the high priest's, the servant's name was Malchus, John 18:10, and smote off his ear. In Luke 22:51, it is said, Jesus touched and healed it. Here was another miracle, and striking proof of the Divinity of Christ. Peter did not cut the ear, merely, he cut it OFF, *αφειλεν*. Now to heal it, Jesus must either take up the ear and put it on again, or else create a new one-either of these was a miracle, which nothing less than unlimited power could produce. See the note on John 18:10.

**Verse 52. Put up again thy sword into his place**— Neither Christ nor his religion is to be defended by the secular arm. God is sufficiently able to support his ark: Uzzah need not stretch out his hand on the occasion. Even the shadow of public justice is not to be resisted by a private person, when coming from those in public authority. The cause of a Christian is the cause of God: sufferings belong to one, and vengeance to the other. Let the cause, therefore, rest in his hands, who will do it ample justice.

**Shall perish with the sword**— Instead of *απολουνται*, shall perish, many excellent MSS., versions, and fathers, have *αποθανουνται*, shall die. The general meaning of this verse is, they who contend in battle are likely, on both sides, to become the sacrifices of their mutual animosities. But it is probably a prophetic declaration of the Jewish and Roman states. The Jews put our Lord to death under the sanction of the Romans-both took the sword against Christ, and both perished by it. The Jews by the sword of the Romans, and the Romans by that of the Goths, Vandals, etc. The event has verified the prediction-the Jewish government has been destroyed upwards of 1700 years, and the Roman upwards of 1000. Confer with this passage, Psalm 2:4, 9; 110:1, 5, 6. But how came Peter to have a sword? Judea was at this time so infested with robbers and

cut-throats that it was not deemed safe for any person to go unarmed. He probably carried one for his mere personal safety.

**Verse 53. *More than twelve legions of angels?***— As if he had said, Instead of you twelve, one of whom is a traitor, my Father can give me more than twelve legions of angels to defend me. A legion, at different times, contained different numbers; 4,200, 5,000, and frequently 6,000 men; and from this saying, taking the latter number, which is the common rate, may we not-safely believe that the angels of God amount to more than 72,000?

**Verse 54. *But how then***— Had I such a defense-shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say, that thus it must be? That is, that I am to suffer and die for the sin of the world. Probably the Scriptures to which our Lord principally refers are Psa 22, 69, and especially Isaiah 53, and Daniel 9:24-27. Christ shows that they had no power against him but what he permitted; and that he willingly gave up himself into their hands.

**Verse 55. *Are ye come out as against a thief***— At this time Judea was much infested by robbers, so that armed men were obliged to be employed against them-to this our Lord seems to allude. See on Matthew 26:52.

***I sat daily with you***— Why come in this hostile manner? Every day, for four days past, ye might have met with me in the temple, whither I went to teach you the way of salvation. See on Matthew 21:17.

**Verse 56. *But all this was done***— This is probably the observation of the evangelist. See on Matthew 2:23.

***Then all the disciples forsook him and fled.***— O what is man! How little is even his utmost sincerity to be depended on! Jesus is abandoned by all!-even zealous Peter and loving John are among the fugitives! Was ever master so served by his scholars? Was ever parent so treated by his children? Is there not as much zeal and love among them all as might make one martyr for God and truth? Alas! no. He had but twelve who professed inviolable attachment to him; one of these betrayed him, another denied him with oaths, and the rest run away and utterly abandon him to his implacable enemies! Are there not found among his disciples still, 1st. Persons who betray him and his cause? 2dly. Persons who deny him and

his people? 3dly. Persons who abandon him, his people, his cause, and his truth? Reader! dost thou belong to any of these classes?

**Verse 57. *They-led him away to Caiaphas***— John says, John 18:13, that they led him first to Annas; but this appears to have been done merely to do him honor as the father-in-law of Caiaphas, and his colleague in the high priesthood. But as the Sanhedrin was assembled at the house of Caiaphas, it was there he must be brought to undergo his mock trial: but see on John 18:13.

**Verse 58. *Peter followed him afar off***— Poor Peter! this is the beginning of his dreadful fall. His fear kept him from joining the company, and publicly acknowledging his Lord; and his affection obliged him to follow at a distance that he might see the end.

***And sat with the servants, to see the end.***— When a man is weak in faith, and can as yet only follow Christ at a distance, he should avoid all dangerous places, and the company of those who are most likely to prove a snare to him. Had not Peter got to the high priest's palace, and sat down with the servants, he would not thus have denied his Lord and Master.

Servants-officers, *υπηρετων*. Such as we term serjeants, constables, etc.

**Verse 59. *All the council sought false witness***— What a prostitution of justice!-they first resolve to ruin him, and then seek the proper means of effecting it: they declare him criminal, and after that do all they can to fix some crime upon him, that they may appear to have some shadow of justice on their side when they put him to death. It seems to have been a common custom of this vile court to employ false witness, on any occasion, to answer their own ends. See this exemplified in the case of Stephen, Acts 6:11-13.

**Verse 60. *Though many false witnesses came***— There is an unaccountable confusion in the MSS. in this verse: without stating the variations, which may be seen in Griesbach, I shall give that which I believe to be the genuine sense of the evangelist. Then the chief priests and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; but they found it not, though many false witnesses came up. At last two false witnesses came up, saying; This man said, etc. It is the property of falsity to be ever inconsistent, and to contradict itself; therefore they



could not find two consistent testimonies, without which the Jewish law did not permit any person to be put to death. However, the hand of God was in this business: for the credit of Jesus, and the honor of the Christian religion, he would not permit him to be condemned on a false accusation; and, therefore, at last they were obliged to change their ground, and, to the eternal confusion of the unrighteous council, he is condemned on the very evidence of his own innocence, purity, and truth!

**Verse 61. *I am able to destroy the temple of God***— 1st. These words were not fairly quoted. Jesus had said, John 2:19, Destroy this temple, and I will build it again in three days. 2dly. The inuendo which they produce, applying these words to a pretended design to destroy the temple at Jerusalem, was utterly unfair; for these words he spoke of the temple of his body. It is very easy, by means of a few small alterations, to render the most holy things and innocent persons odious to the world, and even to take away the life of the innocent.

**Verse 62. *Answerest thou nothing?***— The accusation was so completely frivolous that it merited no notice: besides, Jesus knew that they were determined to put him to death, and that his hour was come; and that therefore remonstrance or defense would be of no use: he had often before borne sufficient testimony to the truth.

**Verse 63. *I adjure thee by the living God***— I put thee to thy oath. To this solemn adjuration Christ immediately replies, because he is now called on, in the name of God, to bear another testimony to the truth. The authority of God in the most worthless magistrate should be properly respected. However necessary our Lord saw it to be silent, when the accusations were frivolous, and the evidence contradictory, he felt no disposition to continue this silence, when questioned concerning a truth, for which he came into the world to shed his blood.

**Verse 64. *Thou hast said***— That is, I am the Christ, the promised Messiah, (see on Matthew 26:25;) and you and this whole nation shall shortly have the fullest proof of it: for hereafter, in a few years, ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, fully invested with absolute dominion, and coming in the clouds of heaven, to execute judgment upon this wicked race. See Matthew 24:30. Our Lord appears to

refer to Daniel 7:13: One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, etc. This may also refer to the final judgment.

**Verse 65. *The high priest rent his clothes***— This rending of the high priest's garments was expressly contrary to the law, Leviticus 10:6; 21:10. But it was a common method of expressing violent grief, Genesis 37:29, 34; Job 1:20, and horror at what was deemed blasphemous or impious. 2 Kings 18:37; 19:1; Acts 14:14. All that heard a blasphemous speech were obliged to rend their clothes, and never to sew them up again. See Lightfoot.

***He hath spoken blasphemy***— Quesnel's note on this is worthy of notice. "See here a false zeal, a mask of religion, and a passionate and seditious way of proceeding, tending only to incense and stir up others, all which are common to those who would oppress truth by cabal, and without proof. By crying out, 'heresy, blasphemy, and faction,' though contrary to all appearance, men fail not to stir up those in power, to gain the simple, to give some shadow of authority to the ill-disposed, to cast devout but ignorant people into scruples, and thereby to advance the mystery of iniquity, which is the mystery of all ages." This was the very plan his Catholic brethren adopted in this country, in the reign of Queen Mary, called the bloody queen, because of the many murders of righteous men which she sanctioned at the mouth of her Catholic priesthood.

**Verse 66. *He is guilty of death.***— *ενοχος θανατου εστι*, he is liable to death. All the forms of justice are here violated. The judge becomes a party and accuser, and proceeds to the verdict without examining whether all the prophecies concerning the Messiah, and the innumerable miracles which he wrought, did not justify him. Examination and proof are the ruin of all calumnies, and of the authors of them, and therefore they take care to keep off from these two things. See Quesnel.

**Verse 67. *Then did they spit in his face***— This was done as a mark of the most profound contempt. See Job 16:10; 30:10; Isaiah 50:6; Micah 5:1. The judges now delivered him into the hands of the mob.

***And buffeted him***— Smote him with their fists, *εκολαφισαν*. This is the translation of Theophylact. *κολαφιζειν*, says he, means, "to beat with

the hand, the fingers being clenched. *συγκαμτομενων των δακτυλων*, or, to speak more briefly, to buffet with the fist.”

**Smote him with the palms of their hands**— *ερραπισαν. ραπιζω*, says Suidas, means “*παταξαι την γναθον απλη τη χειρι*, to smite the cheek with the open hand.” Thus they offered him indignity in all its various and vexatious forms. Insults of this kind are never forgiven by the world: Jesus not only takes no revenge, (though it be completely in his power,) but bears all with meekness, without even one word of reply.

**Verse 68. *Prophecy unto us, thou Christ***— Their conduct toward him now was expressly prophesied of, by a man whose Divine mission they did not pretend to deny; see Isaiah 50:6. It appears that, before they buffeted him, they bound up his eyes, See Mark 14:65.

**Verse 69. *A damsel came unto him***— A maid servant, *παιδισκη*. See this translation vindicated by Kypke.

***Thou also wast with Jesus***— What a noble opportunity had Peter now to show his zeal for the insulted cause of truth, and his attachment to his Master. But, alas! he is shorn of his strength. Constables and maid servants are no company for an apostle, except when he is delivering to them the message of salvation. Evil communications corrupt good manners. Had Peter been in better company, he would not have had so foul a fall.

**Verse 70. *But he denied before them all***— So the evil principle gains ground. Before, he followed at a distance, now he denies; this is the second gradation in his fall.

**Verse 71. *Unto them that were there***— Instead of *λεγει τοις εκει· και*, more than one hundred MSS., many of which are of the first authority and antiquity, have *λεγει αυτοις· εκει και*, she saith unto them, this man was THERE also. I rather think this is the genuine reading. *τοις* might have been easily mistaken for *αυτοις*, if the first syllable *αυ* were but a little faded in a MS. from which others were copied: and then the placing of the point after *εκει·* instead of after *αυτοις·* would naturally follow, as placed after *τοις*, it would make no sense. Griesbach approves of this reading.

**Verse 72. *And again he denied with an oath***— This is a third gradation of his iniquity. He has told a lie, and he swears to support it. A liar has

always some suspicion that his testimony is not credited, for he is conscious to his own falsity, and is therefore naturally led to support his assertions by oaths.

**Verse 73. *Thy speech***— Thy manner of speech, *η λαλια σου*, that dialect of thine-his accent being different from that of Jerusalem. From various examples given by Lightfoot and Schoettgen, we find that the Galileans had a very corrupt pronunciation, frequently interchanging *ξ η ς* and *υ*, and so blending or dividing words as to render them unintelligible, or cause them to convey a contrary sense.

***Bewrayeth thee.***— *δηλου σε ποιει, maketh thee manifest, from the Anglo-saxon [AS]*, to accuse, betray; a word long since lost from our language.

**Verse 74. *Then began he to curse and to swear***— Rather, Then he began positively to affirm-*καταθεματιζειν*, from *κατα* intensive, and *τιθημι*, I lay down, place, affirm. But the common reading is *καταναθεματιζειν*, which signifies to wish curses on himself. The former reading is supported by almost every MS. of value, and is, beyond dispute, the true reading, and has been received by Griesbach into the text. The business is bad enough, but the common reading makes it worse. In Matthew 26:72, Peter is said to deny with an oath; here, he positively affirms and swears, probably by the name of God, for this is the import of the word *ομνυειν*. This makes the fourth and final gradation in the climax of Peter's fall. From these awful beginnings it is not unfair to conclude that Peter might have gone almost as far as Judas himself, had not the traitorous business been effected before. Yet all this evil sprung simply from the fear of man. How many denials of Christ and his truth have sprung since, from the same cause!

***The cock crew***— This animal becomes, in the hand of God, the instrument of awaking the fallen apostle, at last, to a sense of his fall, danger, and duty. When abandoned of God, the smallest thing may become the occasion of a fall; and, when in the hand of God, the smallest matter may become the instrument of our restoration. Let us never think lightly of what are termed little sins: the smallest one has the seed of eternal ruin in it. Let us never think contemptibly of the feeblest means of grace: each may have the seed of eternal salvation in it. Let us ever remember that the

great Apostle Peter fell through fear of a servant maid, and rose through the crowing of a cock.

**Verse 75. *Peter remembered the word of Jesus***— St. Luke says, Luke 22:61, The Lord turned and looked upon Peter. So it appears he was nigh to our Lord, either at the time when the cock crew, or shortly after. The delicacy of this reproof was great—he must be reproofed and alarmed, otherwise he will proceed yet farther in his iniquity; Christ is in bonds, and cannot go and speak to him; if he call aloud, the disciple is discovered, and falls a victim to Jewish malice and Roman jealousy; he therefore does the whole by a look. In the hand of Omnipotence every thing is easy, and he can save by a few, as well as by many.

***He went out***— He left the place where he had sinned, and the company which had been the occasion of his transgression.

***And wept bitterly.***— Felt bitter anguish of soul, which evidenced itself by the tears of contrition which flowed plentifully from his eyes. Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall! Where the mighty have been slain, what shall support the feeble? Only the grace of the ALMIGHTY God.

This transaction is recorded by the inspired penmen, 1st. That all may watch unto prayer, and shun the occasions of sin. 2dly. That if a man be unhappily overtaken in a fault, he may not despair, but cast himself immediately with a contrite heart on the infinite tenderness and compassion of God. See the notes on John 18:27.

I have touched on the subject of our Lord's anointing but slightly in the preceding notes, because the controversy upon this point is not yet settled; and, except to harmonists, it is a matter of comparatively little importance. Bishop Newcome has written largely on this fact, and I insert an extract from his notes.

#### **BISHOP NEWCOME'S ACCOUNT OF THE ANOINTING OF OUR LORD**

"The histories of Jesus' unction, in Matthew, Mark, and John, are accounts of the same fact. Hoc fixum maneat, eandem ab omnibus historiam referri. Calv. Harm. p. 375.

“The following objections to this position occur in Lightfoot, Whiston, Whitby, and Macknight.

1st. “The unction recorded by St. John happens six days before the passover; but the other unction is fixed to the second day before that feast.

“Ans. The day of the entertainment related John 12:2, is not restrained to the sixth day before the passover. Quo die factum illi fuerit convivium, in quo a Maria unctus est, Johannes non exprimit. Calv. Harm. Johann. p. 144. John 12:12, 13, much people are said to meet Jesus on the day after his arrival at Bethany, not on the day after his unction. See John 12:9. St. John has recorded events on the sixth and on the fifth day before the passover; and then, John 13:1, he proceeds to the evening on which the passover was eaten. On this account he anticipates the history of Jesus’s unction; and he naturally anticipates it on mentioning the place where it happened.

2dly. “The scene in St. John is the house of Martha, or of Lazarus; in the other evangelists, that of Simon the leper.

“Ans. St. John lays the scene in general at Bethany. “It seems probable that Lazarus would not have been called *εἰς τῶν ἀνακειμένων*, if he had been the host.

“Martha, the sister of Lazarus, might show Jesus honor by ministering to him in any house as well as her own. ‘She was Simon’s neighbor, and perhaps his relation,’ Dr. Priestley, Harm. p. 102. Our Lord’s affection for Lazarus and his sister, and the recent miracle wrought on Lazarus, were very sufficient reasons for Simon’s invitation of such neighboring guests.

3dly. “St. John mentions the feet of Jesus as anointed by Mary, and wiped with her hair; the other evangelists say that the ointment was poured on Jesus’s head.

“Ans. It is no where asserted that the unction was of Jesus’s head only, or of his feet only: both actions are consistent; and St. John, in his supplemental history, may very well have added the respectful conduct of Mary, that, after having anointed Jesus’s head, she proceeded to anoint his feet, and even to wipe them with her hair.

4thly. “In St. John, Judas alone murmurs: in St. Matthew, the disciples have indignation; or, as St. Mark expresses it, some have indignation among themselves.

“Ans. Dr. Lardner says, Serm. vol. ii. p. 316: ‘It is well known to be very common with all writers to use the plural number when one person only is intended; nor is it impossible that others might have some uneasiness about it, though they were far from being so disgusted at it as Judas was. And their concern for the poor was sincere: his was self-interested and mere pretense.’

Grotius’s words are: *Reprehensa est hoc nomine mulier ab uno discipulorum; nam ita pluralis accipi solet.*

5thly. “The vindications of the woman by our Lord differ so much as to show that the occasions were different.

“Ans. St. John’s words are indeed thus misinterpreted by Baronius: Let her alone, that she may keep it against the day of my burial, alluding to, Mark 16:1. See Lightfoot, Harm. p. 27. See also Lightfoot, ib. l. 251. ‘She hath kept it yet, and not spent all; that she may bestow it on a charitable use, the anointing of my body to its burial.’

“Whiston also, Harm. 129, gives a wrong sense to the words. She hath spent but little of it now: she hath reserved the main part of it for a fitter time, the day before my delivery to the Jews; making this a prediction of what passed, Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9. It must be observed that John 12:7, there is a remarkable various reading: *ὡς εἰς τὴν ἡμέραν τοῦ ἐνταφιασμοῦ μου τηρήσῃ αὐτό*. See Wetstein, and add Codd. Vercell. and Veron. in Blanchini. Of this reading we have a sound interpretation in Mill, proleg. xlv. *Sine eam ut opportune usa hoc unguento, velut ad sepulturam meam, jamjam occidendi, illud servasse ostendatur.* And likewise in Bengelius ad loc. who observes that the common reading is, *Faciioris sensus causta*; and adds, *Verbum τηρήσῃ servaret, pendet ex praeterito, cujus vis latet in ἀφεξ αὐτήν*, i.e. *Noli reprehendere hanc, quoe unguentum ideo nec vendidit, nec pauperibus dedit, ut, etc.* And the common reading is thus rightly explained by Lightfoot, 2, 588. ‘If Baronius’s exposition do not take, then add this clause:—Let her alone; for this may be an argument and sign that she hath not done this vainly,

luxuriously, or upon any delicacy spent so costly an ointment upon me; because she hath reserved it for this time, wherein I am so near my grave and funeral, and poured it not on me before.’ Lardner’s comment, *ubi supra*, p. 312, is applicable to the three evangelists. If this ointment were laid out upon a dead body, you would not think it too much. You may consider this anointing as an embalming of me. The words are a prediction of Christ’s death, which was to happen on the third day after; and they are a prediction beautifully taken from the occasion. She has done this to embalm me, Matthew. She has anticipated the embalming of me, Mark. She has not sold this ointment, and given it to the poor, that she might reserve it to this day, which is, as it were, the day of my embalming, so soon is my burial to follow, John.

“Dr. Scott, on Matthew, quotes the following passage from Theophylact: εθος ην τοις ιουδαιοις μετα μυρων ενταφιαζειν τα σωματα, ως και οι αιγυπτιοι ποιοουν, δια το ασηπτα τηρεισθαι, και ανευ δυσωδιας. It was a custom among the Jews, as well as among the Egyptians, to embalm the bodies of the dead, as well to keep them from putrefaction, as to prevent offensive smells.

The expressions therefore of the three evangelists agree in sense and substance. I have explained the more difficult in St. John; leaving every one to his own judgment whether it be the true one or not; though I incline to think that the unusual phrase ought generally to be admitted into the text.

“6thly. In St. John, Mary anoints Jesus in Matthew and Mark, a woman not named.

“Ans. Lardner says, *ubi supra*, p. 315. ‘St. John having before given the history of the resurrection of Lazarus, it was very natural for him, when he came to relate this anointing of our Lord, to say by whom it was done. But the two former evangelists having never mentioned Lazarus or his sisters in their Gospels, when they came to relate this action forbear to mention any name, and speak only of a certain woman. Luke 10:38-42, has an account of our Lord’s being entertained at the house of Martha. But he says nothing of this anointing. If he had related it, I make no question that he, like St. John, would have said by whom it was done.’ Upon the whole, there is no solid objection to the hypothesis, that we have three accounts of the same transaction. But it is incredible that there should be two



unctions of Jesus, in Bethany, within four days, not plainly distinguished from each other; that the kind and price of the ointment should be the same; that the two actions should be censured in the same manner; and that words to the same effect should be used in defense of the woman who anointed Jesus, within so short a time, in the same place, and among the same persons. See Doddridge on John 12:1. As to the precise time of this transaction, it is natural to conclude from the accounts of Matthew and Mark, that it happened two days before the passover. I had much pleasure in observing that Mr. Jebb, in his *Harmony*, assigns it the same order as I do. I likewise find in Ward's *Dissertations*, p. 112, the following remark. 'John only mentions the day when Jesus came to Bethany, without specifying the time when he was entertained there by Simon the leper; whereas the other two evangelists acquaint us with the day when that was done, and what followed upon it, with relation to Judas.' And again, Wall says, *Critical Notes*, v. 3. p. 52: 'Wednesday he seems to have stayed at Bethany, and supped there. At which supper, Mary, sister of Lazarus, poured that ointment on his body which he interpreted to be for his burial.' And on John 12:2: 'This seems to be the same supper which Matthew and Mark do say was at the house of Simon the leper; for there it was that Mary anointed him. But then we must not take it to be the same night that he came to Bethany, but two days before the passover.'

"That Judas went to the high priests on the evening or night of our Wednesday, may be collected from Matthew 26:14-17, and the parallel places in this harmony; and he seems to have acted partly in disgust at what had passed. This is a good argument for fixing the unction for Wednesday. As it will appear that the other apostles did not suspect his treachery, we may suppose that Judas withdrew himself clandestinely, probably after our Lord had retired to privacy and devotion. Our Lord's words, Matthew 26: 2, may have led Mary to show this respect to Jesus, lest no future opportunity should offer. See Lardner, *ubi supra*, p. 327. Dr. Priestley thinks that 'if the verses that contain this story in Matthew 26:6-13, be considered, they will be found to stand very awkwardly in their present situation, where they interrupt an account of a consultation among the Jews about putting Jesus to death.' *Harm.* p. 100. But it seems to me that the story has a remarkably apt connection with the preceding and subsequent history. The Jewish rulers consult how they may take

Jesus by craft, and without raising a tumult among the people. An accident happens which offends one of Jesus's familiar attendants; who immediately repairs to Jesus's enemies, and receives from them a bribe to betray him in the absence of the multitude." Newcome's Harmony, Notes p. 39, etc.

I have added the above, not from a conviction that the point is so elucidated as to settle the controversy, but merely to place before the reader both sides of the question. Still, *sub judice lis est*; and any man may doubt, consistently with the most genuine piety, whether the relations given by the evangelists, concerning the anointing of our Lord, should be understood of two different unctions, at two different times, in two different places, by two different persons; or whether they are not different accounts, with some varying circumstances, of one and the same transaction. I incline, at present, to the former opinion, but it would be rash to decide where so many eminently learned and wise men have disagreed.

The question considered, whether our Lord ate the passover with his disciples before he suffered?

Every candid person must allow that there are great difficulties relative to the time in which our Lord ate the last passover with his disciples. In the Introduction to my Discourse on the nature and design of the Holy Eucharist, I have examined this subject at large, and considered the four following opinions, viz. I. Our Lord did not eat the passover on the last year of his ministry. II. Our Lord did eat it that year; and at the same time with the Jews. III. He did eat it that year, but not at the same time with the Jews. IV. He did eat a passover of his own instituting, but widely differing from that eaten by the Jews. The two first opinions do not appear to be solidly supported. The two last are of the most importance, are the most likely, and may be harmonized. I shall introduce a few observations on each in this place. And I. On the opinion that "our Lord did eat the passover this year, but not at the same time with the Jews."

Dr. Cudworth, who of all others has handled this subject best, has proved from the Talmud, Mishna, and some of the most reputable of the Jewish rabbins, that the ancient Jews, about our Savior's time, often solemnized as well the passovers as the other feasts, upon the ferias next before and

after the Sabbaths. And, that as the Jews in ancient times reckoned the new moons, not according to astronomical exactness, but according to the **φασις**, or moon's appearance: and, as this appearance might happen a day later than the real time, consequently there might be a whole day of difference in the time of celebrating one of these feasts, which depended on a particular day of the month; the days of the month being counted from the **φασις**, or appearance of the new moon. As he describes the whole manner of doing this, both from the Babylonish Talmud, and from Maimonides, I shall give an extract from this part of his work, that my readers may have the whole argument before them.

“In the great or outer court there was a house called Beth Yazek, where the senate sat all the 30th day of every month, to receive the witnesses of the moon's appearance, and to examine them. If there came approved witnesses on the 30th day, who could state they had seen the new moon, the chief man of the senate stood up, and cried **מקדש** mekuddash, it is sanctified; and the people standing by caught the word from him, and cried, Mekuddash! mekuddash! But if, when the consistory had sat all the day, and there came no approved witnesses of the phasis, or appearance of the new moon, then they made an intercalation of one day in the former month, and decreed the following one and thirtieth day to be the calends. But if, after the fourth or fifth day, or even before the end of the month, respectable witnesses came from far, and testified they had seen the new moon in its due time, the senate were bound to alter the beginning of the month, and reckon it a day sooner, viz. from the thirtieth day.

“As the senate were very unwilling to be at the trouble of a second consecration, when they had even fixed on a wrong day, and therefore received very reluctantly the testimony of such witnesses as those last mentioned, they afterwards made a statute to this effect-That whatsoever time the senate should conclude on for the calends of the month, though it were certain they were in the wrong, yet all were bound to order their feasts according to it.” This, Dr. Cudworth supposes, actually took place in the time of our Lord; and “as it is not likely that our Lord would submit to this perversion of the original custom, and that following the true **φασις**, or appearance of the new moon, confirmed by sufficient witnesses, he and his disciples ate the passover on that day; but the Jews, following the pertinacious decree of the Sanhedrin, did not eat it till the day

following.” Dr. C. farther shows from Epiphanius, that there was a contention, **θορυβος**, a tumult, among the Jews about the passover, that very year. Hence it is likely that what was the real paschal day to our Lord, his disciples, and many other pious Jews who adopted the true **φασις** phasis, was only the preparation or antecedent evening to others, who acted on the decree of the senate. Besides, it is worthy of note, that not only the Karaites, who do not acknowledge the authority of the Sanhedrin, but also the rabbins themselves grant that, where the case is doubtful, the passover should be celebrated with the same ceremonies, two days together; and it was always doubtful, when the appearance of the new moon could not be fully ascertained.

Bishop Pearce supposes that it was lawful for the Jews to eat the paschal lamb at any time between the evening of Thursday, and that of Friday; and that this permission was necessary, because of the immense number of lambs which were to be killed for that purpose: as, in one year there were not fewer than 256,500 lambs offered. See Josephus, War, b. vii. c. 9. sect. 3. In Matthew 26:17, it is said, Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, (**τη δε πρωτη των αζυμων**,) the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover? As the feast of unleavened bread did not begin till the day after the passover, the fifteenth day of the month, Leviticus 23:5, 6; Numbers 28:16, 17, this could not have been properly the first day of that feast; but, as the Jews began to eat unleavened bread on the fourteenth day, Exodus 12:18, this day was often termed the first of unleavened bread. Now it appears that the evangelists use it in this sense, and call even the paschal day by this name, see Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7.

At first view, this third opinion, which states that Christ did eat the passover with his disciples that year, but not in the same hour with the Jews; and that he expired on the cross the same hour in which the paschal lamb was killed, seems the most probable. For it appears, from what has already been remarked, that our Lord and his disciples ate the passover some hours before the Jews ate theirs; for they, according to custom, ate theirs at the end of the fourteenth day, but Christ appears to have eaten his the preceding evening, which was the beginning of the same sixth day of the week, or Friday, for the Jews began their day at sun-setting; we at midnight. Thus Christ ate the passover the same day with the Jews, but

not on the same hour. Christ, therefore, kept this passover the beginning of the fourteenth day, the precise day in which the Jews had eaten their first passover in Egypt: see Exodus 12:6-19. And in the same part of the same day in which they had sacrificed their first paschal lamb, viz. between the two evenings, i, e, between the sun's declining west and his setting, Jesus, our passover was sacrificed for us. For it was the third hour, in the course of between 9 and 12, Mark 15:25, that Christ was nailed to the cross: and in the course of the ninth hour, between 12 and 3 in the afternoon, Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34, Jesus, knowing that the antetype had accomplished every thing shadowed forth by the type, said, "It is FINISHED," *τετελεσται*, completed, perfected, and, having thus said, he bowed his head, and dismissed his spirit. See on John 19:14,30.

Probably there is but one objection of any force that lies against the opinion, that our Lord ate his passover some hours before the Jews in general ate theirs; which is that, if our Lord did eat the passover the evening before the Jews in general ate theirs, it could not have been sacrificed according to the law; nor is it at all likely that the blood was sprinkled at the foot of the altar. If, therefore, the blood was not thus sprinkled by one of the priests, that which constituted the very essence of the rite, as ordained by God, was lacking in that celebrated by our Lord.

To this it is answered:-First, we have already seen that, in consequence of the immense number of sacrifices to be offered on the paschal solemnity, it is highly probable the Jews were obliged to employ two days for this work. It is not at all likely that the blood of 256,500 lambs could be shed and sprinkled at one altar, in the course of one day, by all the priests in Jerusalem, or indeed in the Holy Land; since they had but that one altar where they could legally sprinkle the blood of the victims.

Secondly, we have also seen that, in cases of doubt relative to the time of the appearance of the new moon, the Jews were permitted to hold the passover both days; and that it is probable such a dubious case existed at the time in question. In any of these cases the lamb might have been killed and its blood sprinkled according to the rules and ceremonies of the Jewish Church.

Thirdly, as our Lord was the true paschal lamb, who was, in a few hours after this time, to bear away the sin of the world, he might dispense with

this part of the ceremony, and act as Lord of his own institution in this, as he had done before in the case of the Sabbath. At any rate, as it seems probable that he ate the passover at this time, and that he died about the time the Jews offered theirs, it may be fully presumed that he left nothing undone towards a due performance of the rite which the present necessity required, or the law of God could demand.

The objection that our Lord and his disciples appear to have sat or reclined at table all the time they ate what is supposed above to have been the passover, contrary to the paschal institution, which required them to eat it standing, with their staves in their hands, their loins girded, and their shoes on, cannot be considered as having any great weight in it; for, though the terms [ἀνεκειτο](#), Matthew 26:20, and [ἀνέπεσε](#), Luke 22:14, are used in reference to their eating that evening, and these words signify reclining at table, or on a couch, as is the custom of the orientals, it does not follow that they must necessarily be restrained to that meaning; nor does it appear that this part of the ceremony was much attended to, perhaps not at all, in the latter days of the Jewish Church.

The second opinion which we have to examine is this: Our Lord did eat a passover of his own instituting, but widely different from that eaten by the Jews.

Mr. Toinard, in his Greek Harmony of the Gospels, strongly contends that our Lord did not eat what is commonly called the passover this year, but another, of a mystical kind. His chief arguments are the following:-

It is indubitably evident, from the text of St. John, that the night on the beginning of which our Lord supped with his disciples, and instituted the holy sacrament, was not that on which the Jews celebrated the passover; but the preceding evening, on which the passover could not be legally offered. The conclusion is evident from the following passages: John 13:1. Now before the feast of the passover, Jesus knowing, etc. John 13:2. And supper, (not the paschal, but an ordinary supper,) being ended, etc. John 13:27. That thou doest, do quickly. John 13:28. Now no one at the table knew for what intent he spake this. John 13:29. For some thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy what we have need of against the feast, etc. John 18:28. Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas to the hall of judgment, and it was early; and they themselves went not into

the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the passover. John 19:14. And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour. Now as it appears that at this time the disciples thought our Lord had ordered Judas to go and bring what was necessary for the passover, and they were then supping together, it is evident that it was not the paschal lamb on which they were supping; and it is as evident, from the unwillingness of the Jews to go into the hall of judgment, that they had not as yet eaten the passover. These words are plain, and can be taken in no other sense, without offering them the greatest violence.

Mr. Toinard, having found that our Lord was crucified the sixth day of the week, (Friday,) during the paschal solemnity, in the thirty-third year of the vulgar aera, and that the paschal moon of that year was not in conjunction with the sun till the afternoon of Thursday the 19th of March, and that the new moon could not be seen in Judea until the following day, (Friday,) concluded that the intelligence of the φασις, or appearance of the new moon, could not be made by the witnesses to the beth din, or senate, sooner than Saturday morning, the 21st of March. That the first day of the first Jewish month, Nisan, could not continence that thirty-third year sooner than the setting of the sun on Friday, March 20th; and, consequently, that Friday, April 3d, on which Christ died, was the 14th of Nisan, (not the 15th,) the day appointed by the law for the celebration of the passover. All these points he took care to have ascertained by the nicest astronomical calculations, in which he was assisted by a very eminent astronomer and mathematician, Bullialdus. (Mr. Bouilleau.)

These two last opinions, apparently contradictory, and which alone, of all those offered on the subject, deserve consideration, may be brought to harmonize. That Jesus ate the passover with his disciples the evening before the Jews ate theirs, seems pretty clearly proved from the text of St. Luke, and the arguments founded on that text.

All that is assumed there, to make the whole consistent, is, that the Jews that year held the passover both on the 13th and 14th of Nisan, because of the reasons already assigned: and that therefore Peter and John, who were employed on this business, might have got the blood legally sprinkled by the hands of a priest, which was all that was necessary to the legality of the rite.

But, secondly, should it appear improbable that such double celebration took place at this time, and that our Lord could not have eaten the passover that year with his disciples, as he died on the very hour on which the paschal lamb was slain, and consequently before he could legally eat the passover, how then can the text of St. Luke be reconciled with this fact? I answer, with the utmost ease; by substituting a passover for the passover, and simply assuming that our Lord at this time instituted the holy EUCHARIST, in place of the PASCHAL LAMB: and thus it will appear he ate a passover with his disciples the evening before his death, viz. the mystical passover, or sacrament of his body and blood; and that this was the passover which he so ardently longed to eat with his disciples before he suffered. This is the opinion of Mr. Toinard, and, if granted, solves every difficulty. Thus the whole controversy is brought into a very narrow compass: Our Lord did eat a passover with his disciples some short time before he died:-the question is, What passover did he eat-the regular legal passover, or a mystical one? That he ate a passover is, I think, demonstrated: but whether the literal or mystical one, is a matter of doubt. On this point, good and learned men may innocently hesitate and differ: but on either hypothesis, the text of the evangelists is unimpeachable, and all shadow of contradiction done away: for the question then rests on the peculiar meaning of names and words. On this hypothesis, the preparation of the passover must be considered as implying no more than-1. Providing a convenient room. 2. Bringing water for the baking on the following day, because on that day the bringing of the water would have been unlawful. 3. Making inquisition for the leaven, that every thing of this kind might be removed from the house where the passover was to be eaten, according to the very strict and awful command of God, Exodus 12:15-20; 23:15; 34:25. These, it is probable, were the acts of preparation which the disciples were commanded to perform, Matthew 26:17; Mark 14:13, 14; Luke 22:8-11, and which, on their arrival at the city, they punctually executed. See Matthew 26:19; Mark 14:16; Luke 22:13. Thus every thing was prepared, and the holy sacrament instituted, which should, in the Christian Church, take place of the Jewish passover, and continue to be a memorial of the sacrifice which Christ was about to make by his death on the cross: for as the paschal lamb had showed forth his death till he came, this death fulfilled the design of the rite, and sealed up the vision and prophecy.



All preparations for the true paschal sacrifice being now made, Jesus was immediately betrayed, shortly after apprehended, and in a few hours expired upon the cross. It is therefore very likely that he did not literally eat the passover this year; and may I not add, that it is more than probable that the passover was not eaten in the whole land of Judea on this occasion? The rending of the vail of the temple, Matthew 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45, the terrible earthquake, Matthew 27:51-54; the dismal and unnatural darkness, which was over the whole land of Judea, from the sixth hour, (twelve o'clock,) to the ninth hour (i.e. three o'clock in the afternoon,) with all the other prodigies which took place on this awful occasion, we may naturally conclude, were more than sufficient to terrify and appal this guilty nation, and totally to prevent the celebration of the paschal ceremonies. Indeed, the time in which killing the sacrifices, and sprinkling the blood of the lambs, should have been performed, was wholly occupied with these most dreadful portents; and it would be absurd to suppose that, under such terrible evidences of the Divine indignation, any religious ordinances or festive preparations could possibly have taken place.

My readers will probably be surprised to see the preceding opinions so dissentient among themselves, and the plausible reasons by which they are respectively supported, where each seems by turns to prevail. When I took up the question, I had no suspicion that it was encumbered with so many difficulties. These I now feel and acknowledge; nevertheless, I think the plan of reconciling the texts of the evangelists, particularly St. Luke and St. John, which I have adopted above, is natural, and, I am in hopes, will not appear altogether unsatisfactory to my readers. On the subject, circumstanced as it is, hypothesis alone can prevail; for indubitable evidence and certainty cannot be obtained. The morning of the resurrection is probably the nearest period in which accurate information on this point can be expected. *Je suis trompe*, says Bouilleau, *si cete question peut etre jamais bien eclaircie*. "If I be not mistaken, this question will never be thoroughly understood." It would be presumptuous to say, Christ did eat the passover this last year of his ministry: it would be as hazardous to say he did not eat it. The middle way is the safest; and it is that which is adopted above. One thing is sufficiently evident, that Christ, our paschal lamb, has been sacrificed for us; and that he has instituted the holy

eucharist, to be a perpetual memorial of that his precious death until his coming again: and they who, with a sincere heart, and true faith in his passion and death, partake of it, shall be made partakers of his most blessed body and blood. Reader, praise God for the atonement, and rest not without an application of it to thy own soul.

## CHAPTER 27

*In the morning, Christ is bound and delivered to Pontius Pilate, 1, 2. Judas, seeing his Master condemned, repents, acknowledges his transgression to the chief priests, attests Christ's innocence, throws down the money, and goes and hangs himself, 3-5. They buy the potter's field with the money, 6-10. Christ, questioned by Pilate, refuses to answer, 11-14. Pilate, while inquiring of the Jews whether they would have Jesus or Barabbas released, receives a message from his wife to have nothing to do in this wicked business, 15-19. The multitude, influenced by the chief priests and elders, desire Barabbas to be released, and Jesus to be crucified, 20-23. Pilate attests his innocence, and the people make themselves and their posterity responsible for his blood, 24, 25. Barabbas is released, and Christ is scourged, 26. The soldiers strip him, clothe him with a scarlet robe, crown him with thorns, mock, and variously insult him, 27-31. Simon compelled to bear his cross, 32. They bring him to Golgotha, give him vinegar mingled with gall to drink, crucify him, and cast lots for his raiment, 33-36. His accusation, 37. Two thieves are crucified with him, 38. He is mocked and insulted while hanging on the cross, 39-44. The awful darkness, 45. Jesus calls upon God, is offered vinegar to drink, expires, 46-50. Prodigies that accompanied and followed his death, 51-53. He is acknowledged by the centurion, 54. Several women behold the crucifixion, 55, 56. Joseph of Arimathea begs the body of Pilate, and deposits it in his own new tomb, 57-60. The women watch the sepulchre, 61. The Jews consult with Pilate how they may prevent the resurrection of Christ, 62-64. He grants them a guard for the sepulchre, and they seal the stone that stopped the mouth of the tomb where he was laid, 65, 66.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 27

**Verse 1.** *When the morning was come*— As soon as it was light—took counsel against Jesus. They had begun this counsel the preceding evening, see Matthew 26:59. But as it was contrary to all forms of law to proceed

against a person's life by night, they seem to have separated for a few hours, and then, at the break of day, came together again, pretending to conduct the business according to the forms of law.

***To put him to death***— They had already determined his death, and pronounced the sentence of death on him; Matthew 26:66. And now they assemble under the pretense of reconsidering the evidence, and deliberating on it, to give the greater appearance of justice to their conduct. They wished to make it appear that “they had taken ample time to consider of it, and, from the fullest conviction, by the most satisfactory and conclusive evidence, they had now delivered him into the hands of the Romans, to meet that death to which they had adjudged him.”

**Verse 2. *They-delivered him to Pontius Pilate***— The Sanhedrin had the power of life and death in their own hands in every thing that concerned religion; but as they had not evidence to put Christ to death because of false doctrine, they wished to give countenance to their conduct by bringing in the civil power, and therefore they delivered him up to Pilate as one who aspired to regal dignities, and whom he must put to death, if he professed to be Caesar's friend. Pontius Pilate governed Judea ten years under the Emperor Tiberius; but, having exercised great cruelties against the Samaritans, they complained of him to the emperor, in consequence of which he was deposed, and sent in exile to Vienna, in Dauphiny, where he killed himself two years after.

**Verse 3. *Judas-when he saw that he was condemned, repented***— There is much of the wisdom and goodness of God to be seen in this part of Judas's conduct. Had our Lord been condemned to death on the evidence of one of his own disciples, it would have furnished infidels with a strong argument against Christ and the Christian religion. “One of his own disciples, knowing the whole imposture, declared it to the Jewish rulers, in consequence of which he was put to death as an impostor and deceiver.” But the traitor, being stung with remorse, came and acknowledged his crime, and solemnly declared the innocence of his Master, threw back the money which they gave him to induce him to do this villainous act; and, to establish the evidence which he now gave against them and himself, in behalf of the innocence of Christ, hanged himself, or died through excessive grief and contrition. Thus the character of Christ was rescued from all

reproach; infidelity deprived of the power to cry “imposture!” and the Jewish rulers overwhelmed with eternal infamy. If it should ever be said, “One who knew him best delivered him up as an impostor,”-to this it may be immediately answered, “The same person, struck with remorse, came and declared his own guilt, and Christ’s innocence; accused and convicted the Jewish rulers, in the open council, of having hired him to do this iniquitous action, threw them back the bribe they had given him, and then hanged himself through distress and despair, concluding his iniquity in this business was too great to be forgiven.” Let him who chooses, after this plenary evidence to the innocence of Christ, continue the objection, and cry out imposture! take heed that he go not and do LIKEWISE. Caiaphas, Pilate, and Judas have done so already, and I have known several, who have called Christ an impostor, who have cut their own throats, shot, drowned, or hanged themselves. God is a jealous God, and highly resents every thing that is done and said against that eternal truth that came to man through Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit. Indeed, there is one class of Deists, viz. those who are vicious in their lives, and virulent in their opposition to Christianity, who generally bring themselves to an untimely end.

**Verse 4. *Innocent blood.***— αἱμα ἁθων, a Hebraism, for an innocent man. But instead of αθων, innocent, two ancient MSS., Syriac, Vulgate, Sahidic, Armenian, and all the Itala; Origen, Cyprian, Lucifer, Ambrose, Leo, read δικαιον, righteous, or just.

***What is that to us?***— What is it?-A great deal. You should immediately go and reverse the sentence you have pronounced, and liberate the innocent person. But this would have been justice, and that would have been a stranger at their tribunal.

**Verse 5. *In the temple***— ναος signifies, properly, the temple itself, into which none but the priests were permitted to enter; therefore εν τω ναω must signify, near the temple, by the temple door, where the boxes stood to receive the free-will offerings of the people, for the support and repairs of the sacred edifice. See this amply proved by Kypke.

***Hanged himself***— Or was strangled-απηγγαστο. Some eminent critics believe that he was only suffocated by excessive grief, and thus they think the account here given will agree with that in Acts 1:18. Mr. Wakefield

supports this meaning of the word with great learning and ingenuity. I have my doubts-the old method of reconciling the two accounts appears to me quite plausible-he went and strangled himself, and the rope breaking, he fell down, and by the violence of the fall his body was bursted, and his bowels gushed out. I have thought proper, on a matter of such difficulty, to use the word strangled, as possessing a middle meaning between choking or suffocation by excessive grief, and hanging, as an act of suicide. See the note on Matthew 10:4. Dr. Lightfoot is of opinion that the devil caught him up into the air, strangled him, and threw him down on the ground with violence, so that his body was burst, and his guts shed out! This was an ancient tradition.

**Verse 6. *The treasury***— **κορβαν**-the place whither the people brought their free-will offerings for the service of the temple, so called from the Hebrew **קרב** korban, AN OFFERING, from **קרב** karab, he drew nigh, because the person who brought the gift came nigh to that place where God manifested his glory between the cherubim, over the mercy-seat in the most holy place. It is from this idea that the phrase to draw nigh to God is taken, which is so frequently used in the sacred writings.

***Because it is the price of blood.***— “What hypocrites, as one justly exclaims, to adjudge an innocent man to death, and break the eternal laws of justice and mercy without scruple, and to be, at the same time, so very nice in their attention to a ceremonial direction of the law of Moses! Thus it is that the devil often deludes many, even among the priests, by a false and superstitious tenderness or conscience in things indifferent, while calumny, envy, oppression of the innocent, and a conformity to the world, give them no manner of trouble or disturbance.” See Quesnel.

**Verse 7. *To bury strangers in.***— **τοις ξενοις**, the strangers, probably meaning, as some learned men conjecture, the Jewish strangers who might have come to Jerusalem, either to worship, or on some other business, and died there during their stay. See here, the very money for which the blessed Jesus was sold becomes subservient to the purpose of mercy and kindness! The bodies of strangers have a place of rest in the field purchased by the price at which his life was valued, and the souls of strangers and foreigners have a place of rest and refuge in his blood which was shed as a ransom price for the salvation of the whole world.

**Verse 8. *The field of blood***— In vain do the wicked attempt to conceal themselves; God makes them instrumental in discovering their own wickedness. Judas, by returning the money, and the priests, by laying it out, raise to themselves an eternal monument—the one of his treachery, the others of their perfidiousness, and both of the innocence of Jesus Christ. As, long as the Jewish polity continued, it might be said, “This is the field that was bought from the potter with the money which Judas got from the high priests for betraying his Master; which he, in deep compunction of spirit, brought back to them, and they bought this ground for a burial-place for strangers: for as it was the price of the blood of an innocent man, they did not think proper to let it rest in the treasury of the temple where the traitor had thrown it, who afterwards, in despair, went and hanged himself.” What a standing proof must this have been of the innocence of Christ, and of their perfidy!

**Verse 9. *Jeremy the prophet***— The words quoted here are not found in the Prophet Jeremiah, but in Zechariah 11:13. But St. Jerome says that a Hebrew of the sect of the Nazarenes showed him this prophecy in a Hebrew apocryphal copy of Jeremiah; but probably they were inserted there only to countenance the quotation here.

One of Colbert’s, a MS. of the eleventh century, has ζαχαριου, Zechariah; so has the later Syriac in the margin, and a copy of the Arabic quoted by Bengel. In a very elegant and correct MS. of the Vulgate, in my possession, written in the fourteenth century, Zachariam is in the margin, and Jeremiam in the text, but the former is written by a later hand. Jeremiah is wanting in two MSS., the Syriac, later Persic, two of the Itala, and in some other Latin copies. It is very likely that the original reading was δια τοι προφητου, and the name of no prophet mentioned. This is the more likely, as Matthew often omits the name of the prophet in his quotations. See Matthew 1:22; 2:5, 15; 13:35; 21:4. Bengel approves of the omission.

It was an ancient custom among the Jews, says Dr. Lightfoot, to divide the Old Testament into three parts: the first beginning with the law was called THE LAW; the second beginning with the Psalms was called THE PSALMS; the third beginning with the prophet in question was called JEREMIAH: thus, then, the writings of Zechariah and the other prophets being included

in that division that began with Jeremiah, all quotations from it would go under the name of this prophet. If this be admitted, it solves the difficulty at once. Dr. Lightfoot quotes Baba Bathra, and Rabbi David Kimchi's preface to the prophet Jeremiah, as his authorities; and insists that the word Jeremiah is perfectly correct as standing at the head of that division from which the evangelist quoted, and which gave its denomination to all the rest. But Jeremiah is the reading in several MSS. of the Coptic. It is in one of the Coptic Dictionaries in the British Museum, and in a Coptic MS. of Jeremiah, in the library of St. Germain. So I am informed by the Rev. Henry Tattam, Rector of St Cuthbert's, Bedford.

**Verse 11. *Before the governor***— My old MS. English Bible translates ⲛⲉⲩⲣⲉⲧⲉ Meyr cheef justyse, Presedent.

***Art thou the King of the Jews?***— The Jews had undoubtedly delivered him to Pilate as one who was rising up against the imperial authority, and assuming the regal office. See on Matthew 27:2.

**Verse 12. *He answered nothing.***— An answer to such accusations was not necessary: they sufficiently confuted themselves.

**Verse 14. *Marveled greatly.***— Silence under calumny manifests the utmost magnanimity. The chief priests did not admire this because it confounded them; but Pilate, who had no interest to serve by it, was deeply affected. This very silence was predicted. Isaiah 53:7.

**Verse 15. *The governor was wont to release***— Whence this custom originated among the Jews is not known, -probably it was introduced by the Romans themselves, or by Pilate, merely to oblige the Jews, by showing them this public token of respect; but if it originated with him, he must have had the authority of Augustus; for the Roman laws never gave such discretionary power to any governor.

**Verse 16. *A notable prisoner-Barabbas.***— This person had, a short time before, raised an insurrection in Jerusalem, in which it appears, from Mark 15:7, some lives were lost. In some MSS., and in the Armenian and Syriac Hieros., this man has the surname of Jesus. Professor Birch has discovered this reading in a Vatican MS., written in 949, and numbered 354, in which is a marginal note which has been attributed to Anastasius, bishop of Antioch, and to Chrysostom, which asserts that in the most ancient MSS.



the passage was as follows: *-τινα θελετε απο των δυω απολυσω υμιν, ιν τον βαραββαν, η ιν τον λεγομενον ξυ*: Which of the two do ye wish me to release unto you, Jesus Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ? As Jesus, or Joshua, was a very common name among the Jews, and as the name of the father was often joined to that of the son, as Simon Barjonah, Simon, son of Jonah; so it is probable it was the case here, Jesus Barabba, Jesus, son of Abba, or Abbiah. If this name were originally written as above, which I am inclined to believe, the general omission of JESUS in the MSS. may be accounted for from the over zealous scrupulosity of Christian copyists, who were unwilling that a murderer should, in the same verse, be honored with the name of the Redeemer of the world. See Birch in New Test.

**Verse 18. *For envy***— *δια φθονον*, through malice. Then it was his business, as an upright judge, to have dispersed this mob, and immediately released Jesus.

Seeing malice is capable of putting even Christ himself to death, how careful should we be not to let the least spark of it harbor in our breast. Let it be remembered that malice as often originates from envy as it does from anger.

**Verse 19. *I have suffered many things-in a dream***— There is no doubt that God had appeared unto this woman, testifying the innocence of Christ, and showing the evils which should pursue Pilate if this innocent blood should be shed by his authority. See Matthew 27:2.

**Verse 20. *Ask Barabbas***— Who had raised an insurrection and committed murder-and to destroy Jesus, whose voice was never heard in their streets, and who had, during the space of three years and a half, gone about unweariedly, from village to village, instructing the ignorant, healing the diseased, and raising the dead.

**Verse 21. *They said, Barabbas.***— What a fickle crowd! A little before they all hailed him as the Son of David, and acknowledged him as a gift from God; now they prefer a murderer to him! But this it appears they did at the instigation of the chief priests. We see here how dangerous wicked priests are in the Church of Christ; when pastors are corrupt, they are capable of inducing their flock to prefer Barabbas to Jesus, the world to

God, and the pleasures of sense to the salvation of their souls. The invidious epithet which a certain statesman gave to the people at large was, in its utmost latitude, applicable to these Jews,—they were a SWINISH MULTITUDE.

**Verse 22. *What shall I do then with Jesus?***— Showing, hereby, that it was his wish to release him.

**Verse 23. *What evil hath he done?***— Pilate plainly saw that there was nothing laid to his charge for which, consistently with the Roman laws, he could condemn him.

***But they cried out the more***— What strange fury and injustice! They could not answer Pilate's question, What evil hath he done? He had done none, and they knew he had done none; but they are determined on his death.

**Verse 24. *Pilate-took water, and washed his hands***— Thus signifying his innocence. It was a custom among the Hebrews, Greeks, and Latins, to wash the hands in token of innocence, and to show that they were pure from any imputed guilt. In case of an undiscovered murder, the elders of that city which was nearest to the place where the dead body was found, were required by the law, Deuteronomy 21:1-10, to wash their hands over the victim which was offered to expiate the crime, and thus make public protestation of their own innocence. David says, I will wash my hands in innocence, so shall I compass thine altar, Psalm 26:6. As Pilate knew Christ was innocent, he should have prevented his death: he had the armed force at his command, and should have dispersed this infamous mob. Had he been charged with countenancing a seditious person, he could have easily cleared himself, had the matter been brought before the emperor. He, therefore, was inexcusable.

**Verse 25. *His blood be on us and on our children.***— If this man be innocent, and we put him to death as a guilty person, may the punishment due to such a crime be visited upon us, and upon our children after us! What a dreadful imprecation! and how literally fulfilled! The notes on chap. 24, will show how they fell victims to their own imprecation, being visited with a series of calamities unexampled in the history of the world. They were visited with the same kind of punishment; for the Romans crucified them in such numbers when Jerusalem was taken, that there was

found a deficiency of crosses for the condemned, and of places for the crosses. Their children or descendants have had the same curse entailed upon them, and continue to this day a proof of the innocence of Christ, the truth of his religion, and of the justice of God.

**Verse 26. *Scourged Jesus***— This is allowed to have been a very severe punishment of itself among the Romans, the flesh being generally cut by the whips used for this purpose: so the poet:-

— Horribili SECTERE flagello.

“To be cut by the horrible whip.”-HOR. Sat. I. 3. 119. And sometimes it seems, they were whipped to death. See the same poet, Sat. I. 2. 41.

— Ille FLAGELLIS AD MORTEM caesus. — See also HORAT. Epod. od. iv. v. 11.

It has been thought that Pilate might have spared this additional cruelty of whipping; but it appears that it was a common custom to scourge those criminals which were to be crucified, (see Josephus Deuteronomy Bello, lib. ii. c. 25,) and lenity in Christ’s case is not to be allowed; he must take all the misery in full tale.

***Delivered him to be crucified.***— Tacitos, the Roman historian, mentions the death of Christ in very remarkable terms:-

Nero-quaesitissimis poenis is affecit, quos-vulgus CHRISTIANOS appellabat. Auctor nominis ejus CHRISTUS, qui Tiberio imperitante, per Procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio affectus erat.-“ Nero put those who commonly went by the name of Christians to the most exquisite tortures. The author of this name was CHRIST, who was capitally punished in the reign of TIBERIUS, by PONTIUS PILATE the PROCURATOR.”

**Verse 27. *The common hall***— Or, praetorium. Called so from the praetor, a principal magistrate among the Romans, whose business it was to administer justice in the absence of the consul. This place might be termed in English the court house, or common hall.

**Verse 28. *Stripped him***— Took off his mantle, or upper garment.

***A scarlet robe***— Or, according to Mark and John, a purple robe, such as emperors and kings wore.

**Verse 29. *A crown of thorns***— στεφανον εξ ακανθων. It does not appear that this crown was intended to be an instrument of punishment or torture to his head, but rather to render him ridiculous; for which cause also they put a reed in his hand, by way of scepter, and bowed their knees, pretending to do him homage. The crown was not probably of thorns, in our sense of the word: there are eminently learned men who think that the crown was formed of the herb acanthus; and Bishop Pearce and Michaelis are of this opinion. Mark, Mark 15:17, and John, John 19:5, term it, στεφανον ακανθινον, which may very well be translated an acanthine crown or wreath, formed out of the branches of the herb acanthus, or bear's foot. This, however, is a prickly plant, though nothing like thorns, in the common meaning of that word. Many Christians have gone astray in magnifying the sufferings of Christ from this circumstance; and painters, the worst of all commentators, frequently represent Christ with a crown of long thorns, which one standing by is striking into his head with a stick. These representations engender ideas both false and absurd.

There is a passage produced from Philo by Dr. Lardner, which casts much light on these indignities offered to our blessed Lord.

“Caligula, the successor of Tiberius, gave Agrippa the tetrarchy of his uncle Philip, with the right of wearing a diadem or crown. When he came to Alexandria, on his way to his tetrarchate, the inhabitants of that place, filled with envy at the thoughts of a Jew having the title of king, showed their indignation in the following way. They brought one Carabus (a sort of an idiot) into the theater; and, having placed him on a lofty seat, that he might be seen by all, they put a diadem upon his head, made of the herb byblos, (the ancient papyrus, or paper flag;) his body they covered with a mat or carpet, instead of a royal cloak. One seeing a piece of reed, **παπυρου** (the stem, probably, of the aforesaid herb) lying on the ground, picked it up, and put it in his hand in place of a scepter. Having thus given him a mock royal dress, several young fellows, with poles on their shoulders, came and stood on each side of him as his guards. Then there came people, some to pay their homage to him, some to ask justice, and some to consult him on affairs of state and the crowd that stood round about made a confused noise, crying, Mario, that being, as they say, the Syriac word for LORD; thereby showing that they intended to ridicule

Agrippa, who was a Syrian.” See PHILO, Flace. p. 970, and Dr. Lardner, Works, vol. i. p. 159.

There is the most remarkable coincidence between this account and that given by the evangelists; and the conjecture concerning the acanthus will probably find no inconsiderable support from the bylos and papyrus of Philo. This plant, Pliny says, grows to ten cubits long in the stem and the flowers were used ad deos coronandos, for CROWNING THE GODS. See Hist. Nat. lib. xiii. c. 11.

The reflections of pious Quesnel on these insults offered to our blessed Lord merit serious attention.

Let the crown of thorns make those Christians blush who throw away so much time, pains, and money, in beautifying and adorning a sinful head. Let the world do what it will to render the royalty and mysteries of Christ contemptible, it is my glory to serve a King thus debased; my salvation, to adore that which the world despises; and my redemption, to go unto God through the merits of him who was crowned with thorns.”

**Verse 30. *And they spit upon him***— “Let us pay our adoration,” says the same pious writer, “and humble ourselves in silence at the sight of a spectacle which faith alone renders credible, and which our senses would hardly endure. Jesus Christ, in this condition, preaches to the kings of the earth this truth—that their scepters are but reeds, with which themselves shall be smitten, bruised, and crushed at his tribunal, if they do not use them here to the advancement of his kingdom.”

**Verse 32. *A man of Cyrene-him they compelled to bear his cross.***— In John, John 19:16, 17, we are told Christ himself bore the cross, and this, it is likely, he did for a part of the way; but, being exhausted with the scourging and other cruel usage which he had received, he was found incapable of bearing it alone; therefore they obliged Simon, not, I think, to bear it entirely, but to assist Christ, by bearing a part of it. It was a constant practice among the Romans, to oblige criminal to bear their cross to the place of execution: insomuch that Plutarch makes use of it as an illustration of the misery of vice. “Every kind of wickedness produces its own particular torment, just as every malefactor, when he is brought forth to execution, carries his own cross.” See Lardner’s Credib. vol. i. p. 160.

**Verse 33. *A place called Golgotha***— From the Hebrew גִּלְגֹּתָה or גִּלְגֹּלֶת, golgoleth, a skull, probably so called from the many skulls of these who had suffered crucifixion and other capital punishments scattered up and down in the place. It is the same as Calvary, Calvaria, i.e. calvi capitis area, the place of bare skulls. Some think the place was thus called, because it was in the form of a human skull. It is likely that it was the place of public execution, similar to the Gemoniae Scalae at Rome.

**Verse 34. *They gave him vinegar-mingled with gall***— Perhaps χολη, commonly translated gall, signifies no more than bitters of any kind. It was a common custom to administer a stupefying potion compounded of sour wine, which is the same as vinegar, from the French vinaigre, frankincense, and myrrh, to condemned persons, to help to alleviate their sufferings, or so disturb their intellect that they might not be sensible of them. The rabbins say that they put a grain of frankincense into a cup of strong wine; and they ground this on Proverbs 31:6: Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, i.e. who is condemned to death. Some person, out of kindness, appears to have administered this to our blessed Lord; but he, as in all other cases, determining to endure the fullness of pain, refused to take what was thus offered to him, choosing to tread the winepress alone. Instead of οξος, vinegar, several excellent MSS. and versions have οινον, wine; but as sour wine is said to have been a general drink of the common people and Roman soldiers, it being the same as vinegar, it is of little consequence which reading is here adopted. This custom of giving stupefying potions to condemned malefactors is alluded to in Proverbs 31:6: Give strong drink, שֶׁקֶר shekar, inebriating drink, to him who is ready to PERISH, and wine to him who is BITTER of soul—because he is just going to suffer the punishment of death. And thus the rabbins, as we have seen above, understand it. See Lightfoot and Schoettgen.

Michaelis offers an ingenious exposition of this place: “Immediately after Christ was fastened to the cross, they gave him, according to Matthew 27:34, vinegar mingled with gall; but, according to Mark, they offered him wine mingled with myrrh. That St. Mark’s account is the right one is probable from this circumstance, that Christ refused to drink what was offered him, as appears from both evangelists. Wine mixed with myrrh was given to malefactors at the place of execution, to intoxicate them, and make

them less sensible to pain. Christ, therefore, with great propriety, refused the aid of such remedies. But if vinegar was offered him, which was taken merely to assuage thirst, there could be no reason for his rejecting it. Besides, he tasted it before he rejected it; and therefore he must have found it different from that which, if offered to him, he was ready to receive. To solve this difficulty, we must suppose that the words used in the Hebrew Gospel of St. Matthew were such as agreed with the account given by St. Mark, and at the same time were capable of the construction which was put on them by St. Matthew's Greek translator. Suppose St. Matthew wrote **חליא במרירא** (chaleea bemireera) which signifies, sweet wine with bitters, or sweet wine and myrrh, as we find it in Mark; and Matthew's translator overlooked the yod י in **חליא** (chaleea) he took it for **חלא** (chala) which signifies vinegar; and bitter, he translated by **χολη**, as it is often used in the Septuagint. Nay, St. Matthew may have written **חלא**, and have still meant to express sweet wine; if so, the difference only consisted in the points; for the same word which, when pronounced chale, signifies sweet, denotes vinegar, as soon as it is pronounced chala."

With this conjecture Dr. Marsh (Michaelis's translator) is not satisfied; and therefore finds a Chaldee word for **οἶνος** wine, which may easily be mistaken for one that denotes **οξύς** vinegar; and likewise a Chaldee word, which signifies **σμύρνα**, (myrrh,) which may be easily mistaken for one that denotes **χολη**, (gall.) "Now," says he, "**חמר** (chamar) or **חמרא** (chamera) really denotes **οἶνος** (wine,) and **חמץ** (chamets) or **חמצא** (chametsa) really denotes **οξύς** (vinegar.) Again, **מורא** (mura) really signifies **σμύρνα** (myrrh,) and **מררא** (murera) really signifies **χολη** (gall.) If, then, we suppose that the original Chaldee text was **חליט במורא חמרא** (chamera heleet bemura) wine mingled with myrrh, which is not at all improbable, as it is the reading of the Syriac version, at Mark 15:23, it might easily have been mistaken for **חמצא חליט במררא** (chametsa haleet bemurera) vinegar mingled with gall." This is a more ingenious conjecture than that of Michaelis. See Marsh's notes to Michaelis, vol. iii., part 2d. p. 127-28. But as that kind of sour wine, which was used by the Roman soldiers and common people, appears to have been termed **οἶνος**, and vin aigre is sour wine, it is not difficult to reconcile the two accounts, in what is most material to the facts here recorded.

**Verse 35. *And they crucified him***— Crucifixion properly means the act of nailing or tying to a cross. The cross was made of two beams, either crossing at the top at right angles, like a T, or in the middle of their length, like an X. There was, besides, a piece on the center of the transverse beam, to which the accusation or statement of the crime of the culprit was attached, and a piece of wood which projected from the middle, on which the person sat, as on a sort of saddle; and by which the whole body was supported. Tertullian mentions this particularly: *Nobis, says he, tota crux imputatur, cum antenna scilicet sua, et cum illo SEDILLS excessu. Advers. Nationes, lib. ii.* Justin Martyr, in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, gives precisely the same description of the cross; and it is worthy of observation that both he and Tertullian flourished before the punishment of the cross had been abolished. The cross on which our Lord suffered was of the former kind; being thus represented in all old monuments, coins, and crosses. St. Jerome compares it to a bird flying, a man swimming, or praying with his arms extended. The punishment of the cross was inflicted among the ancient Hindoos from time immemorial for various species of theft; see Halhead's *Code of Gentoo Laws*, p. 248, and was common among the Syrians, Egyptians, Persians, Africans, Greeks, and Romans: it is also still in use among the Chinese, who do not nail, but tie the criminal to it. It was probably the Romans who introduced it among the Jews. Before they became subject to the Romans, they used hanging or gibbeting, but not the cross. This punishment was the most dreadful of all others, both for the shame and pain of it: and so scandalous, that it was inflicted as the last mark of detestation upon the vilest of people. It was the punishment of robbers and murderers, provided they were slaves; but if they were free, it was thought too infamous a punishment for such, let their crimes be what they might.

The body of the criminal was fastened to the upright beam, by nailing or tying the feet to it, and on the transverse piece by nailing, and sometimes tying the hands to it. As the hands and feet are the grand instruments of motion, they are provided with a greater quantity of nerves; and the nerves in those places, especially the hands, are peculiarly sensible. Now, as the nerves are the instruments of all sensation or feeling, wounds in the parts where they abound must be peculiarly painful; especially when inflicted with such rude instruments as large nails, forced through the places by the



violence of a hammer; thus tearing asunder the nervous fibrillae, delicate tendons, and small bones of those parts. This punishment will appear dreadful enough, when it is considered that the person was permitted to hang (the whole weight of his body being borne up by his nailed hands and the projecting piece which passed between the thighs) till he perished through agony and lack of food. Some, we are informed, have lived three whole days in this state. It is true that, in some cases, there was a kind of mercy shown to the sufferer, which will appear sufficiently horrid, when it is known that it consisted in breaking the bones of their legs and thighs to pieces with a large hammer, in order to put them the sooner out of pain! Such a coup de grace as this could only spring from those tender mercies of the wicked which God represents as cruelty itself. Some were permitted to hang on the cross till eaten up by birds of prey, which often began to tear them before life was extinct. Horace alludes to this punishment, and from what he says, it seems to have been inflicted on slaves, etc., not on trifling occasions, but for the most horrible crimes.

*Si quis eum servum, patinam qui tollere jussus  
Semesos pisces tepidumque ligurrierit jus,  
In CRUCE suffigat. HOR. Satyr. l. i. s. 3. v. 80*

*If a poor slave who takes away your plate,  
Lick the warm sauce, or half cold fragments eat,  
Yet should you crucify the wretch! — FRANCIS*

Non hominem occidi: non pasces in CRUCE corvos.

“I have not committed murder: Then thou shalt not be nailed to the cross, to feed the ravens.” HOR. Epist. l. i. s. 16. v. 48.

The anguish occasioned by crucifixion was so intense, that *crucio*, (a *cruce*,) among the Romans, was the common word by which they expressed suffering and torment in general.

***And parted his garments, casting lots***— These were the Roman soldiers, who had crucified him: and it appears from this circumstance, that in those ancient times the spoils of the criminal were claimed by the executioners, as they are to the present day. It appears that they divided a part, and cast lots for the rest: viz. for his seamless coat, John 19:23, 24.

*That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.*—

The whole of this quotation should be omitted, as making no part originally of the genuine text of this evangelist. It is omitted by almost every MS. of worth and importance, by almost all the versions, and the most reputable of the primitive fathers, who have written or commented on the place. The words are plainly an interpolation, borrowed from John 19:24, in which place they will be properly noticed.

**Verse 36. *They watched him***— To prevent his disciples or relatives from taking away the body or affording any relief to the sufferer.

**Verse 37. *His accusation***— It was a common custom to affix a label to the cross, giving a statement of the crime for which the person suffered. This is still the case in China, when a person is crucified. Sometimes a person was employed to carry this before the criminal, while going to the place of punishment.

It is with much propriety that Matthew calls this **αἰτία**, accusation; for it was false that ever Christ pretended to be KING OF THE JEWS, in the sense the inscription held forth: he was accused of this, but there was no proof of the accusation; however it was affixed to the cross. From John 19:21, we find that the Jews wished this to be a little altered: Write, said they, that HE said, I am king of the Jews; thus endeavoring, by the addition of a vile lie, to countenance their own conduct in putting him to death. But this Pilate refused to do. Both Luke, Luke 23:38, and John, John 19:20, say that this accusation was written in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. In those three languages, we may conceive the label to stand thus, according to the account given by St. John; the Hebrew being the mixed dialect then spoken. In Hebrew-**עֲרִיא מַלְכָּא דִּיהוּדָיָא** **ἔβραϊστί**:

In Greek-**ελληνιστᾶ**: **ἰησοῦς ὁ ναζωραῖος ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν ἰουδαίων**

In Latin-**ρωμαιστί**: **IESUS NAZARENUS REX IUDAEORUM** It is only necessary to observe, that all the letters, both of the Greek and Roman alphabets, were those now called square or uncial, similar to these above.

**Verse 38. *Two thieves***— **λησται**, robbers, or cutthroats: men who had committed robbery and murder; for it does not appear that persons were crucified for robbery only. Thus was our Lord numbered (his name

enrolled, placed as it were in the death warrant) with transgressors, according to the prophetic declaration, Isaiah 53:12; and the Jews placed him between these two, perhaps to intimate that he was the worst felon of the three.

**Verse 39. *Wagging their heads***— In token of contempt.

**Verse 40. *Thou that destroyest***— Who didst pretend that thou couldst have destroyed the temple, and built it up again in three days. This malicious torturing of our Lord's words has been noticed before. Cruelty is obliged to take refuge in lies, in order to vindicate its infamous proceedings.

***If thou be the Son of God***— Or rather, υἱος του θεου A son of God, i.e. a peculiar favorite of the Most-High; not ο υἱος του θεου, THE Son of God. “It is not to be conceived,” says a learned man, “that every passenger who was going to the city had a competent knowledge of Christ's supernatural conception by the Holy Spirit, or an adequate comprehension of his character as the Messiah, and (κατ' ἐξοχην) THE SON OF GOD. There is not a single passage where Jesus is designed to be pointed out as the MESSIAH, THE SON OF GOD, where the article is omitted: nor, on the other hand, is this designation ever specified without the article, thus, ‘ο υἱος του θεου. See Matthew 16:16; 26:63; 28:19.”

**Verse 41. *Chief priests-scribes and elders***— To these, several ancient MSS. and versions add, και φαρισαίων, and Pharisees. But though the authority for this reading is respectable, yet it does not appear that the Pharisees joined in with the others in the condemnation of our Lord. Probably his discourses and parables, related in some of the preceding chapters, which were spoken directly to them, had so far convinced them that they would at least have no hand in putting him to death. All the infamy of this seems to fall upon the PRIESTS, scribes, and elders.

**Verse 42. *He saved others; himself he cannot save.***— Or, Cannot he save himself? Several MSS. read this with the mark of interrogation as above; and this makes the sarcasm still more keen.

A high priest who designs to destroy the temple of God: a Savior who saves not himself; and the Son of God crucified: these are the contradictions which give offense to Jews and libertines. But a high priest who dispels the types and shadows, only that he may disclose the

substance of religion, and become the minister of a heavenly sanctuary; a Savior who dies only to be the victim of salvation; and the Son of God who confines his power within the bounds of the cross to establish the righteousness of faith: this is what a Christian adores; this is the foundation of his hope, and the fountain of his present comfort and final blessedness. See Quesnel.

***We will believe him.***— Instead of *αὐτῷ*, him, many excellent MSS. have *ἐπ' αὐτῷ*, IN him: this is a reading which Griesbach and other eminent critics have adopted.

**Verse 43. *If he will have him***— Or, if he delight in him-*εἰ θελεῖ αὐτόν*. The verbs *θέλω* and *εθέλω*, are used by the Septuagint in more than forty places for the Hebrew *יָפַח* chaphets, which signifies, earnestly to desire, or delight in. Now as this is a quotation from Psalm 22:8, He trusted in the Lord, that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, (*כִּי יָפַח בּוֹ* ki chaphets bo,) for he HATH DELIGHTED IN HIM:-*οτι θελει αὐτον*, Sept. This will sufficiently vindicate the above translation; as the evangelist quotes the words from that version, with the simple change of *εἰ*, if, for *οτι*, because.

**Verse 44. *The thieves also-cast the same in his teeth.***— That is, one of the robbers; for one, we find, was a penitent, Luke 23:39, 40. See this form of expression accounted for, on Matthew 26:8.

**Verse 45. *There was darkness over all the land***— I am of opinion that *πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν* does not mean all the world, but only the land of Judea. So the word is used Matthew 24:30; Luke 4:25, and in other places. Several eminent critics are of this opinion: Beza defends this meaning of the word, and translates the Greek, super universam REGIONEM over the whole COUNTRY. Besides, it is evident that the evangelists speak of things that happened in Judea, the place of their residence. It is plain enough there was a darkness in Jerusalem, and over all Judea; and probably over all the people among whom Christ had for more than three years preached the everlasting Gospel; and that this darkness was supernatural is evident from this, that it happened during the passover, which was celebrated only at the full moon, a time in which it was impossible for the sun to be eclipsed. But many suppose the darkness was over the whole world, and think there

is sufficient evidence of this in ancient authors. PHLEGON and THALLUS, who flourished in the beginning of the second century, are supposed to speak of this. The former says: "In the fourth year of the 202nd Olympiad, there was an extraordinary eclipse of the sun: at the sixth hour, the day was turned into dark night, so that the stars in heaven were seen; and there was an earthquake in Bithynia, which overthrew many houses in the city of Nice." This is the substance of what Phlegon is reputed to have said on this subject:-but 1. All the authors who quote him differ, and often very materially, in what they say was found in him. 2. Phlegon says nothing of Judea: what he says is, that in such an Olympiad, (some say the 102nd, others the 202nd,) there was an eclipse in Bithynia, and an earthquake at Nice. 3. Phlegon does not say that the earthquake happened at the time of the eclipse. 4. Phlegon does not intimate that this darkness was extraordinary, or that the eclipse happened at the full of the moon, or that it lasted three hours. These circumstances could not have been omitted by him, if he had known them. 5. Phlegon speaks merely of an ordinary, though perhaps total, eclipse of the sun, and cannot mean the darkness mentioned by the evangelists. 6. Phlegon speaks of an eclipse that happened in some year of the 102nd, or 202nd Olympiad; and therefore little stress can be laid on what he says as applying to this event.

The quotation from THALLUS, made by AFRICANUS, found in the Chronicle of SYNCELLUS, of the eighth century, is allowed by eminent critics to be of little importance. This speaks "of a darkness over all the world, and an earthquake which threw down many houses in Judea and in other parts of the earth." It may be necessary to observe, that THALLUS is quoted by several of the ancient ecclesiastical writers for other matters, but never for this; and that the time in which he lived is so very uncertain, that Dr. Lardner supposes there is room to think he lived rather before than after Christ.

DIONYSIUS the Areopagite is supposed to have mentioned this event in the most decided manner: for being at Heliopolis in Egypt, with his friend Apolophanes, when our Savior suffered, they there saw a wonderful eclipse of the sun, whereupon Dionysius said to his friend, "Either God himself suffers, or sympathizes with the sufferer." It is enough to say of this man, that all the writings attributed to him are known to be spurious, and are proved to be forgeries of the fifth or sixth century. Whoever

desires to see more on this subject, may consult Dr. Lardner, (vol. vii. p. 371, ed. 1788,) a man whose name should never be mentioned but with respect, notwithstanding the peculiarities of his religious creed; who has done more in the service of Divine revelation than most divines in Christendom; and who has raised a monument to the perpetuity of the Christian religion, which all the infidels in creation shall never be able to pull down or deface.

This miraculous darkness should have caused the enemies of Christ to understand that he was the light of the world, and that because they did not walk in it it was now taken away from them.

**Verse 46. *My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me!***— These words are quoted by our Lord from Psalm 22:1; they are of very great importance, and should be carefully considered.

Some suppose “that the divinity had now departed from Christ, and that his human nature was left unsupported to bear the punishment due to men for their sins.” But this is by no means to be admitted, as it would deprive his sacrifice of its infinite merit, and consequently leave the sin of the world without an atonement. Take deity away from any redeeming act of Christ, and redemption is ruined. Others imagine that our Lord spoke these words to the Jews only, to prove to them that he was the Messiah. “The Jews,” say they, “believed this psalm to speak of the Messiah: they quoted the eighth verse of it against Christ—He trusted in God that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him. (See Matthew 27:43.) To which our Lord immediately answers, My God! my God! etc , thus showing that he was the person of whom the psalmist prophesied.” I have doubts concerning the propriety of this interpretation.

It has been asked, What language is it that our Lord spoke? Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani. Some say it is Hebrew—others Syriac. I say, as the evangelists quote it, it is neither. St. Matthew comes nearest the Hebrew, עֲזַבְתָּנִי לְמֵה אֱלֹהֵי אֱלֹהֵי לְמֵה Eli, Eli, lamah azabthani, in the words, ἡλι, ἡλι, λαμμα σαβαχθανι, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani.

And St. Mark comes nearest the Syriac, Mark 15:34, [S] Alohi, Alohi, l'mono shebachtheni, in the words ελωι, ελωι, λαμμα σαβαχθανι, Eloi, Eloi, lamma sabachthani. It is worthy of note, that a Hebrew MS. of the

twelfth century, instead of **עֲזַבְתָּנִי** azabthani, forsaken me, reads **שִׁכַּחְתָּנִי** shechachthani, FORGOTTEN me. This word makes a very good sense, and comes nearer to the sabachthani of the evangelists. It may be observed also, that the words, Why hast thou FORGOTTEN me? are often used by David and others, in times of oppression and distress. See Psalm 42:9.

Some have taken occasion from these words to depreciate the character of our blessed Lord. "They are unworthy," say they, "of a man who suffers, conscious of his innocence, and argue imbecility, impatience, and despair." This is by no means fairly deducible from the passage. However, some think that the words, as they stand in the Hebrew and Syriac, are capable of a translation which destroys all objections, and obviates every difficulty. The particle **לָמָּה** lamah, may be translated, to what-to whom-to what kind or sort-to what purpose or profit: Genesis 25:32; Genesis 32:29; 33:15; Job 9:29; Jeremiah 6:20; 20:18; Am 5:18; and the verb **עָזַב** azab signifies to leave-to deposit-to commit to the care of. See Genesis 39:6; Job 39:11; Psalm 10:14, and Jeremiah 49:11. The words, taken in this way, might be thus translated: My God! my God! to what sort of persons hast thou left me? The words thus understood are rather to be referred to the wicked Jews than to our Lord, and are an exclamation indicative of the obstinate wickedness of his crucifiers, who steeled their hearts against every operation of the Spirit and power of God. See Ling. Brit. Reform. by B. Martin, p. 36.

Through the whole of the Sacred Writings, God is represented as doing those things which, in the course of his providence, he only permits to be done; therefore, the words, to whom hast thou left or given me up, are only a form of expression for, "How astonishing is the wickedness of those persons into whose hands I am fallen!" If this interpretation be admitted, it will free this celebrated passage from much embarrassment, and make it speak a sense consistent with itself, and with the dignity of the Son of God.

The words of St. Mark, Mark 15:34, agree pretty nearly with this translation of the Hebrew: **εἰς τι με εγκατιλεπες**; To what [sort of persons, understood] hast thou left me? A literal translation of the passage in the Syriac Testament gives a similar sense: Ad quid dereliquisti me? "To what hast thou abandoned me?" And an ancient copy of the old Itala

version, a Latin translation before the time of St. Jerome, renders the words thus: Quare me in opprobrium dedisti? “Why hast thou abandoned me to reproach?”

It may be objected, that this can never agree with the **ὡςτις**, why, of Matthew. To this it is answered, that **ὡςτις** must have here the same meaning as **εἰς τι**-as the translation of **למה** lama; and that, if the meaning be at all different, we must follow that evangelist who expresses most literally the meaning of the original: and let it be observed, that the Septuagint often translate **למה** by **ὡςτις** instead of **εἰς τι**, which evidently proves that it often had the same meaning. Of this criticism I say, Valet quod valet, Let it pass for no more than it is worth: the subject is difficult. But whatever may be thought of the above mode of interpretation, one thing is certain, viz. That the words could not be used by our Lord in the sense in which they are generally understood. This is sufficiently evident; for he well knew why he was come unto that hour; nor could he be forsaken of God, in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. The Deity, however, might restrain so much of its consolatory support as to leave the human nature fully sensible of all its sufferings, so that the consolations might not take off any part of the keen edge of his passion; and this was necessary to make his sufferings meritorious. And it is probable that this is all that is intended by our Lord’s quotation from the twenty-second Psalm. Taken in this view, the words convey an unexceptionable sense, even in the common translation.

**Verse 47. *This man calleth for Elias.***— Probably these were Hellenistic Jews, who did not fully understand the meaning of our Lord’s words. Elijah was daily expected to appear as the forerunner of the Messiah, whose arrival, under the character of a mighty prince, was generally supposed to be at hand throughout the east. See Malachi 4:5; Matthew 2:2-4; 17:10-12.

**Verse 48. *Took a sponge***— This being the most convenient way to reach a liquid to his mouth; tied it on a reed, that they might be able to reach his lips with it. This reed, as we learn from St. John, was a stalk of hyssop, which, in that country, must have grown to a considerable magnitude. This appears also to have been done in mercy, to alleviate his sufferings. See Matthew 27:34.



**Verse 49.** After this verse, BCL and five others add, Another, taking a spear, pierced his side, and there came out blood and water. Several of the fathers add the same words here: they appear, however, to be an interpolation from John 19:34.

**Verse 50. *Yielded up the ghost.***— *αφηκε το πνευμα*, He dismissed the spirit. He himself willingly gave up that life which it was impossible for man to take away. It is not said that he hung on the cross till he died through pain and agony; nor is it said that his bones were broken, the sooner to put him out of pain, and to hasten his death; but that himself dismissed the soul, that he might thus become, not a forced sacrifice, but a free-will offering for sin.

Now, as our English word ghost, from the Anglo-Saxon [AS] gast, an inmate, inhabitant, guest, (a casual visitant,) also a spirit, is now restricted among us to the latter meaning, always signifying the immortal spirit or soul of man, the guest of the body and as giving up the spirit, ghost, or soul, is an act not proper to man, though commending it to God, in our last moments, is both an act of faith and piety; and as giving up the ghost, i.e. dismissing his spirit from his body, is attributed to Jesus Christ, to whom alone it is proper; I therefore object against its use in every other case.

Every man, since the fall, has not only been liable to death, but has deserved it; as all have forfeited their lives because of sin. Jesus Christ, as born immaculate, and having never sinned, had not forfeited his life, and therefore may be considered as naturally and properly immortal. No man, says he, taketh it, my life, from me, but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again; therefore doth the Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again, John 10:17, 18. Hence we rightly translate Matthew 27:50, *αφηκε το πνευμα*, he gave up the ghost; i.e. he dismissed his spirit, that he might die for the sin of the world. The Evangelist St. John (John 19:30) makes use of an expression to the same import, which we translate in the same way: *παρεδωκε το πνευμα*, he delivered up his spirit. We translate Mark 15:37, and Luke 23:46, he gave up the ghost, but not correctly, because the word in both these places is very different—*εξεπνευσε*, he breathed his last, or expired; though in the latter place, Luke 23:46, there is an equivalent expression—O Father, into thy hands, *παρατιθεμαι το πνευμα*

μου, I commit my spirit; i.e. I place my soul in thy hand: proving that the act was his own; that no man could take his life away from him; that he did not die by the perfidy of his disciple, or the malice of the Jews, but by his own free act. Thus HE LAID DOWN his life for the sheep. Of Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5:5,10, and of Herod, Acts 12:23, our translation says, they gave up the ghost; but the word in both places is **ἐξεψυξε**, which simply means to breathe out, to expire, or die: but in no case, either by the Septuagint in the Old, or any of the sacred writers in the New Testament, is **αφηκε το πνευμα**, or **παρεδωκε το πνευμα**, he dismissed his spirit, or delivered up his spirit, spoken of any person but Christ. Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, etc., breathed their last; Ananias, Sapphira, and Herod, expired; but none, Jesus Christ excepted, gave up the ghost, dismissed, or delivered up his own spirit, and was, consequently, free among the dead. Of the patriarchs, etc., the Septuagint use the word **εκλειπων**, failing; or **κατεπαυσεν**, he ceased, or rested.

**Verse 51. *The veil of the temple was rent***— That is, the veil which separated the holy place, where the priests ministered, from the holy of holies, into which the high priest only entered, and that once a year, to make a general expiation for the sins of the people. This rending of the veil was emblematical, and pointed out that the separation between Jews and Gentiles was now abolished, and that the privilege of the high priest was now communicated to all mankind: ALL might henceforth have access to the throne of grace, through the one great atonement and mediator, the Lord Jesus. See this beautifully illustrated in Hebrews 10:19-22.

**Verse 52. *And the graves were opened***— By the earthquake; and many bodies of saints which slept, i.e. were dead, sleep being a common expression for death in the Scriptures.

**Verse 53. *And came out of the graves after his resurrection***— Not BEFORE, as some have thought, for Christ was himself the FIRST FRUITS of them who slept, 1 Corinthians 15:20. The graves were opened at his death, by the earthquake, and the bodies came out at his resurrection.

***And appeared unto many.***— Thus establishing the truth of our Lord's resurrection in particular, and of the resurrection of the body in general, by many witnesses. Quesnel's reflections on these passages may be very useful. "1. The veil being rent shows that his death is to put an end to the

figurative worship, and to establish the true religion. 2. The earthquake, that this dispensation of the Gospel is to make known through the earth the judgments of God against sin and sinners. 3. The rocks being rent declare that the sacrifice of Christ is to make way for the grace of repentance. 4. The graves being opened, that it is to destroy the death of sin, and confer the life grace on sinners. 5. The rising of the bodies of the saints shows that this death of Christ is to merit, and his Gospel publish, the eternal happiness of body and soul for all that believe in his name.”

It is difficult to account for the transaction mentioned Matthew 27:52, 53. Some have thought that these two verses have been introduced into the text of Matthew from the gospel of the Nazarenes; others think that the simple meaning is this:-by the earthquake several bodies that had been buried were thrown up and exposed to view, and continued above ground till after Christ’s resurrection, and were seen by many persons in the city. Why the graves should be opened on Friday, and the bodies not be raised to life till the following Sunday, is difficult to be conceived. The place is extremely obscure.

**Verse 54. *The centurion***— The Roman officer who superintended the execution, called centurio, from centum, a hundred, because he had the command of one hundred men.

***Truly this was the Son of God.***— An innocent, holy, and Divine person; and God thus shows his disapprobation of this bloody tragedy. It is not likely that this centurion had any knowledge of the expectation of the Jews relative to the Messiah, and did not use the words in this sense. A son of God, as the Romans used the term, would signify no more than a very eminent or Divine person; a hero.

**Verse 55. *Many women***— To their everlasting honor, these women evidenced more courage, and affectionate attachment to their Lord and Master, than the disciples did, who had promised to die with him rather than forsake him.

***Beholding afar off***— At a distance-*απο μακροθεν*. Though this expression may be understood to refer, rather to the distance from which they came, (viz. from Galilee,) than the distance they stood from the cross;

yet, as all malefactors were crucified naked, perhaps this may account for the distance at which these modest women stood.

**Verse 56. *Mary Magdalene***— She probably had her name from Magdala, a village or district in Lower Galilee. See Matthew 15:39. Some think she was called Magdalene from מגדל magdala, which signifies a plaiter of hair. See Lightfoot.

***Mary the mother of James***— She was mother of him called James the lesser, or junior, who was son of Alphaeus or Cleopas—see Matthew 10:3; Mark 15:40; John 19:25; and she was sister to the holy virgin. Thus it appears that there were four remarkable Marys mentioned in the Gospels. 1. MARY the Virgin, wife of JOSEPH. 2. MARY SALOME, her sister, wife of Cleopas, John 19:25. 3. MARY MAGDALENE, or MARY of Magdala; and, 4. MARY, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, John 11:1. Though Baronius asserts, and Lightfoot is of the same opinion, that Mary Magdalene, and Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, was one and the same person. It is difficult to ascertain and distinguish these women where their names occur in the Gospels, so many being called by the name of Mary.

***Joses***— Several MSS. and versions read Joseph.

**Verse 57. *When the even***— This must have been about three o'clock, or a little after; for our Lord having expired about three o'clock, Matthew 27:46, and the Jewish passover beginning about four, it was necessary that Joseph, who would not fail to eat the passover at the usual time, should have obtained and buried the body of Christ some time before four o'clock. But such was the general consternation, occasioned by the prodigies that took place on this most awful occasion, that we may safely conjecture that nothing was done in order, and perhaps the passover itself was not eaten at the usual hour, if at all, that day. See at the end of the preceding chapter.

***A rich man***— He was a counsellor of the great Sanhedrin, Luke 23:50; and, from the accounts given of him by the evangelists we learn that he was a man of the greatest respectability. He now acted a more honorable part than all the disciples of our Lord. He was of Arimathea, or Rama, in the tribe of Benjamin, Matthew 2:18, but lived ordinarily in Jerusalem, as being a member of the great council.

**Verse 58. *Begged the body***— That he might bury it honorably otherwise, by the Jewish customs, he would have either been burned, or buried in the common place appointed for executed criminals.

**Verse 59. *Wrapped it in a clean linen cloth***— The Jews, as well as the Egyptians, added spices to keep the body from putrefaction, and the linen was wrapped about every part to keep the aromatics in contact with the flesh. From John 19:39, 40, we learn that a mixture of myrrh and aloes of one hundred pounds' weight had been applied to the body of Jesus when he was buried. And that a second embalmment was intended, we learn from Luke 23:56; 24:1, as the hurry to get the body interred before the Sabbath did not permit them to complete, the embalming in the first instance. See an account of the mode of embalming among the Egyptians, in the note on Genesis 50:2, 26.

**Verse 60. *Laid it in his own new tomb***— To all human appearance the body of Christ must have had the same burial-place with those of the two robbers, as he was numbered with the transgressors, and suffered with them; for then he was a sacrifice, bearing the sin of the world in his own body on the tree; but now the sacrifice is offered, the atonement made and accepted, he is no longer to be enrolled with the transgressors, and, according to a prophecy delivered nearly seven hundred years before that time, he is to have the burying-place of a rich man. See Isaiah 53:9, 10. Had our Lord been buried in the common burial-ground of the malefactors, his resurrection could not have been so distinctly remarked, as the chief priests would never have thought of sealing the stone there, or setting a watch; but now that the body is got into the hands of a friend, they judge it necessary to make use of these precautions, in order, as they said, to prevent imposture; and from this very circumstance the resurrection of Christ had its fullest evidence, and was put beyond the power of successful contradiction. What a number of objections would not human prudence have made to Joseph's conduct, had he consulted it on this occasion! It would have represented to him that, "this was to expose himself, to bring himself into trouble, to render himself suspected, to put himself out of all capacity of doing good, to ruin himself irrecoverably; and now it could do no good to his teacher—he is now dead, and needs no longer any office of kindness from men." There is, sometimes in our whole life, but one opportunity in which God designs signally to employ us; and,

through our general backwardness to every good work, we are for reserving ourselves to other opportunities, in which God neither requires nor will accept our services.

***Rolled a great stone to the door***— Some are of opinion that this tomb was cut down into the rock, perpendicularly from the surface; and that the great stone spoken of here covered over the entrance to it. The stone, no doubt, was intended to secure the place as much as possible.

**Verse 61. *Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary***— The mother of James and Joses, Matthew 27:56. The mother of our Lord had probably, by this time, been taken home to the house of John. See John 19:26, 27.

***Sitting over against the sepulchre.***— These holy women, filled with that love to their Lord which death cannot destroy, cleaved to him in life, and in death were not divided. They came to the grave to see the end, and overwhelmed with sorrow and anguish, sat down to mourn.

**Verse 62. *The next day***— This was the seventh, or Saturday, and might be what we should term the evening of the sixth, or Friday, because the Jews always ended their day when the sun set, and then began the next.

***That followed the day of the preparation***— That is, of the Sabbath. The victuals, etc., which were to be used on the Sabbath by the Jews, were always prepared the preceding evening before the sun set. It is of this preparation that the evangelist speaks here; and it is the same which is mentioned by Mark, Mark 15:42; by Luke, Luke 23:54; and by John, John 19:31. But there was another preparation which happened in the same day: viz. The preparation of the passover; this began about twelve o'clock, and continued till four, the time in which they ate the paschal lamb. See John 19:14.

**Verse 63. *Sir, we remember, etc.***— While these wicked men are fulfilling their own vicious counsels, they are subserving the great cause of Christianity. Every thing depended on the resurrection of Christ; if it did not appear that he rose from the dead, then the whole system was false, and no atonement was made. It was necessary therefore that the chief priests, etc., should make use of every precaution to prevent an imposture, that the resurrection of Christ might have the fullest evidence to support it. See on Matthew 27:60.

The word **κυριε** is here very properly translated sir, which, in many other places, is as improperly translated Lord. When a Roman is the speaker, or the person addressed, **κυριε** should always be translated sir; when strangers address our Lord, the word is a title of civil respect, and should, in general, be translated in the same way.

**After three days I will rise again.**— This they probably took from his saying, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will build it up. If so, they destroyed, by their own words, the false accusation they brought against him to put him to death; then they perverted the meaning, now they declare it. Thus the wise are taken in their own craftiness. Neither the devil nor his servants ever speak truth, but when they expect to accomplish some bad purpose by it.

**Verse 64. Lest his disciples come by night**— **νυκτος**, by night, is wanting in ten of the uncial MSS., and in several others, and in most of the versions. Erasmus, Aldus, Bengel, and Boghard, with Griesbach, leave it out of the text.

**Verse 65. Ye have a watch**— The Jews had a corps of Roman troops, consisting of several companies, as a guard for the temple, Acts 4:1. These companies mounted guard by turns, see Luke 22:4. Some of these companies, which were not then on duty, Pilate gave them leave to employ to watch the tomb.

**Verse 66. Made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.**— Or rather, made the tomb secure by the guard, and by sealing the stone. I follow Kypke, in construing **μετα της κουστωδιας**, with **ησφαλισαντο**. The guard was to take care that the disciples should not steal him away; and the seal, which was probably the seal of the governor, was to prevent the guards from being corrupted so as to permit the theft. So every thing was done which human policy and prudence could, to prevent a resurrection, which these very precautions had the most direct tendency to authenticate and establish. How wonderful are the wisdom and goodness of God!-and how true is it, that there is neither might nor counsel against him!

1. The death of Christ was ordered, so as to be witnessed by thousands; and if his resurrection take place, it must be demonstrated; and it cannot

take place without being incontestable, such are the precautions used here to prevent all imposture.

2. The more the circumstances of the death of Christ are examined, the more astonishing the whole will appear. The death is uncommon-the person uncommon-and the object uncommon; and the whole is grand, majestic, and awful. Nature itself is thrown into unusual action, and by means and causes wholly supernatural. In every part, the finger of God most evidently appears.

3. How glorious does Christ appear in his death! Were it not for his thirst, his exclamation on the cross, and the piercing of his side, we should have found it difficult to believe that such a person could ever have entered the empire of death; but the divinity and the manhood equally appear, and thus the certainty of the atonement is indubitably established.

4. But who can reflect on the state of the poor disciples, during the whole of the time in which our blessed Lord lay under the empire of death, without sharing their sorrows! When he expired on the cross their expectation was cut off; and when his body was laid in the grave their hopes were buried; and nothing but the resurrection of Christ from the dead could have given a resurrection to their hopes. It is true they had heard him say that he would rise again the third day; but in this it is evident their faith was very imperfect; and the uncertainty, perplexity, anxiety, and distress which they in consequence must have suffered, can neither be described nor imagined. Though we know the glorious result, yet who can help sympathizing with the pious father, the virgin mother, and the disconsolate disciples!



## CHAPTER 28

*The resurrection of Christ declared by an angel to the two Marys at the sepulchre, 1-6. They are commissioned to announce this to the disciples, 7. They go, and are met by Christ himself who promises to meet the disciples in Galilee, 8-10. The watch go into the city, and report to the chief priests what had taken place, 11. They give them money, to say that his disciples had stolen the body by night, while they slept, 12-15. Christ meets the eleven disciples in a mountain of Galilee, 16, 17. He gives them a commission to preach the Gospel throughout the earth; to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and promises to be with them to the end of the world, 18-20.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 28

**Verse 1. *In the end of the Sabbath***— οψε δε σαββατων. After the end of the week: this is the translation given by several eminent critics; and in this way the word οψε is used by the most eminent Greek writers. Thucydides, lib. iv. chap. 93, της ημερας οψε ην-the day was ended. Plutarch, οψε των βασιλεως χρονων- after the times of the king. Philostratus οψε των τροικων-after the Trojan war. See Rosenmuller. In general the Jews divided their natural day, which consisted of twenty-four hours, into day and night. Their artificial day began at the rising and ended at the setting of the sun; all the rest of the time, from the setting to the rising of the sun, they termed night: hence the same word, in Hebrew, signifies both evening and night. Genesis 1:5; Mark 6:47. Matthew has employed the word in this extensive sense here, pointing out the latter part of the Jewish night, that which immediately preceded the rising of the sun, and not that first part which we call the evening. The transaction mentioned here evidently took place early on the morning of the third day after our Lord's crucifixion; what is called our Sunday morning, or first day of the next week.

***Came to see the sepulchre.***— That is, they set out at this time in order to visit the tomb of our Lord, and also to weep there, John 11:31, and to

embalm the body of our Lord, Luke 24:1. St. Matthew omits Mary Salome, mentioned by Mark; and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, mentioned by Luke. The other Mary was the wife of Cleopas, and mother of James and Joses, mentioned before, Matthew 27:56. Were not Mary and Salome two distinct persons?

**Verse 2. *A great earthquake***—σεισμος, a shaking or commotion of any kind: probably the word means no more than the confusion caused among the guards by the angel's appearance. All this had taken place before the women reached the sepulchre.

***The angel of the Lord descended from heaven***—Matthew is very particular in this, to show that the word angel is not to be taken in the sense of an ordinary messenger, who might have come from Joseph of Arimathea, or from any other; but in the sense of an extraordinary messenger, who descended from GOD, out of heaven, for this very purpose. It is likely that the angel had descended, rolled away the stone, and was sitting on it, before the women reached the tomb.

**Verse 3. *His countenance***—His appearance, η ιδεα αυτου; or, his face, for so the word is used in some of the best Greek writers. It seems, from Mark 16:5, that this angel had assumed the appearance of a young man.

***Like lightning***—Coruscations of glory continually flaming from his face. This might produce the confusion mentioned Matthew 28:2.

***His raiment white as snow***—He was clothed in garments emblematical of the glad tidings which he came to announce. It would have been inconsistent with the message he brought, had the angel appeared in black robes, such as those preposterously wear who call themselves his successors in the ministry of a once suffering, but now risen and highly exalted, Savior. But the world is as full of nonsense as of sin; and who can correct and bring it to reason and piety?

**Verse 4. *The keepers-became as dead men.***—God can, by one and the same means, comfort his servants, and terrify his enemies. The resurrection of Christ is a subject of terror to the servants of sin, and a subject of consolation to the sons of God; because it is a proof of the resurrection of both, the one to shame and everlasting contempt-the other to eternal glory and joy.

**Verse 5. *I know that ye seek Jesus***— Speaking after the manner of men, these women deserved to be the first witnesses of the resurrection of Christ: during life they ministered to him, and in death they were not divided. They attended him to the CROSS, notwithstanding their attachment to him exposed them to the most imminent danger; and now they come to watch and weep at his TOMB. The common opinion is, that women are more fickle and less courageous than men. The reverse of this I believe to be the truth, in those who are thoroughly converted to God; and who, previously to conversion, whether man or woman, can be trusted in any case?

**Verse 6. *Come, see the place***— The tomb in which our Lord was laid was no doubt like the rest of the Jewish burying places, a receptacle for the several dead of a whole family, divided into separate niches, where each had his place. Come and see the place—was tantamount to, Come and see the niche in which he was laid—it is now empty; nor was there any other body in the place, for the tomb was a new one, in which no man had ever been laid, John 19:41; so there could be no deception in the case.

**Verse 7. *Go quickly and tell his disciples***— Thus these faithful women proclaim the Gospel to those who were afterwards to be the teachers of the whole human race! Behold what honor God puts upon those who persevere in his truth, and continue to acknowledge him before men!

***That he is risen from the dead***— There is a remarkable saying of R. Judah Hakkodesh, which some critics quote on this subject: “After THREE DAYS the SOUL of the Messiah shall RETURN to its body, and he shall GO OUT of that STONE in which he shall be BURIED.”

***Goeth before you into Galilee***— As himself promised, Matthew 26:32.

**Verse 8. *They departed quickly from the sepulchre***— At the desire of the angel they went into the tomb, to have the fullest certainty of the resurrection.

***Fear and great joy***— Fear, produced by the appearance of this glorious messenger of God; and great joy occasioned by the glad tidings of the resurrection of their Lord and Master. At the mention of unexpected good news, fear and joy are generally intermingled.

— *Vix sum apud me, ita animus commotus est metu,  
Spe, gaudio, mirando hoc tanto, tam repentino bono*  
TERANT. Andr. v. 945

“I am almost beside myself, my mind is so agitated with fear, hope, and joy, at this unexpected good news.”

**Verse 9. *And as they went to tell his disciples***— This clause is wanting in the Codex Vatican, and Codex Bezae, and in twenty others, and in most of the versions. The omission is approved by Mill, Bengel, and Schmid. Griesbach leaves it in the text with a note of doubtfulness. It appears to be superfluous. To connect this with the next clause, the particle *καί*, and, is obliged to be suppressed in all the translations. I think the verse should begin with, And behold he goeth, etc., and the former clause be suppressed. Probabiliter delenda, says Professor White, in his *Crisews Griesbachianae*, speaking of the preceding words.

***Jesus met them***— Christ bestows his graces and consolations by degrees, first by his angels, and then by himself. He does not reveal himself to incredulous and disobedient souls; he appears not even to these women till he has tried their faith and obedience by his ministering angels.

***All hail.***— Anglo-Saxon, [AS], Health be to you! *χαίρετε*, Be ye safe, rejoice.

***And they held him by the feet, and worshipped him.***— This kind of reverence is in daily use among the Hindoos: when a disciple meets his religious guide in the public streets, he prostrates himself before him, and, taking the dust from his teacher’s feet, rubs it on his forehead, breast, etc. See WARD’S CUSTOMS.

**Verse 10. *Be not afraid***— They were seized with fear at the sight of the angel; and this was now renewed by this unexpected appearance of Christ. See the note on Matthew 28:8.

***Go, tell my brethren***— This is the first time our Lord called his disciples by this endearing name: they no doubt thought that their Lord would reproach them with their past cowardice and infidelity; but, in speaking thus, he gives them a full assurance, in the most tender terms, that all that was passed was as buried for ever.

**Verse 11. *Some of the watch***— Or guards. Probably the rest still remained at the tomb, waiting for orders to depart, and had sent these to intimate to their employers the things that had taken place.

**Verse 12. *With the elders***— That is, the senators of the great Sanhedrin or Jewish council of state, elsewhere called the elders of the people; they could now meet, as the Sabbath was over.

**Verse 13. *His disciples came by night***— This was as absurd as it was false. On one hand, the terror of the disciples, the smallness of their number (only eleven;) and their almost total want of faith; on the other, the great danger of such a bold enterprise, the number of armed men who guarded the tomb, the authority of Pilate and of the Sanhedrin, must render such an imposture as this utterly devoid of credit.

***Stole him away while we slept.***— Here is a whole heap of absurdities. 1st. Is it likely that so many men would all fall asleep, in the open air, at once? 2dly. Is it at all probable that a Roman guard should be found off their watch, much less asleep, when it was instant death, according to the Roman military laws, to be found in this state? 3dly. Could they be so sound asleep as not to awake with all the noise which must be necessarily made by removing the great stone, and taking away the body? 4thly. Is it at all likely that these disciples could have had time sufficient to do all this, and to come and return, without being perceived by any person? And 5thly. If they were asleep, how could they possibly know that it was the disciples that stole him, or indeed that any person or persons stole him?-for, being asleep, they could see no person. From their own testimony, therefore, the resurrection may be as fully proved as the theft.

**Verse 14. *If this came to the governor's ears***— Pilate-we will persuade him that it is for his own interest and honor to join in the deception; and we will render you secure-we will take care that you shalt not suffer that punishment for this pretended breach of duty which otherwise you might expect.

**Verse 15. *Until this day.***— That is to say, the time in which Matthew wrote his Gospel; which is supposed by some to have been eight, by others eighteen, and by others thirty years after our Lord's resurrection.

**Verse 16. *Then the eleven disciples went***— When the women went and told them that they had seen the Lord, and that he had promised to meet them in Galilee. From the eleventh to the fifteenth verse inclusive, should be read in a parenthesis, as the sixteenth verse is the continuation of the subject mentioned in the tenth.

**Verse 17. *But some doubted***.— That is, Thomas only at first doubted. The expression simply intimates, that they did not all believe at that time. See the same form noticed on Matthew 26:8, and Matthew 27:44.

**Verse 18. *And Jesus came and spake unto them***— It is supposed by some that the reason why any doubted was, that when they saw Jesus at first, he was at a distance; but when he came up, drew near to them, they were fully persuaded of the identity of his person.

***All power is given unto me***— Or, All authority in heaven and upon earth is given unto me. One fruit of the sufferings and resurrection of Christ is represented to be, his having authority or right in heaven to send down the Holy Spirit-to raise up his followers thither-and to crown them in the kingdom of an endless glory: in earth, to convert sinners; to sanctify, protect, and perfect his Church; to subdue all nations to himself; and, finally, to judge all mankind. If Jesus Christ were not equal with the Father, could he have claimed this equality of power, without being guilty of impiety and blasphemy? Surely not; and does he not, in the fullest manner, assert his Godhead, and his equality with the Father, by claiming and possessing all the authority in heaven and earth?-i.e. all the power and authority by which both empires are governed?

**Verse 19. *Go ye therefore***— Because I have the authority aforesaid, and can send whomsoever I will to do whatsoever I please:-teach, **μαθητευσατε**, make disciples of all nations, bring them to an acquaintance with God who bought them, and then baptize them in the name of the Father. It is natural to suppose that adults were the first subjects of baptism; for as the Gospel was, in a peculiar manner, sent to the Gentiles, they must hear and receive it, before they could be expected to renounce their old prejudices and idolatries, and come into the bonds of the Christian covenant. But, certainly, no argument can be drawn from this concession against the baptism of children. When the Gentiles and Jews had received the faith and blessings of the Gospel, it is natural enough to suppose they

should wish to get their children incorporated with the visible Church of Christ; especially if, as many pious and learned men have believed, baptism succeeded to circumcision, which I think has never yet been disproved. The apostles knew well that the Jews not only circumcised the children of proselytes, but also baptized them; and as they now received a commission to teach and proselyte all the nations, and baptize them in the name of the holy Trinity, they must necessarily understand that infants were included: nor could they, the custom of their country being considered, have understood our Lord differently, unless he had, in the most express terms, said that they were not to baptize children, which neither he nor his apostles ever did. And as to the objection, that the baptized were obliged to profess their faith, and that, therefore, only adults should be baptized, there is no weight at all in it; because what is spoken of such refers to those who, only at that period of life, heard the Gospel, and were not born of parents who had been Christians; therefore they could not have been baptized into the Christian faith, forasmuch as no such faith was at their infancy preached in the world. That the children and even infants, of proselytes, were baptized among the Jews, and reputed, in consequence, clean, and partakers of the blessings of the covenant, see proved at large by Wetstein, in his note on Matthew 3:16.—See the note on Matthew 3:6, and particularly on Mark 16:16.

*In the name of the Father, etc.*—Baptism, properly speaking, whether administered by dipping or sprinkling, signifies a full and eternal consecration of the person to the service and honor of that Being in whose name it is administered; but this consecration can never be made to a creature; therefore the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are not creatures. Again, baptism is not made in the name of a quality or attribute of the Divine nature; therefore the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are not qualities or attributes of the Divine nature. The orthodox, as they are termed, have generally considered this text as a decisive proof of the doctrine of the holy Trinity: and what else can they draw from it? Is it possible for words to convey a plainer sense than these do? And do they not direct every reader to consider the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as three distinct persons? “But this I can never believe.” I cannot help that—you shall not be persecuted by me for differing from my opinion. I cannot go over to you; I must abide by what I believe to be the meaning of

the Scriptures. Dr. Lightfoot has some good thoughts on this commission given to the apostles:-

“I. Christ commands them to go and baptize the nations: but how much time was past before such a journey was taken! And when the time was now come that this work should be begun, Peter doth not enter upon it without a previous admonition given him from heaven. And this was occasioned hereby, that, according to the command of Christ, the Gospel was first to be preached to Judea, Samaria, and Galilee.

“II. He commands them to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; but among the Jews, they baptized only in the name of Jesus. See Acts 2:38; 8:16; 19:5. For this reason, that thus the baptizers might assert, and the baptized confess, Jesus to be the true Messiah; which was chiefly controverted by the Jews. Of the same nature is that apostolic blessing, Grace and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. Where then is the Holy Ghost? He is not excluded, however he be not named. The Jews did more easily consent to the Spirit of the Messiah, which they very much celebrate, than to the person of the Messiah. Above all others they deny and abjure Jesus of Nazareth. It belonged to the apostles, therefore, the more earnestly to assert Jesus (to be the Messiah) by how much the more vehemently they opposed him: which being once cleared, the acknowledging of the Spirit of Christ would be introduced without delay or scruple. Moses, (in Exodus 6:14,) going about to reckon up all the tribes of Israel, goes no farther than the tribe of Levi; and takes up with that to which his business and story at that present related. In like manner, the apostles, for the present, baptize in the name of Jesus, and bless in the name of the Father and of Jesus, that thereby they might more firmly establish the doctrine of Jesus, which met with such sharp and virulent opposition; which doctrine being established among them, they would soon agree about the Holy Ghost.

“III. Among the Jews, the controversy was about the true Messiah; among the Gentiles, about the true God. It was therefore proper among the Jews to baptize in the name of Jesus, that he might be vindicated to be the true Messiah. Among the Gentiles, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that they might be hereby instructed in the doctrine of the true God.-Let this be particularly noted.



“IV. The Jews baptized proselytes into the name of the Father, that is, into the profession of God, whom they called by the name of Father. The apostles baptize the Jews into the name of Jesus the Son, and the Gentiles, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

“V. The Father hath revealed himself in the old covenant; the Son in the new; in human flesh by his miracles, doctrine, resurrection and ascension; the Holy Ghost in his gifts and miracles. Thus the doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity grew by degrees to full maturity. For the arriving to the acknowledgment of which, it was incumbent upon all who professed the true God to be three in one to be baptized into his name.” LIGHTFOOT’S Works, vol. ii. p. 274.

**Verse 20. *Teaching them to observe all things***— Men are ignorant of Divine things, and must be taught. Only those can be considered as proper teachers of the ignorant who are thoroughly instructed in whatsoever Christ has commanded. Persons who are entrusted with the public ministry of the word should take care that they teach not human creeds and confessions of faith, in place of the Sacred Writings; but those things, and those only, which Jesus has commanded.

***And, lo, I am with you alway***— και ιδου εγω μεθυμων ειμι πασας τας ημερας-literally, Behold, I am with you every day. A minister of Christ should consider, that while his soul simply and uniformly follows Jesus, he shall be made a constant instrument of bringing many sons and daughters to glory. The dark, it is true, must be enlightened, the ignorant instructed, the profligate reclaimed, the guilty justified, and the unholy sanctified; and who is sufficient for this work? He with whom the Son of God is EVERY DAY, and none other.

***Unto the end of the world.***— Some translate, εως της συντελειας του αιωνος, to the end of this age; meaning the apostolic age, or Jewish dispensation; and then they refer the promise of Christ’s presence to the working of miracles, and explain this by Mark 16:17-19. By my name they shall cast out demons, etc., etc. But though the words are used in this sense in several places, see Matthew 13:39, 40, Matthew 13:49; 24:3, yet it is certain they were repeatedly used among the primitive ecclesiastical writers to denote the consummation of all things; and it is likely that this is the sense in which they are used here, which the Anglo-Saxon has happily

expressed: [AS]-And I, be with you all days, until world ending; and this is indispensably necessary, because the presence and influence of Jesus Christ are essentially requisite in every age of the world, to enlighten, instruct, and save the lost. The promise takes in not only the primitive apostles, but also all their successors in the Christian ministry, as long as the earth shall endure.

**Amen.**— This word is omitted by some of the oldest and most authentic MSS., and by some versions and fathers. When it is considered that the word amen simply means so be it! we may at once perceive that it could not be added by our Lord. For our Lord could not pray that his own will might be done, or his own promise fulfilled. The word is, therefore, utterly impertinent as a part of the sacred text, and could neither have been added by our Lord, nor by the evangelist. The amens at the end of the sacred books have no other authority than what they derive from the transcribers of copies; and, at best, are only to be considered as the pious wish of the writer, or of the Church, that the promises contained in the sacred volume may be accomplished. Indeed, it seems often to have no other meaning than our *finis* at the end of our books.

In the MSS. and versions there are various subscriptions, or epigraphs, to this Gospel: the following are the principal:-

“The Gospel according to Matthew-written by him in Jerusalem-in Palestine-in the east-in the Hebrew dialect-in Hebrew-eight years after the ascension of Christ-interpreted by John-by James the brother of the Lord.”

The subscription in some copies of the Arabic version is very full: “The end of the copy of the Gospel of Matthew the Apostle. He wrote it in the land of Palestine, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, in the Hebrew tongue, eight years after the bodily ascension of Jesus the Messiah into heaven, in the first year of the reign of Claudius Caesar, king of Rome.”

These are sufficient to show how little credit should be attached to the subscriptions found at the end of the sacred books, either in the MSS., or in the versions.

1. IN concluding my notes on this evangelist, I cannot express myself better than in the words of the late Mr. Wakefield, to whom this

commentary has been in many instances indebted. "I have now finished my observations on the Gospel of Matthew: a piece of history, it must be acknowledged, the most singular in its composition, the most wonderful in its contents, and the most important in its object, that was ever exhibited to the notice of mankind. For simplicity of narrative, and an artless relation of facts, without any applause or censure, or digressive remarks, on the part of the historian, upon the characters introduced in it; without any intermixture of his own opinion, upon any subject whatsoever; and for a multiplicity of internal marks of credibility, this Gospel certainly has no parallel among human productions."

2. One thing the pious and intelligent reader has, no doubt, already noticed: there is not one truth, or doctrine, in the whole oracles of God, which is not taught in this evangelist. The outlines of the whole spiritual system are here correctly laid down: even Paul himself has added nothing; he has amplified and illustrated the truths contained in this Gospel; but, even under the direct inspiration of the Holy Ghost, neither he nor any other of the apostles have brought to light any one truth, the prototype of which has not been found in the words or acts of our blessed Lord, as related by Matthew, in the work which has already passed under review. The Gospel by St. Matthew is the grand text-book of Christianity; the other Gospels are collateral evidences of its truth, and the apostolic epistles are comments on the text. In the commencement of this work, I stated my wish, "to assist my fellow laborers in the vineyard to lead men to HIM who is the fountain of all excellence, goodness, truth, and happiness;-to magnify his LAW, and make it honorable;-to show the wonderful provision made in his GOSPEL for the recovery and salvation of a sinful world;-to prove that God's great design is to make his creatures HAPPY; and that such a salvation as it becomes God to give, and such as man needs to receive, is within the grasp of every human soul."--General Preface, before Genesis. And having thus far done what I could, in reference to these great and important purposes, here I register my thanks to the ever-blessed God, Father, Word, and Holy Spirit, that he has permitted me to cast my mite into this sacred treasury, to add my feeble testimony to his Eternal Truth; and has spared me, in the midst of many infirmities and oppressive labors, to see the conclusion of this Gospel, a consummation which I had long devoutly wished, but which I had scarcely hoped ever to see realized.

May the Divine Author of this sacred book give the reader a heart-felt experience of all the truths it contains; make and keep him wise unto salvation; build him up in this most holy faith; and give him an inheritance among the blessed, through Christ Jesus, the Friend of mankind, and the Savior of sinners, who is the object and end of this glorious system of truth! And to Him, with the Father and Eternal Spirit, be glory and dominion, thanksgiving and obedience, for ever and ever, Amen and amen!

# PREFACE

## TO THE GOSPEL

*ACCORDING TO*

# ST. MARK

## WITH A SHORT ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE

FOR an explication of the word GOSPEL, and the title SAINT, see the Preface to Matthew {Matthew 1:1.} p. ii-v. MARK. This person, the second in the commonly received order of the four evangelists, was named JOHN MARK, and was the son of a pious woman called Mary, who dwelt at Jerusalem: she was an early believer, and the disciples used to meet at her house. Peter, having been delivered out of prison by an angel, came to the house of Mary, mother of John, whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying, Acts 12:12. This very first mention of John Mark assures us of Peter's intimacy in that family: it is almost universally allowed that Mark, mentioned by Peter, 1 Peter 5:13, is this evangelist, and that he is the same with him who is called sister's son to Barnabas, Colossians 4:10, and is supposed to have been converted by Peter to the Christian faith. Mr. W. Whiston supposes him to have been Peter's own son. See his Primitive New Test. Notes at the end. He traveled from Jerusalem to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, Acts 12:25, and some short time after he accompanied them to other countries as their minister, Acts 13:5. When they returned to the continent, and came on shore at Perga in Pamphylia, he departed from them and returned to Jerusalem, Acts 13:13. Afterwards he would have gone with Paul and Barnabas, but the former refused to take him, because of his having left them at Pamphylia; Paul and Barnabas then separated, and Mark

accompanied his uncle Barnabas to Cyprus, Acts 15:36-41. Afterwards Paul and he were fully reconciled, as evidently appears from 2 Timothy 4:11: Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is profitable to me for the ministry. This appears also from Philemon, Phm 24, where Mark is styled Paul's fellow-laborer; and from Colossians 4:10, where we find the apostle recommending him in a particular manner to the Church of God at that place. He is generally supposed to have been particularly intimate with St. Peter, to have written his Gospel at ROME, A. D. 64, and to have died at Alexandria in Egypt, in the eighth year of the reign of Nero. Dr. LARDNER has fully proved that Mark the evangelist, and John Mark nephew to Barnabas, were one and the same person. See his Works, vol. vi. p. 77, etc.

How Mark composed his Gospel, is a question not yet decided among learned men. Many of the primitive fathers, such as Papias, Clemens, Alexandrinus, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius, etc., believed that he was only the amanuensis of St. Peter; that this apostle, through modesty, would not put his name to the work, but dictated the whole account, and Mark wrote it down from his mouth. St. Augustine appears to have been the first who maintained that Mark abridged St. Matthew's Gospel; and that it is not to be considered as an original work:-on this opinion several remarks will be made in the course of these notes. Others suppose that Mark compiled it, partly out of Matthew's Gospel, and partly out of the Gospel of Luke. But most of these are conjectures which appear to have very little foundation. Critics are also divided concerning the language in which it was written, and the people to whom it was sent. Some have contended for a Latin original, because of several Latin words found in it, such as **σπεκουλατωρ**, Mark 6:27, one of the guard; **κεντυριων**, Mark 15:39, 44, 46, a centurion, a captain of one hundred men; **συσσημον**, Mark 14:44, a signal, a sign agreed on. But such words are better accounted for by supposing that his Gospel was written for the use of the Roman people; and that it is on this account that he wholly passes by the genealogy of our Lord, as being a point of no consequence to Gentile converts, though very necessary for the Jews, and especially the Jews of Palestine. That it was originally written in Greek, is a point now acknowledged by almost all learned men.

It may be necessary to state the things omitted by Mark in the beginning of his Gospel which are mentioned by Matthew and Luke.

1. The PREFACE, found in Luke and John, Luke 1:1; John 1:1.
2. The CONCEPTION of Elizabeth, Luke 1:5-25.
3. The SALUTATION of Mary, Luke 1:26-38.
4. Mary's VISIT to Elizabeth, Luke 1:39-56.
5. John Baptist's BIRTH, Luke 1:57-79.
6. The Angel's APPEARANCE to Joseph, Matthew 1:18-25.
7. The BIRTH of CHRIST, Matthew 1:25; Luke 2:1-7.
8. The GENEALOGY of CHRIST, Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38.
9. The Appearance of the Angel to the SHEPHERDS, Luke 2:8-20.
10. The CIRCUMCISION of CHRIST, Matthew 1:25; Luke 2:21.
11. The PRESENTATION of Christ in the Temple, Luke 2:22-38.
12. The Coming of the MAGI, Matthew 2:1-12.
13. The FLIGHT into Egypt, Matthew 2:13-15.
14. Herod's MURDER of the INNOCENTS, Matthew 2:16-18.
15. The RETURN of the Holy Family from Egypt, Matthew 2:19-23; Luke 2:39.
16. Christ's JOURNEY to Jerusalem when twelve years of age, Luke 2:40-48.

From the particulars enumerated here, it appears that the things omitted by Mark are also omitted by John, except the Preface; and that St. Luke is the most circumstantial.

For other particulars relative to this Gospel, see at the end of the last chapter.

# THE GOSPEL

## ACCORDING TO

## ST. MARK

-Usherian year of the World, 4030. -Alexandrian year of the World, 5528. -Antiochian year of the World, 5518. -Constantinopolitan AEra of the World, 5534. -Rabbinical year of the World, 3786. -Year of the Julian Period, 4740. -AEra of the Seleucidae, 338. -Year of the Christian AEra, 26. -Year of the CCI. Olympiad, 2. -Year of the building of Rome, 769. -Year of the Julian AEra, 71. -Year of the Caesarean AEra of Antioch, 74. -Year of the Spanish AEra, 64. -Year of the Paschal Cycle or Dionysian Period, 27. -Year of the Christian Lunar Cycle, or Golden Number, 8. -Year of the Rabbinical Lunar Cycle, 5. -Year of the Solar Cycle, 7. -Dominical Letter, F. -Epact, 17. -Year of the Emperor Tiberius, 14. -Consuls, C. Calvisius Sabinus, and Cn. Corn. Lentulus Getulicus, from January 1 to July 1; and Q. Marcius Barca and T. Rustius Nummus Gallus, for the remainder of the year. The reason why two sets of Consuls appear in this Chronology is this: the Consuls were changed every year in July; therefore, taking in the whole year, four Consuls necessarily appear: two for the first six months, and two for the latter half of the year.

## CHAPTER 1

The mission, preaching, and success of John Baptist, 1-5. His manner of life, 6. Proclaims Christ, and baptizes him in Jordan, 7-11. The temptation of Christ, 12, 13. John being put in prison, Christ begins to preach, 14, 15. He calls Andrew and Simon, 16-18. James and John, 19, 20. Teaches in Capernaum, 21, 22. Casts out a demon, 23-28. Goes into the house of Simon, and heals his mother-in-law, 29-31. Heals many diseased persons, 32-34. Goes to the desert, and is followed by his disciples, 35-37.



Preaches in different towns and synagogues of Galilee, and casts out devils, 38, 39. Cleanses a leper, who publishes abroad his miraculous cure, 40-45.

## NOTES ON CHAP. 1

**Verse 1. *The beginning of the Gospel***— It is with the utmost propriety that Mark begins the Gospel dispensation by the preaching of John the Baptist, he being the forerunner of Jesus Christ, and the first proclaimer of the incarnated Messiah. Gospel—for the meaning of the word see the preface to Matthew. {Matthew 1:1}

***Son of God***— To point out his Divine origin; and thus glancing at his miraculous conception. This was an essential character of the Messiah. See Matthew 16:16; 26:63; Luke 22:67, etc.

**Verse 2. *As it is written in the prophets***— Rather, As it is written by Isaiah the prophet. I think this reading should be adopted, instead of that in the common text. It is the reading of the Codex Bezae, Vatican, and several other MSS. of great repute. It is found also in the Syriac, Persic, Coptic, Armenian, Gothic, Vulgate, and Itala versions, and in several of the fathers. As this prophecy is found both in Isaiah and Malachi, probably the reading was changed to *ταῖς προφηταῖς*, the prophets, that it might comprehend both. In one of ASSEMAN'S Syriac copies, both Isaiah and Malachi are mentioned. See all the authorities in Griesbach, 2d edit.; and see the parallel place in Matthew, Matthew 3:3, where the Prophet Isaiah is mentioned, which seems fully to establish the authority of this reading.

**Verse 3. *The voice of one crying***— See on Matthew 3:1-3.

**Verse 4. *John***— The original name is nearly lost in the Greek *ἰωάννης*, and in the Latin Johannes, and almost totally so in the English John. The original name is *יְהוֹחָנָן* Yehochanan, compounded of *יְהוָה* Yehovah chanan, the grace or mercy of Jehovah: a most proper and significant name for the forerunner of the God of ALL GRACE. It was John's business to proclaim the Gospel of the grace of God, and to point out that Lamb or sacrifice of God which takes away the sin of the world.

***For the remission of sins.***— Or, toward the remission-*εἰς ἄφεσιν*. They were to repent, and be baptized in reference to the remission of sins.

REPENTANCE prepared the soul for it, and BAPTISM was the type or pledge of it. See on Matthew 3:2.

**Verse 5. *All the land***— See on Matthew 3:4-6.

***Confessing their sins.***— It was an invariable custom among the Jews to admit no proselyte to baptism, till he had, in the most solemn manner, declared that he forever had renounced all idolatrous worship, all heathenish superstitions, and promised an entire and unreserved submission to the law of Moses. This was necessary for a proselyte adult—a child dedicated to God by baptism must be brought up in this faith.

**Verse 6. *John was clothed, etc.***— See the note on Matthew 3:4.

**Verse 7. *The latchet of whose shoes***— The shoe of the ancients was properly only a sole tied round the foot and ankle with strings or thongs. See on Matthew 3:11.

**Verse 8. *I indeed have baptized you with water***— As if he had said: This baptism is not to be rested in; it is only an emblem of that which you must receive from him who is mightier than I. It is he only who can communicate the Holy Spirit; and water baptism is nothing, but as it points out, and leads to, the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The subject of these two verses is not found in Matthew nor John; but is mentioned with some varying circumstances by Luke, Luke 3:16.

**Verse 9. — 11.** See the subject of these verses which contain the account of our Lord's baptism, explained. Matthew 3:13-17.

**Verse 10.** See Clarke on "Mark 1:9".

**Verse 11.** See Clarke on "Mark 1:9".

**Verse 12. *The Spirit driveth him***— *εκβαλλει*, putteth him forth. St. Matthew says, Matthew 4:1, *ανηχθη*, was brought up. See this important subject of our Lord's temptation explained at large, Matthew 4:1-11.

**Verse 13. *With the wild beasts***— This is a curious circumstance, which is mentioned by none of the other evangelists; and seems to intimate that he was in the most remote, unfrequented, and savage part of the desert; which, together with the diabolic influence, tended to render the whole scene the more horrid. Perhaps this very circumstance is mentioned, as

emblematical of that savage and brutal cruelty with which he was persecuted to death by the Jews and Gentiles, instigated thereto by the malice of Satan.

**Verse 14. *Preaching the Gospel of the kingdom***— See the notes on Matthew 3:2; and on the office of the preacher, or herald, at the end of that chapter.

**Verse 15. *The time is fulfilled***— That is, the time appointed for sending the Messiah; and particularly the time specified by Daniel, Daniel 9:24-27. Here are four points worthy of deep attention, in the preaching of the Son of God.

1. Every thing that is done is according to a plan laid by the Divine wisdom, and never performed till the time appointed was filled up.
2. That the kingdom and reign of sin are to be destroyed, and the kingdom of grace and heaven established in their place.
3. That the kingdom of God, and his reign by grace, begins with repentance for past sins.
4. That this reign of grace is at hand; and that nothing but an obstinate perseverance in sin and impenitence can keep any soul out of it; and that now is the accepted time to enter in.

**Verse 16. *As he walked by the sea, etc.***— See on Matthew 4:18-22.

***Andrew his brother***— Instead of the common reading, *αδελφον αυτου*, his brother, the best MSS. and versions have *αδελφου του σιμωνος*, the brother of Simon, which should be received into the text. The most eminent critics approve of this reading.

**Verse 21. *Capernaum***— See Matthew 4:13.

***He entered into the synagogue***— Their synagogues-*εν ταις συναγωγαῖς αυτων*, according to the Syriac, which has the word in the plural.

**Verse 22. *As one that had authority***— From God, to do what he was doing; and to teach a pure and beneficent system of truth.

**And not as the scribes.**— Who had no such authority, and whose teaching was not accompanied by the power of God to the souls of the people: 1. because the matter of the teaching did not come from God; and 2. because the teachers themselves were not commissioned by the Most High. See the note on Matthew 7:28.

**Verse 23. A man with an unclean spirit**— This demoniac is only mentioned by Mark and Luke, Luke 4:33. It seems the man had lucid intervals; else he could not have been admitted into the synagogue. Unclean or impure spirit—a common epithet for those fallen spirits: but here it may mean, one who filled the heart of him he possessed with LASCIVIOUS thoughts, images, desires, and propensities. By giving way to the first attacks of such a spirit, he may soon get in, and take full possession of the whole soul.

**Verse 24. What have we to do with thee**— Or, What is it to us and to thee? or, What business hast thou with us? That this is the meaning of the original, **טו חמיו ואי סוס**, Kypke has sufficiently shown. There is a phrase exactly like it in 2 Samuel 16:10. What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? **מה לי ולכם בני צרויה** *ma li v'lacem beney Tseruiah*, What business have ye with me, or, Why do ye trouble me, ye sons of Tseruiah? The Septuagint translate the Hebrew just as the evangelist does here, **τι εμοι και τι υμιν**; it is the same idiom in both places, as there can be no doubt that the demoniac spoke in Hebrew, or in the Chaldeo-Syriac dialect of that language, which was then common in Judea. See on Matthew 8:29.

**Art thou come to destroy us?**— We may suppose this spirit to have felt and spoken thus: “Is this the time of which it hath been predicted, that in it the Messiah should destroy all that power which we have usurped and exercised over the bodies and souls of men? Alas! it is so. I now plainly see who thou art—the Holy One of God, who art come to destroy unholiness, in which we have our residence, and through which we have our reign in the souls of men.” An unholy spirit is the only place where Satan can have his full operation, and show forth the plenitude of his destroying power.

**Verse 25. And Jesus rebuked him**— A spirit of this cast will only yield to the sovereign power of the Son of God. All watchings, fasting, and

mortifications, considered in themselves, will do little or no good. Uncleanness, of every description, will only yield to the rebuke of God.

**Verse 26. *And when the unclean spirit had torn him***— And had thrown him down in the midst, Luke 4:35, *καὶ σπαραξαν*, and convulsed him. Never was there a person possessed by an unclean spirit who did not suffer a convulsion, perhaps a total ruin of nature by it. Sins of uncleanness, as the apostle intimates, are against the body; they sap the foundation of life, so that there are very few of this class, whether male or female, that live out half their days: they generally die martyrs to their lusts. When the propensities of the flesh are most violent in a person who is determined to serve God, it is often a proof that these are the last efforts of the impure spirit, who has great rages because he knows his time is but short.

**Verse 27. *What thing is this?***— Words of surprise and astonishment.

***And what new doctrine***— I have added the particle and, from the Syriac, as it helps the better to distinguish the members of the sentence; but there is a vast diversity in the MSS. on this verse. See Griesbach.

***For with authority***— They had never heard such a gracious doctrine, and never saw any teaching supported by miracles before. How much must this person be superior to men!—they are brought into subjection by unclean spirits; this person subjects unclean spirits to himself.

**Verse 28. *And immediately his fame spread abroad***— The miracle which he had performed was—1. great; 2. evidenced much benevolence in the worker of it; and 3. was very public, being wrought in the synagogue. The many who saw it published it wherever they went; and thus the fame of Christ, as an incomparable teacher, and unparalleled worker of miracles, became soon spread abroad through the land.

The word, *εὐθὺς*, immediately, occurs more frequently in this evangelist than in any other writer of the new covenant: it is very often superfluous, and may often be omitted in the translation, without any prejudice to the sense of the passage in which it is found. It seems to be used by St. Mark, as our ancient writers used forsooth, and such like words.

**Verse 29.** See this account of the healing of Peter's mother-in-law explained at large, Matthew 8:14-17.

**Verse 32. *When the sun did set***— See on Matthew 8:14.

**Verse 34. *Because they knew him***— To be the Christ, is added here by several ancient and respectable MSS. and versions; but it appears to be only a gloss.

**Verse 35. *In the morning a great while before day***— By πρωι, the morning, is to be understood the whole space of three hours, which finished the fourth watch of the night.

***And there prayed.***— Not that he needed any thing, for in him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; but that he might be a pattern to us. Every thing that our blessed Lord did he performed either as our pattern, or as our sacrifice.

**Verse 36. *And Simon-followed after him.***— κατεδιωξαν, followed him eagerly. They had now begun to taste the good word of God, and thought they could never hear too much of it. Many possess this spirit when first converted to God. O! what a pity that they should ever lose it! The soul that relishes God's word is ever growing in grace by it.

**Verse 37. *All men seek for thee.***— Some to hear; some to be healed; some to be saved; and some, perhaps, through no good motive. There are all sorts of followers in the train of Christ; but how few walk steadily, and persevere unto the end!

**Verse 38. *The next towns***— κωμοπολεις properly signifies such towns as resembled cities for magnitude and number of inhabitants, but which were not walled as were cities. The Codex Bezae, most of the versions, and all the Itala, read, Let us go into the neighboring villages, AND INTO THE CITIES.

***For therefore came I forth.***— εις τουτο, for this purpose am I come forth-to preach the Gospel to every creature, that all might hear, and fear, and return unto the Lord. The towns and the villages will not come to the preacher-the preacher must go to them, if he desires their salvation. In this, also, Jesus has left his ministering servants an example, that they should follow his steps. Let no minister of God think he has delivered his own

soul, till he has made an offer of salvation to every city and village within his reach.

**Verse 39. *And he preached***— He continued preaching-*ἡν κηρύσσων*: this is the proper meaning of the words: he never slackened his pace—he continued proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation to all—there was no time to be lost—immortal souls were perishing for lack of knowledge; and the grand adversary was prowling about, seeking whom he might devour. This zealous, affectionate, and persevering diligence of Christ should be copied by all his servants in the ministry; it is not less necessary now than it was then. Thousands, thousands of Christians, so called, are perishing for lack of knowledge. O God, send forth more and more faithful laborers into thy vineyard!

**Verse 40. *There came a leper***— See the notes on Matthew 8:2, etc. Should any be inclined to preach on this cleansing of the leper, Mark is the best evangelist to take the account from, because he is more circumstantial than either Matthew or Luke.

I. Consider this leper.

1. He heard of Jesus and his miracles.
2. He came to him for a cure, conscious of his disease.
3. He earnestly besought him to grant the mercy he needed.
4. He fell down on his knees, (with his face to the earth, Luke 5:12,) thus showing his humbled state, and the distress of his soul.
5. He appealed to his love—if thou wilt; with a full conviction of his ability—thou canst; in order to get healed.

II. Consider Jesus.

1. He is moved with tender compassion towards him: this is the alone source of all human salvation.
2. He stretches forth his hand, showing thus his readiness to relieve him.
3. He touches him; though this was prohibited by the law, and rendered him who did it in any common case legally unclean.

4. He proves at once his infinite love and unlimited power, by his word and by his act; I will-be thou cleansed; and immediately his leprosy was removed. But see on Matthew 8:2.

**Verse 43. *Straitly charged***— See the reason for this, Matthew 8:4. This verse is wanting in two copies of the Itala.

**Verse 45. *Began to publish it much***— Began to publish πολλὰ, many things; probably all that he had heard about our Lord's miraculous works.

***And to blaze abroad the matter***— That is, his own healing; thinking he could never speak too much, nor too well, of him who had thus mercifully and miraculously cleansed him.

***Jesus could no more openly enter into the city***— A city of Galilee, probably Chorazin or Bethsaida, in which he did not appear, for fear of exciting the jealousy of the secular government, or the envy and malice of the Jewish rulers.

***And they came to him from every quarter.***— So generally had the poor man, who was cleansed of his leprosy, spread abroad his fame. And can we suppose that, of all these people who came to him from all parts, and to whom he preached the glad tidings of the kingdom, by the power and authority of God, few or none were saved? This is a common opinion; but every person who seriously considers it must see that it is unfounded. Without doubt, Christ had thousands that were brought to God by his ministry; though, in general, only those are mentioned who were constant attendants on his person. It would be strange, if, while God manifested in the flesh was preacher, there should be few brought to the knowledge of themselves, and of the truth! In this respect he does not permit his faithful ministers to labor in vain. The Son of man sowed the seed of the kingdom; and it afterwards produced a plentiful harvest. Multitudes of Jews were converted by the preaching of the Gospel; and the first Christian Church was founded at Jerusalem.



## CHAPTER 2

*Christ preaches in Capernaum, 1, 2. A paralytic person is brought to him, whose sins are pronounced forgiven, 3-5. The scribes accuse him of blasphemy, 6, 7. He vindicates himself, and proves his power to forgive sins, by healing the man's disease, 8-11. The people are astonished and edified, 12. He calls Levi from the receipt of custom, 13, 14. Eats in his house with publicans and sinners, at which the Pharisees murmur, 15, 16. He vindicates his conduct, 17. Vindicates his disciples, who are accused of not fasting, 18-22; and for plucking the ears of corn on the Sabbath day, 23-26; and teaches the right use of the Sabbath, 27, 28.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 2

**Verse 1. *In the house.***— The house of Peter, with whom Christ lodged when at Capernaum. See the notes on Matthew 4:13; 8:13.

**Verse 2. *So much as about the door***— Meaning the yard or court before the house.

***Preached THE WORD***— τον λογον. The doctrine of the kingdom of God; for so ο λογος is repeatedly used.

**Verse 3. *One sick of the palsy***— A paralytic person. See on Matthew 9:2, etc.

***Borne of four.***— Four men, one at each corner of the sofa or couch on which he lay: this sick man appears to have been too feeble to come himself, and too weak to be carried in any other way.

**Verse 4. *They uncovered the roof***— The houses in the east are generally made flat-roofed, that the inhabitants may have the benefit of taking the air on them; they are also furnished with battlements round about, Deuteronomy 22:8; Judges 16:27; and 2 Samuel 11:2, to prevent persons from falling off; and have a trap door by which they descend into the house. This door, it appears, was too narrow to let down the sick man and

his couch; so they uncovered the roof, removed a part of the tiles; and having broken it up, taken away the laths or timber, to which the tiles had been attached, they then had room to let down the afflicted man. See Luke 5:19, and on Matthew 10:27; 24:17.

**Verse 7. *Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies?***— See this explained Matthew 9:3, etc.

**Verse 12. *He took up the bed***— The words of PROSPER, on this place, are worthy of notice:-

“What is sin but a deplorable fall, a grovelling on the earth, a repose in the creature, often followed by a universal palsy of the soul; namely, an utter inability to help itself, to break off its evil habits, to walk in the ways of God, to rise or to take one good step towards him? Grace can repair all in a moment: because it is nothing but the almighty will of God, who commands and does whatever he commands.”

**Verse 14. *Levi***— The same as Matthew; he appears to have been a Jew, though employed in the odious office of a tax-gatherer. For an account of his call, see his Gospel, Matthew 9:9, etc.

**Verse 16. *Sinners***— By *αμαρτωλοι*, the Gentiles or heathens are generally to be understood in the Gospels, for this was a term the Jews never applied to any of themselves, See the note on Matthew 9:10.

***How is it that he eateth***— Some very good MSS., several versions, with Chrysostom and Augustin, read, Why doth YOUR MASTER eat?

**Verse 17. *To repentance***.— This is omitted by ABDKL, twenty-seven others; both the Syriac, Persic, Coptic, AETHiopic, Armenian, Gothic, Vulgate; six copies of the Itala; Euthymius and Augustin. Griesbach has left it out of the text; Grotius, Mill, and Bengel approve of the omission. See on Matthew 9:13. I leave it as in the parallel place above quoted. Properly speaking, the righteous cannot be called to repentance. They have already forsaken sin, mourned for it, and turned to God. In the other parallel place, Luke 5:32, all the MSS. and versions retain *μετανοιαν*, repentance.

**Verse 18. *Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast***— See this largely explained on Matthew 9:14, etc. The following vices are very common to Pharisees.

1. They are more busied in censuring the conduct of others than in rectifying their own.
2. They desire that every one should regulate his piety by theirs; and embrace their particular customs and forms of devotion.
3. They speak of and compare themselves with other people, only that they may have an opportunity of distinguishing and exalting themselves.

On the nature, times, and duration of fasting, see Matthew 6:16; 9:15.

**Verse 19. *Can the children of the bride-chamber fast while the bridegroom is with them?***— Among the Hindoos, large parties of friends, belonging both to the bride and bridegroom, attend on both during the wedding day; on the following day, when the bridegroom leaves the house of his father-in-law, the attendants are filled with sorrow, especially the near relations.—WARD'S Customs.

**Verse 20. *In those days***.— But instead of *ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις*, many of the best MSS. and versions read, *ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ*, in that day; viz. the day in which Jesus Christ should be delivered up to the Jews and Gentiles. Mill and Bengel approve of this reading, and Griesbach adopts it. The former part of the verse seems to vindicate the common reading.

**Verse 21. *No man-seweth***— See Matthew 9:16. No man seweth a piece of unscoured cloth upon an old garment. In the common editions this verse begins with *καὶ*, and, but this is omitted by almost every MS. and version of note. The construction of the whole verse is various in the MSS. The translation given here, and in Matthew 9:16, is intelligible, and speaks for itself.

**Verse 23. *Went through the corn fields***— See on Matthew 12:1.

**Verse 26. *The days of Abiathar the high priest***— It appears from 1 Samuel 21:1, which is the place referred to here, that Ahimelech was then high priest at Nob: and from 1 Samuel 22:20; 23:6, and 1 Chronicles 18:16,

it appears that Abiathar was the son of Ahimelech. The Persic reads Abimelech instead of Abiathar. Theophylact supposes that Abiathar was the priest, and Ahimelech or Abimelech the high priest, and thus endeavors to reconcile both the sacred historians. Others reconcile the accounts thus: Ahimelech was called Ahimelech Abiathar, אב, father, understood; and Abiathar was called Abiathar Ahimelech, בן, son, understood. Probably they both officiated in the high priesthood; and the name of the office was indifferently applied to either.

***Shew-bread***— See Matthew 12:4.

**Verse 27. *The Sabbath was made for man***— That he might have the seventh part of his whole time to devote to the purposes of bodily rest and spiritual exercises. And in these respects it is of infinite use to mankind. Where no Sabbath is observed, there disease, poverty, and profligacy, generally prevail. Had we no Sabbath, we should soon have no religion. This whole verse is wanting in the Codex Bezae, and in five of the Itala.

**Verse 28. *The Son of man is Lord***— See on Matthew 12:7, 8. Some have understood this as applying to men in general, and not to Christ. The Son of man, any man is Lord of the Sabbath; i.e. it was made for him, for his ease, comfort, and use, and to these purposes he is to apply it. But this is a very harsh, and at the same time a very lax, mode of interpretation; for it seems to say that a man may make what use he pleases of the Sabbath; and, were this true, the moral obligation of the Sabbath would soon be annihilated.

GOD ordained the Sabbath not only to be a type of that rest which remains for the people of God, but to be also a mean of promoting the welfare of men in general.

The ordinances of religion should be regulated according to their end, which is the honor of God, and the salvation of men. It is the property of the true religion to contain nothing in it but what is beneficial to man. Hereby God plainly shows that it is neither out of indigence or interest that he requires men to worship and obey him; but only out of goodness, and to make them happy. God prohibited work on the Sabbath day, lest servants should be oppressed by their masters, that the laboring beasts might have

necessary rest, and that men might have a proper opportunity to attend upon his ordinances, and get their souls saved. To the Sabbath, under God, we owe much of what is requisite and necessary as well for the body as the soul.

## CHAPTER 3

*The man with the withered hand healed, 1-5. The Pharisees plot our Lord's destruction, 6. Christ withdraws, and is followed by a great multitude, 7-9. He heals many, and goes to a mountain to pray, 10-13. He ordains twelve disciples, and, gives them power to preach and work miracles, 14, 15. Their names, 16-19. The multitudes throng him, and the scribes attribute his miracles to Beelzebub, 20-22. He vindicates himself by a parable, 23-27. Of the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, 28-30. His mother and brethren send for him, 31, 32. And he takes occasion from this to show, that they who do the will of God are to him as his brother, sister, and mother, 33-35.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 3

**Verse 1.** *A man there which had a withered hand.*— See this explained on Matthew 12:10, etc., and on Luke 6:6, 10.

**Verse 2.** *They watched him*— παρατηροῦν αὐτόν, they maliciously watched him. See on Luke 14:1.

**Verse 4.** *To do good-or-evil? to save life, or to kill?*— It was a maxim with the Jews, as it should be with all men, that he who neglected to preserve life when it was in his power, was to be reputed a murderer. Every principle of sound justice requires that he should be considered in this light. But, if this be the case, how many murderers are there against whom there is no law but the law of God!

To kill-but instead of ἀποκτείνειν, several MSS. and versions have ἀπολεσαι to destroy. Wetstein and Griesbach quote Theophylact for this reading; but it is not in my copy. Paris edit. 1635.

**Verse 5.** *With anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts*— These words are not found in any of the other evangelists. For πωρωσει hardness, or rather callousness, the Codex Bezae, and four of the Itala, read νεκρωσει, deadness; the Vulgate and some of the Itala, caecitate,

blindness. Join all these together, and they will scarcely express the fullness of this people's wretchedness. By a long resistance to the grace and Spirit of God, their hearts had become callous; they were past feeling. By a long opposition to the light of God, they became dark in their understanding, were blinded by the deceitfulness of sin, and thus were past seeing. By a long continuance in the practice of every evil work, they were cut off from all union with God, the fountain of spiritual life; and, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, they were incapable of any resurrection but through a miraculous power of God.

With anger. What was the anger which our Lord felt? That which proceeded from excessive grief, which was occasioned by their obstinate stupidity and blindness: therefore it was no uneasy passion, but an excess of generous grief.

**Whole as the other.**— This is omitted by the best MSS. and versions. Grotius, Mill, and Bengel approve of the omission, and Griesbach leaves it out of the text.

**Verse 6. *Herodians***— For an account of these, see the note on Matthew 16:1; 22:16.

**Verse 7. *Galilee***— See Matthew 4:13, 15.

**Verse 8. *Tyre-Sidon, etc.***— See Matthew 11:21.

***When they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.***— So, if Christ be persecuted and abandoned by the wicked, there are a multitude of pious souls who earnestly seek and follow him. He who labors for God will always find more than he loses, in the midst of all his contradictions and persecutions.

**Verse 9. *A small ship***— *πλοιαριον*. The lytil boot, Old English MS. It was doubtless something of the boat kind, which probably belonged to some of the disciples. Our Lord was at this time teaching by the sea of Galilee. The word ship is utterly improper in many places of our translation, and tends to mislead the people.

**Verse 10. *They pressed upon him***— Rushed upon him, *ἐπιπιπτειν*-through eagerness to have their spiritual and bodily maladies immediately removed.

**Plagues.**— Rather disorders, *μαστιγας*; properly such disorders as were inflicted by the Lord. The word plague also tends to mislead.

**Verse 11. *Thou art the Son of God.***— Two MSS., and the later Syriac, have, Thou art the Christ, the Son of God. One of Stephens's MSS. has, Thou art the Holy One of God. A MS. in the library of Leicester has, *συ ει ο θεος, υιος*, Thou art GOD, the Son. This is an uncommon reading, which is not confirmed by any MS. yet discovered.

**Verse 14. *He ordained twelve***— *εποιησε*, he made twelve. Here is nothing of what we call ordaining. Christ simply appointed them to be with him; and that he might send them occasionally to preach, etc.

***To preach***— The Codex Bezae, Saxon, and all the Itala, except one, add *το ευαγγελιον*, the Gospel.

**Verse 15. *To have power to heal-and to cast out devils***— The business of a minister of Christ is, 1st. To preach the Gospel. 2dly. To be the physician of souls. And, 3dly. To wage war with the devil, and destroy his kingdom.

**Verse 16. *Simon, etc.***— See on Matthew 10:2, etc.

**Verse 17. *Sons of thunder***— A Hebraism for thunderers; probably so named because of their zeal and power in preaching the Gospel.

The term Boanerges is neither Hebrew nor Syriac. Calmet and others think that there is reason to believe that the Greek transcribers have not copied it exactly. *בני רעם* beney raam, which the ancient Greeks would pronounce Beneregem, and which means sons of thunder, was probably the appellation used by our Lord: or *בני רעם* beni reges, sons of tempest, which comes nearest to the Boanerges of the evangelist. St. Jerome, on Daniel 1:, gives *בני רעם* (which he writes Benereem, softening the sound of the ר ain) as the more likely reading, and Luther, supposing our Lord spoke in Hebrew, gives the proper Hebrew term above mentioned, which he writes Bnehargem. Some think that the reason why our Lord gave this appellation to the sons of Zebedee was, their desire to bring fire down from heaven, i.e. a storm of thunder and lightning, to overturn and consume a certain Samaritan village, the inhabitants of which would not receive their Master. See the account in Luke 9:53, 54. It was a very usual thing among



the Jews to give surnames, which signified some particular quality or excellence, to their rabbins. See several instances in Schoettgen.

**Verse 19. *Into a house.***— As Christ was now returned to Capernaum, this was probably the house of Peter, mentioned Mark 2:1.

**Verse 20. *Eat bread.***— Had no time to take any necessary refreshment.

**Verse 21. *His friends***— Or, relations. On this verse several MSS. differ considerably. I have followed the reading of the Syriac, because I think it the best: *οι παρ' αυτου* signify merely his relatives, his brethren, etc., see Mark 3:31; and the phrase is used by the best writers to signify relatives, companions, and domestics. See Kypke in loc.

***They said, He is beside himself.***— It was the enemies of Christ that raised this report; and his relatives, probably thinking that it was true, went to confine him. Let a Christian but neglect the care of his body for a time, in striving to enter in at the strait gate; let a minister of Christ but impair his health by his pastoral labors; presently “he is distracted;” he has “not the least conduct nor discretion.” But let a man forget his soul, let him destroy his health by debaucheries, let him expose his life through ambition, and he may, notwithstanding, pass for a very prudent and sensible man!

Schoettgen contends that the multitude, and not Christ, is here intended. Christ was in the house: the multitude, *οχλος*, Mark 3:20, pressed upon him so that he could not eat bread. His disciples, or friends, went out, *κρατησαι αυτον* (scil. *οχλον*,) to restrain it, viz. the multitude, to prevent them from rushing into the house and disturbing their Master, who was now taking some refreshment. This conjecture should not be lightly regarded.

**Verse 22. *He hath Beelzebub***— See on Matthew 12:24-26.

**Verse 27. -30. *No man, etc.***— For an explanation of these verses, and a definition of the sin against the Holy Ghost, see Matthew 12:29-33.

**Verse 28.** See Clarke on “Mark 3:27”.

**Verse 29.** See Clarke on “Mark 3:27”.

**Verse 30.** See Clarke on “Mark 3:27”.

**Verse 31. *His brethren and his mother***— Or rather, his mother and his brethren. This is the arrangement of the best and most ancient MSS.; and this clause, *και αλ αδελφαι σου*, and thy sisters, Mark 3:32, should be ADDED, on the authority of ADEFGMSUV, fifty-five others, some editions, the margin of the later Syriac, Slavonic, Gothic, and all the Itala except four. Griesbach has received this reading into the text.

***Calling him.***— This clause is wanting in one copy of the Itala. The Codex Alexandrinus has *ζητουντες αυτον*, seeking him.

**Verse 33. *Who is my mother?***— See on Matthew 12:46-50.

## CHAPTER 4

*The parable of the sower, 1-9. Its interpretation, 10-20. The use we should make of the instructions we receive, 21-26. The parable of the progressively growing seed, 26-29. Of the mustard seed, 30-34. Christ and his disciples are overtaken by a storm, 35-38. He rebukes the wind and the sea, and produces fair weather, 39-41.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 4

**Verse 2.** *He taught them many things by parables*— See every part of this parable of the sower explained on Matthew 13:1, etc.

**Verse 4.** *The fowls*— τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, of the air, is the common reading; but it should be omitted, on the authority of nine uncial MSS., upwards of one hundred others, and almost all the versions. Bengel and Griesbach have left it out of the text. It seems to have been inserted in Mark, from Luke 8:5.

**Verse 9.** *And he said-He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*— The Codex Bezae, later Syriac in the margin, and seven copies of the Itala, add, καὶ ὁ συνιὼν συνιέτω, and whoso understandeth, let him understand.

**Verse 10.** *They that were about him*— None of the other evangelists intimate that there were any besides the twelve with him: but it appears there were several others present; and though they were not styled disciples, yet they appear to have seriously attended to his public and private instructions.

**Verse 11.** *Unto you it is given to know*— γινῶναι, to know, is omitted by ABKL, ten others, the Coptic, and one of the Itala. The omission of this word makes a material alteration in the sense; for without it the passage may be read thus:-To you the mystery of the kingdom of God is given; but all these things are transacted in parables to those without. Griesbach leaves it doubtful. And Professor White says, probabiliter delendum. I should be inclined to omit it, were it not found in the parallel passages in Matthew and Luke, in neither of whom it is omitted by any MS. or

version. See the dissertation on parabolical writing at the end of Matthew 13:58.

**Verse 13. *Know ye not this parable?***— The scope and design of which is so very obvious.

***How then will ye know all parables?***— Of which mode of teaching ye should be perfect masters, in order that ye may be able successfully to teach others. This verse is not found in any of the other evangelists.

**Verse 15. *THESE are they***— Probably our Lord here refers to the people to whom he had just now preached, and who, it is likely, did not profit by the word spoken.

***Where the word is sown***— Instead of this clause, four copies of the Itala read the place thus—They who are sown by the way side, are they WHO RECEIVE THE WORD NEGLIGENTLY. There are thousands of this stamp in the Christian world. Reader, art thou one of them?

**Verse 19. *The deceitfulness of riches***— This is variously expressed in different copies of the Itala: the errors-delights of the world-completely alienated (abolienati) by the pleasures of the world. The lusts of other things—which have not been included in the anxious cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches. All, all, choke the word!

**Verse 21. *Is a candle-put under a bushel!***— The design of my preaching is to enlighten men; my parables not being designed to hide the truth, but to make it more manifest.

**Verse 22. *For there is nothing hid, etc.***— Probably our Lord means, that all that had hitherto been secret, relative to the salvation of a lost world, or only obscurely pointed out by types and sacrifices, shall now be uncovered and made plain by the everlasting Gospel. See on Matthew 5:15; 10:26.

**Verse 24. *And unto you that hear shall more be given.***— This clause is wanting in DG, Coptic, and four copies of the Itala; and in others, where it is extant, it is variously written. Griesbach has left it out of the text, and supposes it to be a gloss, Whosoever hath, to him shall be given.

**Verse 25. *He that hath***— See on Matthew 13:12.

**Verse 26. *So is the kingdom of God***— This parable is mentioned only by Mark, a proof that Mark did not abridge Matthew. Whitby supposes it to refer to the good ground spoken of before, and paraphrases is thus:-“What I have said of the seed sown upon good ground, may be illustrated by this parable. The doctrine of the kingdom, received in a good and honest heart, is like seed sown by a man in his ground, properly prepared to receive it; for when he hath sown it, he sleeps and wakes day after day, and, looking on it, he sees it spring and grow up through the virtue of the earth in which it is sown, though he knows not how it doth so; and when he finds it ripe, he reaps it, and so receives the benefit of the sown seed. So is it here: the seed sown in the good and honest heart brings forth fruit with patience; and this fruit daily increaseth, though we know not how the Word and Spirit work that increase; and then Christ the husbandman, at the time of the harvest, gathers in this good seed into the kingdom of heaven.” I see no necessity of inquiring how Christ may be said to sleep and rise night and day; Christ being like to this husbandman only in sowing and reaping the seed.

**Verse 27. *And should sleep and rise night and day***— That is, he should sleep by night, and rise by day; for so the words are obviously to be understood.

***He knoweth not how.***— How a plant grows is a mystery in nature, which the wisest philosopher in the universe cannot fully explain.

**Verse 28. *Bringeth forth-of herself***— *αυτοματη*. By its own energy, without either the influence or industry of man. Similar to this is the expression of the poet: —

*Namque aliae, NULLIS HOMINUM COGENTIBUS, ipsae  
SPONTE SUA veniunt. VIRG. Geor. I. ii. v. 10*

“Some (trees) grow of their own accord, without the labor of man.” All the endlessly varied herbage of the field is produced in this way.

***The full corn***— *πληρη σιτον*, FULL wheat; the perfect, full-grown, or ripe corn. Lucian uses *κενος καρπος*, EMPTY fruit, for imperfect, or unripe fruit. See Kypke.

The kingdom of God, which is generated in the soul by the word of life, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, is first very small; there is only a blade, but this is full of promise, for a good blade shows there is a good seed at bottom, and that the soil in which it is sown is good also. Then the ear—the strong stalk grows up, and the ear is formed at the top; the faith and love of the believing soul increase abundantly; it is justified freely through the redemption that is in Christ; it has the ear which is shortly to be filled with the ripe grain, the outlines of the whole image of God. Then the full corn. The soul is purified from all unrighteousness; and, having escaped the corruption that is in the world, it is made a partaker of the Divine nature, and is filled with all the fullness of God.

**Verse 29. *He putteth in the sickle***— *ἀποστέλλει*, he sendeth out the sickle, i.e. the reapers; the instrument, by a metonymy, being put for the persons who use it. This is a common figure. It has been supposed that our Lord intimates here that, as soon as a soul is made completely holy, it is taken into the kingdom of God. But certainly the parable does not say so. When the corn is ripe, it is reaped for the benefit of him who sowed it; for it can be of little or no use till it be ripe: so when a soul is saved from all sin, it is capable of being fully employed in the work of the Lord: it is then, and not till then, fully fitted for the Master's use. God saves men to the uttermost, that they may here perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his name. To take them away the moment they are capable of doing this, would be, so far, to deprive the world and the Church of the manifestation of the glory of his grace. "But the text says, he immediately sendeth out the sickle; and this means that the person dies, and is taken into glory, as soon as he is fit for it." No, for there may be millions of cases, where, though to die would be gain, yet to live may be far better for the Church, and for an increase of the life of Christ to the soul. See Philippians 1:21, 24. Besides, if we attempt to make the parable speak here what seems to be implied in the letter, then we may say, with equal propriety, that Christ sleeps and wakes alternately; and that his own grace grows, he knows not how, in the heart in which he has planted it.

**Verse 27.** On these two parables we may remark:-

1. That a preacher is a person employed by God, and sent out to sow the good seed of his kingdom in the souls of men.

2. That it is a sin against God to stay in the field and not sow.
3. That it is a sin to pretend to sow, when a man is not furnished by the keeper of the granary with any more seed.
4. That it is a high offense against God to change the Master's seed, to mix it, or to sow bad seed in the place of it.
5. That he is not a seeds-man of God who desires to sow by the way side, etc., and not on the proper ground, i.e. he who loves to preach only to genteel congregations, to people of sense and fashion, and feels it a pain and a cross to labor among the poor and the ignorant.
6. That he who sows with a simple, upright heart, the seed of his Master, shall (though some may be unfruitful) see the seed take deep root; and, notwithstanding the unfaithfulness and sloth of many of his hearers, he shall doubtless come with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. See Quesnel.

**Verse 30. *Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God?***— How amiable is this carefulness of Jesus! How instructive to the preachers of his word! He is not solicitous to seek fine turns of eloquence to charm the minds of his auditors, nor to draw such descriptions and comparisons as may surprise them: but studies only to make himself understood; to instruct to advantage; to give true ideas of faith and holiness; and to find out such expressions as may render necessary truths easy and intelligible to the meanest capacities. The very wisdom of God seems to be at a loss to find out expressions low enough for the slow apprehensions of men. How dull and stupid is the creature! How wise and good the Creator! And how foolish the preacher who uses fine and hard words in his preaching, which, though admired by the shallow, convey no instruction to the multitude.

**Verse 31. *A grain of mustard seed***— See on Matthew 13:31, 32.

**Verse 33. *With many such parables***— *πολλαις*, many, is omitted by L, sixteen others; the Syriac, both the Persic, one Arabic, Coptic, Armenian, AEthiopic, and two of the Itala. Mill approves of the omission, and Griesbach leaves it doubtful. It is probably an interpolation: the text reads better without it.

*As they were able to hear*— *ακουειν*, or to understand always suiting his teaching to the capacities of his hearers. I have always found that preacher most useful, who could adapt his phrase to that of the people to whom he preached. Studying different dialects, and forms of speech, among the common people, is a more difficult and a more useful work than the study of dead languages. The one a man should do, and the other he need not leave undone.

**Verse 34. *He expounded all things to his disciples.***— That they might be capable of instructing others. Outside hearers, those who do not come into close fellowship with the true disciples of Christ, have seldom more than a superficial knowledge of Divine things.

In the fellowship of the saints, where Jesus the teacher is always to be found, every thing is made plain,—for the secret of the Lord is with them who fear him.

**Verse 35. *Let us pass over unto the other side.***— Our Lord was now by the sea of Galilee.

**Verse 36. *THEY took him even as he was in the ship.***— That is, the disciples; he was now *εν τω πλοιω*, in the boat, i.e. his own boat which usually waited on him, and out of which it appears he was then teaching the people. There were several others there which he might have gone in, had this one not been in the place. The construction of this verse is exceedingly difficult; the meaning appears to be this:—The disciples sailed off with him just as he was in the boat out of which he had been teaching the people; and they did not wait to provide any accommodations for the passage. This I believe to be the meaning of the inspired penman.

**Verse 37. *A great storm of wind***— See on Matthew 8:24.

**Verse 38. *On a pillow***— *προσκεφαλαιον* probably means a little bed, or hammock, such as are common in small vessels. I have seen several in small packets, or passage boats, not a great deal larger than a bolster.

**Verse 39. *Peace, be still.***— Be silent! Be still! There is uncommon majesty and authority in these words. Who but God could act thus? Perhaps this salvation of his disciples in the boat might be designed to show forth that protection and deliverance which Christ will give to his



followers, however violently they may be persecuted by earth or hell. At least, this is a legitimate use which may be made of this transaction.

**Verse 40. *Why are ye so fearful?***— Having me with you.

***How is it that ye have no faith?***— Having already had such proofs of my unlimited power and goodness.

**Verse 41. *What manner of man is this?***— They were astonished at such power proceeding from a person who appeared to be only like one of themselves. It is often profitable to entertain each other with the succor and support which we receive from God in times of temptation and distress; and to adore, with respectful awe, that sovereign power and goodness by which we have been delivered.

HAVING spoken so largely of the spiritual and practical uses to be made of these transactions, where the parallel places occur in the preceding evangelist, I do not think it necessary to repeat those things here, and must refer the reader to the places marked in the margin.

## CHAPTER 5

*The man possessed with a legion of demons cured, 1-20. He raises Jairus's daughter to life, and cures the woman who had an issue of blood, 21-43.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 5

**Verse 1. *The Gadarenes.***— Some of the MSS. have Gergasenes, and some of them Gerasenes. Griesbach seems to prefer the latter. See the note on Matthew 8:28.

The Gadarenes were included within the limits of the Gergasenes. Dr. Lightfoot supposes that, of the two demoniacs mentioned here, one was of Gadara, and consequently a heathen, the other was a Gergesenan, and consequently a Jew; and he thinks that Mark and Luke mention the Gadarene demoniac because his case was a singular one, being the only heathen cured by our Lord, except the daughter of the Syrophoenician woman.

**Verse 2. *A man with an unclean spirit***— There are two mentioned by Matthew, who are termed demoniacs. See on Mark 1:23.

**Verse 3. *Who had his dwelling among the tombs***— See Matthew 8:28.

**Verse 4. *With fetters and chains***— His strength, it appears was supernatural, no kind of chains being strong enough to confine him. With several, this man would have passed for an outrageous madman, and diabolic influence be entirely left out of the question; but it is the prerogative of the inspired penman only, to enter into the nature and causes of things; and how strange is it, that because men cannot see as far as the Spirit of God does, therefore they deny his testimony. "There was no devil; there can be none." Why? "Because we have never seen one, and we think the doctrine absurd." Excellent reason! And do you think that any man who conscientiously believes his Bible will give any credit to you? Men sent from God, to bear witness to the truth, tell us there were

demoniacs in their time; you say, “No, they were only diseases.” Whom shall we credit? The men sent from God, or you?

**Verse 5. *Crying and cutting himself with stones.***— In this person’s case we see a specimen of what Satan could do in all the wicked, if God should permit him; but even the devil himself has his chain; and he who often binds others, is always bound himself.

**Verse 6. *Worshipped him***— Did him homage; compelled thereto by the power of God. How humiliating to Satan, thus to be obliged to acknowledge the superiority of Christ!

**Verse 7. *What have I to do with thee***— Or, What is it to thee and me, or why dost thou trouble thyself with me? See on Mark 1:24, and Matthew 8:29, where the idiom and meaning are explained.

***Jesus***— This is omitted by four MSS., and by several in Luke 8:28, and by many of the first authority in Matthew 8:29. See the note on this latter place.

**Verse 9. *Legion: for we are many.***— Could a disease have spoken so? “No, there was no devil in the case; the man spoke according to the prejudice of his countrymen.” And do you think that the Spirit of God could employ himself in retailing such ridiculous and nonsensical prejudices? “But the evangelist gives these as this madman’s words, and it was necessary that, as a faithful historian, he should mention these circumstances.” But this objection is destroyed by the parallel place in Luke, Luke 8:30, where the inspired writer himself observes, that the demoniac was called Legion, because many demons had entered into him.

**Verse 10. *Out of the country.***— Strange that these accursed spirits should find it any mitigation of their misery to be permitted to exercise their malevolence in a particular district! But as this is supposed to have been a heathen district, therefore the demons might consider themselves in their own territories; and probably they could act there with less restraint than they could do in a country where the worship of God was established. See on Mark 5:1.

**Verse 11. *A great herd of swine***— See the notes on Matthew 8:30.

**Verse 12. *ALL the devils***— *παντες*, all, is omitted by many MSS. and versions; Griesbach leaves it out of the text. *οι δαιμονες* is omitted also by several: Griesbach leaves it doubtful. Probably it should be read thus, And they besought him, saying.

**Verse 13. *Gave them leave.***— For *επετρεψεν*, DH, three others, and three copies of the Itala have *επεμψεν*, sent them.

**Verse 14. *The swine***— Instead of *τους χοιρους*, BCDL, three others, Syriac, Coptic, AEthiopic, Vulgate, and Itala, read *αυτους*, them—And they that fed THEM fled. Griesbach has adopted this reading.

**Verse 15. *That-had the legion***— This is omitted by D, and two others, AEthiopic, Persic, Vulgate, and all the Itala but one. Mill, Bengel, and Griesbach, think it should be omitted.

**Verse 19. *Suffered him not***— *ο δε ιησους*, Howbeit Jesus, is omitted by ABKLM, twenty-seven others, both the Syriac, both the Persic, Coptic, Gothic, Vulgate, and one of the Itala. Mill and Bengel approve of the omission, and Griesbach leaves it out of the text.

***Go home to thy friends, etc.***— This was the cause why Jesus would not permit him to follow him now, because he would not have the happiness of his relatives deferred, who must exceedingly rejoice at seeing the wonders which the Lord had wrought.

**Verse 20. *Decapolis***— See on Matthew 4:25.

**Verse 23. *My little daughter***— *το θυγατριον μου*, that little daughter of mine. The words express much tenderness and concern. Luke observes, Luke 8:42, that she was his only daughter, and was about twelve years of age.

***At the point of death***— *εσχρατως εχει*, in the last extremity, the last gasp. See on Matthew 9:18.

**Verse 25. *A certain woman***— See Matthew 9:20.

**Verse 26. *Had suffered many things of many physicians,-and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse***— No person will wonder at this account, when he considers the therapeutics of the Jewish physicians in

reference to hemorrhages, especially of the kind with which this woman was afflicted.

Rabbi Jochanan says: "Take of gum Alexandria, of alum, and of crocus hortensis, the weight of a zuzee each; let them be bruised together, and given in wine to the woman that hath an issue of blood. But if this fail, "Take of Persian onions nine logs, boil them in wine, and give it to her to drink: and say, Arise from thy flux. But should this fail, "Set her in a place where two ways meet, and let her hold a cup of wine in her hand; and let somebody come behind and affright her, and say, Arise from thy flux. But should this do no good, "Take a handful of cummin and a handful of crocus, and a handful of faenu-greek; let these be boiled, and given her to drink, and say, Arise from thy flux. But should this also fail, "Dig seven trenches, and burn in them some cuttings of vines not yet circumcised (vines not four years old;) and let her take in her hand a cup of wine, and let her be led from this trench and set down over that, and let her be removed from that, and set down over another: and in each removal say unto her, Arise from thy flux." Dr. Lightfoot gives these as a sample, out of many others, extracted from Bab. Shabb. fol. 110.

And from some of these nostrums it is evident the woman could not be bettered, and from some others it is as evident that she must be made worse; and from all together it is indubitably certain that she must have suffered many things;-and from the persons employed, the expense of the medicaments, and the number of years she was afflicted, as she was not a person of great opulence, it is most perfectly credible that she spent all that she had. She was therefore a fit patient for the Great Physician.

The case of this woman was, a very afflicting one: 1. Because of the nature of her malady; it was such as could not be made public, without exposing her to shame and contempt. 2. It was an inveterate disorder; it had lasted twelve years. 3. It was continual; she appears to have had no interval of health. 4. Her disorder was aggravated by the medicines she used-she suffered much, etc. 6. Her malady was ruinous both to her health and circumstances-she spent all that she had. 6. She was now brought to the last point of wretchedness, want, and despair; she was growing worse, and had neither money nor goods to make another experiment to procure her health. 7. She was brought so low by her disorder as to be incapable of

earning any thing to support her wretched life a little longer. It has been said, and the saying is a good one, “Man’s extremity is God’s opportunity.” Never could the power and goodness of God be shown in a more difficult and distressful case. And now Jesus comes, and she is healed.

**Verse 27. *Came in the press behind***— She had formed her resolution in faith, she executes it, notwithstanding her weakness, etc., with courage; and now she finds it crowned with success.

**Verse 31. *Thou seest the multitude thronging then, etc.***— Many touch Jesus who are not healed by him: the reason is, they do it not by faith, through a sense of their wants, and a conviction of his ability and willingness to save them. Faith conveys the virtue of Christ into the soul, and spiritual health is the immediate consequence of this received virtue.

**Verse 33. *Fearing and trembling***— See Matthew 9:22.

**Verse 34. *Be whole of thy plague.***— Rather, continue whole, not, be whole, for she was already healed: but this contains a promise, necessary to her encouragement, that her disorder should afflict her no more.

**Verse 35. *Why troublest thou the Master***— These people seem to have had no other notion of our Lord than that of an eminent physician, who might be useful while there was life, but afterwards could do nothing.

**Verse 36. *Jesus-saith***— These words were spoken by our Lord to the afflicted father, immediately on his hearing of the death of his child, to prevent that distress which he otherwise must have felt on finding that the case was now, humanly speaking, hopeless.

**Verse 38. *He cometh***— But *ερονται*, they come, is the reading of ABCDF, four others, and several versions.

***Wept and wailed***— See on Matthew 9:23.

**Verse 40. *The father and the mother***— Prudence required that they should be present, and be witnesses of the miracle.

***And them that were with him***— That is, Peter, James, and John, Mark 5:37. It is remarkable that our Lord gave a particular preference to these three disciples, beyond all the rest, on three very important occasions: 1.

They were present at the transfiguration. 2. At the raising of Jairus's daughter. 3. At his agony in the garden of Gethsemane.

**Where the damsel was lying.**— *ἀνακειμενον*, lying. This word is very doubtful. BDL, one other, Coptic, and later Arabic, with five of the Itala, omit it. Other MSS. express the same idea in five different words: Griesbach leaves it out of the text. See his Testament.

**Verse 41. *Talitha cumi***— [S], This is mere Syriac, the proper translation of which the evangelist has given. The Codex Bezae has a very odd and unaccountable reading here, *ραββι, θαβιτα κουμι*, My master. Damsel arise. Suidas quotes this place under the word *αββακουμ* thus *ταληθα κουμ. κουμ* is the reading of several ancient MSS., but it is certainly a faulty one.

**Verse 43. *Something should be given her to eat.***— For though he had employed an extraordinary power to bring her to life, he wills that she should be continued in existence by the use of ordinary means. The advice of the heathen is a good one: —

*Nec Deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus  
Inciderit. HORAT*

“When the miraculous power of God is necessary, let it be resorted to: when it is not necessary, let the ordinary means be used.”-To act otherwise would be to tempt God.

While Christ teaches men the knowledge of the true God, and the way of salvation, he at the same time teaches them lessons of prudence, economy, and common sense. And it is worthy of remark, that all who are taught of him are not only saved, but their understandings are much improved. True religion, civilization, mental improvement, common sense, and orderly behavior, go hand in hand.

## CHAPTER 6

*Our Lord's countrymen are astonished at his wisdom and mighty works, and are offended at him, 1-4. He works few miracles there, because of their unbelief, 5, 6. He sends forth his disciples by two and two to preach, etc., 7-11. They depart, preach, and work miracles, 12, 13. Different opinions of Christ, 14-16. Account of the beheading of John Baptist, 17-29. The disciples return, and give an account of their mission, 30. He departs with them to a place of privacy, but the people follow him, 31-33. He has compassion on them, and miraculously feeds five thousand with five loaves and two fishes, 34-44. He sends the disciples by sea to Bethsaida, and himself goes into a mountain to pray, 45, 46. The disciples meet with a storm, and he comes to them walking upon the water, and appeases the winds and the sea, 47-52. They come into the land of Gennesaret, and he works many miracles, 53-56.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 6

**Verse 1.** *And he went out from thence*— That is, from Capernaum. See on Matthew 13:54.

**Verse 2.** *Were astonished*— ἐπι διδασχῇ αὐτοῦ, at his doctrine, or teaching. This is added by the Codex Bezae and eight others, later Syriac, Armenian, Vulgate, and all the Itala.

**Verse 3.** *Is not this the carpenter*— Among the ancient Jews, every father was bound to do four things for his son. 1. To circumcise him. 2. To redeem him. 3. To teach him the law. 4. To teach him a trade. And this was founded on the following just maxim: “He who teaches not his son to do some work, is as if he taught him robbery!” It is therefore likely that Joseph brought up our Lord to his own trade.

*Joses*— Several good MSS. read Ἰωσητος, Joset, and one, with several versions, reads Joseph.

**Verse 4.** — 6. See this curious subject explained, Matthew 13:55-58.



**Verse 5.** See Clarke on “Mark 6:4”.

**Verse 6.** See Clarke on “Mark 6:4”.

**Verse 7. *By two and two***— That they might encourage and support each other; and to show that union among the ministers of the Gospel is essential to the promotion of the cause of truth. See on Luke 10:1.

**Verse 8. *A staff only***— It is likely he desired them to take only one with every two, merely for the purpose of carrying any part of their clothes on, when they should be obliged to strip them off by reason of the heat; for walking staves, or things of this kind, were forbidden, see Matthew 10:10. But, probably, no more is designed than simply to state that they must not wait to make any provision for the journey, but go off just as they were, leaving the provision necessary in the present case to the care of Divine Providence. St. James is represented in ancient paintings, as carrying a gourd bottle on a STAFF across his shoulder.

**Verse 9. *Shod with sandals***— The sandal seems to have been similar to the Roman solea, which covered only the sole of the foot, and was fastened about the foot and ankle with straps. The sandal was originally a part of the woman’s dress; ancient authors represent them as worn only by women. In Matthew 10:10, the disciples are commanded to take no shoes, *υποδηματα*, which word is nearly of the same import with *σανδαλια*, sandals; but, as our Lord intimates to them that they should be free from all useless incumbrances, that they might fulfill his orders with the utmost diligence and despatch, so we may suppose that the sandal was a lighter kind of wear than the shoe: and indeed the word sandal, which is mere Chaldee, *לדל* might be properly translated a light shoe; as it is compounded of *ל* sin, a shoe, (see Targum, Deuteronomy 25:9, 10,) and *לד* dal, thin, slender, or mean, as being made, not only lighter than the hypodema or shoe, but (probably) also of meaner materials. See many excellent observations on this subject in Martinius’s Etymolog. Lexicon, under the word Sandalium.

**Verse 11. *And whosoever shall not receive you***— *ὅς αν τοπος μη δεξεται*, whatsoever PLACE will not receive you: this is the reading of BL, four others, and the later Syriac in the margin.

**Verily, etc.**— All this clause is omitted in BCDL, two others, one Arabic, one Persic, Coptic, Armenian, Vulgate, and all the Itala but three. Mill and Beza approve of the omission, and Griesbach leaves it out of the text. It has probably been transferred here from Matthew 10:15. See this subject, from Mark 6:7-11, explained at large on Matthew 10:1-15.

**Verse 13. Anointed with oil many that were sick**— This is only spoken of here, and in James 5:14. This ceremony was in great use among the Jews; and in certain cases it might be profitable. But in the cases mentioned here, which were merely miraculous, it could avail no more of itself than the imposition of hands. It was used symbolically, as an emblem of that ease, comfort, and joy, which they prayed God to impart to the sick. For various examples of its use among the Jews, see Lightfoot and Wetstein on this place.

**Verse 14. And king Herod heard?**— την ακιην αοτου, his fame, is added by KM, fifteen others, and in the margin of several. It seems necessary to complete the sense.

**Verse 15. OR, as one of the prophets.**— η, or, is omitted by ABCEGHKLS-BHV, and one hundred others, Syriac, all the Arabic, all the Persic, Coptic, AEthiopic, Gothic, Slavonic, Vulgate, two Itala, Origen, Victor, and Theophylact. Bengel, Wetstein, and Griesbach leave it out of the text: the omission of it mends the sense much.

**Verse 19. Would have killed**— εζητει, SOUGHT to kill him. C and five of the Itala.

See the whole of this account, from Mark 6:17-29, explained on Matthew 14:2-12.

**Verse 21. Lords**— μεγαιστασιν, probably governors of particular districts.

**High captains**— χιλιαρχοις; literally, chiefs or captains over a thousand men, military chiefs.

**Chief estates**— πρωτοις; probably such as might be called nobles by title only, having no office civil or military; probably magistrates. See ΚΥΡΚΕ an the place.

**Verse 23. *Unto the half of my kingdom.***— A noble price for a dance! This extravagance in favor of female dancers has the fullest scope in the east, even to the present day. M. Anquetil du Perron, in the preliminary discourse to his Zend Avesta, p. 344 and 345, gives a particular account of the dancers at Surat. This account cannot be transcribed in a comment on the Gospel of God, however illustrative it might be of the conduct of Herodias and her daughter Salome: it is too abominable for a place here. He observes, that the rich vie with each other in the presents they make to the dancing girls of money and jewels; and that persons of opulence have even ruined themselves by the presents they made to those victims of debauch. He mentions a remarkable case, which may throw light on this passage: “That the dancer Laal-koner gained such a complete ascendancy over the Mogul Emperor Maaz-eddin, that he made her joint governess of the empire with himself.”

**Verse 26. *For their sakes which sat with him***— Probably these persons joined in with the request, and were glad of this opportunity to get this light of Israel extinguished; he being a public reprovcr of all their vices.

**Verse 30. *The apostles gathered themselves together***— For they went different ways before, by two and two, Mark 6:7; and now they return and meet Christ at Capernaum.

**Verse 31. *Rest a while***— Rest is necessary for those who labor; and a zealous preacher of the Gospel will as often stand in need of it as a galley slave.

**Verse 33. *The people***— Or, *οχλοι*, the multitudes. This is wanting in many MSS., but it seems necessary to make the sense clear. There is scarcely a verse in the whole New Testament that has suffered so much from transcribers as this verse. Amidst the abundance of various readings, one can scarcely tell what its original state was. The various readings may be seen in Griesbach.

**Verse 34. *Much people, etc.***— See this miracle explained on Matthew 14:14, etc.

**Verse 40. *By hundreds, and by fifties.***— “That is,” says Mr. Wesley, “fifty in a rank, and a hundred in file. So, a hundred multiplied by fifty,

made just five thousand.” But if they sat fifty deep, how could the disciples conveniently serve them with the bread and fish?

**Verse 41. *And blessed***— I think the word God should be inserted here, as in Matthew 14:19. See the note there. The food we receive from God is already blessed, and does not stand in need of being blessed by man; but God, who gives it, deserves our warmest thanksgivings, as frequently as we are called to partake of his bounty.

**Verse 43. *Twelve baskets***— These were either the baskets used by the disciples, see Matthew 14:20, or baskets belonging to some of the multitude, who might have brought some with them to carry provisions, or other things necessary for the sick, whom they brought to Christ to be healed.

**Verse 44. *Were about five thousand***— ὡσεὶ, about, is omitted by a great majority of the best MSS. and by the principal versions. It is wanting in several editions: Bengel, Wetstein, and Griesbach, leave it out of the text. It is omitted by some in the parallel place, Matthew 14:21, but it stands without any variation in Luke 9:14, and John 6:10. This miracle is mentioned by all the four evangelists. It is one of the most astonishing that Christ has wrought. It is a miracle which could not be counterfeited, and a full proof of the divinity of Christ.

**Verse 45. *To the other side before unto Bethsaida***— John says, John 6:17, to Capernaum. It is probable our Lord ordered them to steer to one or other of these two places, which were about four miles distant, and on the same side of the sea of Galilee.

**Verse 47. *The ship was in the midst of the sea***— See all the parts of this wonderful transaction considered, on Matthew 14:22-33.

**Verse 49. *They supposed it had been a spirit***— That is, by whom the storm had been raised.

**Verse 52. *Their heart was hardened***.— See this explained Matthew 14:33.

**Verse 53. *The land of Gennesaret***— This country lay on the coast of the sea of Galilee: it is described by Josephus as being exceedingly pleasant and fertile. It had its name of Gennesaret from גן, gen, a garden, and סר sar, a

prince, either because the king had a garden there, or because of its great fertility.

**Verse 54. *They knew him***— *ἐπιγινόντες*, They recollected him; for he had before preached and wrought miracles in different places of the same country.

**Verse 56. *Villages***— Probably small towns near cities.

***Country***— Villages at a distance from cities and large public towns. See the notes on Matthew 14:34-36.

Christ went about doing good—he confined his ministry and miracles to no place—wherever he went, they stood in need of his help; and whenever they required his assistance, they had it granted immediately. Our Lord's conduct, in these respects, is a perfect pattern for every preacher of his Gospel.

## CHAPTER 7

*The Pharisees find fault with the disciples for eating with unwashed hands, 1-5. Christ exposes their hypocrisy, and shows that they had made the word of God of no effect by their traditions, 6-13. He shows what things defile men, 14-16; and teaches his disciples in private, that the sin of the heart alone, leading to vicious practices, defiles the man, 17-23. The account of the Syrophoenician woman, 24-30. He heals a man who was dumb, and had an impediment in his speech, 31-37.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 7

**Verse 1. *Came from Jerusalem.***— Probably for the express purpose of disputing with Christ, that they might entangle him in his talk. Malice and envy are never idle—they incessantly hunt the person they intend to make their prey.

**Verse 2. *They found fault.***— This is wanting in ABEHLV, nineteen others, and several versions: Mill and Bengel approve the omission, and Griesbach rejects the word. If the 3d and 4th verses be read in a parenthesis, the 2d and 5th verses will appear to be properly connected, without the above clause.

**Verse 3. *Except they wash their hands***— πυγμη, the hand to the wrist—Unless they wash the hand up to the wrist, eat not. Several translations are given of this word; that above is from Dr. Lightfoot, who quotes a tradition from the rabbins, stating that the hands were to be thus washed. This sort of washing was, and still continues to be, an act of religion in the eastern countries. It is particularly commanded in the Koran, Surat v. ver. 7, “O believers, when ye wish to pray, wash your faces, and your hands up to the elbows—and your feet up to the ankles.” Which custom it is likely Mohammed borrowed from the Jews. The Jewish doctrine is this: “If a man neglect the washing, he shall be eradicated from this world.” But instead of πυγμη, the fist or hand, the Codex Bezae has πυκνη, frequently; and several of the Itala have words of the same signification. Bathing is an indispensable prerequisite to the first meal of

the day among the Hindoos; and washing the hands and the feet is equally so before the evening meal. *WARD'S Customs.*

**Verse 4. *And when they come***— This clause is added by our translators, to fill up the sense; but it was probably a part of the original: for *εαν ελθωσι* is the reading of the Codex Bezae, Vulgate, Armenian, and most of the Itala. The clause in my old MS. Bible is read thus: And thei turninge agein fro chepinge. The words seem essentially necessary to a proper understanding of the text; and, if not admitted on the above authority, they must be supplied in italics, as in our common translation.

***Except they wash***— Or dip; for *βαπτισωνται* may mean either. But instead of the word in the text, the famous Codex Vaticanus; (B,) eight others, and Euthymius, have *παντισωνται*, sprinkle. However, the Jews sometimes washed their hands previously to their eating: at other times, they simply dipped or plunged them into the water.

***Of cups***— *ποτηριων*; any kind of earthen vessels.

***Pots***— Of measures—*ξεστων*, from the singular *ξεστης*, a measure for liquids, formed from the Latin sextarius, equal to a pint and a half English. See this proved by Wetstein on this place. My old MS. renders it *cruetis*.

***Of brazen vessels***— *χαλκιων*. These, if polluted, were only to be washed, or passed through the fire; whereas the earthen vessels were to be broken.

***And of tables.***— Beds, couches—*και κλινων*. This is wanting in BL, two others, and the Coptic. It is likely it means no more than the forms, or seats, on which they sat to eat. A bed or a couch was defiled, if any unclean person sat or leaned on it—a man with an issue—a leper—a woman with child, etc. As the word *βαπτισμους*, baptisms, is applied to all these, and as it is contended that this word, and the verb whence it is derived, signify dipping or immersion alone, its use in the above cases refutes that opinion and shows that it was used, not only to express dipping or immersion, but also sprinkling and washing. The cups and pots were washed; the beds and forms perhaps sprinkled; and the hands dipped up to the wrist.

**Verse 5. *Why walk not thy disciples***— See on Matthew 15:2-9.

**Verse 6. *Honoreth me***— με τιμα—but the Codex Bezae, and three copies of the Itala, have με αγαπα, loveth me:-the AEthiopic has both readings.

**Verse 8. *Washing of pots and cups, etc.***— This whole clause is wanting in BL, five others, and the Coptic: one MS. omits this and the whole of the ninth verse. The eighth verse is not found in the parallel place of Matthew 15:7-9.

**Verse 9. *Full well***— καλωσ, -a strong irony. How noble is your conduct! From conscientious attachment to your own traditions ye have annihilated the commandments of God!

***That ye may keep***— But στησητε, that ye may establish, is the reading of D, three others, Syriac, all the Itala, with Cyprian, Jerome, and Zeno. Griesbach thinks it should be received instead of the other. God's law was nothing to these men, in comparison of their own: hear a case in point. "Rabba said, How foolish are most men! They observe the precepts of the Divine law, and neglect the statutes of the rabbins!" Maccoth, fol. 22.

**Verse 10. *For Moses said, etc.***— See all these verses, from this to the 23d, explained Matthew 15:3-20.

**Verse 13. *Your tradition***— D, later Syriac in the margin, Saxon, and all the Itala but one, add τη μωρα, by your FOOLISH tradition. [AS], your foolish law:-Anglo-Saxon.

**Verse 14. *When he had called all the people***— But instead of παντα, all, παλιν, again, is the reading of BDL, later Syriac in the margin, Coptic, AEthiopic, Saxon, Vulgate, all the Itala but one. Mill and Griesbach approve of this reading.

**Verse 19. *Into the draught***— See on Matthew 15:17.

***Purging all meats?***— For what is separated from the different aliments taken into the stomach, and thrown out of the body, is the innutritious parts of all the meats that are eaten; and thus they are purged, nothing being left behind but what is proper for the support of the body.

**Verse 24. *Into the borders of Tyre and Sidon***— Or, into the country between Tyre and Sidon. I have adopted this translation from ΚΥΡΚΕ, who



proves that this is the meaning of the word **μεθορια**, in the best Greek writers.

**Verse 25. *A certain woman***— See this account of the Syrophoenician woman explained at large, Matthew 15:21-28.

**Verse 26. *The woman was a Greek***— Rosenmuller has well observed, that all heathens or idolaters were called **Ἕλληνες**, Greeks, by the Jews; whether they were Parthians, Medes, Arabs, Indians, or AEthiopians. Jews and Greeks divided the whole world at this period.

**Verse 30. *Laid upon the bed.***— The demon having tormented her, so that her bodily strength was exhausted, and she was now laid upon the couch to take a little rest. The AEthiopic has a remarkable reading here, which gives a very different, and, I think, a better sense. And she found her daughter CLOTHED, SITTING upon the couch, and the demon gone out.

**Verse 32. *They bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech***— Though from the letter of the text, it does not appear that this man was absolutely deprived of speech; for **μογιλαλος** literally signifies, one that cannot speak plainly—a stammerer; yet it is certain also that the word means a dumb person; and it is likely that the person in question was dumb, because he was deaf; and it is generally found that he who is totally deaf is dumb also. Almost all the versions understand the word thus: and the concluding words seem to confirm this—He maketh both the deaf to hear, and the DUMB, **κωφους**, to speak.

**Verse 33. *And he spit, and touched his tongue***— This place is exceedingly difficult. There is scarcely an action of our Lord's life but one can see an evident reason for, except this. Various interpretations are given of it—none of them satisfies my mind. The Abbe Giradeau spiritualizes it thus:—1. He took him aside from the multitude—When Christ saves a sinner, he separates him from all his old evil companions, and from the spirit and maxims of an ungodly world. 2. He put his fingers in his ears—to show that they could be opened only by the finger, i.e. the power, of God, and that they should be shut to every word and voice, but what came from him. 3. Spitting out he touched his tongue—to show that his mental taste and relish should be entirely changed: that he should detest those things which he before esteemed, and esteem those which he before hated. 4. Looking up to

heaven-to signify that all help comes from God, and to teach the new convert to keep continually looking to and depending upon him. 5. He groaned-to show the wretched state of man by sins and how tenderly concerned God is for his present and eternal welfare; and to intimate that men should seek the salvation of God in the spirit of genuine repentance, with strong crying and tears. 6. He said, Be opened-Sin is a shutting of the ears against the words of God; and a tying of the tongue, to render it incapable of giving God due praise. But when the all-powerful grace of Christ reaches the heart, the ear is unstopped, and the man hears distinctly-the tongue is unloosed, and the man speaks correctly.

After all, it is possible that what is attributed here to Christ belongs to the person who was cured. I will give my sense of the place in a short paraphrase.

And Jesus took him aside from the multitude: and [the deaf man] put his fingers into his ears, intimating thereby to Christ that they were so stopped that he could not hear; and having spat out, that there might be nothing remaining in his mouth to offend the sight when Christ should look at his tongue, he touched his tongue, showing to Christ that it was so bound that he could not speak: and he looked up to heaven, as if to implore assistance from above: and he groaned, being distressed because of his present affliction, and thus implored relief: for, not being able to speak, he could only groan and look up, expressing by these signs, as well as he could, his afflicted state, and the desire he had to be relieved. Then Jesus, having compassion upon him, said, Be opened: and immediately his ears were opened, so that he could hear distinctly; and the impediment to his speaking was removed, so that he spake properly. The original will admit of this interpretation; and this, I am inclined to believe, is the true meaning of this otherwise (to me and many others) unaccountable passage.

**Verse 34. *Ephphatha***—Ethphathach, [S] Syriac. It is likely that it was in this language that our Lord spoke to this poor man: and because he had pronounced the word Ephphathach with peculiar and authoritative emphasis, the evangelist thought proper to retain the original word; though the last letter in it could not be expressed by any letter in the Greek alphabet.

**Verse 35. *He spake plain.***— *ορθως*, distinctly, without stammering. One MS. has, And he spoke, praising God. There is no doubt of this: but the evangelist, I think, did not write these words.

**Verse 36. *Tell no man***— See on Matthew 8:4. This miracle is not mentioned by any other of the evangelists. Another proof that Mark did not abridge Matthew. For a practical review of the different important subjects of this chapter, see Matthew 15:1-39, and particularly the observations at the end. {Matthew 15:39.}

**Verse 37. *He hath done all things well***— This has been, and ever will be, true of every part of our Lord's conduct. In creation, providence, and redemption he hath done all things well. The wisest philosophers are agreed that, considering creation as a whole, it would be impossible to improve it. Every thing has been made in number, weight, and measure; there really is nothing deficient, nothing redundant; and the good of the creature seems evidently more consulted than the glory of the Creator. The creature's good is every where apparent; but to find out how the Creator is glorified by these works requires the eye of the philosopher. And as he has done all things well in creation, so has he in providence: here also every thing is in number, weight, measure, and time. As creation shows his majesty, so providence shows his bounty. He preserves every thing he has made; all depend upon him; and by him are all things supported. But how glorious does he appear in the work of redemption! How magnificent, ample, and adequate the provision made for the salvation of a lost world! Here, as in providence, is enough for all, a sufficiency for each, and an abundance for eternity. He loves every man, and hates nothing that he has made; nor can the God of all grace be less beneficent than the Creator and Preserver of the universe.

## CHAPTER 8

*Four thousand persons fed with seven loaves and a few small fishes, 1-8. Christ refuses to give any farther sign to the impertinent Pharisees, 10-12. Warns his disciples against the corrupt doctrine of the Pharisees and of Herod, 13-21. He restores sight to a blind man, 22-26. Asks his disciples what the public thought of him, 27-30. Acknowledges himself to be the Christ, and that he must suffer, 31-33. And shows that all his genuine disciples must take up their cross, suffer in his cause, and confess him before men, 34-38.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 8

**Verse 1. *The multitude being very great***— Or rather, There was again a great multitude. Instead of παμπόλλου, very great, I read παλιν πόλλου, again a great, which is the reading of BDGLM, fourteen others, all the Arabic, Coptic, AEthiopic, Armenian, Gothic, Vulgate, and Itala, and of many Evangelistaria. Griesbach approves of this reading. There had been such a multitude gathered together once before, who were fed in the same way. See Mark 6:34, etc.

**Verse 2. *Having nothing to eat***— If they had brought any provisions with them, they were now entirely expended; and they stood in immediate need of a supply.

**Verse 3. *For divers of them came from far***.— And they could not possibly reach their respective homes without perishing, unless they got food.

**Verse 4. *etc.***— See on Matthew 14:14; 15:35.

**Verse 7. *And they, had a few small fishes***— This is not noticed in the parallel place, Matthew 15:36.

**Verse 10. *Dalmanutha***.— See the note on Matthew 15:39.

**Verse 12. *And he sighed deeply in his spirit***— Or having deeply groaned—so the word *ἀναστεναξας* properly means. He was exceedingly affected at their obstinacy and hardness of heart. See Matthew 16:1-4.

**Verse 14. *Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread***— See all this, to Mark 8:21, explained at large on Matthew 16:4-12. In the above chapter, an account is given of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians.

**Verse 22. *They bring a blind man unto him***— Christ went about to do good, and wherever he came he found some good to be done; and so should we, if we had a proper measure of the same zeal and love for the welfare of the bodies and souls of men.

**Verse 23. *And he took the blind man by the hand***— Giving him a proof of his readiness to help him, and thus preparing him for the cure which he was about to work.

***Led him out of the town***— Thus showing the inhabitants that he considered them unworthy of having another miracle wrought among them. He had already deeply deplored their ingratitude and obstinacy: see on Matthew 11:21. When a people do not make a proper improvement of the light and grace which they receive from God, their candlestick is removed—even the visible Church becomes there extinct; and the candle is put out—no more means of spiritual illumination are afforded to the unfaithful inhabitants: Revelation 2:5.

***When he had spit on his eyes***— There is a similar transaction to this mentioned by John, John 9:6. It is likely this was done merely to separate the eyelids; as, in certain cases of blindness, they are found always gummed together. It required a miracle to restore the sight, and this was done in consequence of Christ having laid his hands upon the blind man: it required no miracle to separate the eyelids, and, therefore, natural means only were employed—this was done by rubbing them with spittle; but whether by Christ, or by the blind man, is not absolutely certain. See on Mark 7:33. It has always been evident that false miracles have been wrought without reason or necessity, and without any obvious advantage; and they have thereby been detected: on the contrary, true miracles have always vindicated themselves by their obvious utility and importance;

nothing ever being effected by them that could be performed by natural means.

*If he saw aught.*— **ει**, if, is wanting in the Syriac, all the Persic and Arabic, and in the AEthiopic; and **τι βλέπεις**, Dost thou see any thing? is the reading of CD, Coptic, AEthiopic, all the Arabic and Persic.

**Verse 24. *I see men as trees, walking.***— His sight was so imperfect that he could not distinguish between men and trees, only by the motion of the former.

**Verse 25. *And saw every man clearly.***— But instead of **απαντας**, all men, several excellent MSS., and the principal versions, have **απαντα**, all things, every object; for the view he had of them before was indistinct and confused. Our Lord could have restored this man to sight in a moment; but he chose to do it in the way mentioned in the text, to show that he is sovereign of his own graces; and to point out that, however insignificant means may appear in themselves, they are divinely efficacious when he chooses to work by them; and that, however small the first manifestations of mercy may be, they are nevertheless the beginnings of the fullness of the blessings of the Gospel of peace. Reader, art thou in this man's state? Art thou blind? Then come to Jesus that he may restore thee. Hast thou a measure of light? Then pray that he may lay his hands again on thee, that thou mayest be enabled to read thy title clear to the heavenly inheritance.

**Verse 26. *He sent him away to his house***— So it appears that this person did not belong to Bethsaida, for, in going to his house, he was not to enter into the village.

This miracle is not mentioned by any other of the evangelists. It affords another proof that Mark did not abridge Matthew's Gospel.

**Verse 27. *And Jesus went out, etc.***— See on Matthew 16:13-20.

**Verse 29. *Thou art the Christ.***— Three MSS. and some versions add, the Son of the living God.

**Verse 32. *And he spake that saying***— Concerning the certainty and necessity of his sufferings-openly: with great plainness, **παρησια**, confidence, or emphasis, so that the disciples now began fully to

understand him. This is an additional observation of St. Mark. For Peter's reproof, see on Matthew 16:22, etc.

**Verse 34. *Whosoever will come after me***— It seems that Christ formed, on the proselytism of the Jews, the principal qualities which he required in the proselytes of his covenant.

The first condition of proselytism among the Jews was, that he that came to embrace their religion should come voluntarily, and that neither force nor influence should be employed in this business. This is also the first condition required by Jesus Christ, and which he considers as the foundation of all the rest: -If a man be willing to come after me.

The second condition required in the Jewish proselyte was, that he should perfectly renounce all his prejudices, his errors, his idolatry, and every thing that concerned his false religion; and that he should entirely separate himself from his most intimate friends and acquaintances. It was on this ground that the Jews called proselytism a new birth, and proselytes new-born, and new men; and our Lord requires men to be born again, not only of water, but by the Holy Ghost. See John 3:5. All this our Lord includes in this word, Let him renounce himself. To this the following scriptures refer: Matthew 10:33; John 3:3, 5, 2 Corinthians 5:17.

The third condition on which a person was admitted into the Jewish Church as a proselyte was, that he should submit to the yoke of the Jewish law, and bear patiently the inconveniences and sufferings with which a profession of the Mosaic religion might be accompanied. Christ requires the same condition; but, instead of the yoke of the law, he brings in his own doctrine, which he calls his yoke, Matthew 11:29: and his cross, the taking up of which not only implies a bold profession of Christ crucified, but also a cheerful submitting to all the sufferings and persecutions to which he might be exposed, and even to death itself.

The fourth condition was, that they should solemnly engage to continue in the Jewish religion, faithful even unto death. This condition Christ also requires; and it is comprised in this word, Let him FOLLOW me. See the following verses; and see, on the subject of proselytism, Ruth 1:16, 17.

**Verse 35. *For whosoever will save his life***— On this and the following verses, see Matthew 16:24, etc.

**Verse 38. *Whosoever shall be ashamed of me***— Our Lord hints here at one of the principal reasons of the incredulity of the Jews,—they saw nothing in the person of Jesus Christ which corresponded to the pompous notions which they had formed of the Messiah.

If Jesus Christ had come into the world as a mighty and opulent man, clothed with earthly glories and honors, he would have had a multitude of partisans, and most of them hypocrites.

***And of my words***— This was another subject of offense to the Jews: the doctrine of the cross must be believed; a suffering Messiah must be acknowledged; and poverty and affliction must be borne; and death, perhaps, suffered in consequence of becoming his disciples.

Of him, and of his words, in this sense, the world is, to this day, ashamed.

***Of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed***— As he refused to acknowledge me before men, so will I refuse to acknowledge him before God and his angels. Terrible consequence of the rejection of Christ! And who can help him whom the only Savior eternally disowns. Reader! Lay this subject seriously to heart; and see the notes on Matthew 16:24, etc., and at the end of that chapter. {Matthew 16:28.}

ALL the subjects contained in this chapter are very interesting; but particularly: 1. The miraculous feeding of the multitudes, which is a full, unequivocal proof of the supreme Divinity of Jesus Christ: in this miracle he truly appears in his creative energy, with which he has associated the tenderest benevolence and humanity. The subject of such a prince must ever be safe; the servant of such a master must ever have kind usage; the follower of such a teacher can never want nor go astray.

2. The necessity of keeping the doctrine of the Gospel uncorrupt, is strongly inculcated in the caution to avoid the leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod: the doctrine of the cross must not only be observed and held inviolate, but that doctrine must never be mixed with worldly politics. Time-serving is abominable in the sight of God: it shows that the person has either no fixed principle of religion, or that he is not under the influence of any.



## CHAPTER 9

*The transfiguration of Christ, and the discourse occasioned by it, 1-13. He casts out a dumb spirit which his disciples could not, 14-29. He foretells his death, 30-32. The disciples dispute about supremacy, and Christ corrects them, 33-37. Of the person who cast out demons in Christ's name, but did not follow him, 38-40. Every kind of office done to the disciples of Christ shall be rewarded by him, and all injuries done to them shall be punished, 41, 42. The necessity of mortification and self-denial, 43-48. Of the salting of sacrifices, 49; and the necessity of having union among the disciples of Christ, 50.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 9

**Verse 1. *There be some***— This verse properly belongs to the preceding chapter, and to the preceding discourse. It is in this connection in Matthew 16:27, 28. See the notes there.

**Verse 2. *And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, etc.***— For a full account of the nature and design of the transfiguration, see on Matthew 17:1, etc.

***A high mountain***— I have conjectured, Matthew 17:1, that this was one of the mountains of Galilee: some say Hermon, some Tabor; but Dr. Lightfoot thinks a mountain near Cesarea Philippi to be more likely.

***Was transfigured***— Four good MSS. and Origen add here, *AND WHILE THEY WERE PRAYING* he was transfigured; but this appears to be added from Luke 9:29.

**Verse 10. *And they kept that saying***— This verse is wanting in two MSS. and one of the Itala.

***What the rising from the dead should mean.***— ὅταν ἐκνεκρῶν ἀναστή, When he should arise from the dead, is the reading of D, six others, Syriac, all the Persic, Vulgate, all the Itala, and Jerome. Griesbach approves of it.

There is nothing that answers to this verse either in Matthew or Luke.

**Verse 12. *And how it is written***— Rather, as also it is written. Instead of *καὶ πῶς*, AND HOW it is written, I read *καθὼς*, AS ALSO it is written of the Son of man, etc. This reading is supported by AKM, seventeen others, the later Syriac in the margin, Slavonic and Armenian. Some think the propriety of adopting this reading is self-evident.

**Verse 15. *Were greatly amazed***— Probably, because he came so unexpectedly; but the cause of this amazement is not self-evident.

**Verse 17. *A dumb spirit***— That is, a demon who afflicted those in whom it dwelt with an incapacity of speaking. The spirit itself could not be either deaf or dumb. These are accidents that belong only to organized animate bodies.

See this case explained, Matthew 17:14, etc.

**Verse 18. *Pineth away***— By these continual torments; so he was not only deaf and dumb, but sorely tortured besides.

**Verse 20. *When he saw him the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, etc.***— When this demon saw Jesus, he had great rage, knowing that his time was short; and hence the extraordinary convulsions mentioned above.

**Verse 22. *If THOU canst Do any thing***— I have already tried thy disciples, and find they can do nothing in this case; but if thou hast any power, in mercy use it in our behalf.

**Verse 23. *If THOU canst BELIEVE***— This was an answer to the inquiry above. I can furnish a sufficiency of power, if thou canst but bring faith to receive it. Why are not our souls completely healed? Why is not every demon cast out? Why are not pride, self-will, love of the world, lust, anger, peevishness, with all the other bad tempers and dispositions which constitute the mind of Satan, entirely destroyed? Alas! it is because we do not believe; Jesus is able; more, Jesus is willing; but we are not willing to give up our idols; we give not credence to his word; therefore hath sin a being in us, and dominion over us.

**Verse 24. *Lord, I believe***— The word Lord is omitted by ABCDL, both the Syriac, both the Arabic later Persic, AEthiopic, Gothic, and three copies of the Itala. Griesbach leaves it out. The omission, I think, is proper, because it is evident the man did not know our Lord, and therefore could not be expected to accost him with a title expressive of that authority which he doubted whether he possessed, unless we grant that he used the word *κύριε* after the Roman custom, for Sir.

***Help thou mine unbelief.***— That is, assist me against it. Give me a power to believe.

**Verse 25. *I charge thee***— Considerable emphasis should be laid on the pronoun:—Thou didst resist the command of my disciples, now I command thee to come out. If this had been only a natural disease, for instance the epilepsy, as some have argued, could our Lord have addressed it, with any propriety, as he has done here: Thou deaf and dumb spirit, come out of him, and enter no more into him? Is the doctrine of demoniacal influence false? If so, Jesus took the most direct method to perpetuate the belief of that falsity, by accommodating himself so completely to the deceived vulgar. But this was impossible; therefore the doctrine of demoniacal influence is a true doctrine, otherwise Christ would never have given it the least countenance or support.

**Verse 29. *Prayer and fasting.***— See on Matthew 17:21.

This demon may be considered as an emblem of deeply rooted vices, and inveterate habits, over which the conquest is not generally obtained, but through extraordinary humiliations.

This case is related by both Matthew and Luke, but it is greatly amplified in Mark's account, and many new circumstances related. Another proof that Mark did not abridge Matthew.

**Verse 30. *They-passed through Galilee***— See on Matthew 17:22-27.

**Verse 32. *But they understood not***— This whole verse is wanting in two MSS., in the first edition of Erasmus, and in that of Aldus. Mill approves of the omission. It does not appear likely, from Matthew's account, that three of the disciples, Peter, James, and John, could be ignorant of the reasons of Christ's death and resurrection, after the transfiguration; on the

contrary, from the circumstances there related, it is very probable that from that time they must have had at least a general understanding of this important subject; but the other nine might have been ignorant of this matter, who were not present at the transfiguration; probably it is of these that the evangelist speaks here. See the observations on the transfiguration, Matthew 17:9, etc., and Matthew 18:1.

**Verse 33. *And being in the house***— That is, Peter's house, where he ordinarily lodged. This has been often observed before.

**Verse 34. *Who should be the greatest***.— See on Matthew 18:1-5.

**Verse 38. *We saw one casting out devils in thy name***— It can scarcely be supposed that a man who knew nothing of Christ, or who was only a common exorcist, could be able to work a miracle in Christ's name; we may therefore safely imagine that this was either one of John the Baptist's disciples, who, at his master's command, had believed in Jesus, or one of the seventy, whom Christ had sent out, Luke 10:1-7, who, after he had fulfilled his commission, had retired from accompanying the other disciples; but as he still held fast his faith in Christ, and walked in good conscience, the influence of his Master still continued with him, so that he could cast out demons as well as the other disciples.

***He followeth not us***— This first clause is omitted by BCL, three others, Syriac, Armenian, Persic, Coptic, and one of the Itala. Some of the MSS. and versions leave out the first; some the second clause: only one of them is necessary. Griesbach leaves out the first.

***We forbade him***— I do not see that we have any right to attribute any other motive to John than that which he himself owns—because he followed not us—because he did not attach himself constantly to thee, as we do, we thought he could not be in a proper spirit.

**Verse 39. *Forbid him not***— If you meet him again, let him go on quietly in the work in which God owns him. If he were not of God, the demons would not be subject to him, and his work could not prosper. A spirit of bigotry has little countenance from these passages. There are some who are so outrageously wedded to their own creed, and religious system, that they would rather let sinners perish than suffer those who differ from them to become the instruments of their salvation. Even the good that is done they

either deny or suspect, because the person does not follow them. This also is vanity and an evil disease.

**Verse 40. *He that is not against us, is on our part.***— Or rather, Whosoever is not against YOU, is for YOU. Instead of *ἡμῶν*, us, I would read *υμῶν*, you, on the authority of ADSHV, upwards of forty others, Syriac, Armenian, Persic, Coptic, AETHiopic, Gothic, Slavonic, Vulgate, Itala, Victor, and Opt. This reading is more consistent with the context—He followed not us—well, he is not against YOU; and he who is not against you, in such a work, may be fairly presumed to be on your side.

There is a parallel case to this mentioned in Numbers 11:26-29, which, for the elucidation of this passage, I will transcribe. “The Spirit rested upon Eldad and Medad, and they prophesied in the camp. And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp. And Joshua, the servant of Moses, said, My lord Moses, forbid them! And Moses said unto him, Enviest THOU for MY sake? Would God, that all the Lord’s people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them.” The reader will easily observe that Joshua and John were of the same bigoted spirit; and that Jesus and Moses acted from the spirit of candour and benevolence. See the notes on Numbers 11:25-29.

**Verse 41. *A cup of water to drink***— See the notes on Matthew 10:42; 18:6-8.

**Verse 43. — 48. *Thy hand-foot-eye-cause thee to offend;***— See the notes on Matthew 5:29, 30.

**Verse 43. *The fire that never shall be quenched***— That is, the inextinguishable fire. This clause is wanting in L, three others, the Syriac, and later Persic. Some eminent critics suppose it to be a spurious reading; but the authorities which are for it, are by no means counterbalanced by those which are against it. The same clause in Mark 9:45, is omitted in BCL, seven others, Syriac, later Persic, Coptic, and one Itala. Eternal fire is the expression of Matthew.

**Verse 44.** See Clarke on “Mark 9:43.

**Verse 45.** See Clarke on “Mark 9:43.

**Verse 46.** See Clarke on “Mark 9:43.

**Verse 47.** See Clarke on “Mark 9:43.

**Verse 48.** See Clarke on “Mark 9:43.

**Verse 49.** *For every one shall be salted with fire*— Every one of those who shall live and die in sin: but there is great difficulty in this verse. The Codex Bezae, and some other MSS., have omitted the first clause; and several MSS. keep the first, and omit the last clause-and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. There appears to be an allusion to Isaiah 66:24. It is generally supposed that our Lord means, that as salt preserves the flesh with which it is connected from corruption, so this everlasting fire, το πυρ το ασβεστον, this inconsumable fire, will have the property, not only of assimilating all things cast into it to its own nature, but of making them inconsumable like itself.

Scaliger supposes, that instead of πας πυρι, πασα πυρια, every sacrifice (of flour) should be read, “Every sacrifice (of flour) shall be salted, and every burnt offering shall be salted.” This, I fear, is taking the text by storm. Some take the whole in a good sense, as referring to the influence of the Spirit of God in the hearts of believers, which shall answer the same end to the soul, in preserving it from the contagion that is in the world, as salt did in the sacrifices offered to God to preserve them from putrefaction. Old Trapp’s note on the place pleases me as much as any I have seen:—“The Spirit, as salt, must dry up those bad humours in us which breed the never-dying worm; and, as fire, must waste our corruptions, which else will carry us on to the unquenchable fire.” Perhaps the whole is an allusion to the purification of vessels, and especially such metallic vessels as were employed in the service of the sanctuary. Probably the following may be considered as a parallel text:—Every thing that may abide the fire, ye shalt make go through the fire, and it shall be clean; and all that abideth not the fire, ye shall make go through the water, Numbers 31:23. Ye, disciples, are the Lord’s sacrifice; ye shall go through much tribulation, in order to enter into my kingdom: but ye are salted, ye are influenced by the Spirit of God, and are immortal till your work is done; and should ye be offered up, martyred, this shall be a means of establishing more fully the glad tidings of the kingdom: and this Spirit shall preserve all who believe on me from the corruption of sin, and from eternal

perdition. That converts to God are represented as his offering, see Isaiah 66:20, the very place which our Lord appears to have here in view.

If this passage be taken according to the common meaning, it is awful indeed! Here may be seen the greatness, multiplicity, and eternity, of the pains of the damned. They suffer without being able to die; they are burned without being consumed; they are sacrificed without being sanctified—are salted with the fire of hell, as eternal victims of the Divine Justice. We must of necessity be sacrificed to God, after one way or other, in eternity; and we have now the choice either of the unquenchable fire of his justice, or of the everlasting flame of his love. Quesnel.

**Verse 50. *If the salt have lost his saltness***— See on Matthew 5:13.

***Have salt in yourselves***— See that ye have at all times the preserving principle of Divine grace in your hearts, and give that proof of it which will satisfy your own minds, and convince or silence the world: live in brotherly kindness and peace with each other: thus shall all men see that you are free from ambition, (see Mark 9:34,) and that you are my disciples indeed. That it is possible for the salt to lose its savor, and yet retain its appearance in the most perfect manner, see proved on the note on Matthew 5:13.

## CHAPTER 10

*The Pharisees question our Lord concerning divorce, 1-12. Little children are brought to him, 13-16. The person who inquired how he might inherit eternal life, 17-22. How difficult it is for a rich man to be saved, 23-27. What they shall receive who have left all for Christ and his Gospel, 28-31. He foretells his death, 32-34. James and John desire places of pre-eminence in Christ's kingdom, 35-41. Christ shows them the necessity of humility, 42-46. Blind Bartimeus healed, 46-52.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 10

**Verse 1. *He arose***— *κακειθεν αναστας* may be translated, he departed thence. The verb *ανιστημι* has this sense in some of the purest Greek writers. See Kypke. Many transactions took place between those mentioned in the preceding chapter, and these that follow, which are omitted by Matthew and Mark; but they are related both by Luke and John. See Lightfoot, and Bishop Newcome.

**Verse 2. *Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?***— See this question about divorce largely explained on Matthew 19:3-12.

**Verse 12. *And if a woman shall put away her husband***— From this it appears that in some cases, the wife assumed the very same right of divorcing her husband that the husband had of divorcing his wife; and yet this is not recorded any where in the Jewish laws, as far as I can find, that the women had such a right. Indeed, were the law which gives the permission all on one side, it would be unjust and oppressive; but where it is equally balanced, the right being the same on each side, it must serve as a mutual check, and prevent those evils it is intended to cure. Among the Jews there are several instances of the women having taken other men, even during the life of their own husbands. Nor do we find any law by which they were punished. Divorce never should be permitted but on this ground—"The parties are miserable together, and they are both perfectly willing to be separated." Then, if every thing else be proper, let them go



different ways, that they may not ruin both themselves and their hapless offspring.

**Verse 13. *And they brought young children***— See on Matthew 19:13-15.

**Verse 16. *And he took them up in his arms***— One of the Itala reads in sinu suo—"in his bosom." Jesus Christ loves little children; and they are objects of his most peculiar care. Who can account for their continual preservation and support, while exposed to so many dangers, but on the ground of a peculiar and extraordinary providence?

***And blessed them.***— Then, though little children, they were capable of receiving Christ's blessing. If Christ embraced them, why should not his Church embrace them? Why not dedicate them to God by baptism?—whether that be performed by sprinkling, washing, or immersion; for we need not dispute about the mode: on this point let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind. I confess it appears to me grossly heathenish and barbarous, to see parents who profess to believe in that Christ who loves children, and among them those whose creed does not prevent them from using infant baptism, depriving their children of an ordinance by which no soul can prove that they cannot be profited, and, through an unaccountable bigotry or carelessness, withholding from them the privilege of even a nominal dedication to God; and yet these very persons are ready enough to fly for a minister to baptize their child when they suppose it to be at the point of death! It would be no crime to pray that such persons should never have the privilege of hearing, My father! or, My mother! from the lips of their own child. See on Matthew 3:6, and on Mark 16:16.

**Verse 17. *There came one running***— See the case of this rich young man largely explained on Matthew 19:16, etc.

**Verse 21. *Then Jesus, beholding him***— Looking earnestly, *εμβλεψας*, or affectionately upon him, loved him, because of his youth, his earnestness, and his sincerity.

***One thing thou lackest***— What was that? A heart disengaged from the world, and a complete renunciation of it and its concerns, that he might become a proper and successful laborer in the Lord's vineyard. See

Matthew 19:21. To say that it was something else he lacked, when Christ explains here his own meaning, is to be wise above what is written.

**Verse 22. *And he was sad at that saying***— This young man had perhaps been a saint, and an eminent apostle, had he been poor! From this, and a multitude of other cases, we may learn that it is oftentimes a misfortune to be rich: but who is aware of this?-and who believes it?

**Verse 29. *And the Gospel's***— Read, for the sake of the Gospel. I have with Griesbach adopted *ἐνεκεν*, for the sake, on the authority of BCDEGHKMS, V, sixty others, and almost all the versions.

**Verse 30. *In this time***— *ἐν τῷ καιρῷ τούτῳ*, In this very time. Though Jews and Gentiles have conspired together to destroy both me and you, my providence shall so work that nothing shall be lacking while any thing is necessary.

And fathers. This is added by K, upwards of sixty others, AEthiopic, Gothic, Slavonic, Saxon, Armenian, Coptic, and in one of my own MSS. of the Vulgate.

Some have been greatly embarrassed to find out the literal truth of these promises; and, some in flat opposition to the text, have said they are all to be understood spiritually. But thus far is plain, that those who have left all for the sake of Christ do find, among genuine Christians, spiritual relatives, which are as dear to them as fathers, mothers, etc.; yet they have the promise of receiving a hundredfold often literally fulfilled: for, wherever a Christian travels among Christians, the shelter of their houses, and the product of their lands, are at his service as far as they are requisite. Besides, these words were spoken primarily to the disciples, and pointed out their itinerant manner of life; and how, travelling about from house to house, preaching the Gospel of the grace of God, they should, among the followers of Christ, be provided with every thing necessary in all places, as if the whole were their own. I have often remarked that the genuine messengers of God, in the present day have, as noted above, this promise literally fulfilled.

***With persecutions***— For while you meet with nothing but kindness from true Christians, you shall be despised, and often afflicted, by those who are enemies to God and goodness; but, for your comfort, ye shall have in

the world to come, **αιωνι τω ερχομενω**, the coming world, (that world which is on its way to meet you,) eternal life.

**Verse 32. *And he took again the twelve***— Or thus: For having again taken the twelve, etc. I translate **και** for, which signification it often bears; see Luke 1:22; John 12:35, and elsewhere. This gives the reason of the wonder and fear of the disciples, FOR he began to tell them on the way, what was to befall him. This sense of **και**, I find, is also noticed by Rosenmuller. See on Matthew 20:17-19.

**Verse 35. *And James and John-come unto him***— The request here mentioned, Matthew says, Matthew 20:20, was made by Salome their mother; the two places may be easily reconciled thus:-The mother introduced them, and made the request as if from herself; Jesus knowing whence it had come, immediately addressed himself to James and John, who were standing by; and the mother is no farther concerned in the business. See the note on Matthew 20:20.

**Verse 37. *In thy glory.***— In the kingdom of thy glory-three MSS. Which kingdom they expected to be established on earth.

***And be baptized***— OR, be baptized. Instead of **και** and **η** or, is the reading of BCDL, five others, Coptic, Armenian, later Syriac in the margin, Vulgate, all the Itala, and Origen. See the note on Matthew 20:22.

**Verse 40. *Is not mine to give***— See on Matthew 20:23.

**Verse 41. *When the ten heard it***— See Matthew 20:24-28.

**Verse 46. *Blind Bartimeus***— **ܒܪ** bar in Syriac signifies son. It appears that he was thus named because Timeus, Talmeus or Talmai, was the name of his father, and thus the son would be called Bar-talmeus, or Bartholomew. Some suppose **υιος τιμαίου**, the son of Timeus, to be an interpolation. Bartimeus the son of Timeus, **ο τυφλος**, THE blind man. It was because he was the most remarkable that this evangelist mentions him by name, as a person probably well known in those parts.

**Verse 50. *And he, casting away his garment***— He cast off his outward covering, a blanket, or loose piece of cloth, the usual upper garment of an Asiatic mendicant, which kept him from the inclemency of the weather,

that he might have nothing to hinder him from getting speedily to Christ. If every penitent were as ready to throw aside his self-righteousness and sinful incumbrances, as this blind man was to throw aside his garment, we should have fewer delays in conversions than we now have; and all that have been convinced of sin would have been brought to the knowledge of the truth. The reader will at least pardon the introduction of the following anecdote, which may appear to some as illustrative of the doctrine grounded on this text.

A great revival of religion took place in some of the American States, about the year 1773, by the instrumentality of some itinerant preachers sent from England. Many, both whites and blacks, were brought to an acquaintance with God who bought them. Two of these, a white man and a negro, meeting together, began to speak concerning the goodness of God to their souls, (a custom which has ever been common among truly religious people.) Among other things they were led to inquire how long each had known the salvation of God; and how long it was, after they were convinced of their sin and danger, before each got a satisfactory evidence of pardoning mercy. The white man said, "I was three months in deep distress of soul, before God spoke peace to my troubled, guilty conscience." "But it was only a fortnight," replied the negro, "from the time I first heard of Jesus, and felt that I was a sinner, till I received the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins." "But what was the reason," said the white man, "that you found salvation sooner than I did?" "This is the reason," replied the other; "you white men have much clothing upon you, and when Christ calls, you cannot run to him; but we poor negroes have only this, (pointing to the mat or cloth which was tied round his waist,) and when we hear the call, we throw it off instantly, and run to him."

Thus the poor son of Ham illustrated the text without intending it, as well as any doctor in the universe. People who have been educated in the principles of the Christian religion imagine themselves on this account Christians; and, when convinced of sin, they find great difficulty to come as mere sinners to God, to be saved only through the merits of Christ. Others, such as the negro in question, have nothing to plead but this, We have never heard of thee, and could not believe in thee of whom we had not heard; but this excuse will not avail now, as the true light is come-therefore

they cast off this covering, and come to Jesus. See this miraculous cure explained at large on Matthew 20:29-34.

**Verse 51. *Lord, that I might, etc.***— The Codex Bezae, and some copies of the Itala, have, κυριε παββει, O Lord, my teacher.

**Verse 52. *Followed Jesus in the way.***— Instead of τω ιησου, Jesus, several eminent critics read αυτω, him. This is the reading of ABCDL, fourteen others, Coptic, AEthiopic, Armenian, later Syriac in the margin, two Persic, Vulgate, all the Itala, and Origen once. JESUS is the common reading; but this sacred name having occurred so immediately before, there could be no necessity for repeating it here, nor would the repetition have been elegant.

This very remarkable cure gives us another proof, not only of the sovereign power, but of the benevolence, of Christ: nor do we ever see that sovereign power used, but in the way of benevolence. How slow is God to punish!-how prone to spare! To his infinite benevolence, can it be any gratification to destroy any of the children of men? No! We must take great heed not to attribute to his sovereignty, acts which are inconsistent with his benevolence and mercy. I am afraid this is a prevailing error; and that it is not confined to any religious party exclusively.

## CHAPTER 11

*Christ rides triumphantly into Jerusalem, 1-11. The barren fig tree cursed, 12-14. He cleanses the temple, 15-17. The scribes and chief priests are enraged, 18. Reflections on the withered fig tree, 19-23. Directions concerning prayer and forgiveness, 24-26. The chief priests, etc., question him by what authority he did his works, 27, 28. He answers, and confounds them, 29-33.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 11

**Verse 1. *He sendeth-two of his disciples***— This was done but a few days before the passover. See our Lord's entry into Jerusalem illustrated, on Matthew 21:1-17.

**Verse 2. *Whereon never man sat***— No animal was allowed to be employed in sacred uses, even among the heathen, that had previously been used for any domestic or agricultural purpose; and those which had never been yoked were considered as sacred. See several proofs of this in the note on Numbers 19:2, and add this from Ovid:-

*Bos tibi, Phoebus ait, solis occurret in arvis,  
Nullum passa jugum curvique immunis aratri  
Met. lib. iii. v. 10*

*The Delphic oracles this answer give:—  
Behold among the fields a lonely cow,  
Unworn with yokes, unbroken to the plough.*

**Verse 3. *And straightway he will send him hither.***— From the text, I think it is exceedingly plain, that our Lord did not beg, but borrow, the colt; therefore the latter clause of this verse should be understood as the promise of returning him. Is not the proper translation the following? And if any one say to you, Why do ye this? Say, the Lord hath need of him, and will speedily send him back hither-*και ευθεως αυτον αποσπελλει ωδε*. Some eminent critics take the same view of the passage.

**Verse 6. *And they let them go.***— Having a full assurance that the beast should be safely and speedily restored.

**Verse 10. *In the name of the Lord***— Omitted by BCDLU, some others, and several versions. Griesbach leaves it out.

***Hosanna in the highest!***— See on Matthew 21:9.

**Verse 11. *When he had looked round about upon all things***— He examined every thing—to see if the matters pertaining to the Divine worship were properly conducted; to see that nothing was wanting—nothing superfluous.

***And now the eventide was come***— The time in which he usually left Jerusalem, to go to Bethany.

**Verse 13. *For the time of figs was not yet.***— Rather, For it was not the season of gathering figs yet. This I am fully persuaded is the true sense of this passage, *οὐ γὰρ ἦν καιρὸς συκῶν*. For a proof that *καιρὸς* here signifies the time of gathering the figs, see the LXX. in Psalm 1:3. He bringeth forth his fruit, *ἐν καιρῷ αὐτοῦ*, in his season; i.e. in the time in which fruit should be ripe, and fit for gathering. See also Mark 12:2: -And at the season, *τῷ καιρῷ*, the time of gathering the fruits of the vineyard. Matthew 21:34:- When the time of the fruit drew near; *ὁ καιρὸς τῶν καρπῶν*, the time in which the fruits were to be gathered, for it was then that the Lord of the vineyard sent his servants to receive the fruits; i.e. so much of them as the holder of the vineyard was to pay to the owner by way of rent; for in those times rent was paid in kind.

To the above may be added, Job 5:26:- Thou shalt come to thy grave in FULL AGE, like as a shock of corn cometh in his season; *κατὰ καιρὸν*, in the time in which it should be reaped.

When our Lord saw this fig tree by the way-side, apparently flourishing, he went to it to gather some of the figs: being on the way-side, it was not private, but public property; and any traveler had an equal right to its fruit. As it was not as yet the time for gathering in the fruits, and yet about the time when they were ready to be gathered, our Lord with propriety expected to find some. But as this happened about five days before that passover on which Christ suffered, and the passover that year fell on the

beginning of April, it has been asked, “How could our Lord expect to find ripe figs in the end of March?” Answer, Because figs were ripe in Judea as early as the passover. Besides, the fig tree puts forth its fruit first, and afterwards its leaves. Indeed, this tree, in the climate which is proper for it, has fruit on it all the year round, as I have often seen. All the difficulty in the text may be easily removed by considering that the climate of Judea is widely different from that of Great Britain. The summer begins there in March, and the harvest at the passover, as all travelers into those countries testify; therefore, as our Lord met with this tree five days before the passover, it is evident, -1st. That it was the time of ripe figs: and, 2ndly. That it was not the time of gathering them, because this did not begin till the passover, and the transaction here mentioned took place five days before.

For farther satisfaction on this point, let us suppose: -I. That this tree was intended to point out the state of the Jewish people. 1. They made a profession of the true religion. 2. They considered themselves the peculiar people of God, and despised and reprobated all others. 3. They were only hypocrites, having nothing of religion but the profession-leaves, and no fruit.

II. That our Lord’s conduct towards this tree is to be considered as emblematical of the treatment and final perdition which was to come upon this hypocritical and ungodly nation. 1. It was a proper time for them to have borne fruit: Jesus had been preaching the doctrine of repentance and salvation among them for more than three years; the choicest influences of Heaven had descended upon them; and every thing was done in this vineyard that ought to be done, in order to make it fruitful. 2. The time was now at hand in which God would require fruit, good fruit; and, if it did not produce such, the tree should be hewn down by the Roman axe. Therefore, 1. The tree is properly the Jewish nation. 2. Christ’s curse the sentence of destruction which had now gone out against it; and, 3. Its withering away, the final and total ruin of the Jewish state by the Romans. His cursing the fig tree was not occasioned by any resentment at being disappointed at not finding fruit on it, but to point out unto his disciples the wrath which was coming upon a people who had now nearly filled up the measure of their iniquity.



A fruitless soul, that has had much cultivation bestowed on it, may expect to be dealt with as God did with this unrighteous nation. See on Matthew 21:19, etc.

**Verse 15. *And they come***— Several MSS. and versions have *παλιν*, again. This was the next day after our Lord's triumphant entry into Jerusalem; for on the evening of that day he went to Bethany, and lodged there, Mark 11:11, and Matthew 21:17, and returned the next morning to Jerusalem.

**Verse 16. *Should carry any vessel***— Among the Jews the word כֵּל *keli*, vessel, had a vast latitude of meaning; it signified arms, Jeremiah 21:4; Ezekiel 9:1; clothes, Deuteronomy 22:5, and instruments of music, Psalm 71:22. It is likely that the evangelist uses the Greek word *σκευος* in the same sense, and by it points out any of the things which were bought and sold in the temple.

**Verse 17. *And he taught-them***— See on Matthew 21:12.

**Verse 19. *He went out of the city.***— To go to Bethany.

**Verse 22. *Have faith in God***— *εχετε πιστιν θεου* is a mere Hebraism: have the faith of God, i.e. have strong faith, or the strongest faith, for thus the Hebrews expressed the superlative degree; so the mountains of God mean exceeding great mountains-the hail of God, exceeding great hail, etc.

**Verse 25. *When ye stand praying***— This expression may mean no more than, When ye are disposed, or have a mind, to pray, i.e. whenever ye perform that duty. And it is thus used and explained in the Koran, Surat. v. ver. 7. See on Matthew 21:20-22. But the Pharisees loved to pray standing, that they might be seen of men.

**Verse 26.** At the end of this verse, the 7th and 8th verses of Matt. 7:, {Matthew 7:7, 8} Ask and ye shall receive, etc., are added by M, and sixteen other MSS.

The 26th verse is wanting in BLS, seven others, some editions, the Coptic, one Itala, and Theophyact.

**Verse 27. — 33.** See on Matthew 21:23-27.

**Verse 28.** See Clarke on "Mark 11:27".

**Verse 29.** See Clarke on “Mark 11:27”.

**Verse 30.** See Clarke on “Mark 11:27”.

**Verse 31.** See Clarke on “Mark 11:27”.

**Verse 32. *They feared the people***— Or rather, We fear, etc. Instead of **εφοβουντο**, they feared; the Codex Bezae, seven others, later Syriac, Arabic, Coptic, AEthiopic, Armenian, Vulgate, and all the Itala, read **φοβουμεν**, or **φοβουμεθα**. The common reading appearing to me quite improper.

WE fear the people. **εαν**, if, before **ειπωμεν**, we shall say, is omitted by ABCEFGHLS, and more than fifty others. Bengel leaves it out of the text, and puts a note of interrogation after **εξ ανθρωπων**; and then the whole passage reads thus: But shall we say, Of men? They feared the people, etc. This change renders the adoption of **φοβουμεν**, we fear, unnecessary. Several critics prefer this mode of distinguishing the text. However the critics may be puzzled with the text, the scribes, chief priests, and elders were worse puzzled with our Lord’s question. They must convict themselves or tell a most palpable falsehood.—They told the lie, and so escaped for the present.

1. ENVY, malice, and double dealing have always a difficult part to act, and are ultimately confounded by their own projects and ruined by their own operations. On the other hand, simplicity and sincerity are not obliged to use a mask, but always walk in a plain way.

2. The case of the barren fig-tree which our Lord cursed has been pitifully misunderstood and misapplied. The whole account of this transaction, as stated above, I believe to be correct; it is so much in our Lord’s usual manner that the propriety of it will scarcely be doubted. He was ever acting the part of the philosopher, moralist, and divine, as well as that of the Savior of sinners. In his hand, every providential occurrence and every object of nature, became a means of instruction: the stones of the desert, the lilies of the field, the fowls of heaven, the beasts of the forest, fruitful and unfruitful trees, with every ordinary occurrence, were so many grand texts, from which he preached the most illuminating and impressive sermons, for the instruction and salvation of his audience. This wisdom and condescension cannot be sufficiently admired. But shall the example of

the fruitless fig tree be lost on us as well as on the Jews? God forbid! Let us therefore take heed, lest having been so long unfruitful, God should say, Let no fruit appear on thee hereafter for ever! and in consequence of this, we wither and die away! See Clarke on “Mark 11:27”.

**Verse 33.** See Clarke on “Mark 11:27”.

## CHAPTER 12

*The parable of the vineyard let out to wicked husbandmen, 1-12. The Pharisees and Herodians question him about paying tribute to Caesar, 13-17. The Sadducees question him about the resurrection, 18-27. A scribe questions him concerning the chief commandment of the law, 28-34. Christ asks the scribes why the Messiah is called David's son, 35-37. He warns his disciples against the scribes, 38-40. Of the widow that cast two mites into the treasury, 41-44.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 12

**Verse 1. *A certain man planted a vineyard***— See this parable explained, Matthew 21:33-41.

**Verse 4. *At him they cast stones and wounded him in the head***— Or rather, as most learned men agree, they made short work of it, εκεφαλαιωσαν. We have followed the Vulgate, illum in capite vulneraverunt, in translating the original, wounded him in the head, in which signification, I believe, the word is found in no Greek writer. ανακεφαλαιοομαι signifies to sum up, to comprise, and is used in this sense by St. Paul, Romans 13:9. From the parable we learn that these people were determined to hear no reason, to do no justice, and to keep the possession and the produce by violence; therefore they fulfilled their purpose in the fullest and speediest manner, which seems to be what the evangelist intended to express by the word in question. Mr. Wakefield translates, They speedily sent him away; others think the meaning is, They shaved their heads and made them look ridiculously; this is much to the same purpose, but I prefer, They made short work of it. Dr. Lightfoot, Deuteronomy Dieu, and others, agree in the sense given above; and this will appear the more probable, if the word λιθοβολησαντες, they cast stones, be omitted, as it is by BDL, the Coptic, Vulgate, and all the Itala.

**Verse 7. *This is the heir***— So they appear to have acknowledged in their consciences that this was the Messiah, the heir of all things.

***The inheritance shall be ours.***— By slaying him we shall maintain our authority, and keep possession of our revenues.

**Verse 9. *And will give the vineyard unto others.***— The vineyard must not perish with the husbandmen; it is still capable of producing much fruit, if it be properly cultivated. I will give it into the care of new vine-dressers, the evangelists and apostles.—And under their ministry, multitudes were brought to God before the destruction of Jerusalem.

**Verse 13. *And they send unto him***— See this, and to Mark 12:17, largely explained on Matthew 22:15-22.

**Verse 15. *Shall we give, or shall we not give?***— This is wanting in the Codex Bezae, and in several versions.

**Verse 18.** See this question, concerning the resurrection, explained in detail on Matthew 22:23-32.

**Verse 23. *When they shall rise***— This clause is wanting in BCDL, four others, Syriac, later Arabic, later Persic, Coptic, Saxon, and two of the Itala. Griesbach leaves it doubtful.

**Verse 27. *But the God of the living***— θεός, God, is left out by ABCDKL, and in more than forty others, Syriac, one Arabic, one Persic, Coptic, Armenian, Gothic, Saxon, Vulgate, Itala, and Origen. Griesbach has omitted it.

**Verse 30. *Thou shalt love the Lord***— On the nature and properties of the love of God and man, and the way in which this commandment is fulfilled, see the notes on Matthew 22:37, etc.

**Verse 32. *And the scribe said***— The answer of the scribe, contained in Mark 12:32-34, is not found either in Matthew or Luke. This is another proof against Mark's supposed abridgment.

**Verse 34. *Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.***— This scribe appears to have been a prudent, sensible, and pious man; almost a Christian—so near the kingdom of God that he might have easily stepped in. It is very probable that he did at last believe in and confess Jesus.

**Verse 35. *How say the scribes***— See Matthew 22:41, etc.

**Verse 37. *The common people heard him gladly.***— And were doubtless many of them brought to believe and receive the truth. By the comparatively poor the Gospel is still best received.

**Verse 38. *Beware of the scribes***— See on Matthew 23:1, etc.

**Verse 41. *Cast money into the treasury***— It is worthy of observation, that the money put into the treasury, even by the rich, is termed by the evangelist *χάλκον*, brass money, probably that species of small brass coin which was called *פרוטא* prutah among the Jews, two of which make a farthing, and twenty-four an Italian assarius, which assarius is the twenty-fourth part of a silver penny. We call this, mite, from the French, miete, which signifies a crumb, or very small morsel. The prutah was the smallest coin in use among the Jews: and there is a canon among the rabbins that no person shall put less than two prutahs into the treasury. This poor widow would not give less, and her poverty prevented her from giving more. And whereas it is said that many rich persons cast in MUCH, *πολλα*, (many,) this may only refer to the number of the prutahs which they threw in, and not to the value. What opinion should we form of a rich man, who, in a collection for a public charity, only threw in a handful of halfpence? See Luke 21:1, and see the note on Matthew 5:26. The whole of this account is lacking in Matthew. Another proof that Mark did not abridge him.

Let us examine this subject a little more closely: Jesus prefers the widow's two mites to all the offerings made by the rich.

In the preceding account, Mark 12:41, it is said Jesus beheld how the people cast money into the treasury. To make this relation the more profitable, let us consider Christ the observer and judge of human actions.

1. Christ observes all men and all things: all our actions are before his eyes, what we do in public and what we do in private are equally known unto him.

2. He observes the state and situation we are in: his eye was upon the abundance of the rich who had given much; and he was well acquainted with the poverty and desolate state of the widow who had given her all, though that was but little in itself. What an awful thought for the rich! "God sees every penny I possess, and constantly observes how I lay it

out.” What a comfortable thought for the poor and desolate! The eye of the most merciful and bountiful Jesus continually beholds my poverty and distress, and will cause them to work for my good.

3. Christ sees all the motives which lead men to perform their respective actions; and the different motives which lead them to perform the same action: he knows whether they act through vanity, self-love, interest, ambition, hypocrisy, or whether through love, charity, zeal for his glory, and a hearty desire to please him.

4. He observes the circumstances which accompany our actions; whether we act with care or negligence, with a ready mind or with reluctance.

5. He observes the judgment which we form of that which we do in his name; whether we esteem ourselves more on account of what we have done, speak of it to others, dwell on our labors, sufferings, expenses, success, etc., or whether we humble ourselves because we have done so little good, and even that little in so imperfect a way.

## II. See the judgment Christ forms of our actions.

1. He appears surprised that so much piety should be found with so much poverty, in this poor widow.

2. He shows that works of charity, etc., should be estimated, not by their appearance, but by the spirit which produces them.

3. He shows by this that all men are properly in a state of equality; for though there is and ought to be a difference in outward things, yet God looks upon the heart, and the poorest person has it in his power to make his mite as acceptable to the Lord, by simplicity of intention, and purity of affection, as the millions given by the affluent. It is just in God to rate the value of an action by the spirit in which it is done.

4. He shows that men should judge impartially in cases of this kind, and not permit themselves to be carried away to decide for a person by the largeness of the gift on the one hand, or against him by the smallness of the bounty on the other. Of the poor widow it is said, She has cast in more than all the rich. Because: 1. She gave more; she gave her all, and they gave only a part. 2. She did this in a better spirit, having a simple desire to please God. Never did any king come near the liberality of this widow; she

gave all that she had, **ολον τον βιον αυτης**, her whole life, i.e. all that she had to provide for one day's sustenance, and could have no more till by her labor she had acquired it. What trust must there be in the Divine Providence to perform such an act as this!

Two important lessons may be learned from her conduct. 1. A lesson of humiliation to the rich, who, by reason of covetousness on the one hand, and luxury on the other, give but little to God and the poor. A lesson of reproof to the poor, who, through distrust of God's providence, give nothing at all. Our possessions can only be sanctified by giving a portion to God. There will be infallibly a blessing in the remainder, when a part has been given to God and the poor. If the rich and the poor reflect seriously on this, the one will learn pity, the other liberality, and both be blessed in their deed. He must be a poor man indeed who cannot find one poorer than himself.



## CHAPTER 13

*Jesus predicts the destruction of the temple, 1, 2. His disciples inquire when this shall be, and what previous sign there shall be of this calamity, 3, 4; which questions he answers very solemnly and minutely, 5-27; illustrates the whole by a parable, 28, 29; asserts the absolute certainty of the events, 30, 31; shows that the precise minute cannot be known by man, 32; and inculcates the necessity of watchfulness and prayer, 33-37.*

### NOTES ON MARK 13

**Verse 1.** *See what manner of stones*— Josephus says, ANT. b. xv. chap. 11: “That these stones were white and strong, FIFTY feet long, TWENTY-FOUR broad, and SIXTEEN in thickness.” If this account can be relied on, well might the disciples be struck with wonder at such a superb edifice, and formed by such immense stones! The principal contents of this chapter are largely explained in the notes on Matt. 24.; and to these the reader is requested to refer.

**Verse 6.** *Saying, I am*— The Christ, is added by eight MSS., Coptic, Armenian, Saxon, and four of the Itala.

**Verse 8.** *The beginnings*— For αρχαι, many MSS. and versions have αρχη, the beginning, singular.

**Verse 9.** *Councils*— συνεδρια, Sanhedrins. The grand Sanhedrin consisted of seventy-two elders; six chosen out of each tribe; this was the national council of state; and the small Sanhedrins, which were composed of twenty-three counsellors.

*Synagogues*— Courts of justice for villages, etc., consisting of three magistrates, chosen out of the principal directors of the synagogue in that place.

*Rulers*— Or governors. The Roman deputies, such as Pontius Pilate, etc.

**Kings**— The tetrarchs of Judea and Galilee, who bore this name. See Mark 6:27.

**Verse 10. *And the Gospel must first be published among all nations.***— Many of the Evangelistaria omit this verse. Its proper place seems to be after verse the thirteenth. {Mark 13:13}

**Verse 11. *Neither-premeditate***— This is wanting in BDL, five others, Coptic, AEthiopic, Vulgate, Itala. Griesbach leaves it doubtful. On this verse see Matthew 10:19.

**Verse 14. *Let him that readeth understand***— What he readeth, is added by D, and three of the Itala, perhaps needlessly.

**Verse 15. *House-top***— See on Matthew 24:17.

**Verse 20. *Had shortened those days***— Because of his chosen, added by D, Armenian, and five of the Itala. See Matthew 24:22.

**Verse 30. *This generation***— ἡ γενεα αὐτη, This very race of men. It is certain that this word has two meanings in the Scriptures; that given in the text, and that above. Generation signifies a period of a certain number of years, sometimes more, sometimes less. In Deuteronomy 1:35; 2:14, Moses uses the word to point out a term of thirty-eight years, which was precisely the number in the present case; for Jerusalem was destroyed about thirty-eight years after our Lord delivered this prediction. But as there are other events in this chapter, which certainly look beyond the destruction of Jerusalem, and which were to take place before the Jews should cease to be a distinct people, I should therefore prefer the translation given above. See on Matthew 24:34.

**Verse 32. *Neither the Son***— This clause is not found either in Matthew or Luke; and Ambrose says it was wanting in some Greek copies in his time. To me it is utterly unaccountable, how Jesus, who knew so correctly all the particulars which he here lays down, and which were to a jot and tittle verified by the event—how he who knew that not one stone should be left on another, should be ignorant of the day and hour when this should be done, though Daniel, Daniel 9:24, etc., could fix the very year, not less than five hundred years before it happened: how he in whom the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily, and all the treasures of wisdom and

knowledge, should not know this small matter, I cannot comprehend, but on this ground, that the Deity which dwelt in the man Christ Jesus might, at one time, communicate less of the knowledge of futurity to him than at another. However, I strongly suspect that the clause was not originally in this Gospel. Its not being found in the parallel places in the other evangelists is, in my opinion, a strong presumption against it. But Dr. Macknight, and others, solve this difficulty in the following manner. They suppose the verb *οἶδεν* to have the force of the Hebrew conjugation Hiphel, in which verbs are taken in a causative, declarative, or permissive sense; and that it means here, make known, or promulge, as it is to be understood in 1 Corinthians 2:2. This intimates that this secret was not to be made known, either by men or angels, no, not even by the Son of man himself; but it should be made known by the Father only, in the execution of the purposes of his justice. I am afraid this only cuts the knot, but does not untie it.

**Verse 34. *Left his house***—*οἰκίαν*, family. Our blessed Lord and Master, when he ascended to heaven, commanded his servants to be faithful and watchful. This fidelity to which he exhorts his servants consists in doing every thing well which is to be done, in the heart or in the family, according to the full extent of the duty. The watchfulness consists in suffering no stranger nor enemy to enter in by the senses, which are the gates of the soul; in permitting nothing which belongs to the Master to go out without his consent; and in carefully observing all commerce and correspondence which the heart may have abroad in the world, to the prejudice of the Master's service. See Quesnel.

**Verse 35. *Watch ye therefore***—The more the master is expected, the more diligent ought the servants to be in working, watching, and keeping themselves in readiness. Can one who has received the sentence of his death, and has no right to live a moment, need any admonition to prepare to die? Does not a prisoner who expects his deliverance, hold himself in continual readiness to leave his dungeon?

**Verse 36. *He find you sleeping***.—A porter asleep exposes the house to be robbed, and well deserves punishment. No wonder that the man is constantly suffering loss who is frequently off his guard.

Our Lord shows us in this parable: 1. That himself, ascended to heaven, is the man gone from home. 2. That believers collectively are his family. 3. That his servants are those who are employed in the work of faith and labor of love. 4. That the porter represents the ministers of his Gospel, who should continually watch for the safety and welfare of the whole flock. 5. That every one has his own work-that which belongs to himself and to none other, and for the accomplishment of which he receives sufficient strength from his Lord. 6. That these servants and porters shall give an account to their Lord, how they have exercised themselves in their respective departments. 7. And that as the master of the family will certainly come to require this account at a time when men are not aware, therefore they should be always watchful and faithful. And, 8, That this is a duty incumbent on every soul of man, What I say unto you, I say unto ALL, WATCH! If, after all these warnings, the followers of God be found careless, their misery and condemnation must be great.

## CHAPTER 14

*The Jews conspire against Christ, 1, 2. He is anointed in the house of Simon the Leper, 3-9. Judas Iscariot sells him to the chief priests for thirty pieces of money, 10, 11. He orders his disciples to prepare the passover, 12-16. Predicts his approaching death, 17-21. Institutes the holy eucharist, 22-26. Foretells the unfaithfulness of his disciples in general, 27, 28, and Peter's denial, 29-31. His agony in the garden, 32-36. The disciples overcome by sleep, 37-42. Judas comes with a mob from the chief priests, and betrays him with a kiss; they seize him, 43-49. The disciples flee, 50. A young man following, and about to be apprehended, makes his escape, 51, 52. Jesus is brought before the chief priests, and Peter follows at a distance, 53, 54. He is examined, insulted, and abused, and condemned on false evidence, 55-65. Peter thrice denies him, reflects on his wickedness, and repents of his sin, 66-72.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 14

**Verse 1. *Unleavened bread***— After they began to eat unleavened bread: see on Matthew 26:2.

**Verse 3. *Alabaster box***— Among critics and learned men there are various conjectures concerning the alabaster mentioned by the evangelists: some think it means a glass phial; others, that it signifies a small vessel without a handle, from α negative and λαβη, a handle; and others imagine that it merely signifies a perfume or essence bottle. There are several species of the soft calcareous stone called alabaster, which are enumerated and described in different chemical works.

***Spikenard***— Or nard. An Indian plant, whose root is very small and slender. It puts forth a long and small stalk, and has several ears or spikes even with the ground, which has given it the name of spikenard: the taste is bitter, acrid, and aromatic, and the smell agreeable. CALMET.

***Very precious***— Or rather, unadulterated: this I think is the proper meaning of πιστικης. Theophylact gives this interpretation of the

passage: “Unadulterated hard, and prepared with fidelity.” Some think that **πιστική** is a contraction of the Latin spicatae, and that it signifies the spicated nard, or what we commonly call the spikenard. But Dr. Lightfoot gives a different interpretation. **πιστική** he supposes to come from the Syriac **פִּיטְקָא** pistike, which signifies the acorn: he would therefore have it to signify an aromatic confection of nard, maste, or myrobalane. See his Hebrew and Talmudical Exercitations; and see Scheuchzer’s Physica Sacra.

***She brake the box***— Rather, she broke the seal. This is the best translation I can give of the place; and I give it for these reasons: 1. That it is not likely that a box exceedingly precious in itself should be broken to get out its contents. 2. That the broken pieces would be very inconvenient if not injurious to the head of our Lord, and to the hands of the woman. 3. That it would not be easy effectually to separate the oil from the broken pieces. And, 4. That it was a custom in the eastern countries to seal the bottles with wax that held the perfumes; so that to come at their contents no more was necessary than to break the seal, which this woman appears to have done; and when the seal was thus broken, she had no more to do than to pour out the liquid ointment, which she could not have done had she broken the bottle. The bottles which contain the [H] gul i attyr, or attyr of roses, which come from the east, are sealed in this manner. See a number of proofs relative to this point in HARMER’S Observations, vol. iv. 469. Pouring sweet-scented oil on the head is common in Bengal. At the close of the festival of the goddess Doorga, the Hindoos worship the unmarried daughters of Brahmins: and, among other ceremonies, pour sweet-scented oil on their heads. WARD’S Customs.

**Verse 5. *It might have been sold***— **το μύρον**, This ointment, is added by ABCDKL, thirty-five others, AEthiopic, Armenian, Gothic, all the Itala except one. Griesbach has received it into the text. The sum mentioned here would amount to nearly 10ú sterling.

**Verse 8. *To anoint my body to the burying***.— **εἰς τὸν ἐνταφιασμόν**, against, or in reference to, its embalmment, thus pointing out my death and the embalmment of my body, for the bodies of persons of distinction were wrapped up in aromatics to preserve them from putrefaction. See on Matthew 26:12.

**Verse 9. *For a memorial of her***.— See on Matthew 26:13.

**Verse 11. *They were glad***— The joy that arises from the opportunity of murdering an innocent person must be completely infernal.

**Verse 13. *Bearing a pitcher of water***— How correct is the foreknowledge of Jesus Christ! Even the minutest circumstances are comprehended by it! An honest employment, howsoever mean, is worthy the attention of God; and even a man bearing a pitcher of water is marked in all his steps, and is an object of the merciful regards of the Most High. This man was employed in carrying home the water which was to be used for baking the unleavened bread on the following day; for on that day it was not lawful to carry any: hence they were obliged to fetch it on the preceding evening.

**Verse 14. *Say ye to the good man of the house***— *εἰπατε τῷ οἰκοδεσποτῇ*— Say ye to the master of the house. The good man and the good woman mean, among us, the master and mistress of the house. A Hindoo woman never calls her husband by his name; but simply, the man of the house.

***Where is the guest chamber?***— Respectable householders, says Mr. Ward, have a room which they call the strangers' room, (*utit' hu-shala*), which is especially set apart for the use of guests. This appears to have been the custom in Judea also.

**Verse 15. *Furnished***— Spread with carpets—*ἐστρωμενον*—so this word is often used. See WAKEFIELD. But it may also signify the couches on which the guests reclined when eating. It does not appear that the Jews ate the passover now, as their fathers did formerly, standing, with their shoes on, and their staves in their hands.

**Verse 19. *And another said, Is it I?***— This clause is wanting in BCLP, seventeen others, Syriac, Persic, Arabic, Coptic, AEthiopic, Vulgate, and four of the Itala. Griesbach leaves it doubtful: others leave it out.

**Verse 20. *That dippeth with me in the dish.***— In the east, persons never eat together from one dish, except when a strong attachment subsists between two or more persons of the same caste; in such a case one invites another to come and sit by him and eat from the same dish. This custom seems to have existed among the Jews; and the sacred historian mentions this notice of our Lord's, It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish, to mark more strongly the perfidy of the character of Judas.

**Verse 21. *Goeth***— That is, to die. See on Matthew 26:24.

**Verse 22. *Eat***— This is omitted by many MSS. and versions, but I think without reason. It is found in the parallel places, Matthew 26:26; 1 Corinthians 11:24. See the subject of the Lord's Supper largely explained on Matthew 26:26, etc.

**Verse 30. *That THOU***— **σὺ** is added by ABEGHKLMS-V, eighty-eight others, Syriac, Arabic, Persic, Coptic, AEthiopic, Armenian, Slavonic, Vulgate, Saxon, Theophylact, and Euthymus. It adds much to the energy of the passage, every word of which is deeply emphatical. Verily, I say unto thee, that THOU, THIS DAY, in THIS VERY NIGHT, before the cock shall crow TWICE, THOU wilt deny ME.

**Verse 36. *Abba, Father***— This Syriac word, which intimates filial affection and respect, and parental tenderness, seems to have been used by our blessed Lord merely considered as man, to show his complete submission to his Father's will, and the tender affection which he was conscious his Father had for him, [S] Abba, Syriac, is here joined to **ο πατηρ**, Greek, both signifying father; so St. Paul, Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6. The reason is, that from the time in which the Jews became conversant with the Greek language, by means of the Septuagint version and their commerce with the Roman and Greek provinces, they often intermingled Greek and Roman words with their own language. There is the fullest evidence of this fact in the earliest writings of the Jews; and they often add a word of the same meaning in Greek to their own term; such as **קירי מרי**, **מורי**, Mori, **κύριε** my Lord, Lord; **פילי שער**, **פילי**, **πυλη**, shuar, gate, gate: and above, **אבא**, **πατηρ**, father, father: see several examples in Schoettgen. The words **אבא** and **אב** appear to have been differently used among the Hebrews; the first Abbi, was a term of civil respect; the second, Abba, a term of filial affection. Hence, Abba, Abbi, as in the Syriac version in this place, may be considered as expressing, My Lord, my Father. And in this sense St. Paul is to be understood in the places referred to above. See Lightfoot.

**Verse 37. *Saith unto Peter***— See on Matthew 26:40.

**Verse 51. *A certain young man***— Probably raised from his sleep by the noise which the rabble made who came to apprehend Jesus, having



wrapped the sheet or some of the bed-clothing about him, became thereby the more conspicuous: on his appearing, he was seized; but as they had no way of holding him, but only by the cloth which was wrapped round him, he disengaged himself from that, and so escaped out of their hands. This circumstance is not related by any other of the evangelists.

**Verse 52. *And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.***— It has often been intimated, by the inhabitants of India, that a European in strait clothes must be in great danger when his clothes take fire. From their loose clothing they can suddenly disengage themselves. When two Hindoos are engaged in a violent quarrel, and one seizes the clothing of the other, often the latter will leave his clothes in the hands of his opponent, and flee away naked. This seems to have been the case with the person mentioned above. See WARD'S Customs.

**Verse 54. *Peter followed***— On Peter's denial, see Matthew 26:57, etc.

***At the fire.***— *προς το φως*, literally, at the light, i.e. a fire that cast considerable light, in consequence of which, the maid servant was the better able to distinguish him: see Mark 14:67.

**Verse 61. *Of the Blessed?***— *θεου του ευλογητου*, Or, of God the blessed one. *θεου*, is added here by AK, ten others, Vulgate, and one of the Itala. It might be introduced into the text, put in Italics, if the authority of the MSS. and versions be not deemed sufficient. It appears necessary for the better understanding of the text. The adjective, however, conveys a good sense by itself, and is according to a frequent Hebrew form of speech.

**Verse 72. *And when he thought thereon, he wept.***— Or, he fell a weeping. This Mr. Wakefield thinks comes nearest to the original, *επιβαλων εκλαιε*. Others think it means the wrapping of his head in the skirts of his garment, through shame and anguish. Others think that *επιβαλων* rather refers to the violence, or hurry, with which he left the place, being impelled thereto by the terrors and remorse of his guilty conscience. Our own translation is as good as any.

## CHAPTER 15

*Jesus is brought before Pilate, examined, and accused, but makes no answer, 1-5. The multitude clamor for the release of Barabbas, and the crucifixion of Christ, 6-14. Pilate consents, and he is led away, mocked, insulted, and nailed to the cross, 15-26. Two thieves are crucified with him, 27, 28. While hanging on the cross, he is mocked and insulted, 29-32. The miraculous darkness and our Lord's death, 33-37. The rending of the veil, and the confession of the centurion, 38, 39. Several women attend and behold his death, 40, 41. Joseph of Arimathea begs the body from Pilate, and buries it, 42-46. Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of Joses, note the place of his burial, 47.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 15

**Verse 1.** *In the morning*— See Matthew 27:1, etc.

**Verse 8.** *The multitude crying aloud*— αναβοησας. The word itself strongly marks the vociferations, or, to come nearer the original word, the bellowing of the multitude. It signifies, properly, a loud and long cry, such as Christ emitted on the cross. See the whole history of these proceedings against our Lord treated at large, on Matthew 27. {Matthew 27:1-26, etc.}

**Verse 17.** *And platted a crown of thorns*— In the note on Matthew 27:29, I have ventured to express a doubt whether our Lord was crowned with thorns, in our sense of the word; this crown being designed as an instrument of torture. I am still of the same opinion, having considered the subject more closely since writing that note. As there I have referred to Bishop Pearce, a man whose merit as a commentator is far beyond my praise, and who, it is to be regretted, did not complete his work on the New Testament, I think it right to insert the whole of his note here.

“The word ακανθων may as well be the plural genitive case of the word ακανθος as of ακανθη: if of the latter, it is rightly translated, of thorns; but the former would signify what we call bear's-foot, and the French, *branche ursine*. This is not of the thorny kind of plants, but is soft and

smooth. Virgil calls it *mollis acanthus*, Ecl. iii. 45, Geor. iv. 137. So does Pliny, sec. Epist. ver. 6. And Pliny the elder, in his Nat. Hist. xxii. 22, p. 277, edit. Hard., says that it is *laevis*, smooth; and that it is one of those plants that are cultivated in gardens. I have somewhere read, but cannot at present recollect where, that this soft and smooth herb was very common in and about Jerusalem. I find nothing in the New Testament said concerning this crown, which Pilate's soldiers put on the head of Jesus, to incline one to think that it was of thorns, and intended, as is usually supposed, to put him to pain. The reed put into his hand, and the scarlet robe on his back, were only meant as marks of mockery and contempt. One may also reasonably judge, by the soldiers being said to plait this crown, that it was not composed of such twigs and leaves as were of a thorny nature. I do not find that it is mentioned by any of the primitive Christian writers as an instance of the cruelty used towards our Savior, before he was led to his crucifixion, till the time of Tertullian, who lived after Jesus's death at the distance of above 160 years. He indeed seems to have understood *ακανθων* in the sense of thorns, and says, Deuteronomy Corona Militar. sect. xiv. edit. Pamel. Franck. 1597, Quale, oro te, Jesus Christus sertum pro utroque sexu subiit? Exodus spinis, opinor, et tribulis. The total silence of Polycarp, Barnabas, Clem. Romanus, and all the other Christian writers whose works are now extant, and who wrote before Tertullian, in particular, will give some weight to incline one to think that this crown was not platted with thorns. But as this is a point on which we have not sufficient evidence, I leave it almost in the same state of uncertainty in which I found it. The reader may see a satisfactory account of *acanthus*, bear's-foot, in Quincy's English Dispensatory, part ii. sect. 3, edit. 8, 1742."

This is the whole of the learned and judicious prelate's note; on which I have only to observed that the species of *acanthus* described by Virgil and the two Plinys, as *mollis* and *laevis*, soft and smooth, is, no doubt, the same as that formerly used in medicine, and described by Quincy and other pharmacopaeists; but there are other species of the same plant that are prickly, and particularly those called the *acanthus spinosus*, and the *ilicifolius*, the latter of which is common in both the Indies: this has leaves something like our common holly, the jagged edges of which are armed with prickles; but I do not conceive that this kind was used, nor indeed

any other plant of a thorny nature, as the Roman soldiers who platted the crown could have no interest in adding to our Lord's sufferings; though they smote him with the rod, yet their chief object was to render him ridiculous, for pretending, as they imagined, to regal authority. The common wild acanthas or bear's-foot, which I have often met in the dry turf bogs in Ireland, though it have the appearance of being prickly, yet is not, in fact, so. Several shoots grow from one root, about four or five inches long, and about as thick as a little finger. A parcel of such branches, platted by their roots in a string, might be made to look even ornamental, tied about the temples and round the head. It would finely imitate a crown or diadem. But I know not if this plant be a native of Judea.

**Verse 21. *A Cyrenian***— One of Cyrene, a celebrated city in the Pentapolis of Libya.

***The father of Alexander and Rufus***— It appears that these two persons were well known among the first disciples of our Lord. It is not unlikely that this is the same Alexander who is mentioned, Acts 19:33, and that the other is the Rufus spoken of by St. Paul, Romans 16:13.

**Verse 25. *The third hour***— It has been before observed, that the Jews divided their night into four watches, of three hours each. They also divided the day into four general parts. The first began at sunrise. The second three hours after. The third at mid-day. The fourth three hours after, and continued till sunset. Christ having been nailed to the cross a little after mid-day, John 19:14-16, 17, and having expired about three o'clock, Mark 15:33, the whole business of the crucifixion was finished within the space of this third division of the day, which Mark calls here the third hour. Commentators and critics have found it very difficult to reconcile this third hour of Mark, with the sixth hour of John, John 19:14. It is supposed that the true reading, in John 19:14, should be **τριτη**, the third, instead of **εκτη** the sixth; a mistake which might have readily taken place in ancient times, when the character **γ** gamma, which was put for **τριτη**, three, might have been mistaken for **Γρεκ** episema, or sigma tau, which signifies six. And **τριτη**, the third, instead of **εκτη**, the sixth, is the reading of some very eminent MSS. in the place in question, John 19:14. See Bengel, Newcome, Macknight, Lightfoot, Rosenmuller, etc., on this perplexing point.

**Verse 27. *Two thieves***— A copy of the Itala tells their names: One on the right hand-named Zoathon; and one on the left hand-named Chammatha.

**Verse 28. *The scripture was fulfilled***— All this verse is wanting in many MSS., some versions, and several of the fathers.

**Verse 32. *And believe***— In him is added by DFGHPBHV, and upwards of sixty others; as also the Armenian, Slavonic, and four Itala.

**Verse 34. *My God, my God, etc.***— See on Matthew 27:46.

**Verse 37. *Gave up the ghost***— This was about three o'clock, or what was termed by the Jews the ninth hour; about the time that the paschal lamb was usually sacrificed. The darkness mentioned here must have endured about two hours and a half. Concerning this eclipse, see on Matthew 27:45.

**Verse 40. *Joses***— Some MSS. and versions read Joset, others Joseph. See on Matthew 27:56.

**Verse 42. *The day before the Sabbath***— What we would call Friday evening. As the law of Moses had ordered that no criminal should continue hanging on a tree or gibbet till the setting of the sun, Joseph, fearing that the body of our Lord might be taken down, and thrown into the common grave with the two robbers, came and earnestly entreated Pilate to deliver it to him, that he might bury it in his own new tomb. See on Matthew 27:56, 60.

**Verse 43. *Went in boldly unto Pilate***— He who was a coward before now acts a more open, fearless part, than any of the disciples of our Lord! This the Holy Spirit has thought worthy of especial notice. It needed no small measure of courage to declare now for Jesus, who had been a few hours ago condemned as a blasphemer by the Jews, and as a seditious person by the Romans; and this was the more remarkable in Joseph, because hitherto, for fear of the Jews, he had been only a secret disciple of our Lord. See John 19:38.

The apostle says, We have BOLDNESS to enter into the holiest through his blood. Strange as it may appear, the death of Jesus is the grand cause of confidence and courage to a believing soul.

**Verse 47. *Beheld where he was laid.***— The courage and affection of these holy women cannot be too much admired. The strength of the Lord is perfected in weakness; for here a timid man, and a few weak women, acknowledge Jesus in death, when the strong and the mighty utterly forsook him.

HUMAN strength and human weakness are only names in religion. The mightiest MAN, in the hour of trial, can do nothing without the strength of God; and the weakest WOMAN can do all things, if Christ strengthen her. These truths are sufficiently exemplified in the case of Peter and all his brother disciples on the one hand; and Joseph of Arimathea and the two Marys on the other. And all this is recorded, equally to prevent both presumption and despair. Reader, let not these examples be produced before thee in vain.

## CHAPTER 16

*Early in the morning after the Sabbath, the three Marys come to the sepulcher, bringing sweet spices to embalm the body, 1-4. They see an angel who announces the resurrection of our Lord, 5-8. Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene, who goes and tells the disciples, 9-11. He appears also to the two disciples who were going into the country, who also tell it to the rest, 12, 13. Afterwards he appears unto the eleven, and commissions them to preach the Gospel to all mankind, 14-16. And promises to endue them with power to work miracles, 17, 18. He is received up into heaven, 19. And they go forth to preach and work miracles, 20.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 16

**Verse 1. *And anoint him.***— Rather, to embalm him. This is a proof that they had not properly understood what Christ had so frequently spoken, viz. that he would rise again the third day. And this inattention or unbelief of theirs is a proof of the truth of the resurrection.

**Verse 2. *Very early in the morning,***— This was the time they left their own houses, and by the rising of the sun they got to the tomb. As the preceding day was the Sabbath, they could not, consistently with the observances of that day, approach the tomb. See the concluding notes at the end of John. {John 21:25}

The following observations from Lightfoot will serve to illustrate this subject.

“The distinction of the twilight among the rabbins was this:-

“I. אֵילָחָא הַשְּׁחֵרָא The hinde of the morning-the first appearance. R. Chaia Rab, and R. Simeon ben Chalaphta, travelling together on a certain morning in the valley of Arbel, saw the hinde of the morning, that its light spread the sky. R. Chaia said, Such shall be the redemption of Israel. First, it goes forward by degrees, and by little and little; but by how much the more it shall go forward, by so much the more it shall increase. It was

at that time that Christ arose, namely, in the first morning, as may be gathered from the words of St. Matthew. And to this the title of the 22d Psalm seems to have respect- **על איילת השחר**. See also Revelation 22:16, I am the bright and morning star. And now you may imagine the women went out of their houses towards the sepulchre.

“II. **משיכיר בי הכלת ללב** When one may distinguish between purple color and white. From what time do they recite their phylacterical prayers in the morning? From that time that one may distinguish between purple color and white. R. Eliezer saith, Between purple color and green. Before this time was *obscurum adhuc caeptae lucis*, the obscurity of the begun light, as Tacitus’s expression is.

“III. **משיארו המזרח** When the east begins to lighten.

“IV. **בנין החמה** Sunrise; from the hinde of the morning going forth, until the east begins to lighten; and from the time the east begins to lighten, until sunrise, etc.

“According to these four parts of time, one might not improperly suit the four phrases of the evangelists. According to the first, Matthew’s, **τη επιφωσκειν**, As it began to dawn. According to the second, John’s, **πρωι σκοτίας ετι ουσης**, Early in the morning when it was yet dark. To the third, Luke’s, **ορθρου βαθεως**, Very early in the morning. To the fourth, Mark’s, **λιαν πρωι**, Very early in the morning. And yet, **ανατειλαντος του ηλιου**, At the rising of the sun. For the women came twice to the sepulchre, as St. John teaches, by whom the other evangelists are to be explained; which being well considered, the reconciling them together is very easy.”

**Verse 4. *For it was very great***— This clause should be read immediately after the third verse, according to D, three copies of the Itala, Syriac, Hier., and Eusebius. “Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? for it was very great. And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away.” They knew that the stone was too heavy for them to roll away; and, unless they got access to the body, they could not apply the aromatics which they had brought to finish the embalming.



**Verse 6. *Jesus of Nazareth***— The Jews had given this name to Christ by way of reproach, Matthew 2:23; but as it was under this name that he was crucified, John 19:19, the angel here, and the apostles after, have given him the same name, Acts 4:10, etc. Names which the world, in derision, fixes all the followers of God, often become the general appellatives of religious bodies: thus Quakers, Puritans, Pietists, and Methodists, have in their respective times been the nicknames, given in derision by the world, to those who separated themselves from its corruptions. Our Lord, by continuing to bear the name of the Nazarene, teaches us not to be too nice or scrupulous in fixing our own appellation. No matter what the name may be, as long as it implies no particular evil, and serves sufficiently to mark us out. Let us be contented to bear it, and thus carry about with us the reproach of Christ; always taking care to keep our garments unspotted from the world.

**Verse 7. *Tell his disciples and Peter***— Why is not Peter included among the disciples? For this plain reason,-he had forfeited his discipleship, and all right to the honor and privileges of an apostle, by denying his Lord and Master. However, he is now a penitent:-tell him that Jesus is risen from the dead, and is ready to heal his backsliding, and love him freely; so that, after being converted, he may strengthen his brethren.

**Verse 9. *Now when Jesus was risen, etc.***— This, to the conclusion of the Gospel, is wanting in the famous Codex Vaticanus, and has anciently been wanting in many others. See Wetstein and Griesbach. In the margin of the later Syriac version, there is a remarkable addition after this verse; it is as follows:-And they declared briefly all that was commanded, to them that were with Peter. Afterward Jesus himself published by them, from east to west, the holy and incorruptible preaching of eternal salvation. Amen.

***Mary Magdalene***— It seems likely that, after this woman had carried the news of Christ's resurrection to the disciples, she returned alone to the tomb; and that it was then that Christ appeared to her, John 20:1-12; and a little after he appeared to all the women together, Matthew 28:9; Luke 24:16.

**Verse 10. *Them that had been with him***— Not only the eleven disciples, but several others who had been the occasional companions of Christ and the apostles.

**Mourned and wept.**— Because they had lost their Lord and Master, and had basely abandoned him in his extremity.

**Verse 12. *He appeared-unto two of them***— These were the two who were going to Emmaus. The whole account is given by Luke, Luke 24:13-34, where see the notes.

Dr. Lightfoot's criticism upon this passage is worthy of notice.

"That, in the verses immediately going before, the discourse is of the two disciples going to Emmaus, is without all controversy. And then how do these things consist with that relation in Luke, who saith, That they two, returning to Jerusalem, found the eleven gathered together, and they that were with them; who said, The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon? Luke 24:34. The word λεγοντας, saying, evidently makes those to be the words των ενδεκα, of the eleven, and of those that were gathered together with them; which, when you read the versions, you would scarcely suspect. For when that word is rendered by the SYRIAC, [S] cad amrin; by the ARABIC, [A] wehom yekolon; by the VULGATE, dicentes; by the ITALIAN, dicendo; by the FRENCH, disans; by the ENGLISH, saying; who, I pray, would take it in another sense, than that those two that returned from Emmaus said, The Lord is risen indeed, etc.? But in the original Greek, when it is the accusative case, it is plainly to be referred to the eleven disciples, and those that were together with them; as if they had discoursed among themselves of the appearance made to Peter, either before, or now in the very access of those two coming from Emmaus. And yet, says this our evangelist, that when those two had related the whole business, they gave no credit to them; so that, according to Luke, they believed Christ was risen, and had appeared to Simon, before they told their story; but, according to Mark, they believed it not, no, not when they had told it. The reconciling therefore of the evangelists is to be fetched thence, that those words pronounced by the eleven, ὅτι ηγερθη ο κυριος οντως, etc., The Lord is risen indeed, etc., do not manifest their absolute confession of the resurrection of Christ, but a conjectural reasoning of the sudden and unexpected return of Peter. I believe that Peter was going with Cleophas into Galilee, and that being moved with the words of Christ, told him by the women, Say to his disciples and Peter, I go before you into Galilee-think with yourself how doubtful Peter was,

and how he fluctuated within himself after his threefold denial, and how he gasped to see the Lord again, if he were risen, and to cast himself an humble suppliant at his feet. When therefore he heard these things from the women, (and he had heard it indeed from Christ himself, while he was yet alive, that when he arose he would go before them into Galilee,) and when the rest were very little moved with the report of his resurrection, nor as yet stirred from that place, he will try a journey into Galilee, and Alpheus with him; which, when it was well known to the rest, and they saw him return so soon and so unexpectedly—Certainly, say they, the Lord is risen, and hath appeared to Peter, otherwise he had not so soon come back again. And yet, when he and Cleophas open the whole matter, they do not yet believe even them.”

**Verse 14. *And upbraided them with their unbelief***— Never were there a people so difficult to be persuaded of the truth of spiritual things as the disciples. It may be justly asserted, that people of so skeptical a turn of mind would never credit any thing till they had the fullest evidence of its truth. The unbelief of the disciples is a strong proof of the truth of the Gospel of God. See the addition at the end. {Mark 16:20}

**Verse 15. *Go ye into all the world***— See on Matthew 28:19.

***And preach the Gospel to every creature.***— Proclaim the glad tidings-of Christ crucified; and raised from the dead-to all the creation, παση τη κτισει-to the Gentile world; for in this sense בריות berioth, is often understood among the rabbins; because HE, through the grace of God, hath tasted death for EVERY man, Hebrews 2:9. And on the rejection of the Gospel by the Jews, it was sent to the whole Gentile world.

**Verse 16. *He that believeth***— He that credits this Gospel as a revelation from God: and is baptized-takes upon him the profession of it, obliging himself to walk according to its precepts: he shall be saved-redeemed from sin here, and brought at last to the enjoyment of my eternal glory. But he that believeth not, shall be damned-because he rejects the only provision that could be effectual to his soul's salvation.

**Verse 17. *These signs shall follow***— Or rather, accompany; this is the proper import of the original word παρακολουθησει, from παρα with, and ακολουθεω, I follow.

***Them that believe***— The believers, as we express it; i.e. the apostles, and all those who in those primitive times were endued with miraculous powers, for the confirmation of the doctrines they preached.

***In my name***— That is, by the authority and influence of the almighty Jesus.

***Cast out devils***— Whose kingdom Jesus Christ was manifested to destroy.

***Speak with new tongues***— This was most literally fulfilled on the day of pentecost, Acts 2:4-19.

**Verse 18. *Take up serpents***— Several MSS. add *εν ταῖς χερσιν*, in their hands—shall be enabled to give, when such a proof may be serviceable to the cause of truth, this evidence of their being continually under the power and protection of God, and that all nature is subject to him. This also was literally fulfilled in the case of Paul, Acts 28:5.

***If they drink any deadly thing***— *θανασιμον (φαρμακον)* being understood—if they should through mistake, or accident, drink any poisonous matter, their constant preserver will take care that it shall not injure them. See a similar promise, Isaiah 43:2.

***They shall lay hands on the sick***— And I will convey a healing power by their hands, so that the sick shall recover, and men shall see that these are sent and acknowledged by the Most High. Several instances of this kind are found in the Acts of the Apostles.

That the apostles of our Lord should not lose their lives by poison is most fully asserted in this verse, and there is neither record nor tradition to disprove this. But it is worthy of remark, that Mohammed, who styled himself THE APOSTLE OF GOD, lost his life by poison; and had he been a true apostle of God, he could not have fallen by it. Al Kodai, Abul Feda, and Al Janabi, give the following account.

When Mohammed, in the seventh year of the Hejra, A. D. 628, had taken the city of Kheebur, from the Arab Jews, he took up his lodgings at the house of Hareth, the father of Marhab the Jewish general, who had been slain at the taking of the city by Alee, the son-in-law of Mohammed. Zeenab the daughter of Hareth, who was appointed to dress the prophet's dinner, to avenge the fall of her people, and the death of her brother, put

poison in a roasted lamb which was provided for the occasion. Bashar, one of his companions, falling on too hastily, fell dead on the spot. Mohammed had only chewed one mouthful, but had not swallowed it: though, on perceiving that it was poisoned, he immediately spat it out, yet he had swallowed a sufficiency of the juice to lay the foundation of his death; though this did not take place till about three years after: but that it was the cause of his death then, his dying words related by Al Janabi, and others, sufficiently testify. When the mother of Bashar came to see him in his dying agonies, he thus addressed her: “O mother of Bashar, I now feel the veins of my heart bursting through the poison of that morsel which I ate with thy son at Kheebar.”

Abul Feda, Ebnol Athir, and Ebn Phares say, that the prophet acknowledged on his death-bed, that the poison which he had taken at Kheebar had tormented him from that time until then, notwithstanding blisters were applied to his shoulders, and every thing done in the beginning to prevent its effects. Al Kodai and Al Janabi relate, that when Zeenab was questioned why she did this, she answered to this effect: “I said in my heart, If he be a king, we shall hereby be freed from his tyranny; and if he be a prophet, he will easily perceive it, and consequently receive no injury.” To support his credit, he pretended that the lamb spoke to him, and said that it was infected with poison! See Elmakin, p. 8. It was therefore policy in him not to put Zeenab to death. It has pleased God that this fact should be acknowledged by the dying breath of this scourge of the earth; and that several of even the most partial Mohammedan historians should relate it! And, thus attested, it stands for the complete and everlasting refutation of his pretensions to the prophetic spirit and mission. Vide Specimen Hist. Arabum, a ПОСЛОЖИО, p. 189, 190. Leviticus Coran traduit par SAVARY, vol. i; p. 135, and 212. See also, The Life of Mohammed by PRIDEAUX, 93, 101.

**Verse 19. *After the Lord had spoken***— These things, and conversed with them for forty days, he was taken up into heaven, there to appear in the presence of God for us.

**Verse 20. *The Lord working with them***— This co-operation was twofold, internal and external. Internal, illuminating their minds, convincing them of the truth, and establishing them in it. External, conveying their word to the

souls that heard it, by the demonstration of the Holy Ghost; convincing them of sin, righteousness, and judgment; justifying them by his blood, and sanctifying them by his Spirit. Though miraculous powers are not now requisite, because the truth of the Gospel has been sufficiently confirmed, yet this co-operation of God is indispensably necessary, without which no man can be a successful preacher; and without which no soul can be saved.

**With signs following.**— *επακολουθουντων σημειων*, the accompanying signs: viz. those mentioned in the 17th and 18th verses, {Mark 16:17, 18}, and those others just now spoken of, which still continue to be produced by the energy of God, accompanying the faithful preaching of his unadulterated word.

**Amen.**— This is added here by many MSS. and versions; but is supposed not to have made a part of the text originally. Griesbach, Bengel, and others, leave it out.

St. Jerome mentions certain Greek copies, which have the following remarkable addition to Mark 16:14, after these words- and reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen him after he was raised up: *Et illi satisfaciebant dicentes: seculum istud iniquitatis et incredulitatis substantia est, quae non sinit per immundos spiritus verem Dei apprehendi virtutem. Idcirco, jam nunc revela justitiam tuam.* “And they confessed the charge, saying: This age is the substance of iniquity and unbelief, which, through the influence of impure spirits, does not permit the true influence of God to be apprehended. Therefore, even now, reveal thy righteousness.”

There are various subscriptions to this book in the MSS. and versions; the principal are the following: “The holy Gospel according to Mark is ended written by him-in EGYPT-in ROME-in the Latin tongue-directed by Peter the 10th-12th year after the ascension of Christ-preached in Alexandria, and all its coasts.” Dr. Lardner supposes this Gospel to have been composed A. D. 64 or 65, and published before the end of the last mentioned year. See the Preface. {Mark 1:1}

The Gospel according to Mark, if not an abridgment of the Gospel according to Matthew, contains a neat, perspicuous abridgment of the history of our Lord; and, taken in this point of view, is very satisfactory;

and is the most proper of all the four Gospels to be put into the hands of young persons, in order to bring them to an acquaintance with the great facts of evangelical history. But as a substitute for the Gospel by Matthew, it should never be used. It is very likely that it was written originally for the use of the Gentiles, and probably for those of Rome. Of this, there seem to be several evidences in the work itself. Of the other Gospels it is not only a grand corroborating evidence, but contains many valuable hints for completing the history of our Lord, which have been omitted by the others; and thus, in the mouths of FOUR witnesses, all these glorious and interesting facts are established.

One thing may be observed, that this Gospel has suffered more by the carelessness and inaccuracy of transcribers than any of the others: and hence the various readings in the MSS. are much more numerous, in proportion, than in the other evangelists. Every thing of this description, which I judged to be of real importance, I have carefully noted.

Though the matter of St. Mark's work came from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, yet the language seems to be entirely his own: it is very plain, simple, and unadorned; and sometimes appears to approach to a degree of rusticity or inelegance. Whoever reads the original must be struck with the very frequent, and often pleonastic, occurrence of *ευθεως*, immediately, and *παλιν*, again, and such like; but these detract nothing from the accuracy and fidelity of the work. The Hebraisms which abound in it may be naturally expected from a native of Palestine, writing in Greek. The Latinisms which frequently occur are accounted for on the ground of this Gospel being written for the Gentiles, and particularly for the Roman people: this, it must be confessed, is only theory, but it is a theory which stands supported by many arguments, and highly presumptive facts. However this may be, the Gospel according to Mark is a very important portion of Divine revelation, which God has preserved by a chain of providences, from the time of its promulgation until now; and for which no truly pious reader will hesitate to render due praise to that God whose work is ever perfect. Amen.

# PREFACE

TO THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

ST. LUKE

WITH A SHORT ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE

THERE is little certain known of this evangelist: from what is spoken in the Scriptures, and by the best informed of the primitive fathers, the following probable account is collected:-

Luke was, according to Dr. Lardner, a Jew by birth, and an early convert to Christianity; but Michaelis thinks he was a Gentile, and brings Colossians 4:10, 11, 14, in proof, where St. Paul distinguished Aristarchus, Marcus, and Jesus, who was called Justus, from Epaphras, Lucas, and Demas, who were of the circumcision, i.e. Jews. Some think he was one of our Lord's seventy disciples. It is worthy of remark that he is the only evangelist who mentions the commission given by Christ to the seventy, Luke 10:1-20. It is likely he is the Lucius mentioned Romans 16:21, and if so he was related to the Apostle Paul, and that it is the same Lucius of Cyrene who is mentioned Acts 13:1, and in general with others, Acts 11:20. Some of the ancients, and some of the most learned and judicious among the moderns, think he was one of the two whom our Lord met on the way to Emmaus on the day of his resurrection, as related Luke 24:13-35; one of these was called Cleopas, Luke 24:18, the other is not mentioned, the evangelist, himself, being the person and the relator.

St. Paul styles him his fellow-laborer, Phm 24. It is barely probable that he is the person mentioned, Colossians 4:14, Luke, the beloved physician. All the ancients of repute, such as Eusebius, Gregory Nyssen, Jerome, Paulinus, Euthalius, Euthymius, and others, agree that he was a physician,



but where he was born, and where he exercised the duties of his profession, are not known. Many moderns have attributed to him the most profound skill in the science of painting, and that he made some pictures of the Virgin Mary. This is justly esteemed fabulous; nor is this science attributed to him by any writer previously to Nicephorus Callisti, in the fourteenth century, an author who scarcely deserves any credit, especially in relations not confirmed by others.

He accompanied St. Paul when he first went into Macedonia, Acts 16:8-40; 20:1ff; 27:1ff; 28:1ff. Whether he went with him constantly afterwards is not certain; but it is evident he accompanied him from Greece through Macedonia and Asia to Jerusalem, where he is supposed to have collected many particulars of the evangelic history: from Jerusalem he went with Paul to Rome, where he stayed with him the two years of his imprisonment in that city. This alone makes out the space of five years, and upwards. It is probable that he left St. Paul when he was set at liberty, and that he then went into Greece, where he finished and published this Gospel, and the book of the Acts, which he dedicated to Theophilus, an honorable Christian friend of his in that country. It is supposed that he died in peace about the eightieth or eighty-fourth year of his age. Some suppose he published this Gospel fifteen, others twenty-two years after the ascension of Christ.

See much on this subject in Lardner, Works, vol. vi. p. 104, etc., and in Michaelis's Introduction to the New Testament.

Some learned men think that Luke has borrowed considerably from St. Matthew: collate Luke 3:7-9, 16, 17, with Matthew 3:7-12; also Luke 5:20-38, with Matthew 9:2-17; also Luke 6:1-5, with Matthew 12:1-5; Luke 7:22-28, with Matthew 11:4-11; also Luke 12:22-31, with Matthew 6:25-33. It is allowed that there is considerable diversity in the order of time between St. Matthew and St. Luke, which is accounted for thus: Matthew deduces the facts related in his history in chronological order. Luke, on the contrary, appears to have paid little attention to this order, because he proposed to make a classification of events, referring each to its proper class, without paying any attention to chronological arrangement. Some critics divide this history into five distinct classes or sections, in the following manner:-

CLASS I. Comprehends all the details relative to the birth of Christ; with the preceding, concomitant, and immediately succeeding circumstances. Luke 1:1ff, and 2:1-40.

CLASS II. Contains a description of our Lord's infancy and bringing up; his visit to the temple when twelve years of age; and his going down to Nazareth and continuing under the government of his parents; Luke 2:41-52.

CLASS III. Contains the account of the preaching of John Baptist, and his success; the baptism of Christ, and his genealogy. Luke 3:1ff.

CLASS IV. Comprehends the account of all our Lord's transactions in Galilee, for the whole three years of his ministry, from Luke 4:1ff to Luke 9:1-50. This seems evident: for as soon as Luke had given the account of our Lord's temptation in the deserts Luke 4:1-13, he represents him as immediately returning in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, Luke 4:14; mentions Nazareth, Luke 4:16; Capernaum, Luke 4:31; and the lake of Galilee, Luke 5:1; and thus, to Luke 9:50, goes on to describe the preaching, miracles, etc.; of our Lord in Galilee.

CLASS V. and last, commences at Luke 9:51, where the evangelist gives an account of our Lord's last journey to Jerusalem: therefore this class contains, not only all the transactions of our Lord from that time to his crucifixion, but also, the account of his resurrection, his commission to his apostles, and his ascension to heaven. Luke 9:51, to Luke 24:53, inclusive.

A plan similar to this has been followed by Suetonius, In his life of Augustus: he does not produce his facts in chronological order, but classifies them, as he himself professes, cap. 12, giving an account of all his wars, honors, legislative acts, discipline, domestic life, etc., etc. MATTHEW therefore, is to be consulted for the correct arrangement of facts in chronological order: Luke, for a classification of facts and events, without any attention to the order of time in which they occurred. Many eminent historians have conducted their narratives in the same way. See Rosenmuller. It must not, however, be forgotten, that this evangelist gives us some very valuable chronological data in several parts of the three first chapters. These shall be noticed in their proper places.

# THE GOSPEL

## ACCORDING TO

## ST. LUKE

-Usherian year of the World, 3999. -Alexandrian year of the World, 5497. -Antiochian year of the World, 5487. -Constantinopolitan AEra of the World, 5503. -Rabbinical year of the World, 3754. -Year of the Julian Period, 4708. -AEra of the Seleucidae, 307. -Year before the Christian AEra, 6. -Year of the CXCI<sup>III</sup>. Olympiad, 3. -Year of the building of Rome, 748. -Year of the Julian AEra, 41. -Year of the Caesarean AEra of Antioch, 44. -Year of the Spanish AEra, 34. -Year of the Paschal Cycle or Dionysian Period, 529. -Year of the Christian Lunar Cycle, or Golden Number, 15. -Year of the Rabbinical Lunar Cycle, 12. -Year of the Solar Cycle, 4. -Dominical Letter, C. -Epact, 4. -Year of the Emperor Augustus, 25. -Consuls, D. Laelius Balbus, and C. Antistius Vetus, from January 1 to July 1; and Imp. C. Julius Caesar Octav. Augustus XII. and L. Cornelius Sulla, for the remainder of the year. The reason why two sets of Consuls appear in this Chronology is this: the Consuls were changed every year in July, therefore, taking in the whole year, four Consuls necessarily appear: two for the first six months, and two for the latter half of the year.

## CHAPTER 1

*The preface, or St. Luke's private epistle to Theophilus, 1-4. The conception and birth of John Baptist foretold by the angel Gabriel, 5-17. Zacharias doubts, 18. And the angel declares he shall be dumb, till the accomplishment of the prediction, 19-25. Six months after the angel Gabriel appears to the virgin Mary, and predicts the miraculous conception and birth of Christ, 26-38. Mary visits her cousin Elisabeth, 39-45. Mary's song of exultation and praise, 46-56. John the Baptist is born, 57-66. The prophetic song of his father Zacharias, 67-79. John is educated in the desert, 80.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 1

**Verse 1. *Many have taken in hand***— Great and remarkable characters have always many biographers. So it appears it was with our Lord: but as most of these accounts were inaccurate, recording as facts things which had not happened; and through ignorance or design mistaking others, especially in the place where St. Luke wrote; it seemed good to the Holy Spirit to inspire this holy man with the most correct knowledge of the whole history of our Lord's birth, preaching, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension, that the sincere, upright followers of God might have a sure foundation, on which they might safely build their faith. See the note on Luke 9:10.

***Most surely believed among us***— Facts confirmed by the fullest evidence-των πεπληροφορημενων πραγματος. Every thing that had been done or said by Jesus Christ was so public, so plain, and so accredited by thousands of witnesses, who could have had no interest in supporting an imposture, as to carry the fullest conviction, to the hearts of those who heard and saw him, of the divinity of his doctrine, and the truth of his miracles.

**Verse 2. *Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses***— Probably this alludes to the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, which it is likely were written before St. Luke wrote his, and on the

models of which he professes to write his own; and **ἀπ' αρχης**, from the beginning, must mean, from the time that Christ first began to proclaim the glad tidings of the kingdom; and **αυτοπται**, eye-witnesses, must necessarily signify, those who had been with him from the beginning, and consequently had the best opportunities of knowing the truth of every fact.

**Ministers of the word**— **του λογου**. Some suppose that our blessed Lord is meant by this phrase; as **ο λογος**, the Word or Logos, is his essential character in John 1:1, etc.; but it does not appear that any of the inspired penmen ever use the word in this sense except John himself; for here it certainly means the doctrine of Christ; and in this sense **λογος** is frequently used both by the evangelists and apostles.

**Verse 3. Having had perfect understanding**— **παρηκολουθηκοτι ανωθεν**, Having accurately traced up-entered into the very spirit of the work, and examined every thing to the bottom; in consequence of which investigation, I am completely convinced of the truth of the whole. Though God gives his Holy Spirit to all them who ask him, yet this gift was never designed to set aside the use of those faculties with which he has already endued the soul, and which are as truly his gifts as the Holy Spirit itself is. The nature of inspiration, in the case of St. Luke, we at once discover: he set himself, by impartial inquiry and diligent investigation, to find the whole truth, and to relate nothing but the truth; and the Spirit of God presided over and directed his inquiries, so that he discovered the whole truth, and was preserved from every particle of error.

**From the very first**— **ανωθεν**, from their origin. Some think **ανωθεν** should, in this place, be translated from above; and that it refers to the inspiration by which St. Luke wrote. I prefer our translation, or, from the origin, which several good critics contend for, and which meaning it has in some of the best Greek writers. See Kypke.

**Theophilus**— As the literal import of this word is friend of God, **θεου φιλος**, some have supposed that under this name Luke comprised all the followers of Christ, to whom, as friends of God, he dedicated this faithful history of the life, doctrine, death, and resurrection of our Lord. But this interpretation appears to have little solidity in it; for, if all the followers of Christ are addressed, why is the singular number used? and what good end

could there be accomplished by using a feigned name? Besides, **κράτιστε**, most excellent, could never be applied in this way, for it evidently designates a particular person, and one probably distinguished by his situation in life; though this does not necessarily follow from the title, which was often given in the way of friendship. Theophilus appears to have been some very reputable Greek or Roman, who was one of St. Luke's disciples. The first four verses seem a private epistle, sent by the evangelist with this history, which, having been carefully preserved by Theophilus, was afterwards found and published with this Gospel.

**Verse 4. *Wherein thou hast been instructed.***— **κατηχηθης**—In which thou hast been catechized. It appears that Theophilus had already received the first elements of the Christian doctrine, but had not as yet been completely grounded in them. That he might know the certainty of the things in which he had been thus catechized, by having all the facts and their proofs brought before him in order, the evangelist sent him this faithful and Divinely inspired narrative. Those who content themselves with that knowledge of the doctrines of Christ which they receive from catechisms and schoolmasters, however important these elementary instructions may be, are never likely to arrive at such a knowledge of the truth as will make them wise unto salvation, or fortify them against the attacks of infidelity and irreligion. Every man should labor to acquire the most correct knowledge, and indubitable certainty, of those doctrines on which he stakes his eternal salvation. Some suppose that St. Luke refers here to the imperfect instruction which Theophilus had received from the defective Gospels to which he refers in Luke 1:1.

**Verse 5. *In the days of Herod, the king***— This was Herod, surnamed the Great, the son of Antipater, an Idumean by birth, who had professed himself a proselyte to the Jewish religion, but regarded no religion, farther than it promoted his secular interests and ambition. Thus, for the first time, the throne of Judah was filled by a person not of Jewish extraction, who had been forced upon the people by the Roman government. Hence it appears plain that the prophecy of Jacob, Genesis 49:10, was now fulfilled; for the scepter had departed from Judah: and now was the time, according to another prophecy, to look for the governor from Bethlehem, who should rule and feed the people of Israel: Micah 5:1, 2. See a large

account of the family of the Herods, in the note on Matthew 2:1. This was before Christ six years.

***The course of Abiah***— When the sacerdotal families grew very numerous, so that all could not officiate together at the tabernacle, David divided them into twenty-four classes, that they might minister by turns, 1 Chronicles 24:1, etc., each family serving a whole week, 2 Kings 11:7; 2 Chronicles 23:8. Abiah was the eighth in the order in which they had been originally established: 1 Chronicles 24:10. These dates and persons are particularly mentioned as a full confirmation of the truth of the facts themselves; because any person, at the time this Gospel was written, might have satisfied himself by applying to the family of John the Baptist, the family of our Lord, or the surrounding neighbors. What a full proof of the Gospel history! It was published immediately after the time in which these facts took place; and among the very people, thousands of whom had been eye-witnesses of them; and among those, too, whose essential interest it was to have discredited them if they could; and yet, in all that age, in which only they could have been contradicted with advantage, no man ever arose to call them in question! What an absolute proof was this that the thing was impossible; and that the truth of the Gospel history was acknowledged by all who paid any attention to the evidences it produced!

***Of the daughters of Aaron***— That is, she was of one of the sacerdotal families. This shows that John was most nobly descended: his father was a priest and his mother the daughter of a priest; and thus, both by father and mother, he descended from the family of Amram, of whom came Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, the most illustrious characters in the whole Jewish history.

**Verse 6. *They were both righteous***— Upright and holy in all their outward conduct in civil life.

***Before God***— Possessing the spirit of the religion they professed; exercising themselves constantly in the presence of their Maker, whose eye, they knew, was upon all their conduct, and who examined all their motives.

***Walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.***— None being able to lay any evil to their charge. They were as

exemplary and conscientious in the discharge of their religious duties as they were in the discharge of the offices of civil life. What a sacred pair! they made their duty to God, to their neighbor, and to themselves, walk constantly hand in hand. See the note on Matthew 3:15. Perhaps *εντολαι*, commandments, may here mean the decalogue; and *δικαιωματα*, ordinances, the ceremonial and judicial laws which were delivered after the decalogue: as all the precepts delivered from Exodus 21:1ff to 24:1ff are termed *δικαιωματα*, judgments or ordinances.

**Verse 7. *Both were now well stricken in years.***— By the order of God, sterility and old age both met in the person of Elisabeth, to render the birth of a son (humanly speaking) impossible. This was an exact parallel to the case of Sarah and Abraham, Genesis 11:30; 17:17. Christ must (by the miraculous power of God) be born of a virgin: whatever was connected with, or referred to, his incarnation must be miraculous and impressive. Isaac was his grand type, and therefore must be born miraculously-contrary to the common course and rule of nature: Abraham was a hundred years of age, Sarah was ninety, Genesis 17:17, and it had CEASED to be with Sarah AFTER THE MANNER OF WOMEN, Genesis 18:11, and therefore, from her age and state, the birth of a child must, according to nature, have been impossible; and it was thus; that it might be miraculous. John the Baptist was to be the forerunner of Christ; his birth, like that of Isaac, must be miraculous, because, like the other, it was to be a representation of the birth of Christ; therefore his parents were both far advanced in years, and besides, Elisabeth was naturally barren. The birth of these three extraordinary persons was announced nearly in the same way. God himself foretells the birth of Isaac, Genesis 17:16. The angel of the Lord announces the birth of John the Baptist, Luke 1:13; and six months after, the angel Gabriel, the same angel, proclaims to Mary the birth of Christ! Man is naturally an inconsiderate and incredulous creature: he must have extraordinary things to arrest and fix his attention; and he requires well-attested miracles from God, to bespeak and confirm his faith. Every person who has properly considered the nature of man must see that the whole of natural religion, so termed, is little else than a disbelief of all religion.



**Verse 8. *Before God***— In the temple, where God used to manifest his presence, though long before this time he had forsaken it; yet, on this important occasion, the angel of his presence had visited it.

**Verse 9. *His lot was, etc.***— We are informed in the Talmud, that it was the custom of the priests to divide the different functions of the sacerdotal office among themselves by lot: and, in this case, the decision of the lot was, that Zacharias should at that time burn the incense before the Lord, in the holy place.

**Verse 10. *The whole multitude-were praying***— The incense was itself an emblem of the prayers and praises of the people of God: see Psalm 141:2; Revelation 8:1. While, therefore, the rite is performing by the priest, the people are employed in the thing signified. Happy the people who attend to the spirit as well as the letter of every divine institution! Incense was burnt twice a day in the temple, in the morning and in the evening, Exodus 30:7, 8; but the evangelist does not specify the time of the day in which this transaction took place. It was probably in the morning.

**Verse 11. *There appeared-an angel of the Lord***— There had been neither prophecy nor angelic ministry vouchsafed to this people for about 400 years. But now, as the Sun of righteousness is about to arise upon them, the day-spring from on high visits them, that they may be prepared for that kingdom of God which was at hand. Every circumstance here is worthy of remark: 1. That an angel should now appear, as such a favor had not been granted for 400 years. 2. The person to whom this angel was sent—one of the priests. The sacerdotal office itself pointed out the Son of God till he came: by him it was to be completed, and in him it was to be eternally established:—Thou art a priest for ever, Psalm 110:4. 3. The place in which the angel appeared—Jerusalem; out of which the word of the Lord should go forth, Isaiah 2:3, and not at Hebron, in the hill country of Judea, where Zacharias lived, Luke 1:39, which was the ordinary residence of the priests, Joshua 21:11, where there could have been few witnesses of this interposition of God, and the effects produced by it. 4. The place where he was when the angel appeared to him—in the temple, which was the place where God was to be sought; the place of his residence, and a type of the human nature of the blessed Jesus, John 2:21. 5. The time in which this was done—the solemn hour of public prayer. God has always promised to

be present with those who call upon him. When the people and the priest go hand in hand, and heart with heart, to the house of God, the angel of his presence shall surely accompany them, and God shall appear among them. 6. The employment of Zacharias when the angel appeared—he was burning incense, one of the most sacred and mysterious functions of the Levitical priesthood, and which typified the intercession of Christ: confer Hebrews 7:25, with Hebrews 9:24. 7. The long continued and publicly known dumbness of the priest, who doubted the word thus miraculously sent to him from the Lord: a solemn intimation of what God would do to all those who would not believe in the Lord Jesus. Every mouth shall be stopped.

**Verse 12. *Zacharias was troubled***— Or, confounded at his sudden and unexpected appearance; and fear fell upon him, lest this heavenly messenger were come to denounce the judgments of God against a faithless and disobedient people, who had too long and too well merited them.

**Verse 13. *Thy prayer is heard***— This probably refers, 1st, to the frequent prayers which he had offered to God for a son; and 2dly, to those which he had offered for the deliverance and consolation of Israel. They are all heard—thou shalt have a son, and Israel shall be saved. If fervent faithful prayers be not immediately answered, they should not be considered as lost; all such are heard by the Lord, are registered in heaven, and shall be answered in the most effectual way, and in the best time. Answers to prayer are to be received by faith; but faith should not only accompany prayer while offered on earth, but follow it all its way to the throne of grace, and stay with it before the throne till dismissed with its answer to the waiting soul.

***Thou shalt call his name John.***— For the proper exposition of this name, see on Mark 1:4.

**Verse 14. *Thou shalt have joy, etc.***— *εσται χαρα σοι*, He will be joy and gladness to thee. A child of prayer and faith is likely to be a source of comfort to his parents. Were proper attention paid to this point, there would be fewer disobedient children in the world; and the number of broken-hearted parents would be lessened. But what can be expected from the majority of matrimonial connections, connections begun without the fear of God, and carried on without his love.

***Many shall rejoice at his birth.***— He shall be the minister of God for good to multitudes, who shall, through his preaching, be turned from the error of their ways, and converted to God their Savior.

**Verse 15. *He shall be great in the sight of the Lord***— That is, before Jesus Christ, whose forerunner he shall be; or he shall be a truly great person, for so this form of speech may imply.

***Neither wine nor strong drink***— **σικερα**, i.e. all fermented liquors which have the property of intoxicating, or producing drunkenness. The original word **σικερα**, sikera, comes from the Hebrew, **שכר** shakar, to inebriate. “Any inebriating liquor,” says St. Jerome, (Epis. ad Nepot.)” is called sicera, whether made of corn, apples, honey, dates, or any other fruits.” One of the four prohibited liquors among the East Indian Moslimans is called sikkir. “Sikkir is made by steeping fresh dates in water till they take effect in sweetening it: this liquor is abominable and unlawful.” HEDAYA, vol. iv. p. 158. Probably this is the very liquor referred to in the text. In the Institutes of Menu it is said, “Inebriating liquor may be considered as of three principal sorts: that extracted from dregs of sugar, that extracted from bruised rice, and that extracted from the flowers of the madhuca: as one, so are all; they shall not be tasted by the chief of the twice-born.” Chap. xi. Inst. 95. Twice-born is used by the Brahmins in the same sense as being born again is used by Christians. It signifies a spiritual regeneration. From this word comes our English term cyder, or sider, a beverage made of the fermented juice of apples. See the note on Leviticus 10:9.

***Shall be filled with the Holy Ghost***— Shall be Divinely designated to this particular office, and qualified for it, from his mother’s womb—from the instant of his birth. One MS., two versions, and four of the primitive fathers read **εν τη κοιλια**, IN the womb of has mother-intimating that even before he should be born into the world the Holy Spirit should be communicated to him. Did not this take place on the salutation of the Virgin Mary?—and is not this what is intended, Luke 1:44? To be filled with the Holy Ghost, implies having the soul influenced in all its powers, with the illuminating, strengthening, and sanctifying energy of the Spirit.

**Verse 16. *Many of the children of Israel shall he turn***— See this prediction fulfilled, Luke 3:10-18.

**Verse 17. *He shall go before him***— Jesus Christ, in the spirit and power of Elijah; he shall resemble Elijah in his retired and austere manner of life, and in his zeal for the truth, reproving even princes for their crimes; compare 1 Kings 21:17-24, with Matthew 14:4. It was on these accounts that the Prophet Malachi, Malachi 4:6, had likened John to this prophet. See also Isaiah 40:3; and Malachi 4:5, 6.

***To turn the hearts of the fathers***— Gross ignorance had taken place in the hearts of the Jewish people; they needed a Divine instructor: John is announced as such; by this preaching and manner of life, all classes among the people should be taught the nature of their several places, and the duties respectively incumbent upon them, See Luke 3:10, etc. In these things the greatness of John, mentioned Luke 1:15, is pointed out, Nothing is truly great but what is so in the sight of God. John's greatness arose: 1st. From the plenitude of God's Spirit which dwelt in him. 2. From his continual self-denial, and taking up his cross. 3. From his ardent zeal to make Christ known. 4. From his fidelity and courage in rebuking vice. 5. From the reformation which he was the instrument of effecting among the people; reviving among them the spirit of the patriarchs, and preparing their hearts to receive the Lord Jesus. To turn the hearts of the fathers to their children. By a very expressive figure of speech, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the rest of the patriarchs, are represented here as having their hearts alienated from the Jews, their children, because of their unbelief and disobedience; but that the Baptist should so far succeed in converting them to the Lord their God, that these holy men should again look upon them with delight, and acknowledge them for their children. Some think that by the children, the Gentiles are meant, and by the fathers, the Jews.

***The disobedient***— Or unbelieving, *απειθεῖς*, the persons who would no longer credit the predictions of the prophets, relative to the manifestation of the Messiah. Unbelief and disobedience are so intimately connected, that the same word in the sacred writings often serves for both.

**Verse 18. *Whereby shall I know this?***— All things are possible to God: no natural impediment can have any power when God has declared he will accomplish his purpose. He has a right to be believed on his own word alone; and it is impious, when we are convinced that it is his word, to demand a sign or pledge for its fulfillment.

**Verse 19. *I am Gabriel***— This angel is mentioned, Daniel 8:16; 9:21. The original גַּבְרִיאֵל is exceedingly expressive: it is compounded of גְּבוּרָה geburah, and אֵל el, the might of the strong God. An angel with such a name was exceedingly proper for the occasion; as it pointed out that all-prevalent power by which the strong God could accomplish every purpose, and subdue all things to himself.

***That stand in the presence of God***— This is in allusion to the case of the prime minister of an eastern monarch, who alone has access to his master at all times; and is therefore said, in the eastern phrase, to see the presence, or to be in the presence. From the allusion we may conceive the angel Gabriel to be in a state of high favor and trust before God.

**Verse 20. *Thou shalt be dumb***— σιωπῶν silent; this translation is literal; the angel immediately explains it, thou shalt not be able to speak. Dumbness ordinarily proceeds from a natural imperfection or debility of the organs of speech; in this case there was no natural weakness or unfitness in those organs; but, for his rash and unbelieving speech, silence is imposed upon him by the Lord, and he shall not be able to break it, till the power that has silenced him gives him again the permission to speak! Let those who are intemperate in the use of their tongues behold here the severity and mercy of the Lord; nine months' silence for one intemperate speech! Many, by giving way to the language of unbelief, have lost the language of praise and thanksgiving for months, if not years!

**Verse 21. *The people waited***— The time spent in burning the incense was probably about half an hour, during which there was a profound silence, as the people stood without engaged in mental prayer. To this there is an allusion in Revelation 8:1-5. Zacharias had spent not only the time necessary for burning the incense, but also that which the discourse between him and the angel took up.

**Verse 22. *They perceived that he had seen a vision***— As the sanctuary was separated from the court by a great veil, the people could not see what passed, but they understood this from Zacharias himself, who, ἡν δεικνύων, made signs, or nodded unto them to that purpose. Signs are the only means by which a dumb man can convey his ideas to others.

**Verse 23. *As soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished***— Each family of the priesthood officiated one whole week, 2 Kings 11:17.

There is something very instructive in the conduct of this priest; had he not loved the service he was engaged in, he might have made the loss of his speech a pretext for immediately quitting it. But as he was not thereby disabled from fulfilling the sacerdotal function, so he saw he was bound to continue till his ministry was ended; or till God had given him a positive dismissal. Preachers who give up their labor in the vineyard because of some trifling bodily disorder by which they are afflicted, or through some inconvenience in outward circumstances, which the follower of a cross-bearing, crucified Lord should not mention, show that they either never had a proper concern for the honor of their Master or for the salvation of men, or else that they have lost the spirit of their Master, and the spirit of their work. Again, Zacharias did not hasten to his house to tell his wife the good news that he had received from heaven, in which she was certainly very much interested: the angel had promised that all his words should be fulfilled in their season, and for this season he patiently waited in the path of duty. He had engaged in the work of the Lord, and must pay no attention to any thing that was likely to mar or interrupt his religious service. Preachers who profess to be called of God to labor in the word and doctrine, and who abandon their work for filthy lucre's sake, are the most contemptible of mortals, and traitors to their God.

**Verse 24. *Hide herself five months***— That she might have the fullest proof of the accomplishment of God's promise before she appeared in public, or spoke of her mercies. When a Hindoo female is pregnant of her first child, she avoids the presence of those with whom she was before familiar, as a point of delicacy.

**Verse 25. *To take away my reproach***— As fruitfulness was a part of the promise of God to his people, Genesis 17:6, and children, on this account, being considered as a particular blessing from heaven, Exodus 23:20; Leviticus 26:9; Psalm 127:3; so barrenness was considered among the Jews as a reproach, and a token of the disapprobation of the Lord. 1 Samuel 1:6. But see Luke 1:36.

**Verse 26. *A city of Galilee***— As Joseph and Mary were both of the family of David, the patrimonial estate of which lay in Bethlehem, it seems

as if the family residence should have been in that city, and not in Nazareth; for we find that, even after the return from the captivity, the several families went to reside in those cities to which they originally belonged. See Nehemiah 11:3. But it is probable that the holy family removed to Galilee for fear of exciting the jealousy of Herod, who had usurped that throne to which they had an indisputable right. See on Luke 2:39. Thus, by keeping out of the way, they avoided the effects of his jealousy.

**Verse 27. *To a virgin espoused, etc.***— See on-Matthew 1:18, 23. The reflections of pious father Quesnel on this subject are worthy of serious regard. At length the moment is come which is to give a son to a virgin, a saviour to the world, a pattern to mankind, a sacrifice to sinners, a temple to the Divinity, and a new principle to the new world. This angel is sent from God, not to the palaces of the great, but to a poor maid, the wife of a carpenter. The Son of God comes to humble the proud, and to honor poverty, weakness, and contempt. He chooses an obscure place for the mystery which is most glorious to his humanity, its union with the Divinity, and for that which is most degrading (his sufferings and death) he will choose the greatest city! How far are men from such a conduct as this!

**Verse 28. *And the angel came in unto her***— Some think that all this business was transacted in a vision; and that there was no personal appearance of the angel. When Divine visions were given, they are announced as such, in the sacred writings; nor can we with safety attribute any thing to a vision, where a Divine communication is made, unless it be specified as such in the text.

***Hail***— Analogous to, Peace be to thee-May thou enjoy all possible blessings!

***Highly favored***— As being chosen in preference to all the women upon earth, to be the mother of the Messiah. Not the mother of God, for that is blasphemy.

***The Lord is with thee***— Thou art about to receive the most convincing proofs of God's peculiar favor towards thee.

***Blessed art thou among women.***— That is, thou art favored beyond all others.

**Verse 29. *She was troubled at his saying***— The glorious appearance of the heavenly messenger filled her with amazement; and she was puzzled to find out the purport of his speech.

**Verse 31. *Thou shalt call his name JESUS.***— See on Matthew 1:20, 21, and here, on Luke 2:21, and John 1:29.

**Verse 32. *He shall be great***— Behold the greatness of the man Christ Jesus: 1st. Because that human nature that should be born of the virgin was to be united with the Divine nature. 2dly. In consequence of this, that human nature should be called in a peculiar sense the SON of the most high God; because God would produce it in her womb without the intervention of man. 3. He shall be the everlasting Head and Sovereign of his Church. 4thly. His government and kingdom shall be eternal. Revolutions may destroy the kingdoms of the earth, but the powers and gates of hell and death shall never be able to destroy or injure the kingdom of Christ. His is the only dominion that shall never have an end. The angel seems here to refer to Isaiah 9:7; 16:5; Jeremiah 23:5; Daniel 2:44; 7:14. All which prophecies speak of the glory, extent, and perpetuity of the evangelical kingdom. The kingdom of grace and the kingdom of glory form the endless government of Christ.

**Verse 33. *The house of Jacob***— All who belong to the twelve tribes, the whole Israelitish people.

**Verse 34. *Seeing I know not a man***— Or, husband. As she was only contracted to Joseph, and not as yet married, she knew that this conception could not have yet taken place; and she modestly inquires by what means the promise of the angel is to be fulfilled in order to regulate her conduct accordingly.

**Verse 35. *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee***— This conception shall take place suddenly, and the Holy Spirit himself shall be the grand operator. The power, *δυναμις*, the miracle-working power, of the Most High shall overshadow thee, to accomplish this purpose, and to protect thee from danger. As there is a plain allusion to the Spirit of God brooding over the face of the waters, to render them prolific, Genesis 1:2, I am the more firmly established in the opinion advanced on Matthew 1:20, that the



rudiments of the human nature of Christ was a real creation in the womb of the virgin, by the energy of the Spirit of God.

***Therefore also that holy thing (or person)-shall be called the Son of God.***— We may plainly perceive here, that the angel does not give the appellation of Son of God to the Divine nature of Christ; but to that holy person or thing, **το ἅγιον**, which was to be born of the virgin, by the energy of the Holy Spirit. The Divine nature could not be born of the virgin; the human nature was born of her. The Divine nature had no beginning; it was God manifested in the flesh, 1 Timothy 3:16; it was that Word which being in the beginning (from eternity) with God, John 1:2, was afterwards made flesh, (became manifest in human nature,) and tabernacled among us, John 1:14. Of this Divine nature the angel does not particularly speak here, but of the tabernacle or shrine which God was now preparing for it, viz. the holy thing that was to be born of the virgin. Two natures must ever be distinguished in Christ: the human nature, in reference to which he is the Son of God and inferior to him, Mark 13:32; John 5:19; 14:28, and the Divine nature which was from eternity, and equal to God, John 1:1; 10:30; Romans 9:5; Colossians 1:16-18. It is true, that to Jesus the Christ, as he appeared among men, every characteristic of the Divine nature is sometimes attributed, without appearing to make any distinction between the Divine and human natures; but is there any part of the Scriptures in which it is plainly said that the Divine nature of Jesus was the Son of God? Here, I trust, I may be permitted to say, with all due respect for those who differ from me, that the doctrine of the eternal Sonship of Christ is, in my opinion, anti-scriptural, and highly dangerous. This doctrine I reject for the following reasons:-

1st. I have not been able to find any express declaration in the Scriptures concerning it.

2dly. If Christ be the Son of God as to his Divine nature, then he cannot be eternal; for son implies a father; and father implies, in reference to son, precedency in time, if not in nature too. Father and son imply the idea of generation; and generation implies a time in which it was effected, and time also antecedent to such generation.

3dly. If Christ be the Son of God, as to his Divine nature, then the Father is of necessity prior, consequently superior to him.

4thly. Again, if this Divine nature were begotten of the Father, then it must be in time; i.e. there was a period in which it did not exist, and a period when it began to exist. This destroys the eternity of our blessed Lord, and robs him at once of his Godhead.

5thly. To say that he was begotten from all eternity, is, in my opinion, absurd; and the phrase eternal Son is a positive self-contradiction. ETERNITY is that which has had no beginning, nor stands in any reference to TIME. SON supposes time, generation, and father; and time also antecedent to such generation. Therefore the conjunction of these two terms, Son and eternity is absolutely impossible, as they imply essentially different and opposite ideas.

The enemies of Christ's Divinity have, in all ages, availed themselves of this incautious method of treating this subject, and on this ground, have ever had the advantage of the defenders of the Godhead of Christ. This doctrine of the eternal Sonship destroys the deity of Christ; now, if his deity be taken away, the whole Gospel scheme of redemption is ruined. On this ground, the atonement of Christ cannot have been of infinite merit, and consequently could not purchase pardon for the offenses of mankind, nor give any right to, or possession of, an eternal glory. The very use of this phrase is both absurd and dangerous; therefore let all those who value Jesus and their salvation abide by the Scriptures. This doctrine of the eternal Sonship, as it has been lately explained in many a pamphlet, and many a paper in magazines, I must and do consider as an awful heresy, and mere sheer Arianism; which, in many cases, has terminated in Socinianism, and that in Deism. From such heterodoxies, and their abettors, may God save his Church! Amen!

**Verse 36. *Thy cousin Elisabeth***— Thy kinswoman, συγγενης. As Elisabeth was of the tribe of Levi, Luke 1:5, and Mary of the tribe of Judah, they could not be relatives but by the mother's side.

***She hath also conceived***— And this is wrought by the same power and energy through which thou shalt conceive. Thus God has given thee a proof and pledge, in what he has done for Elisabeth, of what he will do for thyself; therefore, have faith in God.

**Who was called barren.**— It is probable that Elisabeth got this appellative by way of reproach; or to distinguish her from some other Elisabeth also well known, who had been blessed with children. Perhaps this is the reproach which Elisabeth speaks of, Luke 1:25, her common name among men, among the people who knew her, being Elisabeth the barren.

**Verse 37. *For with God nothing shall be impossible.***— Words of the very same import with those spoken by the Lord to Sarah, when he foretold the birth of Isaac, Genesis 18:14, Is any thing too hard for the Lord? As there can be no doubt that Mary perceived this allusion to the promise and birth of Isaac, so she must have had her faith considerably strengthened by reflecting on the intervention of God in that case.

**Verse 38. *Behold the handmaid of the Lord***— I fully credit what thou sayest, and am perfectly ready to obey thy commands, and to accomplish all the purposes of thy grace concerning me. It appears that at the instant of this act of faith, and purposed obedience, the conception of the immaculate humanity of Jesus took place; and it was DONE unto her according to his word. See Luke 1:35.

**Verse 39. *In those days***— As soon as she could conveniently fit herself out for the journey.

**Hill country**— Hebron, the city of the priests, Joshua 21:11, which was situated in the tribe of Judah, about forty miles south of Jerusalem, and upwards of seventy from Nazareth.

**With haste**— This probably refers to nothing else than the earnestness of her mind to visit her relative Elisabeth, and to see what the Lord had wrought for her.

**Verse 41. *Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost.***— This seems to have been the accomplishment of the promise made by the angel, Luke 1:15, He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. The mother is filled with the Holy Spirit, and the child in her womb becomes sensible of the Divine influence.

**Verse 42. *Blessed art thou among women***— Repeating the words of the angel, Luke 1:28, of which she had probably been informed by the holy virgin, in the present interview.

**Verse 43. *The mother of my Lord***— The prophetic spirit, which appears to have overshadowed Elisabeth, gave her a clear understanding in the mystery of the birth of the promised Messiah.

**Verse 45. *Blessed is she that believed; for there shall be, etc.***— Or, Blessed is she who hath believed that there shall be, etc. This I believe to be the proper arrangement of the passage, and is thus noticed in the marginal reading. Faith is here represented as the foundation of true happiness, because it receives the fulfillment of God's promises. Whatever God has promised, he intends to perform. We should believe whatever he has spoken-his own authority is a sufficient reason why we should believe. Let us only be convinced that God has given the promise, and then implicit faith becomes an indispensable duty: in this case not to believe implicitly would be absurd and unreasonable-God will perform his promise, for HE cannot lie.

**Verse 46. *And Mary said***— Two copies of the Itala, and some books mentioned by Origen, give this song to Elisabeth. It is a counterpart of the song of Hannah, as related in 1 Samuel 2:1-10.

This is allowed by many to be the first piece of poetry in the New Testament; but the address of the angel to Zacharias, Luke 1:13-17, is delivered in the same way; so is that to the virgin, Luke 1:30-33, and so also is Elisabeth's answer to Mary, Luke 1:42-45. All these portions are easily reducible to the hemistich form in which the Hebrew poetry of the Old Testament is found in many MSS., and in which Dr. Kennicott has arranged the Psalms, and other poetical parts of the Sacred Writings. See his Hebrew Bible.

***My soul doth magnify the Lord***— The verb *μεγαλυνειν*, Kypke has proved, signifies to celebrate with words, to extol with praises. This is the only way in which God can be magnified, or made great; for, strictly speaking, nothing can be added to God, for he is infinite and eternal; therefore the way to magnify him is to show forth and celebrate those acts in which he has manifested his greatness.

**Verse 47. *My spirit hath rejoiced***— Exulted. These words are uncommonly emphatical-they show that Mary's whole soul was filled with the Divine influence, and wrapped up in God.

**Verse 48. *He hath regarded***— Looked favorably, etc., *επεβλεψεν*. In the most tender and compassionate manner he has visited me in my humiliation, drawing the reasons of his conduct, not from any excellence in me, but from his own eternal kindness and love.

***All generations shall call me blessed.***— This was the character by which alone she wished to be known; viz. The blessed or happy virgin. What dishonor do those do to this holy woman, who give her names and characters which her pure soul would abhor; and which properly belong to GOD her Savior! By her votaries she is addressed as Queen of Heaven, Mother of God, etc., titles both absurd and blasphemous.

**Verse 49. *He that is mighty hath done to me great things***— Or, miracles, *μεγαλεια*. As God fills her with his goodness, she empties herself to him in praises; and, sinking into her own nothingness, she ever confesses that God alone is all in all.

***Holy is his name***— Probably the word which Mary used was *ἅγιος* chesed, which though we sometimes translate holy, see Psalm 86:2; 145:17, yet the proper meaning is abundant goodness, exuberant kindness; and this well agrees with the following clause.

**Verse 50. *His mercy is on them that fear him***— His exuberant kindness manifests itself in acts of mercy to all those who fear or reverence his name; and this is continued from generation to generation, because he is abundant in goodness, and because he delighteth in mercy. This is a noble, becoming, and just character of the God of the Christians; a being who delights in the salvation and happiness of all his creatures, because his name is mercy, and his nature love.

**Verse 51. *He hath showed strength***— Or, He hath gained the victory, *εποιησε κρατος*. The word *κρατος* is used for victory, by Homer, Hesiod, Sophocles, Euripides, and others.

***With his arm***— Grotius has well observed, that God's efficacy is represented by his finger, his great power by his hand, and his omnipotence by his arm. The plague of lice was the finger of God, Exodus 7:18. The plagues in general were wrought by his hand, Exodus 3:20, And the destruction of Pharaoh's host in the Red Sea, which was effected by the omnipotence of God, is called the act of his arm, Exodus 15:16.

***He hath scattered***— διεσκορπισεν, hath scattered abroad; as a whirlwind scatters dust and chaff.

***The proud***— Or haughty, υπερηφανους; from υπερ above, and φαινω I show-the haughty men, who wish to be noticed in preference to all others, and feel sovereign contempt for all but themselves. These God scatters abroad-instead of being in his sight, as in their own, the most excellent of the earth, he treats them as straw, stubble, chaff, and dust.

***In the imagination of their hearts.***— While they are forming their insolent, proud, and oppressive projects-laying their plans, and imagining that accomplishment and success are waiting at their right hand, the whirlwind of God's displeasure blows, and they and their machinations are dissipated together.

**Verse 52. *He hath put down the mighty from their seats***— Or, He hath taken down potentates from their thrones. This probably alludes to the removal of Saul from the throne of Israel, and the establishment of the kingdom in the person and family of David. And as Mary spoke prophetically, this saying may also allude to the destruction of the kingdom of Satan and his allies, and the final prevalence of the kingdom of Christ.

**Verse 53. *Filled the hungry-the rich he hath sent empty away.***— God is here represented under the notion of a person of unbounded benevolence, who is daily feeding multitudes at his gates. The poor and the rich are equally dependent upon him; to the one he gives his affluence for a season, and to the other his daily bread. The poor man comes through a sense of his want to get his daily support, and God feeds him; the rich man comes through the lust of gain, to get more added to his abundance, and, God sends him empty away-not only gives him nothing more, but often deprives him of that which he has, because he has not improved it to the honor of the giver. There is an allusion here, as in several other parts of this song, to the case of Hannah and Peninah, as related 1 Samuel 1:2, etc.; 2:1-10.

**Verse 54. *He hath holpen [supported, αντελαβετο] his servant Israel***— Israel is here represented as falling, and the Lord comes speedily in and props him up. The house of David was now ready to fall and rise no more;

Jesus, being born of the very last branch of the regal line, revived the family, and restored the dominion.

***In remembrance of his mercy***— By mercy, the covenant which God made with Abraham, Genesis 15:18, is intended; which covenant proceeded from God's eternal mercy, as in it salvation was promised to all the nations of the earth. See Genesis 17:19, and 22:18, and this promise was, in one form or other, given to all the fathers, Luke 1:55.

This song properly consists of three parts.

1. In the first part Mary praises God for what he had done for herself, Luke 1:46-50.
2. In the second, she praises him for what he had done, and would do, against the oppressors of his people, Luke 1:51-53.
3. In the third, she praises him for what he had done, and would do, for his Church, Luke 1:53-56.

**Verse 56. *And Mary abode with her about three months***— According to some, the departure of Mary from Hebron must have been but a few days before the birth of John; as nine months had now elapsed since Elisabeth's conception; see Luke 1:36. Hence it immediately follows:-

**Verse 57. *Now Elisabeth's full time came, etc.***— But, according to others, we are to understand the three months of Mary's visit as preceding the birth of John, which would complete the time of Elisabeth's pregnancy, according to Luke 1:36, and the only difficulty is to ascertain whether Mary went immediately to Hebron after her salutation, or whether she tarried nearly three months before she took the journey.

**Verse 58. *And her neighbors and her cousins-rejoiced with her.***— Because sterility was a reproach; and they now rejoiced with their relative, from whom that reproach was now rolled away. To rejoice with those whom God has favored, and to congratulate them on the advantages which he has granted to them, is a duty which humanity, charity, and religion call upon us to fulfill.

1. It is a duty of humanity, which should be punctually performed. We are all members of each other, and should rejoice in the welfare of the whole.

He who rejoices in his neighbor's prosperity increases his neighbor's happiness, and gets an addition to his own.

2. It is a duty which charity or brotherly love requires us to perform with sincerity. In the polite world, there is no duty better fulfilled in word than this is; but sincerity is utterly banished, and the giver and receiver are both convinced that compliments and good wishes mean-nothing. He who does not endeavor to take a sincere part in his neighbor's prosperity will soon feel ample punishment in the spirit of jealousy and envy.

3. It is a duty of religion, which should be fulfilled with piety. These neighbors and relatives saw that God had magnified his mercy towards Elisabeth, and they acknowledged his hand in the work. God is the dispenser of all good—he distributes his favors in mercy, judgment, and justice. Let us honor him in his gifts; and honor those, for his sake, who are objects of his favor. The society of believers are but one body; the talents, etc., of every individual are profitable to the whole community; at least none are deprived of a share in the general welfare, but those who, through jealousy or envy, refuse to rejoice with him towards whom God hath magnified his mercy.

**Verse 59. *On the eighth day they came to circumcise***— See an account of this institution in the note on Genesis 17:10-14. Had circumcision been essential to an infant's salvation, God would not have ordered it to be delayed to the eighth day, because, in all countries, multitudes die before they arrive at that age. Baptism, which is generally allowed to have been substituted for circumcision, is no more necessary to the salvation of an infant than circumcision was. Both are signs of the covenant—circumcision, of the putting away the impurity of the flesh; and baptism, of the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, producing the answer of a good conscience towards God. Confer 1 Peter 3:21, with Titus 3:5. This should never be neglected: it is a sign and token of the spiritual grace.

***They called him Zacharias***— Among the Jews, the child was named when it was circumcised, and ordinarily the name of the father was given to the first-born son.

**Verse 60. *Not so; but he shall be called John***.— This is the name which the angel desired should be given him, Luke 1:13, and of which Zacharias



by writing had informed his wife. There is something very remarkable in the names of this family. Zachariah, זכריהו the memory or memorial of Jehovah; יהו' yeho, at the end of the word, being contracted for יהוה Yehovah, as in many other names. Elisabeth, אֵלִישַׁבֶּת the Sabbath or rest of my strong God: names probably given them by their parents, to point out some remarkable circumstance in their conception or birth. And John, which should always be written Jehochanan or Yehochanan, יהוחנן the grace or mercy of Jehovah: so named, because he was to go before and proclaim the God of all grace, and the mercy granted through him to a lost world. See John 1:29; see also Luke 3:16, and Mark 1:4.

**Verse 61. *None of thy kindred***— As the Jewish tribes and families were kept sacredly distinct, it appears the very names of the ancestors were continued among their descendants, partly through reverence for them, and partly to avoid confusion in the genealogical tables, which, for the sake of distinguishing the inheritances, were carefully preserved in each of the families. It seems to be on this account that the neighbors and relatives objected to a name which had not before existed in any branch of the family.

**Verse 62. *They made signs to his father***— Who, it appears from this, was deaf as well as dumb; otherwise they might have asked him, and obtained his answer in this way.

**Verse 63. *A writing table***— πίνακιδιον, a tablet, a diminutive of πίναξ, a table. “The boys in Barbary are taught to write upon a smooth thin board, slightly daubed over with whiting, which may be rubbed off or renewed at pleasure. Such probably (for the Jewish children use the same) was the little board, or writing table, as we render it Luke 1:63, that was called for by Zacharias.” Shaw’s Travels, p. 194. My old MS. considers the word as meaning the instrument of writing, rather than the tablet on which he wrote: and he aringe a poyntel, wroot seyinge, Joon is his name.

A thin board, made out of the pine tree, smeared over with wax, was used among the ancients; and to this the Anglo-Saxon version seems to refer, as it translates πίνακιδιον, [AS], a wax board or cloth.

An intelligent friend has suggested a different mode of reading the 62nd and 63rd verses: Luke 1:62. And they asked his father how he would have him

called? Luke 1:63. And he made signs for a writing table and wrote, His name is John: “For,” says my friend, “the 64th verse {Luke 1:64} proves his mouth was not opened, neither his tongue loosed, till after the child was named; therefore he could not ask for the table; and it is more reasonable that he, being dumb, should make signs, than that those should who had the use of their tongues.” But, howsoever ingenious this may be, neither the words of the Greek text, nor their construction, will bear this version.

**Verse 64.** The latter clause of the preceding verse should be joined with the beginning of this, as follows: And they marveled all, for his mouth was opened, etc. Every person must see the propriety of putting this clause, And they marveled all, to the beginning of the 64th verse, instead of leaving it at the end of the 63rd, as in the common version. The people did not wonder because Zacharias said, He shall be called John; but because he himself was that instant restored to the use of his speech.

***And he spake, and praised God.***— In his nine months’ silence, he had learned the proper use of his tongue; and God, whose power was discredited by it, is now magnified. Happy they who, in religious matters, only break silence in order to speak of the loving-kindness of the Lord!

**Verse 65. *And fear came***— Seeing what they might have thought a paralytic affection so suddenly and effectually healed. φοβος—This word certainly means in several places, religious fear or reverence; and in this sense it is used Acts 9:31; Romans 3:18; 13:7; 1 Peter 1:17; 2:18; 3:2. The meaning of it here is plainly this: The inhabitants of Hebron and its environs, who were well acquainted with the circumstances of Zacharias and Elisabeth, perceived that God had in a remarkable manner visited them; and this begot in their minds a more than ordinary reverence for the Supreme Being. Thus the salvation of one often becomes an instrument of good to the souls of many. The inhabitants of this hill country seem to have been an open, honest-hearted, generous people; who were easily led to acknowledge the interposition of God, and to rejoice in the comfort and welfare of each other. The people of the country are more remarkable for these qualities than those in towns and cities. The latter, through that evil communication which corrupts good manners, are generally profligate, selfish, regardless of God, and inattentive to the operation of his hands.

**Verse 66. *What manner of child shall this be!***— As there have been so many extraordinary things in his conception and birth, surely God has designed him for some extraordinary purpose. These things they laid up in their heart, patiently waiting to see what God would work.

***The hand of the Lord was with him.***— God defended and prospered him in all things, and the prophetic spirit began to rest upon him.

**Verse 67. *Zacharias- prophesied***— The word prophecy is to be taken here in its proper acceptance, for the predicting or foretelling future events. Zacharias speaks, not only of what God had already done, but also of what he was about to do, in order to save a lost world.

**Verse 68. *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for, etc.***— Zacharias praises God for two grand benefits which he had granted to his people. 1. He has visited them. 2. He has ransomed them. 1. He speaks by the spirit of prophecy, which calls things that are not, as though they were; because they are absolutely determined by the Most High, and shall be all fulfilled in their season. God visits his people in the incarnation of Jesus Christ; therefore this Christ is called by him, **κυριος ο θεος**, Jehovah the God of Israel. Here the highest and most glorious character of the Supreme Being is given to Christ. 2. This God redeems his people: it is for this end that he visits them. His soul is about to be made a sacrifice for sin: he becomes flesh, that he may suffer and die for the sin of the world. God, by taking upon him the nature of man, has redeemed that nature from eternal ruin.

***He hath-redeemed***— **εποιησε λυτρωσιν**, he hath made a ransom-laid down the ransom price. **λυτρωω** signifies particularly to ransom a captive from the enemy, by paying a price. The following remarkable passage from Josephus, Ant. b. xiv. c. 14, sect. 1, fully illustrates this meaning of the original. “Herod, not knowing what had happened to his brother, hastened **λυτρωσασθαι**, to ransom him from the enemy, and was willing to pay **λυτρον υπερ αυτου**, a ransom for him, to the amount of three hundred talents.” Sinners are fallen into the hands of their enemies, and are captives to sin and death. Jesus ransoms them by his own blood, and restores them to life, liberty, and happiness. this truth the whole Bible teaches: this truth God has shown in certain measures, even to those nations who have not been favored with the light of his written word: for Christ is that true light, which enlightens every man that cometh into the world.

How astonishing is the following invocation of the Supreme Being, (translated from the original Sanscreet by Dr. C. WILKINS,) still existing on a stone, in a cave near the ancient city of Gya, in the East Indies!

“The Deity, who is the Lord, the possessor of all, appeared in this ocean of natural beings, at the beginning of the Kalee Yoog (the age of contention and baseness.) He who is omnipresent and everlastingly to be contemplated, the Supreme Being, the Eternal One, the Divinity worthy to be adored-APPEARED here with a PORTION of his DIVINE NATURE. Reverence be unto thee in the form of (a) Bood-dha! Reverence be unto the Lord of the earth! Reverence be unto thee, an INCARNATION of the Deity, and the Eternal One! Reverence be unto thee, O God, in the form of the God of mercy; the dispeller of pain and trouble, the Lord of all things, the Deity who overcometh the sins of the Kalee Yoog; the guardian of the universe, the emblem of mercy toward those who serve thee- (b) O’M! the possessor of all things in VITAL FORM! Thou art (c) Brahma, Veeshnoo, and Mahesa! Thou art Lord of the universe! Thou art under the form of all things, movable and immovable, the possessor of the whole! and thus I adore thee. Reverence be unto the BESTOWER OF SALVATION, and the Ruler of the faculties! Reverence be unto thee, the DESTROYER of the EVIL SPIRIT! O Damordara, (d) show me favor! I adore thee, who art celebrated by a thousand names, and under various forms, in the shape of Bood-dha, the God of MERCY! Be propitious, O Most High God!”-ASIATIC RESEARCHES, vol. i. pp. 284, 285.

(a) Bood-dha. The name of the Deity, as author of happiness.

(b) O’M. A mystic emblem of the Deity, forbidden to be pronounced but in silence. It is a syllable formed of the Sanscreet letters a, o o, which in composition coalesce, and make o, and the nasal consonant m. The first letter stands for the Creator, the second for the Preserver and the third for the Destroyer. It is the same among the Hindoos as יהוה Yehovah is among the Hebrews.

(c) Brahma, the Deity in his creative quality. Veeshnoo, he who filleth all space, the Deity in his preserving quality. Mahesa, the Deity in his destroying quality. This is properly the Hindoo Trinity: for these three names belong to the same Being. See the notes to the Bhagvat Geeta.

(d) Damordara, or Darmadeve, the Indian God of Virtue.

**Verse 69. *And hath raised up a horn of salvation***— That is, a mighty and glorious Savior: a quotation from Psalm 18:2. Horns are the well known emblems of strength, glory, and power, both in the sacred and profane writers, because the strength and beauty of horned animals consist in their horns. Horns have also been considered as emblems of light; therefore the heathen god Apollo is represented with horns, to point out the power, glory, and excellence of the solar light. The Chaldee paraphrast sometimes translates קר keren, horn, by מלכות malcuth, or מלכותא malcutha, 1 Samuel 2:10; Jeremiah 48:25, which signify a kingdom: but it is likely that the allusion is here made to the horns of the altar; and as the altar was a place of refuge and safety, and those who laid hold on its horns were considered to be under the protection of the Lord, so, according to the expression of Zacharias, Jesus Christ is a new altar, to which whosoever flees shall find refuge.

Some imagine that this form of speech is taken from the custom of ancient warriors, who had a horn of steel on the top of their helmets, which ordinarily lay flat, till the person came victorious from battle, and then it was erected, as emblematical of the victory gained. Such a horn as this is represented on the helmet of the Abyssinian kings and warriors: see the plates in Bruce's Travels. To this custom of wearing or lifting up the horn, the following scriptures are thought to allude: 1 Samuel 2:10; Psalm 112:9; 148:4; Lamentations 2:17. In ancient gems and coins, this form of the horn on helmets is easily discernible, sometimes flat, sometimes erected. A horn, filled with various fruits, was also the emblem of abundance among the ancients: hence their cornu copia, or horn of plenty. From all this we may learn that the Lord Jesus gives a luminous, powerfully prevalent, glorious, and abundant SALVATION or REFUGE to mankind.

***In the house of his servant David***— Or, in the family: so the word οἶκος, house, is often used in the Sacred Writings. In Luke 1:32, the angel states that Mary was of the family of David; and Zacharias, who, from the nature of his office, must have been well acquainted with the public genealogical tables, attests the same thing. This is a matter of considerable importance; because it shows forth the truth of all the prophetic

declarations, which uniformly state that the Messiah should come from the family and sit on the throne of DAVID.

**Verse 71. *That we should be saved (literally, a salvation) from our enemies***— As Zacharias spoke by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the salvation which he mentions here must necessarily be understood in a spiritual sense. Satan, death, and sin are the enemies from whom Jesus came to deliver us. Sin is the most dangerous of all, and is properly the only enemy we have to fear. Satan is without us, and can have no power over us, but what he gets through sin. Death is only in our flesh, and shall be finally destroyed (as it affects us) on the morning of the resurrection. Jesus redeems from sin; this is the grand, the glorious, the important victory. Let us get sin cast out, and then we need, fear neither death, nor the devil.

**Verse 72. *His holy covenant***— See the note on Luke 1:54.

**Verse 74. — 75. *Being delivered, etc.***— The salvation brought by Jesus Christ, consists in the following things:-

1. We are to be delivered out of the hand of our enemies, and from all that hate us; so that sin shall neither have dominion over us, nor existence in us.
2. We are to worship God, λατρεύειν, to render him that service and adoration which the letter and spirit of his religion require.
3. Ye are to live in holiness, a strict inward conformity to the mind of Christ-and righteousness, a full outward conformity to the precepts of the Gospel.
4. This is to be done before God, under the continual influence and support of his grace, and with a constant evidence of his presence and approbation.
5. This state is a state of true happiness-it is without fear. Sin is all cast out, holiness is brought in; God's power upholds, and his approbation cheers and comforts, the believing heart. Thus misery is precluded, and happiness established.
6. This blessedness is to continue as long as we exist-all the days of our life, in all ages, in all situations, and in all circumstances. What a pity to

have lived so long without God in the world, when so much happiness and glory are to be enjoyed in union with him!

της ζωης, in the last clause, is omitted by many MSS., versions, and fathers. Griesbach has left it out of the text: however, it is but of small importance whether we read all our days, or, all the days of our life.

**Verse 76. *And thou, child, etc.*** — Zacharias proclaims the dignity, employment, doctrine, and success of his son; and the ruin and recovery of the Jews and the Gentiles.

1. His dignity. Thou shalt be called (constituted) a prophet of the Most High. Prophet has two acceptations:—1st. A person who foretells future events; and; 2dly. A teacher of men in the things of God, 1 Corinthians 14:3. John was a prophet in both senses: he proclaimed the mercy which should be communicated; announced the baptism of the Holy Spirit; and taught men how to leave their sins, and how to find the salvation of God. See Luke 3:5-14. His very name, Jehochanan, the grace or mercy of Jehovah, (see Luke 1:60,) was a constant prediction of the salvation of God. Our Lord terms him the greatest prophet which had ever appeared in the world. He had the honor of being the last and clearest prophet of the old covenant, and the first of the new.

2. His employment. Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways. He should be the immediate forerunner of Jesus Christ, none being capable of succeeding him in his ministry but Christ himself. He was to prepare his ways, to be the honored instrument, in the hands of God, of disposing the hearts of multitudes of the Israelites to believe in and follow the Lord Jesus.

3. Zacharias points out the doctrine or teaching of John. It should be γνωσις σωτηριας, the science of salvation. Men are ignorant, and they must be instructed. Human sciences may be profitable in earthly matters, but cannot profit the soul. The science that teaches God must come from God. No science is of any avail to the soul that does not bring salvation with it: this is the excellence of heavenly science, and an excellence that is peculiar to itself. No science but that which comes from God can ever save a soul from the power, the guilt, and the pollution of sin.

4. Zacharias predicts the success of his son's ministry. Under his preaching, the people should be directed to that tender mercy of God, through which they might obtain the remission of their sins, Luke 1:77, 78. Those who are sent by God, and preach his truth, and his only, shall always be successful in their work; for it is for this very purpose that God has sent them; and it would be a marvelous thing, indeed, should they labor in vain. But there never was such a case, since God made man, in which a preacher was Divinely commissioned to preach Jesus and his salvation, and yet had no fruit of his labor.

5. Zacharias points out the wretched state in which the inhabitants of Judea and the Gentile world were then found. 1. Their feet had wandered out of the way of peace, (Luke 1:79,) of temporal and spiritual prosperity. 2. They had got into a state of darkness-they were blind concerning the things of God, and the things which belonged to their salvation. 3. They had become contented inhabitants of this land of intellectual darkness-they had sat down in it, and were not concerned to get out of it. 4. They were about to perish in it-death had his dominion there; and his swift approaches to them were now manifested to the prophet by seeing his shadow cast upon them. Ignorance of God and salvation is the shadow of death; and the substance, eternal ruin, is essentially connected with the projected shadow. See these phrases explained at large on Matthew 4:16.

6. Zacharias proclaims the recovery of a lost world. As the removal of this darkness, and redemption from this death, were now at hand, John is represented as being a day-spring from on high, a morning star, that foretold the speedy approach of the day, and the rising of the Sun of righteousness. That these words should be applied to John, and not to Christ, I am fully satisfied; and cannot give my reasons better for the arrangement I have made in the preceding notes, than in the words of an eminent critic, who, I find, has adopted nearly the same plan with myself. The passage, as I read it, is as follows: Through the tender mercy of our God, by which he hath visited us: a day-spring from on high, to give light to them that sit in the darkness and in the shadow of death, etc. "Let the reader judge, whether my arrangement of this passage, which much better suits the original, be not far more elegant, and in all respects superior to the old translation. Thou, child! wilt be a teacher-THOU WILT BE a day-spring from the sky. And with what beauty and propriety is John, the forerunner



of our Lord, styled the dawn of day, that ushers in the rising of the Sun of righteousness! And the concluding words-to guide our feet into the way of peace-is a comprehensive clause, after the manner of Hebrew poetry, belonging equally to the former sentence, beginning at-And thou, child!-and the latter, beginning at-A day-spring from the sky: for the people spoken of in the former are the Jews; and in the latter, the Gentiles.”-WAKEFIELD.

**Verse 80. *The child grew***— Increased in stature and bodily vigor. And waxed strong in spirit-had his understanding Divinely illuminated and confirmed in the truths of God. And was in the deserts-the city of Hebron, the circumjacent hill country, and in or near Nazareth. Till the time of his showing, or manifestation-till he was thirty years of age, before which time the law did not permit a man to enter into the public ministry, Numbers 4:3. See also Luke 3:23.

So much has already been said, by way of practical improvement of the different subjects in this important chapter, as to preclude the necessity of any addition here.

## CHAPTER 2

*The decree of Augustus to enroll all the Roman empire, 1, 2. Joseph and Mary go to their own city to be enrolled, 3-5. Christ is born, 6, 7. His birth is announced to the shepherds, 8-14. They go to Bethlehem, and find Joseph, Mary, and Christ, 15-20. Christ is circumcised, 21. His parents go to present him in the temple, 22-24. Simeon receives him: his song, 25-35. Anna the prophetess, 36-38. The holy family return to Nazareth, 39, 40. They go to Jerusalem at the feast of the passover, and leave Jesus behind in Jerusalem, 41-44. They return seeking him, and find him in the midst of the doctors, 45-47. His mother chides him, 48. His defense of his conduct, 49, 50. They all return to Nazareth, 51, 52.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 2

**Verse 1. *Caesar Augustus***— This was Caius Caesar Octavianus Augustus, who was proclaimed emperor of Rome in the 29th year before our Lord, and died A.D. 14.

***That all the world should be taxed.***— *πασαν την οικουμενην*, the whole of that empire. It is agreed, on all hands, that this cannot mean the whole world, as in the common translation; for this very sufficient reason, that the Romans had not the dominion of the whole earth, and therefore could have no right to raise levies or taxes in those places to which their dominion did not extend. *οικουμενη* signifies properly the inhabited part of the earth, from *οικεω*, to dwell, or inhabit. Polybius makes use of the very words in this text to point out the extent of the Roman government, lib. vi. c. 48; and Plutarch uses the word in exactly the same sense, Pomp. p. 635. See the passages in Wetstein. Therefore the whole that could be meant here, can be no more than that a general CENSUS of the inhabitants and their effects had been made in the reign of Augustus, through all the Roman dominions.

But as there is no general census mentioned in any historian as having taken place at this time, the meaning of *οικουμενη* must be farther restrained, and applied solely to the land of Judea. This signification it

certainly has in this same evangelist, Luke 21:26. Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth, **τη οικουμενη** this land. The whole discourse relates to the calamities that were coming, not upon the whole world, nor the whole of the Roman empire, but on the land of Judea, see Luke 21:21. Then let them that are in Judea flee to the mountains. Out of Judea, therefore, there would be safety; and only those who should be with child, or giving suck, in those days, are considered as peculiarly unhappy, because they could not flee away from that land on which the scourge was to fall: for the wrath, or punishment, shall be, says our Lord, **εν τω λαω τουτω**, ON THIS VERY PEOPLE, viz. the Jews, Luke 21:23. It appears that St. Luke used this word in this sense in conformity to the Septuagint, who have applied it in precisely the same way, Isaiah 13:11; 14:26; 24:1. And from this we may learn, that the word **οικουμενη** had been long used as a term by which the land of Judea was commonly expressed. **ἡ γη**, which signifies the earth, or world in general, is frequently restrained to this sense, being often used by the evangelists and others for all the country of Judea. See Luke 4:25; Joshua 2:3.

It is probable that the reason why this enrolment, or census, is said to have been throughout the whole Jewish nation, was to distinguish it from that partial one, made ten years after, mentioned Acts 5:37, which does not appear to have extended beyond the estates of Archelaus, and which gave birth to the insurrection excited by Judas of Galilee. See Josephus, Ant. book xx. c. 3.

**Verse 2. *This taxing was first made when Cyrenius, etc.***— The next difficulty in this text is found in this verse, which may be translated, Now this first enrolment was made when Quirinus was governor of Syria.

It is easily proved, and has been proved often, that Caius Sulpicius Quirinus, the person mentioned in the text, was not governor of Syria, till ten or twelve years after the birth of our Lord.

St. Matthew says that our Lord was born in the reign of Herod, Luke 2:1, at which time Quintilius Varus was president of Syria, (Joseph. Ant. book xvii. c. 5, sect. 2,) who was preceded in that office by Sentius Saturninus. Cyrenius, or Quirinus, was not sent into Syria till Archelaus was removed from the government of Judea; and Archelaus had reigned there between

nine and ten years after the death of Herod; so that it is impossible that the census mentioned by the evangelist could have been made in the presidency of Quirinus.

Several learned men have produced solutions of this difficulty; and, indeed, there are various ways of solving it, which may be seen at length in Lardner, vol. i. p. 248-329. One or other of the two following appears to me to be the true meaning of the text.

1. When Augustus published this decree, it is supposed that Quirinus, who was a very active man, and a person in whom the emperor confided, was sent into Syria and Judea with extraordinary powers, to make the census here mentioned; though, at that time, he was not governor of Syria, for Quintilius Varus was then president; and that when he came, ten or twelve years after, into the presidency of Syria, there was another census made, to both of which St. Luke alludes, when he says, This was the first assessment of Cyrenius, governor of Syria; for so Dr. Lardner translates the words. The passage, thus translated, does not say that this assessment was made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria, which would not have been the truth, but that this was the first assessment which Cyrenius, who was (i.e. afterwards) governor of Syria, made; for after he became governor, he made a second. Lardner defends this opinion in a very satisfactory and masterly manner. See vol. i. p. 317. etc.

2. The second way of solving this difficulty is by translating the words thus: This enrolment was made BEFORE Cyrenius was governor of Syria; or, before that of Cyrenius. This sense the word **πρωτος** appears to have, John 1:30: **οτι πρωτος μου ην**, for he was BEFORE me. John 15:18: The world hated me BEFORE (**πρωτον**) it hated you. See also 2 Samuel 19:43. Instead of **πρωτη**, some critics read **προ της**, This enrolment was made BEFORE THAT of Cyrenius. Michaelis; and some other eminent and learned men, have been of this opinion: but their conjecture is not supported by any MS. yet discovered; nor, indeed, is there any occasion for it. As the words in the evangelist are very ambiguous, the second solution appears to me to be the best.

**Verse 3. *And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.***— The Roman census was an institution of Servius Tullius, sixth king of Rome.

From the account which Dionysius of Halicarnassus gives of it; we may at once see its nature.

“He ordered all the citizens of Rome to register their estates according to their value in money, taking an oath, in a form he prescribed, to deliver a faithful account according to the best of their knowledge, specifying the names of their parents, their own age, the names of their wives and children, adding also what quarter of the city, or what town in the country, they lived in.” Ant. Rom. l. iv. c. 15. p. 212. Edit. Huds.

A Roman census appears to have consisted of these two parts: 1. The account which the people were obliged to give in of their names, quality, employments, wives, children, servants, and estates; and 2. The value set upon the estates by the censors, and the proportion in which they adjudged them to contribute to the defense and support of the state, either in men or money, or both: and this seems to have been the design of the census or enrolment in the text. This census was probably similar to that made in England in the reign of William the Conqueror, which is contained in what is termed Domesday Book, now in the Chapter House, Westminster, and dated 1086.

**Verse 5. *With Mary his espoused wife***— There was no necessity for Mary to have gone to Bethlehem, as Joseph’s presence could have answered the end proposed in the census as well without Mary as with her; but God so ordered it, that the prophecy of Micah should be thus fulfilled, and that Jesus should be born in the city of David; Micah 5:2.

**Verse 7. *Laid him in a manger***— Wetstein has shown, from a multitude of instances, that φάτνη means not merely the manger, but the whole stable, and this I think is its proper meaning in this place. The Latins use *praesepe*, a manger, in the same sense. So Virgil, AEn. vii. p. 275.

*Stabant ter centum nitidi in praesepibus altis*

*“Three hundred sleek horses stood in lofty stables.”*

Many have thought that this was a full proof of the meanness and poverty of the holy family, that they were obliged to take up their lodging in a stable; but such people overlook the reason given by the inspired penman, because there was no room for them in the inn. As multitudes were going

now to be enrolled, all the lodgings in the inn had been occupied before Joseph and Mary arrived. An honest man who had worked diligently at his business, under the peculiar blessing of God, as Joseph undoubtedly had, could not have been so destitute of money as not to be able to procure himself and wife a comfortable lodging for a night; and, had he been so ill fitted for the journey as some unwarrantably imagine, we may take it for granted he would not have brought his wife with him, who was in such a state as not to be exposed to any inconveniences of this kind without imminent danger.

***There was no room for them in the inn.***— In ancient times, inns were as respectable as they were useful, being fitted up for the reception of travelers alone:—now, they are frequently haunts for the idle and the profligate, the drunkard and the infidel;—in short, for any kind of guests except Jesus and his genuine followers. To this day there is little room for such in most inns; nor indeed have they, in general, any business in such places. As the Hindoos travel in large companies to holy places and to festivals, it often happens that the inns (suraies) are so crowded that there is not room for one half of them: some lie at the door, others in the porch. These inns, or lodging-houses, are kept by Mohammedans, and Mussulmans obtain prepared food at them; but the Hindoos purchase rice, etc., and cook it, paying about a halfpenny a night for their lodging.

WARD'S Customs.

**Verse 8. *There were-shepherds abiding in the field***— There is no intimation here that these shepherds were exposed to the open air. They dwelt in the fields where they had their sheep penned up; but they undoubtedly had tents or booths under which they dwelt.

***Keeping watch-by night.***— Or, as in the margin, keeping the watches of the night, i.e. each one keeping a watch (which ordinarily consisted of three hours) in his turn. The reason why they watched them in the field appears to have been, either to preserve the sheep from beasts of prey, such as wolves, foxes, etc., or from freebooting banditti, with which all the land of Judea was at that time much infested. It was a custom among the Jews to send out their sheep to the deserts, about the passover, and bring them home at the commencement of the first rain: during the time they were out, the shepherds watched them night and day. As the passover occurred in

the spring, and the first rain began early in the month of Marchesvan, which answers to part of our October and November, we find that the sheep were kept out in the open country during the whole of the summer. And as these shepherds had not yet brought home their flocks, it is a presumptive argument that October had not yet commenced, and that, consequently, our Lord was not born on the 25th of December, when no flocks were out in the fields; nor could he have been born later than September, as the flocks were still in the fields by night. On this very ground the nativity in December should be given up. The feeding of the flocks by night in the fields is a chronological fact, which casts considerable light upon this disputed point. See the quotations from the Talmudists in Lightfoot.

The time in which Christ was born has been considered a subject of great importance among Christians. However, the matter has been considered of no moment by Him who inspired the evangelists; as not one hint is dropped on the subject, by which it might be possible even to guess nearly to the time, except the chronological fact mentioned above. A late writer makes the following remark: "The first Christians placed the baptism of Christ about the beginning of the fifteenth year of Tiberius; and thence reckoning back thirty years, they placed his birth in the forty-third year of the Julian period, the forty-second of Augustus, and the twenty-eighth after the victory at Actium. This opinion obtained till A. D. 527, when Dionysius Exiguus invented the vulgar account. Learned and pious men have trifled egregiously on this subject, making that of importance which the Holy Spirit, by his silence, has plainly informed them is of none. Fabricius gives a catalogue of no less than 136 different opinions concerning the YEAR of Christ's birth: and as to his birth DAY, that has been placed by Christian sects and learned men in every month in the year. The Egyptians placed it in January-Wagenseil, in February-Bochart, in March-some, mentioned by Clemens Alexandrinus, in April-others, in May-Epiphanius speaks of some who placed it in June-and of others who supposed it to have been in July-Wagenseil, who was not sure of February, fixed it probably in August-Lightfoot, on the 15th of September-Scaliger, Casaubon, and Calvisius, in October-others, in November-but the Latin Church, supreme in power, and infallible in judgment, placed it on the 25th of December, the very day on which the

ancient Romans celebrated the feast of their goddess Bruma.” See more in Robinson’s Notes on Claude’s Essay, vol. i. p. 275, etc. Pope Julius I. was the person who made this alteration, and it appears to have been done for this reason: the sun now began his return towards the northern tropic, ending the winter, lengthening the short days, and introducing the spring. All this was probably deemed emblematical of the rising of the Sun of righteousness on the darkness of this world, and causing the day-spring from on high to visit mankind.

**Verse 9. *The angel of the Lord came upon them***— Or, stood over them, **ἐπεσθη**. It is likely that the angel appeared in the air at some little distance above them, and that from him the rays of the glory of the Lord shone round about them, as the rays of light are protected from the sun.

***They were sore afraid.***— Terrified with the appearance of so glorious a being, and probably fearing that he was a messenger of justice, coming to denounce Divine judgments, or punish them immediately, for sins with which their consciences would not fail, on such an occasion, to reproach them.

**Verse 10. *Behold, I bring you good tidings***— I am not come to declare the judgments of the Lord, but his merciful loving-kindness, the subject being a matter of great joy. He then declares his message. Unto you-to the Jews first, and then to the human race. Some modern MSS. with the utmost impropriety read **ἡμῖν**, us, as if angels were included in this glorious work of redemption; but St. Paul says, he took not upon him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, i.e. the nature of Abraham and his posterity, the human nature; therefore the good news is to you,-and not to yourselves exclusively, for it is to all people, to all the inhabitants of this land, and to the inhabitants of the whole earth.

**Verse 11. *A Savior, which is Christ the Lord.***— A Savior, **σωτηρ**, the same as Jesus from **σωζειν**, to make safe, to deliver, preserve, to make alive, thus used by the Septuagint for **הִחִיָּה** hecheiah, to cause to escape; used by the same for **פָּלַט** to confide in, to hope. See the extensive acceptations of the verb in Mintert, who adds under **σωτηρ**: “ The word properly denotes such a Savior as perfectly frees us from all evil and



danger, and is the author of perpetual salvation.” On the word Jesus, see John 1:29.

Which is Christ. **χριστος**, the anointed, from **χρίω** to anoint, the same as **משיח** Messiah, from **משה** mashach. This name points out the Savior of the world in his prophetic, regal, and sacerdotal offices: as in ancient times, prophets, kings, and priests were anointed with oil, when installed into their respective offices. Anointing was the same with them as consecration is with us. Oil is still used in the consecration of kings.

It appears from Isaiah 61:1, that anointing with oil, in consecrating a person to any important office, whether civil or religious, was considered as an emblem of the communication of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit. This ceremony was used on three occasions, viz. the installation of prophets, priests, and kings, into their respective offices. But why should such an anointing be deemed necessary? Because the common sense of men taught them that all good, whether spiritual or secular, must come from God, its origin and cause. Hence it was taken for granted, 1. That no man could foretell events, unless inspired by the Spirit of God. And therefore the prophet was anointed, to signify the communication of the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge. 2. That no person could offer an acceptable sacrifice to God for the sins of men, or profitably minister in holy things, unless enlightened, influenced, and directed by the Spirit of grace and holiness. Hence the priest was anointed, to signify his being divinely qualified for the due performance of his sacred functions. 3. That no man could enact just and equitable laws which should have the prosperity of the community and the welfare of the individual continually in view, or could use the power confided to him only for the suppression of vice and the encouragement of virtue, but that man who was ever under the inspiration of the Almighty. Hence kings were inaugurated by anointing with oil. Two of these offices only exist in all civilized nations, the sacerdotal and regal; and in some countries the priest and king are still consecrated by anointing. In the Hebrew language, **משה** mashach signifies to anoint; and **המשיח** ha-mashiach, the anointed person. But as no man was ever dignified by holding the three offices, so no person ever had the title ha-mashiach, the anointed one, but Jesus the Christ. He alone is King of kings, and Lord of lords: the king who governs the universe, and rules in

the hearts of his followers; the prophet to instruct men in the way wherein they should go; and the great high priest, to make atonement for their sins. Hence he is called the Messias, a corruption of the word **הַמָּשִׁיחַ** ha-mashiach, THE anointed ONE, in Hebrew; which gave birth to **ο χριστος**, ho Christos, which has precisely the same signification in Greek. Of him, Melchizedek, Abraham, Aaron, David, and others, were illustrious types; but none of these had the title of THE MESSIAH, or the ANOINTED of GOD: This does, and ever will, belong exclusively to JESUS the CHRIST.

The Lord. **κυριος**, the supreme, eternal Being, the ruler of the heavens and the earth. The Septuagint generally translate **יהוה** Yehovah by **κυριος**. This Hebrew word, from **הָיָה** hayah, he was, properly points out the eternity and self-existence of the Supreme Being; and if we may rely on the authority of Hesychius, which no scholar will call in question, **κυριος** is a proper translation of **יהוה** Yehovah, as it comes from **κυρω, -τυγχανω**, I am, I exist. Others derive it from **κυρος**, authority, legislative power. It is certain that the lordship of Christ must be considered in a mere spiritual sense, as he never set up any secular government upon earth, nor commanded any to be established in his name; and there is certainly no spiritual government but that of God: and indeed the word Lord, in the text, appears to be properly understood, when applied to the deity of Christ. Jesus is a prophet, to reveal the will of God, and instruct men in it. He is a priest, to offer up sacrifice, and make atonement for the sin of the world. He is Lord, to rule over and rule in the souls of the children of men: in a word, he is Jesus the Savior, to deliver from the power, guilt, and pollution of sin; to enlarge and vivify, by the influence of his Spirit; to preserve in the possession of the salvation which he has communicated; to seal those who believe, heirs of glory; and at last to receive them into the fullness of beatitude in his eternal joy.

**Verse 12. *This shall be a sign (or token) unto you***— You shall find this glorious person, however strange it may appear, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a stable! It is by humility that Christ comes to reign; and this is the only way into his kingdom! Pride is the character of all the children of Adam: humility the mark of the Son of God, and of all his followers. Christ came in the way of humility to destroy that pride which

is the root of evil in the souls of men. And thus, according to the old medical aphorism, “Opposites are destroyed by their opposites.”

**Verse 13. *Suddenly there was with the angel, etc.***— this multitude of the heavenly host had just now descended from on high, to honor the new-born Prince of peace, to give his parents the fullest conviction of his glory and excellence, and to teach the shepherds, who were about to be the first proclaimers of the Gospel, what to think and what to speak of him, who, while he appeared as a helpless infant, was the object of worship to the angels of God.

**Verse 14. *Glory to God in the highest***— The design of God, in the incarnation, was to manifest the hidden glories of his nature, and to reconcile men to each other and to himself. The angels therefore declare that this incarnation shall manifest and promote the glory of God, *ἐν ὑψίστοις* not only in the highest heavens, among the highest orders of beings, but in the highest and most exalted degrees. For in this astonishing display of God’s mercy, attributes of the Divine nature which had not been and could not be known in any other way should be now exhibited in the fullness of their glory, that even the angels should have fresh objects to contemplate, and new glories to exult in. These things the angels desire to look into, 1 Peter 1:12, and they desire it because they feel they are thus interested in it. The incarnation of Jesus Christ is an infinite and eternal benefit. Heaven and earth both partake of the fruits of it, and through it angels and men become one family, Ephesians 3:15.

***Peace, good will toward men.***— Men are in a state of hostility with Heaven and with each other. The carnal mind is enmity against God. He who sins wars against his Maker; and

“Foe to God was ne’er true friend to man.”

When men become reconciled to God, through the death of his Son, they love one another. They have peace with God; peace in their own consciences; and peace with their neighbors: good will dwells among them, speaks in them, and works by them. Well might this state of salvation be represented under the notion of the kingdom of God, a counterpart of eternal felicity. See on Matthew 3:2.

**Verse 15. *Let us now go even unto Bethlehem***— διελθωμεν, let us go across the country at the nearest, that we may lose no time, that we may speedily see this glorious reconciler of God and man. All delays are dangerous: but he who delays to seek Jesus, when the angels, the messengers of God, bring him glad tidings of salvation, risks his present safety and his eternal happiness. O, what would the damned in hell give for those moments in which the living hear of salvation, had they the same possibility of receiving it! Reader, be wise. Acquaint thyself now with God, and be at peace; and thereby good will come unto thee. Amen.

**Verse 17. *They made known abroad the saying***— These shepherds were the first preachers of the Gospel of Christ: and what was their text? Why, Glory to God in the highest heavens, and on earth peace and good will among men. This is the elegant and energetic saying which comprises the sum and substance of the Gospel of God. This, and this only, is the message which all Christ's true pastors or shepherds bring to men. He who, while he professes the religion of Christ, disturbs society by his preachings or writings, who excludes from the salvation of God all who hold not his religious or political creed, never knew the nature of the Gospel, and never felt its power or influence. How can religious contentions, civil broils, or open wars, look that Gospel in the face which publishes nothing but glory to God, and peace and good will among men? Crusades for the recovery of a holy land so called, (by the way, latterly, the most unholy in the map of the world,) and wars for the support of religion, are an insult to the Gospel, and blasphemy against God!

**Verse 19. *And pondered them in her heart***.— συμβαλλουσα, Weighing them in her heart. Weighing is an English translation of our word pondering, from the Latin ponderare. Every circumstance relative to her son's birth, Mary treasured up in her memory; and every new circumstance she weighed, or compared with those which had already taken place, in order to acquire the fullest information concerning the nature and mission of her son.

**Verse 20. *The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising***— These simple men, having satisfactory evidence of the truth of the good tidings, and feeling a Divine influence upon their own minds, returned to the care of their flocks, glorifying God for what he had shown them, and for the

blessedness which they felt. “Jesus Christ, born of a woman, laid in a stable, proclaimed and ministered to by the heavenly host, should be a subject of frequent contemplation to the pastors of his Church. After having compared the predictions of the prophets with the facts stated in the evangelic history, their own souls being hereby confirmed in these sacred truths, they will return to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for what they had seen and heard in the Gospel history, just as it had been told them in the writings of the prophets; and, preaching these mysteries with the fullest conviction of their truth, they become instruments in the hands of God of begetting the same faith in their hearers; and thus the glory of God and the happiness of his people are both promoted.” What subjects for contemplation!-what matter for praise!

**Verse 21. *When eight days were accomplished***— The law had appointed that every male should be circumcised at eight days old, or on the eighth day after its birth, Genesis 17:12; and our blessed Lord received circumcision in token of his subjection to the law, Galatians 4:4; 5:3.

***His name was called JESUS***— See on Matthew 1:21 and John 1:29.

**Verse 22. *Days of her purification***— That is, thirty-three days after what was termed the seven days of her uncleanness-forty days in all: for that was the time appointed by the law, after the birth of a male child. See Leviticus 12:2, 6.

The MSS. and versions differ much in the pronoun in this place: some reading *αυτης*, HER purification; others *αυτου*, His purification; others *αυτων*, THEIR purification; and others *αυτοις*, the purification of THEM BOTH. Two versions and two of the fathers omit the pronoun, *αυτων*, their, and *αυτου*, his, have the greatest authorities in their support, and the former is received into most of the modern editions. A needless scrupulosity was, in my opinion, the origin of these various readings. Some would not allow that both needed purification, and referred the matter to Mary alone. Others thought neither could be supposed to be legally impure, and therefore omitted the pronoun entirely, leaving the meaning indeterminate. As there could be no moral defilement in the case, and what was done being for the performance of a legal ceremony, it is of little consequence which of the readings is received into the text.

The purification of every mother and child, which the law enjoined, is a powerful argument in proof of that original corruption and depravity which every human being brings into the world. The woman to be purified was placed in the east gate of the court, called Nicanor's gate, and was there sprinkled with blood: thus she received the atonement. See Lightfoot.

**Verse 24. *And to offer a sacrifice***— Neither mother nor child was considered as in the Lord's covenant, or under the Divine protection, till these ceremonies, prescribed by the law, had been performed.

***A pair of turtle doves, etc.***— One was for a burnt-offering, and the other for a sin-offering: see Leviticus 12:8. The rich were required to bring a lamb, but the poor and middling classes were required to bring either two turtle doves, or two pigeons. This is a proof that the holy family were not in affluence. Jesus sanctified the state of poverty, which is the general state of man, by passing through it. Therefore the poor have the Gospel preached unto them; and the poor are they who principally receive it.

Though neither Mary nor her son needed any of these purifications, for she was immaculate, and He was the Holy One, yet, had she not gone through the days of purification according to the law, she could not have appeared in the public worship of the Most High, and would have been considered as an apostate from the faith of the Israel of God; and had not He been circumcised and publicly presented in the temple, he could not have been permitted to enter either synagogue or temple, and no Jew would have heard him preach, or had any intercourse or connection with him. These reasons are sufficient to account for the purification of the holy virgin, and for the circumcision of the most holy Jesus.

**Verse 25. *And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem***— This man is distinguished because of his singular piety. There can be no doubt that there were many persons in Jerusalem named Simeon, besides this man; but there was none of the name who merited the attention of God so much as he in the text. Such persevering exemplary piety was very rare, and therefore the inspired penman ushers in the account with behold! Several learned men are of the opinion that he was son to the famous Hillel, one of the most celebrated doctors and philosophers which had ever appeared in the Jewish nation since the time of Moses. Simeon is supposed also to have been the AB or president of the grand Sanhedrin.

***The same man was just***— He steadily regulated all his conduct by the law of his God: and devout—he had fully consecrated himself to God, so that he added a pious heart to a righteous conduct. The original word **ευλαβης**, signifies also a person of good report—one well received among the people, or one cautious and circumspect in matters of religion; from **ευ**, well, and **λαμβανω**, I take: it properly denotes, one who takes any thing that is held out to him, well and carefully. He so professed and practised the religion of his fathers that he gave no cause for a friend to mourn on his account, or an enemy to triumph.

Several excellent MSS. read **ευσεβης**, pious or godly, from **ευ**, well, and **σεβομαι**, I worship; one who worships God well, i.e. in spirit and in truth.

***Waiting for the consolation of Israel***— That is, the Messiah, who was known among the pious Jews by this character: he was to be the consolation of Israel, because he was to be its redemption. This consolation of Israel was so universally expected that the Jews swore by it: So let me see the Consolation, if such a thing be not so, or so. See the forms in Lightfoot.

***The Holy Ghost was upon him***— He was a man divinely inspired, overshadowed, and protected by the power and influence of the Most High.

**Verse 26. *It was revealed unto him***— He was divinely informed, **κεχηρηματιστισμενον**—he had an express communication from God concerning the subject. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. The soul of a righteous and devout man is a proper habitation for the Holy Spirit.

***He should not see death***— They that seek shall find: it is impossible that a man who is earnestly seeking the salvation of God, should be permitted to die without finding it.

***The Lord's Christ.***— Rather, the Lord's anointed. That prophet, priest, and king, who was typified by so many anointed persons under the old covenant; and who was appointed to come in the fullness of time, to accomplish all that was written in the law, in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning him. See the note on Luke 2:11.

**Verse 27. *He came by the Spirit into the temple***— Probably he had in view the prophecy of Malachi, Malachi 3:1, The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple. In this messenger of the covenant, the soul of Simeon delighted. Now the prophecy was just going to be fulfilled; and the Holy Spirit, who dwelt in the soul of this righteous man, directed him to go and see its accomplishment. Those who come, under the influence of God's Spirit, to places of public worship, will undoubtedly meet with him who is the comfort and salvation of Israel.

***After the custom of the law***— To present him to the Lord, and then redeem him by paying five shekels, Numbers 18:15, 16, and to offer those sacrifices appointed by the law. See Luke 2:24.

**Verse 28. *Then took he him up in his arms***— What must the holy soul of this man have felt in this moment! O inestimable privilege! And yet ours need not be inferior: If a man love me, says Christ, he will keep my word; and I and the Father will come in unto him, and make our abode with him. And indeed even Christ in the arms could not avail a man, if he were not formed in his heart.

**Verse 29. *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace***— Now thou dismissest, *απολυνεις*, loosest him from life; having lived long enough to have the grand end of life accomplished.

***According to thy word***— It was promised to him, that he should not die till he had seen the Lord's anointed, Luke 2:26; and now, having seen him, he expects to be immediately dismissed in peace into the eternal world; having a full assurance and enjoyment of the salvation of God. Though Simeon means his death, yet the thing itself is not mentioned; for death has not only lost its sting, but its name also, to those who have, even by faith, seen the Lord's anointed.

**Verse 30. *Thy salvation***— That Savior which it became the goodness of God to bestow upon man, and which the necessities of the human race required. Christ is called our salvation, as he is called our life, our peace, our hope; i.e. he is the author of all these, to them who believe.

**Verse 31. *Which thou hast prepared***— *ο ητοιμασας*, which thou hast MADE READY before the face, in the presence, of all people. Here salvation is represented under the notion of a feast, which God himself has provided



for the whole world; and to partake of which he has invited all the nations of the earth. There seems a direct allusion here to Isaiah 25:6, etc. “In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things,” etc. Salvation is properly the food of the soul, by which it is nourished unto eternal life; he that receiveth not this, must perish for ever.

**Verse 32. *A light to lighten the Gentiles***— **φως εις αποκαλοψιν εθνων**—A light of the Gentiles, for revelation. By Moses and the prophets, a light of revelation was given to the Jews, in the blessedness of which the Gentiles did not partake. By Christ and his apostles, a luminous revelation is about to be given unto the Gentiles, from the blessedness of which the Jews in general, by their obstinacy and unbelief, shall be long excluded. But to all true Israelites it shall be a glory, an evident fulfillment of all the predictions of the prophets, relative to the salvation of a lost world; and the first offers of it shall be made to the Jewish people, who may see in it the truth of their own Scriptures indisputably evinced.

**Verse 33. *Joseph and his mother marvelled***— For they did not as yet fully know the counsels of God, relative to the salvation which Christ was to procure; nor the way in which the purchase was to be made: but to this Simeon refers in the following verses.

**Verse 34. *This child is set for the fall***— This seems an allusion to Isaiah 8:14, 15: Jehovah, God of hosts, shall be-for a stone of stumbling and rock of offense to both houses of Israel; and many among them shall stumble and fall, etc. As Christ did not come as a temporal deliverer, in which character alone the Jews expected him, the consequence should be, they would reject him, and so fall by the Romans. See Romans 11:11, 12, and Matthew 24. But in the fullness of time there shall be a rising again of many in Israel. See Romans 11:26.

***And for a sign***— A mark or butt to shoot at—a metaphor taken from archers. Or perhaps Simeon refers to Isaiah 11:10-12. There shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ENSIGN of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek;-intimating that the Jews would reject it, while the Gentiles should flock to it as their ensign of honor, under which they were to enjoy a glorious rest.

***That the thoughts (or reasonings) of many hearts may be revealed.***— I have transposed this clause to the place to which I believe it belongs. The meaning appears to me to be this: The rejection of the Messiah by the Jewish rulers will sufficiently prove that they sought the honor which comes from the world, and not that honor which comes from God: because they rejected Jesus, merely for the reason that he did not bring them a temporal deliverance. So the very Pharisees, who were loud in their professions of sanctity and devotedness to God, rejected Jesus, and got him crucified, because his kingdom was not of this world. Thus the reasonings of many hearts were revealed.

**Verse 35. *Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also***— Probably meaning, Thou also, as well as thy son, shall die a martyr for the truth. But as this is a metaphor used by the most respectable Greek writers to express the most pungent sorrow, it may here refer to the anguish Mary must have felt when standing beside the cross of her tortured son: John 19:25.

**Verse 36. *Anna, a prophetess***— It does not appear that this person was a prophetess in the strict sense of the word, i.e. one who could foretell future events; but rather a holy woman; who, from her extensive knowledge and deep experience in Divine things, was capable of instructing others; according to the use of the word *προφητεύω*, 1 Corinthians 14:3: He that prophesieth, speaketh unto men to edification, and to exhortation, and to comfort. So we find this holy widow proclaiming Jesus to all who looked for redemption in Jerusalem, Luke 2:38.

***The tribe of Asher***— This was one of the ten tribes of the kingdom of Israel, several families of which had returned from their idolatry unto God, in the time that Hezekiah proclaimed the passover in Jerusalem, which is mentioned 2 Chronicles 30:1-11. Though her family might have been a distinguished one in Jerusalem, yet we find that it was her very exemplary piety that entitled her to be thus honourably mentioned in the sacred history. It is an honorable thing indeed to have one's name written in the sacred records; but to be written in the book of life is of infinitely greater moment.

***Seven years***— She was a pure virgin when married, was favored with her husband but seven years, and was now in all, taking in the time of her

virginity, marriage, and widowhood, eighty-four years of age. At such an age, it might be supposed she was reasonably exempted from performing the severer duties of religion; but her spirit of piety continued still to burn with a steady and undiminished fame.

**Verse 37. *Departed not from the temple***— Attended constantly at the hours of prayer, which were nine in the morning and three in the afternoon. See Acts 2:15; 3:1. It does not appear that women had any other functions to perform in that holy place.

***With fastings***— She accompanied her devotion with frequent fastings, probably not oftener than twice in the week; for this was the custom of the most rigid Pharisees: see Luke 18:12.

**Verse 38. *Coming in that instant***— *αυτη τη ωρα*, at that very time-while Simeon held the blessed Redeemer in his arms, and was singing his departing and triumphal song.

***Gave thanks likewise***— She, as well as Simeon, returned God public thanks, for having sent this Savior to Israel.

***Spake of him***— Of the nature and design of his mission; and the glory that should take place in the land.

***To all them that looked for redemption***— As Daniel's seventy weeks were known to be now completed, the more pious Jews were in constant expectation of the promised Messiah. They were expecting redemption, *λυτρωσις*; such a redemption as was to be brought about by an atonement, or expiatory victim, or ransom price. See on Luke 1:68.

***In Jerusalem.***— It is probable she went about from house to house, testifying the grace of God. In the margin of our common version, Israel is put instead of Jerusalem, which the translators thought was nearly as eligible as the word they received into the text. This marginal reading is supported by several MSS., all the Arabic and Persic versions, the Vulgate, and most copies of the Itala. Were this reading to be received, it would make a very essential alteration in the meaning of the text, as it would intimate that this excellent woman traveled over the land of Israel, proclaiming the advent of Christ. At all events, it appears that this widow was one of the first publishers of the Gospel of Christ, and it is likely that

she traveled with it from house to house through the city of Jerusalem, where she knew they dwelt who were expecting the salvation of God.

**Verse 39. *They returned into Galilee***— But not immediately: for the coming of the wise men, and the retreat of Joseph with his family into Egypt, happened between this period of time, and his going to Nazareth in Galilee.—Bp. PEARCE. But it is very likely, that as soon as the presentation in the temple, and the ceremonies relative to it, had been accomplished, that the holy family did return to Galilee, as St. Luke here states, and that they continued there till Herod's bloody purpose was discovered to them by the Lord; which probably took some time to bring it to its murderous crisis, after the departure of the magi. After which, they fled into Egypt, where they continued till the death of Herod; and it is probable that it is of a second return to Nazareth that St. Matthew speaks, Luke 2:23.

**Verse 40. *The child grew***— As to his body-being in perfect health.

***Waxed strong in spirit***— His rational soul became strong and vigorous.

***Filled with wisdom***— The divinity continuing to communicate itself more and more, in proportion to the increase of the rational principle. The reader should never forget that Jesus was perfect man, as well as God.

***And the grace of God was upon him.***— The word *χαρις*, not only means grace in the common acceptation of the word, (some blessing granted by God's mercy to those who are sinners, or have no merit,) but it means also favor or approbation: and this sense I think most proper for it here, when applied to the human nature of our blessed Lord; and thus our translators render the same word, Luke 2:52. Even Christ himself, who knew no sin, grew in the favor of God; and, as to his human nature, increased in the graces of the Holy Spirit. From this we learn that, if a man were as pure and as perfect as the man Jesus Christ himself was, yet he might nevertheless increase in the image, and consequently in the favor, of God. God loves every thing and person, in proportion to the nearness of the approaches made to his own perfections.

**Verse 41. *His parents went-every year***— This was their constant custom, because positively enjoined by the law, Exodus 23:17. But it does not appear that infants were obliged to be present; and yet all the men-children are positively ordered to make their appearance at Jerusalem thrice in the

year, Exodus 34:23. And our Lord, being now twelve years old, Luke 2:42, accompanies his parents to the feast. Probably this was the very age at which the male children were obliged to appear before the Lord at the three public festivals—the feast of unleavened bread, of weeks, and of tabernacles. According to the Jewish canons, it was the age at which they were obliged to begin to learn a trade.

**Verse 43. *Had fulfilled the days***— Eight days in the whole: one was the passover, and the other seven, the days of unleavened bread. See on Matthew 26:2.

**Verse 44. *Supposing him to have been in the company***— Some have supposed that the men and women marched in separate companies on these occasions, which is very likely; and that sometimes the children kept company with the men, sometimes with the women. This might have led to what otherwise seems to have been inexcusable carelessness in Joseph and Mary. Joseph, not seeing Jesus in the men's company, might suppose he was with his mother in the women's company; and Mary, not seeing him with her, might imagine he was with Joseph.

***Went a day's journey***— Knowing what a treasure they possessed, how could they be so long without looking on it? Where were the bowels and tender solicitude of the mother? Let them answer this question who can.

***And they sought him***— *ανεζητουν*, They earnestly sought him. They are now both duly affected with a sense of their great loss and great negligence.

***Kinsfolk and acquaintance.***— Those of the same family and neighborhood went up to Jerusalem together on such occasions.

I have frequently been reminded, says Mr. Ward, when reading this history, of the crowds going to some place in Bengal, to an idol feast. Men, women, and children, in large companies, may be seen travelling together, with their bedding, etc., on their heads. They cook and prepare their victuals in some shady place near a town, where they can purchase the necessaries they want, and, after remaining two or three days at the festival, return in companies as they went.

**Verse 45. *Seeking him.***— *ζητουντες αυτον*—or rather, seeking him diligently, *ανζητουντες*. This is the reading of BCDL, six others, Vulgate,

and nine copies of the Itala. If they sought earnestly when they first found him missing, there is little doubt that their solicitude and diligence must be greatly increased during his three days' absence, therefore the word which I have adopted, on the above authority, is more likely to be the true reading than the *ζητουντες* of the common text, which simply signifies seeking; whereas the other strongly marks their solicitude and diligence.

**Verse 46. *Sitting in the midst of the doctors***— The rabbins, who were explaining the law and the ceremonies of the Jewish religion to their disciples.

***Asking them questions.***— Not as a scholar asks his teacher, to be informed; but as a teacher, who proposes questions to his scholars in order to take an occasion to instruct them.

In the time of Josephus, the Jewish teachers were either very ignorant or very humble: for he tells us that, “when he was about fourteen years of age, the chief priests, and the principal men of the city, were constantly coming to him to be more accurately instructed in matters relative to the law.” See his Life, sect. ii. If this were true, it is no wonder to find them now listening, with the deepest attention, to such teaching as they never before heard.

**Verse 47. *Answers:***— The word *αποκρισις* here seems not to mean answers only, but what Jesus said by way of question to the doctors, Luke 2:46. So in Revelation 7:13, one of the elders is said to have answered, saying-when he only asked a question. Bp. PEARCE.

**Verse 48. *Why hast thou thus dealt with us?***— It certainly was not his fault, but theirs. Men are very apt to lay on others the blame of their own misconduct.

**Verse 49. *How is it that ye sought me?***— Is not this intended as a gentle reproof? Why had ye me to seek? Ye should not have left my company, when ye knew I am constantly employed in performing the will of the Most High.

***My Father's business?***— *εν τοις του πατρος μου*, My Father's concerns. Some think that these words should be translated, In my Father's house; which was a reason that they should have sought him in

the temple only. As if he had said, Where should a child be found, but in his father's house? This translation is defended by Grotius, Pearce, and others; and is the reading of the Syriac, later Persic, and Armenian versions. Our Lord took this opportunity to instruct Joseph and Mary concerning his Divine nature and mission. My Father's concerns. This saying, one would think, could not have been easily misunderstood. It shows at once that he came down from heaven. Joseph had no concerns in the temple; and yet we find they did not fully comprehend it. How slow of heart is man to credit any thing that comes from God!

**Verse 51. *Was subject unto them***— Behaved towards them with all dutiful submission. Probably his working with his hands at his reputed father's business, is here also implied: see on Luke 2:41. No child among the Jews was ever brought up in idleness. Is not this the carpenter? was a saying of those Jews who appear to have had a proper knowledge of his employment while in Joseph's house. See the note on Matthew 13:55.

**Verse 52. *Jesus increased in wisdom***— See on Luke 2:40.

THE following remarks, taken chiefly from Mr. Claude, on the foregoing subject, are well worth the reader's attention.

I. The birth of Christ is announced to the shepherds.

1. God causes his grace to descend not only on the great and powerful of the world, but also upon the most simple and inconsiderable; just as the heavens diffuse their influence not only on great trees, but also on the smallest herbs.

2. God seems to take more delight in bestowing his favors on the most abject than in distributing them among persons of elevated rank. Here is an example: for while he sent the wise men of the east to Herod, he sent an angel of heaven to the shepherds, and conducted them to the cradle of the Savior of the world.

3. In this meeting of the angels and shepherds, you see a perpetual characteristic of the economy of Jesus Christ; wherein the highest and most sublime things are joined with the meanest and lowest. In his person, the eternal WORD is united to a creature, the Divine nature to the human, infinity to infirmity, in a word, the Lord of glory to mean flesh and blood.

On his cross, though he appears naked, crowned with thorns, and exposed to sorrows, yet at the same time he shakes the earth, and eclipses the sun. Here, in like manner, are angels familiar with shepherds; angels, to mark his majesty-shepherds, his humility.

4. This mission of angels relates to the end for which the Son of God came into the world; for he came to establish a communion between God and men, and to make peace between men and angels: to this must be referred what St. Paul says, Colossians 1:20, It pleased the Father, by him, to reconcile all things to himself.

5. However simple and plain the employments of men may be, it is always very pleasing to God when they discharge them with a good conscience. While these shepherds were busy in their calling, God sent his angels to them.

6. God does, in regard to men, what these shepherds did in regard to their sheep. He is the great Shepherd of mankind, continually watching over them by his providence.

## II. The glory of the Lord shone round the shepherds.

1. When angels borrow human forms, in order to appear to men, they have always some ensigns of grandeur and majesty, to show that they are not men, but angels.

2. The appearance of this light to the shepherds in the night, may very well be taken for a mystical symbol. Night represents the corrupt state of mankind when Jesus came into the world; a state of ignorance and error. Light fitly represents the salutary grace of Christ, which dissipates obscurity, and gives us the true knowledge of God.

## III. The shepherds were filled with great fear.

1. This was the effect of their great surprise. When grand objects suddenly present themselves to us, they must needs fill us with astonishment and fear, for the mind, on these occasions, is not at liberty to exert its force; on the contrary, its strength is dissipated, and during this dissipation it is impossible not to fear.



2. This fear may also arise from emotions of conscience. Man is by nature a sinner, and consequently an object of the justice of God. While God does not manifest himself to him, he remains insensible of his sin; but, when God discovers himself to him, he awakes to feeling, and draws nigh to God as a trembling criminal approaches his judge. See this exemplified in the case of Adam, and in that of the Israelites when God appeared on the mountain: hence that proverbial saying, We shall die, for we have seen God.

3. The shepherds had just reason to fear when they saw before them an angel of heaven, surrounded with the ensigns of majesty, for angels had been formerly the ministers of God's vengeance. On this occasion, the sad examples of Divine vengeance, recorded in Scripture, and performed by the ministry of angels, might, in a moment, rise to view, and incline them to think that this angel had received a like order to destroy them.

IV. Observe the angel's discourse to the shepherds.

1. The angels say to them, Fear not. This preface was necessary to gain their attention, which fear, no doubt, had dissipated. The disposition which the angel wishes to awaken in them comports with the news which he intended to announce; for what has fear to do with the birth of the Savior of the world?

2. The angel describes, 1st, The person of whom he speaks, a Savior, Christ, the Lord; see before on Luke 2:11. See, 2dly, What he speaks of him; he is born unto you. 3dly, He marks the time; this day. 4thly, He describes the place; in the city of David. 5thly, He specifies the nature of this important news; a great joy which shall be unto all people. See Claude's Essay, by Robinson, vol. i. p. 266, etc.

Concerning Simeon, three things deserve to be especially noted: 1. His faith. 2. His song. And 3. His prophecy.

I. His faith.

1. He expected the promised Redeemer, in virtue of the promises which God had made; and, to show that his faith was of the operation of God's Spirit, he lived a life of righteousness and devotedness to God. Many profess to expect the salvation which God has promised only to those

who believe, while living in conformity to the world, under the influence of its spirit, and in the general breach of the righteous law of God.

2. The faith of Simeon led him only to wish for life that he might see him who was promised, and, be properly prepared for an inheritance among the sanctified. They who make not this use of life are much to be lamented. It would have been better for them had they never been born.

3. The faith of Simeon was crowned with success. Jesus came; he saw, he felt, he adored him! and, with a heart filled with the love of God, he breathed out his holy soul, and probably the last dregs of his life, in praise to the fountain of all good.

II. Simeon's song. By it he shows forth:-

1. The joy of his own heart. Lord, now thou dismissest thy servant; as if he had said: "Yes, O my God, I am going to quit this earth! I feel that thou callest me; and I quit it without regret. Thou hast fulfilled all my desires, and completed my wishes, and I desire to be detained no longer from the full enjoyment of thyself." O, how sweet is death, after such an enjoyment and discovery of eternal life!

2. Simeon shows forth the glory of Christ. He is the Sun of righteousness, rising on a dark and ruined world with light and salvation. He is the light that shall manifest the infinite kindness of God to the Gentile people; proving that God is good to all, and that his tender mercies are over all his works.

He is the glory of Israel. It is by him that the Gentiles have been led to acknowledge the Jews as the peculiar people of God; their books as the word of God, and their teaching as the revelation of God. What an honor for this people, had they known how to profit by it!

3. He astonished Joseph and Mary with his sublime account of the Redeemer of the world. They hear him glorified, and their hearts exult in it. From this Divine song they learn that this miraculous son of theirs is the sum and substance of all the promises made unto the fathers, and of all the predictions of the prophets.

III. Simeon's prophecy.

1. He addresses Christ, and foretells that he should be for the ruin and recovery of many in Israel. How astonishing is the folly and perverseness of man, to turn that into poison which God has made the choicest medicine; and thus to kill themselves with the cure which he has appointed for them in the infinity of his love! Those who speak against Jesus, his ways, his doctrine, his cross, his sacrifice, are likely to stumble, and fall, and rise no more for ever! May the God of mercy save the reader from this condemnation!

2. He addresses Mary, and foretells the agonies she must go through. What must this holy woman have endured when she saw her son crowned with thorns, scourged, buffeted, spit upon-when she saw his hands and his feet nailed to the cross, and his side pierced with a spear! What a sword through her own soul must each of these have been! But this is not all. These sufferings of Jesus are predicted thirty years before they were to take place! What a martyrdom was this! While he is nourished in her bosom, she cannot help considering him as a lamb who is growing up to be sacrificed. The older he grows, the nearer the bloody scene approaches! Thus her sufferings must increase with his years, and only end with his life!

3. He foretells the effects which should be produced by the persecutions raised against Christ and his followers. This sword of persecution shall lay open the hearts of many, and discover their secret motives and designs. When the doctrine of the cross is preached, and persecution raised because of it, then the precious are easily distinguished from the vile. Those whose hearts are not established by grace, now right with God, will turn aside from the way of righteousness, and deny the Lord that bought them. On the other hand, those whose faith stands not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God, will continue faithful unto death, glorify God in the fire, and thus show forth the excellency of his salvation, and the sincerity of the profession which they had before made. Thus the thoughts of many hearts are still revealed.

The design of our blessed Lord in staying behind in the temple seems to have been twofold. 1st. To prepare the Jews to acknowledge in him a Divine and supernatural wisdom: and 2dly. To impress the minds of Joseph and Mary with a proper idea of his independence and Divinity.

Their conduct in this business may be a lasting lesson and profitable warning to all the disciples of Christ.

1st. It is possible (by not carefully watching the heart, and by not keeping sacredly and constantly in view the spirituality of every duty) to lose the presence and power of Christ, even in religious ordinances. Joseph and Mary were at the feast of the passover when they lost Jesus!

2dly. Many who have sustained loss in their souls are kept from making speedy application to God for help and salvation, through the foolish supposition that their state is not so bad as it really is; and, in the things of salvation, many content themselves with the persuasion that the religious people with whom they associate are the peculiar favourites of Heaven, and that they are in a state of complete safety while connected with them.

They, supposing him to be in the company, went a day's journey.

3dly. Deep sorrow and self-reproach must be the consequence of the discovery of so great a loss as that of the presence and power of Christ. Joseph and Mary sought him sorrowing.

4thly. When people are convinced, by the light of the Lord, that their souls are not in a safe state, and that unless they find the Redeemer of the world they must perish, they are naturally led to inquire among their kinsfolk and acquaintance for him who saves sinners. But this often proves fruitless; they know not Jesus themselves, and they cannot tell others where to find him.

They sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance, and found him not.

5thly. When people perceive that they have proceeded in a certain course of life for a considerable time, without that salvation which God promises in his word, they should first stop and inquire into their state, and when they find that they have been posting into eternity, not only without a preparation for glory, but with an immense load of guilt upon their souls, they should turn back, and, as their time may be but short, they should seek diligently.

They turned back to Jerusalem, earnestly seeking him.

6thly. The likeliest place to find Jesus and his salvation is the temple. The place where his pure unadulterated Gospel is preached, the sanctuary where the power and glory of God are seen in the conviction, conversion, and salvation of sinners. They found him in the temple, among the doctors.

7thly. Trials, persecutions, and afflictions are all nothing, when the presence and power of Christ are felt; but when a testimony of his approbation lives no longer in the heart, every thing is grievous and insupportable. The fatigue of the journey to Bethlehem, the flight from the cruelty of Herod, and the unavoidable trials in Egypt, were cheerfully supported by Joseph and Mary, because in all they had Jesus with them; but now they are in distress and misery because he is behind in Jerusalem. Reader, if thou have lost Jesus, take no rest to body or soul till thou have found him! Without him, all is confusion and ruin: with him, all is joy and peace.

## CHAPTER 3

*The time in which John the Baptist began to preach, 1-3. The prophecies which were fulfilled in him, 4-6. The matter and success of his preaching, 7-9; among the people, 10, 11; among the publicans, 12, 13; among the soldiers, 14. His testimony concerning Christ, 15-18. The reason why Herod put him afterwards in prison, 19, 20. He baptizes Christ, on whom the Spirit of God descends, 21, 22. Our Lord's genealogy, 23-38.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 3

**Verse 1. *Fifteenth year***— This was the fifteenth of his principality and thirteenth of his monarchy: for he was two years joint emperor, previously to the death of Augustus.

***Tiberius Caesar***— This emperor succeeded Augustus, in whose reign Christ was born. He began his reign August 19, A.D. 14, reigned twenty-three years, and died March 16, A.D. 37, aged seventy eight years. He was a most infamous character. During the latter part of his reign especially, he did all the mischief he possibly could; and that his tyranny might not end with his life, he chose Caius Caligula for his successor, merely on account of his bad qualities; and of whom he was accustomed to say, This young prince will be a SERPENT to the Roman people, and a PHAETHON to the rest of mankind.

***Herod***— This was Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great who murdered the innocents. It was the same Herod who beheaded John Baptist, and to whom our Lord was sent by Pilate. See the account of the Herod family in the notes on Matthew 2:1.

***Iturea and Trachonitis***— Two provinces of Syria, on the confines of Judea.

***Abilene***— Another province of Syria, which had its name from Abila, its chief city.

These estates were left to Herod Antipas and his brother Philip by the will of their father, Herod the Great; and were confirmed to them by the decree of Augustus.

That Philip was tetrarch of Trachonitis, in the fifteenth year of Tiberius, we are assured by Josephus, who says that Philip the brother of Herod died in the twentieth year of Tiberius, after he had governed Trachonitis, Batanea, and Gaulonitis thirty-seven years. Antiq. b. xviii. c. 5, s. 6. And Herod continued tetrarch of Galilee till he was removed by Caligula, the successor of Tiberius. Antiq. b. xviii. c. 8, s. 2.

That Lysanius was tetrarch of Abilene is also evident from Josephus. He continued in this government till the Emperor Claudius took it from him, A.D. 42, and made a present of it to Agrippa. See Antiq. b. xix. c. 5, s. 1.

Tetrarch signifies the ruler of the fourth part of a country. See the note on Matthew 14:1.

**Verse 2. *Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests***— Caiaphas was the son-in-law of Annas or Ananias, and it is supposed that they exercised the high priest's office by turns. It is likely that Annas only was considered as high priest; and that Caiaphas was what the Hebrews termed כהן מִשְׁנֶה cohen mishneh, or כֹּהֲנִים sagan cohanim, the high priest's deputy, or ruler of the temple. See the note on Matthew 2:4, and on John 18:13.

The facts which St. Luke mentions here tend much to confirm the truth of the evangelical history. Christianity differs widely from philosophic system; it is founded in the goodness and authority of God; and attested by historic facts. It differs also from popular tradition, which either has had no pure origin, or which is lost in unknown or fabulous antiquity. It differs also from pagan and Mohammedan revelations, which were fabricated in a corner, and had no witnesses. In the above verses we find the persons, the places, and the times marked with the utmost exactness. It was under the first Caesars that the preaching of the Gospel took place; and in their time, the facts on which the whole of Christianity is founded made their appearance: an age the most enlightened, and best known from the multitude of its historic records. It was in Judea, where every thing that professed to come from God was scrutinized with the most exact and unmerciful criticism. In writing the history of Christianity, the evangelists

appeal to certain facts which were publicly transacted in such places, under the government and inspection of such and such persons, and in such particular times. A thousand persons could have confronted the falsehood, had it been one! These appeals are made—a challenge is offered to the Roman government, and to the Jewish rulers and people—a new religion has been introduced in such a place, at such a time—this has been accompanied with such and such facts and miracles! Who can disprove this? All are silent. None appears to offer even an objection. The cause of infidelity and irreligion is at stake! If these facts cannot be disproved, the religion of Christ must triumph. None appears because none could appear. Now let it be observed, that the persons of that time, only, could confute these things had they been false; they never attempted it; therefore these facts are absolute and incontrovertible truths: this conclusion is necessary. Shall a man then give up his faith in such attested facts as these, because, more than a thousand years after, an infidel creeps out, and ventures publicly to sneer at what his iniquitous soul hopes is not true!

*The word of God came unto John*— That is, the Holy Spirit that revealed to him this doctrine of salvation. This came upon him in the desert, where he was living in such a state of austerity as gave him full right to preach all the rigours of penitence to others. Thus we find that the first preachers, historians, and followers of the doctrines of the Gospel were men eminent for the austerity of their lives, the simplicity of their manners, and the sanctity of their conduct; they were authorized by God, and filled with the most precious gifts of his Spirit. And what are the apostles which the new philosophy sends us? Philosophers full of themselves, not guided by the love of truth or wisdom, but ever seeking their own glory; in constant hostility among themselves, because of their separate pretensions to particular discoveries, of the honor of which they would almost as soon lose life as be deprived. Who are they? Men of a mortified life and unblamable conversation? No—they are poets and poetasters; composers of romances, novels, intrigues, farces, comedies, etc., full of extravagance and impurity. They are pretended moralists that preach up pleasure and sensual gratification, and dissolve, as far as they can, the sacred and civil ties that unite and support society. They are men whose guilt is heightened by their assuming the sacred name of philosophers, and



dignifying their impure system with a name at which Philosophy herself blushes and bleeds.

**Verse 3. *The baptism of repentance***— See on Matthew 3:4-6, and Mark 1:1, etc., and Mark 16 at the end.

**Verse 4. *Prepare ye the way***— It was customary for the Hindoo kings, when on journeys, to send a certain class of the people two or three days before them, to command the inhabitants to clear the ways. A very necessary precaution where there are no public roads.-WARD.

**Verse 5. *Every they shall be filled***— All hinderances shall be taken out of the way: a quotation from the Greek version of Isaiah 40:4, containing an allusion to the preparations made in rough countries to facilitate the march of mighty kings and conquerors. See the instance produced on Matthew 3:3.

**Verse 7.-9.** On this account of the Baptist's mode of preaching, see the notes on Matthew 3:7-11.

**Verse 10. *What shall we do then?***— The preaching of the Baptist had been accompanied with an uncommon effusion of that Spirit which convinces of sin, righteousness, and judgment. The people who heard him now earnestly begin to inquire what they must do to be saved? They are conscious that they are exposed to the judgments of the Lord, and they wish to escape from the coming wrath.

**Verse 11. *He that hath two coats, etc.***— He first teaches the great mass of the people their duty to each other. They were uncharitable and oppressive, and he taught them not to expect any mercy from the hand of God, while they acted towards others in opposition to its dictates. If men be unkind and uncharitable towards each other, how can they expect the mercy of the Lord to be extended towards themselves?

**Verse 12. *Then came also publicans***— He next instructs the tax-gatherers in the proper discharge of their duty: though it was an office detested by the Jews at large, yet the Baptist does not condemn it. It is only the abuse of it that he speaks against. If taxes be necessary for the support of a state, there must be collectors of them; and the collector, if he properly discharge his duty, is not only a useful, but also a respectable officer. But it seems

the Jewish tax-gatherers exacted much more from the people than government authorized them to do, Luke 3:13, and the surplus they pocketed. See the conduct of many of our surveyors and assessors. They are oppressors of the people, and enrich themselves by unjust surcharges. This, I am inclined to think, is too common an evil; and the executive government is often the people's scape-goat, to bear the crimes of its officers, crimes in which it has no concern. For an account of the publicans, see the note on Matthew 5:46.

**Verse 14. *The soldiers likewise demanded of him***— He, thirdly, instructs those among the military. They were either Roman soldiers, or the soldiers of Herod or Philip. Use no violence to any, **μηδενά διασεισητε**, do not extort money or goods by force or violence from any. This is the import of the words *neminein concutite*, used here by the Vulgate, and points out a crime of which the Roman soldiers were notoriously guilty, their own writers being witnesses. *Concussio* has the above meaning in the Roman law. See *RAPHELIUS* in loco.

***Neither accuse any falsely***— Or, on a frivolous pretense—**μηδε συκοφαντησητε**, be not sycophants, like those who are base flatterers of their masters, who to ingratiate themselves into their esteem, malign, accuse, and impeach the innocent. Bishop PEARCE observes that, when the *concussio* above referred to did not produce the effect they wished, they often falsely accused the persons, which is the reason why this advice is added. See the note on Luke 19:7.

***Be content with your wages.***— **οψωνιοις**. The word signifies not only the money which was allotted to a Roman soldier, which was *tico oboli*, about three halfpence per day, but also the necessary supply of wheat, barley, etc. See *Raphelius*.

**Verse 15. *Whether he were the Christ***— So general was the reformation which was produced by the Baptist's preaching that the people were ready to consider him as the promised Messiah. Thus John came in the spirit and power of Elijah, and reformed all things; showed the people, the tax-gatherers, and the soldiers, their respective duties, and persuaded them to put away the evil of their doings. See the note on Matthew 17:11.

**Verse 16.-17.** On these verses see Matthew 3:11, 12, and Mark 1:7, 8, and particularly the note on John 3:5.

**Verse 19. *Herod the tetrarch***— See this subject explained at large, Matthew 14:1, etc., and Mark 6:21, 23.

**Verse 21. *Jesus-being baptized***— See on Matthew 3:16, 17.

**Verse 23. *Thirty years of age***— This was the age required by the law, to which the priests must arrive before they could be installed in their office: see Numbers 4:3.

***Being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph***— This same phrase is used by Herodotus to signify one who was only reputed to be the son of a particular person: *τουτον παις νομιζεται* he was SUPPOSED to be this man's son. Much learned labor has been used to reconcile this genealogy with that in St. Matthew, Matthew 1:1-17, and there are several ways of doing it; the following, which appears to me to be the best, is also the most simple and easy. For a more elaborate discussion of the subject, the reader is referred to the additional observations at the end of the chapter.

MATTHEW, in descending from Abraham to Joseph, the spouse of the blessed virgin, speaks of SONS properly such, by way of natural generation: Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob, etc. But Luke, in ascending from the Savior of the world to GOD himself, speaks of sons either properly or improperly such: on this account he uses an indeterminate mode of expression, which may be applied to sons either putatively or really such. And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being, as was SUPPOSED the son of Joseph-of Heli-of Matthat, etc. This receives considerable support from Raphelius's method of reading the original *ων (ως ενομιζετο υιος ιωσηφ) του 'ηλι*, being (when reputed the son of Joseph) the son of Heli, etc. That St. Luke does not always speak of sons properly such, is evident from the first and last person which he names: Jesus Christ was only the supposed son of Joseph, because Joseph was the husband of his mother Mary: and Adam, who is said to be the son of God, was such only by creation. After this observation it is next necessary to consider, that, in the genealogy described by St. Luke, there are two sons improperly such: i.e. two sons-in-law, instead of two sons. As the Hebrews never permitted women to enter into their genealogical tables, whenever a family happened to end

with a daughter, instead of naming her in the genealogy, they inserted her husband, as the son of him who was, in reality, but his father-in-law. This import, bishop Pearce has fully shown, νομιζεσθαι bears, in a variety of places-Jesus was considered according to law, or allowed custom, to be the son of Joseph, as he was of Heli. The two sons-in-law who are to be noticed in this genealogy are Joseph the son-in-law of Heli, whose own father was Jacob, Matthew 1:16; and Salathiel, the son-in-law of Neri, whose own father was Jechonias: 1 Chronicles 3:17, and Matthew 1:12. This remark alone is sufficient to remove every difficulty. Thus it appears that Joseph, son of Jacob, according to St. Matthew, was son-in-law of Heli, according to St. Luke. And Salathiel, son of Jechonias, according to the former, was son-in-law of Neri, according to the latter. Mary therefore appears to have been the daughter of Heli; so called by abbreviation for Heliachim, which is the same in Hebrew with Joachim. Joseph, son of Jacob, and Mary; daughter of Heli, were of the same family: both came from Zerubbabel; Joseph from Abiud, his eldest son, Matthew 1:13, and Mary by Rhesa, the youngest. See Luke 3:27. Salathiel and Zorobabel, from whom St. Matthew and St. Luke cause Christ to proceed, were themselves descended from Solomon in a direct line: and though St. Luke says that Salathiel was son of Neri, who was descended from Nathan, Solomon's eldest brother, 1 Chronicles 3:5, this is only to be understood of his having espoused Nathan's daughter, and that Neri dying, probably, without male issues the two branches of the family of David, that of Nathan and that of Solomon, were both united in the person of Zerubbabel, by the marriage of Salathiel, chief of the regal family of Solomon, with the daughter of Neri, chief and heretrix of the family of Nathan. Thus it appears that Jesus, son of Mary, reunited in himself all the blood, privileges, and rights of the whole family of David; in consequence of which he is emphatically called, The son of David. It is worthy of being remarked that St. Matthew, who wrote principally for the Jews, extends his genealogy to Abraham through whom the promise of the Messiah was given to the Jews; but St. Luke, who wrote his history for the instruction of the Gentiles, extends his genealogy to Adam, to whom the promise of the Redeemer was given in behalf of himself and of all his posterity. See the notes on Matthew 1:1, etc.

**Verse 36. *Of Cainan***— This Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, and father of Sala, is not found in any other Scripture genealogy. See Genesis 10:24; 11:12; 1 Chronicles 1:18, 24, where Arphaxad is made the father of Sala, and no mention at all made of Cainan. Some suppose that Cainan was a surname of Sala, and that the names should be read together thus, The son of Heber, the son of Salacainan, the son of Arphaxad, etc. If this does not untie the knot, it certainly cuts it; and the reader may pass on without any great scruple or embarrassment. There are many sensible observations on this genealogy in the notes at the end of Bishop Newcome's Harmony.

## CHAPTER 4.

Christ's temptation, 1-13. Teaches in the synagogues of Galilee, 14, 15. He preaches in a synagogue at Nazareth, 16-28. They attempt to kill him, 29, 30. He preaches in Capernaum, 31, 32, and casts out a demon, 33-37. Heals Peter's mother-in-law, and various others, 38-41. He goes to the desert, and preaches afterwards in the synagogues of Galilee, 42-44.

### NOTES ON CHAP. 4

**Verse 1. *Was led by the Spirit***— Or, And was carried about, ηγετο. Matthew says, ασηχθη, he was brought up. Mark says, the Spirit driveth him εκβαλλει-putteth him forth. But each of the evangelists attributes this to the Holy Ghost, not to Satan. It may be useful to remark here, that, during the forty days and forty nights in which he is said to have been tempted by the devil, he is carried about, continually sustained and supported, by the Holy Ghost. Let those who are tempted by Satan look for, and, in virtue of the power and intercession of Christ, claim, the same support; and it matters little how many days they may be assaulted by the devil, while they are carried about by the Spirit of God.

**Verse 7. *If thou-wilt worship me***— This temptation is the last in order, as related by Matthew; and it is not reasonable to suppose that any other succeeded to it. Luke has here told the particulars, but not in the order in which they took place. See every circumstance of this temptation considered and explained in the notes on Matthew 4:1-11.

**Verse 14. *Returned in the power of the Spirit***— εν τη δυναμει του πνευματος, In the mighty power of the Spirit. Having now conquered the grand adversary, he comes in the miracle-working energy of the Spirit to show forth his power, godhead, and love to the people, that they might believe and be saved. He who, through the grace of God, resists and overcomes temptation, is always bettered by it. This is one of the wonders of God's grace, that those very things which are designed for our utter ruin he makes the instruments of our greatest good. Thus Satan is ever duped by his own proceedings, and caught in his own craft.

**Verse 15. *And he taught in their synagogues***— We do not find that even the persecuting Jews ever hindered Christ or his disciples from preaching in their synagogues. Is it the same in every place where even the Christian religion is established by law? Would Jesus, or his apostles, or their most Scriptural representatives, be permitted to preach in one out of a thousand churches, in certain countries, unless they were strictly conformed to their external ecclesiastical customs? Nor even then, unless their doctrine were according to the taste of the managers and of the times.

***Glorified of all.***— All felt the power of his preaching, and acknowledged the divinity of his mission. The scandal of the cross had not yet taken place.

**Verse 16. *To Nazareth, where he had been brought up***— It is likely that our Lord lived principally in this city till the 30th year of his age; but, after he entered on his public ministry, his usual place of residence was at the house of Peter, in Capernaum.

***As his custom was***— Our Lord regularly attended the public worship of God in the synagogues; for there the Scriptures were read: other parts of the worship were very corrupt; but it was the best at that time to be found in the land. To worship God publicly is the duty of every man, and no man can be guiltless who neglects it. If a person cannot get such public worship as he likes, let him frequent such as he can get. Better to attend the most indifferent than to stay at home, especially on the Lord's day. The place and the time are set apart for the worship of the true God: if others do not conduct themselves well in it, that is not your fault, and need not be any hinderance to you. You come to worship GOD-do not forget your errand-and God will supply the lack in the service by the teachings of his Spirit. Hear the saying of old Mr. Herbert:- "The worst speak something good: should all want sense, God takes the text, and preacheth p-a-t-i-e-n-c-e." A man may always profit where the word of God is read.

***Stood up for to read.***— The Jews, in general, sat while they taught or commented on the Sacred Writings, or the traditions of the elders; but when they read either the law or the prophets they invariably stood up: it was not lawful for them even to lean against any thing while employed in reading.

**Verse 17. *And when he had opened the book***— *αναπτύξας*, When he had unrolled it. The Sacred Writings used to this day, in all the Jewish synagogues, are written on skins of basil, parchment, or vellum, sewed end to end, and rolled on two rollers, beginning at each end; so that, in reading from right to left, they roll off with the left, while they roll on with the right. Probably the place in the Prophet Isaiah, here referred to, was the lesson for that day; and Jesus unrolled the manuscript till he came to the place: then, after having read, he rolled it up again, and returned it to the officer, Luke 4:20, the ruler of the synagogue, or his servant, whose business it was to take care of it. The place that he opened was probably the section for the day. See the table at the end of Deuteronomy, and the note at the end of that table.

**Verse 18. *The Spirit of the Lord***— This is found in Isaiah 61:1; but our Lord immediately adds to it Isaiah 42:7. The proclaiming of liberty to the captives, and the acceptable year (or year of acceptance) of the Lord, is a manifest allusion to the proclaiming of the year of jubilee by sound of trumpet: see Leviticus 25:9, etc., and the notes there. This was a year of general release of debts and obligations; of bond-men and women; of lands and possessions, which had been sold from the families and tribes to which they belonged. Our Savior, by applying this text to himself, a text so manifestly relating to the institution above mentioned, plainly declares the typical design of that institution.—LOWTH.

***He hath anointed me***— I have been designed and set apart for this very purpose; my sole business among men is to proclaim glad tidings to the poor, etc. All the functions of this new prophet are exercised on the hearts of men; and the grace by which he works in the heart is a grace of healing, deliverance, and illumination; which, by an admirable virtue, causes them to pass from sickness to health, from slavery to liberty, from darkness to light, and from the lowest degrees of misery to supreme eternal happiness. See Quesnel. To those who feel their spiritual poverty, whose hearts are broken through a sense of their sins, who see themselves tied and bound with the chains of many evil habits, who sit in the darkness of guilt and misery, without a friendly hand to lead them in the way in which they should go—to these, the Gospel of the grace of Christ is a pleasing sound, because a present and full salvation is proclaimed by it; and the present is shown to be the acceptable year of the Lord; the year, the time, in which



he saves to the uttermost all who come unto him in the name of his Son Jesus. Reader! what dost thou feel? Sin-wretchedness-misery of every description? Then come to Jesus-He will save THEE-he came into the world for this very purpose. Cast thy soul upon him, and thou shalt not perish, but have everlasting life.

**Verse 20. *Were fastened on him.***— Were attentively fixed on him. The proper import of *ατενιζοντες αυτω*.

**Verse 22. *At the gracious words***— To the words of grace, *επι τοις λογοις της χαριτος*, or the doctrines of grace, which he then preached. It is very strange that none of the evangelists give us any account of this sermon! There was certainly more of it than is related in Luke 4:21. To-day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears; which seems to have been no more than the first sentence he spoke on the occasion. Had it been necessary for our salvation, it would have been recorded. It was a demonstration to those Jews, that Jesus, who preached to them, was the person of whom the prophet there spoke: it was not designed for general edification. Let us make a good use of what we have got, and we shalt not regret that this sermon is lost. The ear is never satisfied with hearing: we wish for another and another revelation, while sadly unacquainted with the nature and design of that which God's mercy has already given us.

**Verse 23. *Physician, heal thyself***— That is, heal the broken-hearted in thy own country, as the latter clause of the verse explains it; but they were far from being in a proper spirit to receive the salvation which he was ready to communicate; and therefore they were not healed.

**Verse 24. *No prophet is accepted***— See on Matthew 13:55-57.

**Verse 25. *In the days of Elias***— See this history, 1 Kings 17:1-9, compared with 1 Kings 18:1-45. This was evidently a miraculous interference, as no rain fell for three years and six months, even in the rainy seasons. There were two of these in Judea, called the first and the latter rains; the first fell in October, the latter in April: the first prepared the ground for the seed, the latter ripened the harvest. As both these rains were withheld, consequently there was a great famine throughout all the land.

**Verse 26. *Unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta***— The sentence is elliptical, and means this: To none of them was Elias sent; he was not sent except to Sarepta; for the widow at Sarepta was a Sidonian, not a widow of Israel. PEARCE.—Sarepta was a pagan city in the country of Sidon, in the vicinity of Galilee.

**Verse 27. *None of them was cleansed***— This verse is to be understood as the 26th; for Naaman, being a Syrian, was no leper in Israel. The meaning of these verses is, God dispenses his benefits when, where, and to whom he pleases. No person can complain of his conduct in these respects, because no person deserves any good from his hand. God never punishes any but those who deserve it; but he blesses incessantly those who deserve it not. The reason is evident: justice depends on certain rules; but beneficence is free. Beneficence can bless both the good and the evil; justice can punish the latter only. Those who do not make this distinction must have a very confused notion of the conduct of Divine Providence among men.

**Verse 28. *Were filled with wrath***— They seem to have drawn the following conclusion from what our Lord spoke: “The Gentiles are more precious in the sight of God than the Jews; and to them his miracles of mercy and kindness shall be principally confined.” This was pretty near the truth, as the event proved. Those who profit not by the light of God, while it is among them, shall have their candle extinguished. The kingdom of God was taken from the Jews, and given to the Gentiles; not because the Gentiles were better than they were, but because, 1st. The Jews had forfeited their privileges; and 2dly. Because Christ saw that the Gentiles would bring forth the fruits of the kingdom.

**Verse 29. *The brow of the hill***— Mr. Maundrel tells us that this is still called “the Mountain of the Precipitation, and is half a league southward of Nazareth. In going to it, you cross first over the vale in which Nazareth stands; and then going down two or three furlongs, in a narrow cleft between the rocks, you there clamber up a short but difficult way on the right hand; at the top of which you find a great stone standing on the brink of a precipice, which is said to be the very place where our Lord was destined to be thrown down by his enraged neighbors.” Maundrel’s Journey, p. 116. Edit. 5th. 1732.

**Verse 30. *Passing through the midst of them***— Either he shut their eyes so that they could not see him; or he so overawed them by his power as to leave them no strength to perform their murderous purpose. The man Christ Jesus was immortal till his time came; and all his messengers are immortal till their work is done. The following relation of a fact presents a scene something similar to what I suppose passed on this occasion: A missionary, who had been sent to a strange land to proclaim the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and who had passed through many hardships, and was often in danger of losing his life, through the persecutions excited against him, came to a place where he had often before, at no small risk, preached Christ crucified. About fifty people, who had received good impressions from the word of God, assembled: he began his discourse; and, after he had preached about thirty minutes, an outrageous mob surrounded the house, armed with different instruments of death, and breathing the most sanguinary purposes. Some that were within shut the door; and the missionary and his flock betook themselves to prayer. The mob assailed the house, and began to hurl stones against the walls, windows, and roof; and in a short time almost every tile was destroyed, and the roof nearly uncovered, and before they quitted the premises scarcely left one square inch of glass in the five windows by which the house was enlightened. While this was going forward, a person came with a pistol to the window opposite to the place where the preacher stood, (who was then exhorting his flock to be steady, to resign themselves to God, and trust in him,) presented it at him, and snapped it; but it only flashed in the pan! As the house was a wooden building, they began with crows and spades to undermine it, and take away its principal supports. The preacher then addressed his little flock to this effect: “These outrageous people seek not you, but me; if I continue in the house, they will soon pull it down, and we shall be all buried in its ruins; I will therefore, in the name of God, go out to them, and you will be safe.” He then went towards the door; the poor people got round him, and entreated him not to venture out, as he might expect to be instantly massacred; he went calmly forward, opened the door, at which a whole volley of stones and dirt was that instant discharged; but he received no damage. The people were in crowds in all the space before the door, and filled the road for a considerable way, so that there was no room to pass or repass. As soon as the preacher made his appearance, the savages became instantly as silent and as still as night:

he walked forward; and they divided to the right and to the left, leaving a passage of about four feet wide for himself and a young man who followed him, to walk in. He passed on through the whole crowd, not a soul of whom either lifted a hand, or spoke one word, till he and his companion had gained the uttermost skirts of the mob! The narrator, who was present on the occasion, goes on to say: “This was one of the most affecting spectacles I ever witnessed; an infuriated mob, without any visible cause, (for the preacher spoke not one word,) became in a moment as calm as lambs! They seemed struck with amazement bordering on stupefaction; they stared and stood speechless; and, after they had fallen back to right and left to leave him a free passage, they were as motionless as statues! They assembled with the full purpose to destroy the man who came to show them the way of salvation; but he, passing through the midst of them, went his way. Was not the God of missionaries in this work? The next Lord’s day, the missionary went to the same place, and again proclaimed the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world!”

**Verse 31. *Came down to Capernaum***— Which it is likely he made his ordinary place of residence from this time. See on Matthew 4:13.

**Verse 32. *His word was with power***.— *εν εξουσια*, With authority. He assumed the tone and manner of a new Lawgiver; and uttered all his doctrines, not in the way of exhortation or advice, but in the form of precepts and commands, the unction of the Holy Spirit accompanying all he said. See on Mark 1:22.

**Verse 33. *A spirit of an unclean devil***— As demon was used both in a good and bad sense before and after the time of the evangelists the word unclean may have been added here by St. Luke, merely to express the quality of this spirit. But it is worthy of remark, that the inspired writers never use the word *δαμων*, demon, in a good sense. See the whole of this case explained, Mark 1:23, etc.

**Verse 35. *And hurt him not***.— Though he convulsed him, Mark 2:26, and threw him down in the midst of them, probably with the design to take away his life, yet our Lord permitted it not; and this appears to be the meaning of the place. The spirit was not permitted essentially to injure him at that time.

**Verse 37. *The fame***— *ἤχος*, the sound. This is a very elegant metaphor. The people are represented as struck with astonishment, and the sound goes out through all the coasts; in allusion to the propagation of sound, by a smart stroke upon any substance, by which the air is suddenly agitated, and conveys the report made by the stroke to distant places. So this miracle was told to others by those who saw it, and they to others still, till it was heard through all the coasts of Galilee, Mark 1:28.

**Verse 38. *Simon's wife's mother***— See on Matthew 8:14-17. As soon as Peter began to follow Christ, his family began to benefit by it. It is always profitable to contract an acquaintance with good men. One person full of faith and prayer may be the means of drawing down innumerable blessings on his family and acquaintance. Every person who knows the virtue and authority of Christ should earnestly seek his grace in behalf of all the spiritually diseased in his household; nor can he seek the aid of Christ in vain.

**Verse 40. *When the sun was setting***— And consequently the Sabbath ended, for before this it would have been unlawful to have brought their sick to be healed.

**Verse 42. *And the people sought him***— Rather, Sought him earnestly. Instead of *ἐζητοῦν*, sought, I read, *ἐπεζητοῦν*, earnestly sought. This reading is supported by ABCDFLMS-V, and more than seventy others. Wetstein and Griesbach have both received it into the text. The people had tasted the good word of God, and now they cleave to Christ with their whole heart. Hearing the words of Christ, and feeling the influence of his Spirit upon the soul, will attract and influence the heart; and indeed nothing else can do it.

***And stayed him***— Strove to detain him; *κατειχον αὐτον* they caught hold of him. Thus showing their great earnestness to be farther instructed.

**Verse 43. *I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities***— To proclaim the kingdom of God was the Messiah's great work; healing the diseases of the people was only an emblematical and secondary work, a work that was to be the proof of his goodness, and the demonstration of his authority to preach the Gospel, and open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

SOME have found both a difficulty and a mystery in the shutting up of heaven in the time of the Prophet Elijah. It was, no doubt, emblematical of the hardened and impenitent state of the Israelites, and of the judgments of God in withholding those Divine influences which they had so often abused. As to the difficulty of the six months, which both our Lord here, and St. James, James 5:17, mention, and which are not mentioned in the book of Kings whence the account is taken, it may be easily understood thus. The rains, we have already seen, fell in Judea twice in the year, about April, and about October. At this latter period, when the rain was expected, the prophet prayed that it might not rain; the rain therefore of Marchesvan, or October, etc., was then restrained: this restraint continued for three full years; but six months had elapsed from Nisan, April, etc., when they had their last rain, add these six months to the three full years that the rain was restrained at the prayer of Elijah, and then we have the period of three years and six months, according to our Lord and Saint James. By this the justice of God was shown: but behold his mercy in that rain of grace which fell so abundantly by the preaching of Christ during the three years and six months of his public ministry! Thus the difficulty is solved, and the mystery explained. Reader, the most awful famine is a famine of the word of God: thou art not yet tried in this way: behold the goodness and severity of God! While thou hast the light, walk as a child of the light; and let it not be thy curse and condemnation, that while others, by reading and hearing the word of God, are plenteously watered, thy fleece alone should be found dry. How unutterable must the wo of those be, who live and die infidels under the preaching of the Gospel of Christ! Let him that readeth, understand.

## CHAPTER 5

*The miraculous draught of fishes at the lake of Gennesaret, 1-11. Christ heals a leper, 12-14. His fame being published abroad, he withdraws to the desert, 15, 16. He heals a paralytic person, at which the scribes and Pharisees murmur, but the people glorify God, 17-26. He calls the publican Levi, who makes a feast for Christ, to which he invites a great number of publicans and others, at which the scribes and Pharisees murmur, and our Lord vindicates his conduct, 27-32. The question about fasting answered, 33-35. The parable of the new piece of cloth put on the old garment, and the new wine in old bottles, 36-39.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 5

**Verse 1. *The people pressed upon him***— There was a glorious prospect of a plentiful harvest, but how few of these blades came to full corn in the ear! To hear with diligence and affection is well; but a preacher of the Gospel may expect that, out of crowds of hearers, only a few, comparatively, will fully receive the truth, and hold out to the end.

***To hear the word of God***— τοῦ λόγου τοῦ θεοῦ, The doctrine of God, or, the heavenly doctrine.

***The lake of Gennesaret***— Called also the sea of Galilee, Matthew 4:18, and Mark 1:16; and the sea of Tiberias, John 6:1. It was, according to Josephus, forty furlongs in breadth, and one hundred and forty in length. No synagogue could have contained the multitudes who attended our Lord's ministry; and therefore he was obliged to preach in the open air. But this also some of the most eminent rabbins were in the habit of doing; though among some of their brethren it was not deemed reputable.

**Verse 2. *Two ships***— δύο πλοῖα, Two vessels, It is highly improper to term these ships. They appear to have been only such small boats as are used to manage nets on flat smooth beaches: one end of the net is attached to the shore; the fishermen row out, and drop the net as they go, making a kind of semicircle from the shore; they return, and bring the rope attached

to the other end with them, and then the net is hauled on shore; and, as it was sunk with weights to the bottom, and floated with corks at the top, all the fish in that compass were included, and drawn to shore.

**Verse 3. *And taught-out of the ship.***— They pressed so much upon him on the land, through their eagerness to hear the doctrine of life, that he could not conveniently speak to them, and so was obliged to get into one of the boats; and, having pushed a little out from the land, he taught them. The smooth still water of the lake must have served excellently to convey the sounds to those who stood on the shore;

**Verse 5. *Simon-said-Master***— **ἐπιστάτα**. This is the first place where this word occurs; it is used by none of the inspired penmen but Luke, and he applies it only to our blessed Lord. It properly signifies a prefect, or one who is set over certain affairs or persons: it is used also for an instructor, or teacher. Peter considered Christ, from what he had heard, as teacher of a Divine doctrine, and as having authority to command, etc. He seems to comprise both ideas in this appellation; he listened attentively to his teaching, and readily obeyed his orders. To hear attentively, and obey cheerfully, are duties we owe, not only to the sovereign Master of the world, but also to ourselves. No man ever took Jesus profitably for his teacher, who did not at the same time receive him as his Lord.

***We have toiled all the night***— They had cast the net several times in the course of the night, and drew it to shore without success, and were now greatly disheartened. I have seen several laborious draughts of this kind made without fruit. All labor must be fruitless where the blessing of God is not; but especially that of the ministry. It is the presence and influence of Christ, in a congregation, that cause souls to be gathered unto himself: without these, whatever the preacher's eloquence or abilities may be, all will be night, and fruitless labor.

***At thy word I will let down the net.***— He who assumes the character of a fisher of men, under any authority that does not proceed from Christ, is sure to catch nothing; but he who labors by the order and under the direction of the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, cannot labor in vain.

**Verse 6. *Their net brake.***— Or, began to break, **διερρηγνυτο**, or, was likely to be broken. Had it broke, as our version states, they could have



caught no fish. Grammarians give the following rule concerning words of this kind. Verba completiva inchoative intelligenda. Verbs which signify the accomplishment of a thing, are often to be understood as only signifying the beginning of that accomplishment. Raphelius gives some very pertinent examples of this out of Herodotus.

**Verse 7. *They beckoned unto their partners***— Had not these been called in to assist, the net must have been broken, and all the fish lost. What a pity there should be such envious separation among the different sects that profess to believe in Christ Jesus! Did they help each other in the spirit of Christian fellowship, more souls would be brought to the knowledge of the truth. Some will rather leave souls to perish than admit of partners in the sacred work. It is an intolerable pride to think nothing well done but what we do ourselves; and a diabolic envy to be afraid lest others should be more successful than we are.

***They-filled both the ships***— Both the boats had as many as they could carry, and were so heavily laden that they were ready to sink. As one justly observes, “There are fish plenty to be taken, were there skillful hands to take, and vessels to contain them. Many are disputing about the size, capacity, and goodness of their nets and their vessels, while the fish are permitted to make their escape.” Did the faithful fishers in both the vessels in these lands (the established Church, and the various branches of the dissenting interest) join heartily together, the nations might be converted to God; but, while the ridiculous disputes for and against particular forms last, there can be no unity. Were men as zealous to catch souls, as they are to support their particular creeds, and forms of worship, the state of Christianity would be more flourishing than it is at present. But the wall of separation is continually strengthened, each party fortifying it on his own side.

**Verse 8. *Depart from me; for I am a sinful man***— ἐξέλθε ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ, Go out from me, i.e. from my boat. Peter was fully convinced that this draught of fish was a miraculous one; and that God himself had particularly interfered in this matter, whose presence and power he revered in the person of Jesus. But as he felt himself a sinner, he was afraid the Divine purity of Christ could not possibly endure him; therefore he wished for a separation from that power, which he was afraid might break forth and

consume him. It seems to have been a received maxim among the Jews, that whoever had seen a particular manifestation of God should speedily die. Hence Jacob seemed astonished that his life should have been preserved, when he had seen God face to face, Genesis 32:30. So the nobles of Israel saw God, and yet did eat and drink; for on them he had laid not his hand, i.e. to destroy them, though it appears to have been expected by them, in consequence of this discovery which he made of himself. See Exodus 24:10, 11, and the notes there. This supposition of the Jews seems to have been founded on the authority of God himself, Exodus 33:20: There shall no man see my FACE and LIVE. So Moses, Deuteronomy 5:26: Who is there of all flesh that hath heard the voice of the living God, speaking out of the midst of the fire as we have, and LIVED? So Gideon expected to be immediately slain, because he had seen an angel of the Lord, and a miracle performed by him. See Judges 6:21-23. So likewise Manoah and his wife, Judges 13:22: We shall surely DIE, for we have SEEN GOD. These different passages sufficiently show in what sense these words of Peter are to be understood.

**Verse 10. *Thou shalt catch men.***— *ανθρωπους εση ζωγων*, Thou shalt catch men alive; this is the proper signification of the word. Fear not: these discoveries of God tend to life, not to death; and ye shall become the instruments of life and salvation to a lost world. These fish are taken to be killed and fed on; but those who are converted under your ministry shall be preserved unto eternal life. See on Matthew 4:18, etc., where this subject is considered more at large.

**Verse 11. *They forsook all, and followed him.***— God expects this from every person, and especially from those in whose hearts, or in whose behalf, he has wrought a miracle of grace or of providence. Jesus intended to call Peter, James, and John, to become his disciples; and that they might see the propriety and importance of the call, he:-

1st. TEACHES in their presence, that they may know his doctrine.

2dly. He WORKS a MIRACLE before their eyes, that they might see and be convinced of his power.

3dly. He CALLS them to go forth with this doctrine, and through this power, that they might teach the ignorant, and be successful in their work.

**Verse 12. *A certain city***— This was some city of Galilee; probably Chorazin or Bethsaida.

***A man full of leprosy***— See this disease, and the cure, largely explained on Matthew 8:2-4; and see it particularly applied to the use of public preaching, Mark 1:40, etc. See also the notes on Leviticus 13, and 14. {Leviticus 13:1ff, Leviticus 14:1ff}

**Verse 14. *And offer for thy cleansing***— A Hindoo, after recovering from sickness, presents the offerings he had vowed when in distress, as a goat, sweetmeats, milk, or any thing directed by the Shaster. All nations agreed in these gratitude-offerings for benefits received from the object of their worship.

**Verse 16. *And he withdrew himself into the wilderness***— Or rather, He frequently withdrew into the desert. This I believe to be the import of the original words, *ην υποχωρων*. He made it a frequent custom to withdraw from the multitudes for a time, and pray, teaching hereby the ministers of the Gospel that they are to receive fresh supplies of light and power from God by prayer, that they may be the more successful in their work; and that they ought to seek frequent opportunities of being in private with God and their books. A man can give nothing unless he first receive it; and no man can be successful in the ministry who does not constantly depend upon God, for the excellence of the power is all from him. Why is there so much preaching, and so little good done? Is it not because the preachers mix too much with the world, keep too long in the crowd, and are so seldom in private with God? Reader! Art thou a herald for the Lord of hosts? Make full proof of thy ministry! Let it never be said of thee, “He forsook all to follow Christ, and to preach his Gospel, but there was little or no fruit of his labor; for he ceased to be a man of prayer, and got into the spirit of the world.” Alas! alas! is this luminous star, that was once held in the right hand of Jesus, fallen from the firmament of heaven, down to the EARTH!

**Verse 17. *On a certain day***— This was when he was at Capernaum. See Mark 2:1.

***The power of the Lord***— *δυναμις κυριου* The mighty or miraculous power of the Lord, i.e. of Jesus, was there to heal them-as many as were

diseased either in body or soul. Where the teaching of Christ is, there also is the power of Christ to redeem and save.

**Verse 18. *A man-taken with a palsy***— See this case described on Matthew 9:1, etc., and Mark 2:1, etc.

**Verse 19. *Went upon the housetop***— See on Matthew 24:17.

**Verse 21. *Who can forgive sins, but God alone?***— If Jesus were not God, he could not forgive sins; and his arrogating this authority would have been blasphemy against God, in the most proper sense of the word. That these scribes and Pharisees might have the fullest proof of his Godhead, he works in their presence three miracles, which from their nature could only be effected by an omniscient and omnipotent Being. The miracles are: 1. The remission of the poor man's sins. 2. The discernment of the secret thoughts of the scribes. 3. The restoration of the paralytic in an instant to perfect soundness. See on Matthew 9:5, 6.

**Verse 26. *Strange things***— *παράδοξα*, paradoxes. A paradox is something that appears false and absurd, but is not really so: or, something contrary to the commonly received opinion. We have seen wonders wrought which seem impossible; and we should conclude them to be tricks and illusions, were it not for the indisputable evidence we have of their reality.

**Verse 27. *Levi***— See on Matthew 9:9; Mark 2:14.

**Verse 28. *And he left all***— *καταλιπών*-completely abandoning his office, and every thing connected with it. He who wishes to preach the Gospel, like the disciples of Christ, must have no earthly entanglement. If he have, his whole labor will be marred by it. The concerns of his own soul, and those of the multitudes to whom he preaches, are sufficient to engross all his attention, and to employ all his powers.

**Verse 29. *A great feast***— *δοχην μεγάλην*, A splendid entertainment. The word refers more properly to the number of the guests, and the manner in which they were received, than to the quality or quantity of the fare. A great number of his friends and acquaintance was collected on the occasion, that they might be convinced of the propriety of the change he had made, when they had the opportunity of seeing and hearing his heavenly teacher.

**Verse 30. *Why do ye eat and drink, etc.***— See what passed at this entertainment considered at large on Matthew 9:10-17; Mark 2:15-22.

**Verse 37. *The new wine will burst the bottles***— These old bottles would not be able to stand the fermentation of the new wine, as the old sewing would be apt to give way. It is scarcely necessary to remark, that the eastern bottles are made of skins; generally those of goats.

**Verse 39. *The old is better.***— *χρηστοτερος*—Is more agreeable to the taste or palate. Herodotus, the scholiast on Aristophanes, and Homer, use the word in this sense. See Raphelius. The old wine, among the rabbins, was the wine of three leaves; that is, wine three years old; because, from the time that the vine had produced that wine, it had put forth its leaves three times. See Lightfoot.

1. THE miraculous draught of fishes-the cleansing of the leper-the healing of the paralytic person-the calling of Levi-and the parable of the old and new bottles, and the old and new wine-all related in this chapter, make it not only very entertaining, but highly instructive. There are few chapters in the New Testament from which a preacher of the Gospel can derive more lessons of instruction; and the reader would naturally expect a more particular explanation of its several parts, had not this been anticipated in the notes and observations on Matt. 9, {Matthew 9:1ff} to which chapter it will be well to refer.

2. The conduct as well as the preaching of our Lord is highly edifying. His manner of teaching made every thing he spoke interesting and impressive. He had many prejudices to remove, and he used admirable address in order to meet and take them out of the way. There is as much to be observed in the manner of speaking the truth, as in the truth itself, in order to make it effectual to the salvation of them who hear it. A harsh, unfeeling method of preaching the promises of the Gospel, and a smiling manner of producing the terrors of the Lord, are equally reprehensible. Some preachers are always severe and magisterial: others are always mild and insinuating: neither of these can do God's work; and it would take two such to make one PREACHER.

## CHAPTER 6

*The disciples pluck and eat the ears of corn on the Sabbath day, and the Pharisees find fault, 1, 2. Our Lord shows the true use of the Sabbath, 3-5. He heals the man with the withered hand, 6-11. He goes into a mountain to pray, and calls twelve disciples, 12-16. Multitudes are instructed and healed, 17-19. Pronounces four blessings, 20-23, and four woes, 24-26. Gives various instructions about loving our enemies, being patient, gentle, kind, grateful, and merciful, 27-36. Harsh judgments censured, and charity recommended, 37, 38. The parable of the blind leading the blind, 39. Of the mote in a brother's eye, 40-42. Of the good and corrupt tree, 43, 44. The good and evil treasure of the heart, 45. The parable of the two houses, one builded on the rock, and the other on the sand, 46-49.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 6

**Verse 1.** *On the second Sabbath after the first*— εν σαββατω δευτεροπρωτω, In the first Sabbath after the second. What does this mean? In answering this question, commentators are greatly divided. Dr. Whitby speaks thus: “After the first day of the passover, (which was a Sabbath, Exodus 12:16,) ye shall count unto you seven Sabbaths complete, Leviticus 23:15, reckoning that day for the first of the first week, which was therefore called δευτεροπρωτον, the first Sabbath from the second day of unleavened bread; (the 16th of the month;) the second was called δευτεροδευτερον, the second Sabbath from that day; and the third, δευτεροτριτον, the third Sabbath from the second day; and so on, till they came to the seventh Sabbath from that day, i.e. to the 49th day, which was the day of pentecost. The mention of the seven Sabbaths, to be numbered with relation to this second day, answers all that Grotius objects against this exposition.” WHITBY’S Notes.

By this Sabbath seems meant that which immediately followed the two great feasts, the first and last day of the passover, and was therefore the second after the proper passover day. The words in the Greek seem to

signify, the second first Sabbath; and, in the opinion of some, the Jews had three first Sabbaths: viz. the first Sabbath after the passover; that after the feast of pentecost; and that after the feast of tabernacles. According to which opinion, this second first Sabbath must have been the first Sabbath after the pentecost. So we have the first Sunday after Epiphany; the first after Easter; the first after Trinity; and the first in Lent. Bp. PEARCE.

This was the next day after the passover, the day in which they were forbidden to labor, Leviticus 23:6, and for this reason was termed Sabbath, Leviticus 23:15; but here it is marked by the name, second first Sabbath, because, being the day after the passover, it was in this respect the second; and it was also the first, because it was the first day of unleavened bread, Exodus 12:15, 16. MARTIN.

I think, with many commentators, that this transaction happened on the first Sabbath of the month Nisan; that is, after the second day of the feast of unleavened bread. We may well suppose that our Lord and his disciples were on their way from Jerusalem to Galilee, after having kept the passover. Bp. NEWCOME.

The Vulgar Latin renders *δευτεροπρωτον*, secundoprimum, which is literal and right. We translate it, the second Sabbath after the first, which is directly wrong; for it should have been the first Sabbath after the second day of the passover. On the 14th of Nisan, the passover was killed; the next day (the 15th) was the first day of the feast of unleavened bread; the day following (the 16th) the wave sheaf was offered, pursuant to the law, on the morrow after the Sabbath: Leviticus 18:11. The Sabbath, here, is not the seventh day of the week, but the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, let it fall on what day of the week it would. That and the seventh day of that feast were holy convocations, and therefore are here called Sabbaths. The morrow, therefore, after the Sabbath, i.e. after the 16th day of Nisan, was the day in which the wave sheaf was offered; and after that seven Sabbaths were counted, and fifty days completed, and the fiftieth day inclusively was the day of pentecost. Now these Sabbaths, between the passover and pentecost, were called the first, second, etc., Sabbaths after the second day of the feast of unleavened bread. This Sabbath, then, on which the disciples plucked the ears of corn, was the first Sabbath after that second day. Dr. Lightfoot, has demonstrably proved this to be the

meaning of this **σαββατον δευτεροπρωτον**, (Hor. Hebraic. in locum,) and from him F. Lamy and Dr. Whitby have so explained it. This Sabbath could not fall before the passover, because, till the second day of that feast, no Jew might eat either bread or parched corn, or green ears, (Leviticus 23:14.) Had the disciples then gathered these ears of corn on any Sabbath before the passover, they would have broken two laws instead of one: and for the breach of these two laws they would infallibly have been accused; whereas now they broke only one, (plucking the ears of standing corn with one's hand, being expressly allowed in the law, Deuteronomy 23:25,) which was that of the Sabbath. They took a liberty which the law gave them upon any other day; and our Lord vindicated them in what they did now, in the manner we see. Nor can this fact be laid after pentecost; because then the harvest was fully in. Within that interval, therefore, this Sabbath happened; and this is a plain determination of the time, according to the Jewish ways of reckoning, founded upon the text of Moses's law itself. Dr. WOTTON's Miscellaneous Discourses, etc., vol. i. p. 269.

The word **δευτεροπρωτω**, the second first, is omitted by BL, four others, Syriac, later Arabic, all the Persic, Coptic, AEthiopic, and three of the Itala. A note in the margin of the later Syriac says, This is not in all copies. The above MSS. read the verse thus: It came to pass, that he walked through the corn fields on a Sabbath day. I suppose they omitted the above word, because they found it difficult to fix the meaning, which has been too much the case in other instances.

**Verse 2. *Which is not lawful***— See on Matthew 12:2-8.

**Verse 3. *What David did***— See on Mark 2:26, 27.

**Verse 4.** After this verse, the Codex Bezae and two ancient MSS. quoted by Wechel, have the following extraordinary addition: **τη αυτη θεασαμενος τινα εργαζομενον τω σαββατω, ειπεν αυτω, ανθρωπε, ει μεν οιδας τι ποιεις μακαριος ει: ει δε μη οιδας επικαταρατος, και παραβατης ειτου νομον.** On the same day, seeing one working on the Sabbath, he said unto him, Man, if indeed thou knowest what thou dost, blessed art thou; but if thou knowest not, thou art cursed, and art a transgressor of the law. Whence this strange addition proceeded, it is hard to tell. The meaning seems to be this: If thou now workest on the Jewish



Sabbath, from a conviction that that Sabbath is abolished, and a new one instituted in its place, then happy art thou, for thou hast got Divine instruction in the nature of the Messiah's kingdom; but if thou doest this through a contempt for the law of God, then thou art accursed, forasmuch as thou art a transgressor of the law. The Itala version of the Codex Bezae, for *παράβατης*, transgressor, has this semi-barbaric word, trabaricator.

**Verse 6. *Whose right hand was withered.***— See on Matthew 12:10, etc. The critic who says that *ξηραν χειρα* signifies a luxated arm, and that the stretching it out restored the bone to its proper place, without the intervention of a miracle, deserves no serious refutation. See on Luke 6:10.

**Verse 7. *Watched him***— *παρετηρουν*, They maliciously watched him. This is the import of the word, Luke 14:1; 20:20, and in the parallel place, Mark 3:2. See Raphelius on the last-quoted text, who has proved, by several quotations, that this is the proper meaning of the term.

***An accusation against him.***— Instead of *κατηγοριαν αυτον*, his accusation, several eminent MSS. and versions add *κατα*, against, which I find our translators have adopted.

**Verse 9. *I will ask you one thing***— I will put a question to you. See on Mark 3:4, 5.

**Verse 10. *Whole as the other.***— Many MSS., both here and in the parallel place, Mark 3:5, omit the word *υγιης*, whole. Griesbach leaves it out of the text. The hand was restored as the other. But had it only been a luxated joint, even allowing, with a German critic, that the bone regained its place by the effort made to stretch out the arm, without the intervention of a miracle, it would have required several weeks to restore the muscles and ligaments to their wonted tone and strength. Why all this learned labor to leave God out of the question?

**Verse 11. *They were filled with madness***— Pride, obstinacy, and interest, combined together, are capable of any thing. When men have once framed their conscience according to their passions, madness passes for zeal, the blackest conspiracies for pious designs, and the most horrid attempts for heroic actions. QUESNEL.

**Verse 12. *In prayer to God.***— Or, in the prayer of God: or, in the oratory of God, *εν τη προσευχη του θεου*. So this passage is translated by many critics; for which Dr. Whitby gives the following reasons: As the mountain of God, Exodus 3:1; 4:27; the bread of God, Leviticus 21:17; the lamp of God, 1 Samuel 3:3; the vessels of God, 1 Chronicles 22:19; the altar of God, Psalm 43:4; the sacrifices of God, Psalm 51:17; the gifts of God, Luke 21:4; the ministers of God, 2 Corinthians 6:4; the tabernacle of God, 2 Chronicles 1:3; the temple of God, Matthew 21:12; the synagogues of God, Psalm 74:8; are all things consecrated or appropriated to God's service; so *προσευχη του θεου* must, in all reason, be a house of prayer to God; whence it is called *τοπος προσευχης*, a place of prayer, 1 Mac. iii. 46; and so the word is certainly used Acts 16:13; and by Philo, in his oration against Flaccus, where he complains that *αι προσευχαι*, their houses for prayer were pulled down, and there was no place left in which they might worship God, or pray for Caesar; and by Josephus, who says the multitude was gathered *εις της προσευχην*, into the house of prayer: and so Juvenal, Sat. iii. v. 296, speaks to the mendicant Jew:-

Ede ubi consistas; in qua te quaero proseucha? In what house of prayer may I find thee begging?

See on Acts 16:13. But on this it may be observed, that as the mountains of God, the wind of God, the hail of God, the trees of God, etc., mean very high mountains, a very strong wind, great and terrible hail, very tall trees, etc., so *προσευχη του θεου*, here, may be very properly translated the prayer of God; i.e. very fervent and earnest prayer; and though *διανυκτερευων* may signify, to lodge in a place for a night, yet there are various places in the best Greek writers in which it is used, not to signify a place, but to pass the night in a particular state. So Appian, Bell. Pun. *εν τοις οπλοις διενυκτερευσε μεθ' απαντων*-He passed the night under arms with them all. Idem, Bell. Civ. lib. v. *διενυκτερευον*-They passed the night without food, without any regard to the body, and in the want of all things. See more examples in Kypke, who concludes by translating the passage thus: He passed the night without sleep in prayers to God. Some of the Jews imagine that God himself prays; and this is one of his petitions: Let it be my good pleasure, that my mercy overcome my wrath. See more in Lightfoot.

**Verse 13. *He chose twelve***— ἐκλεξαμενος ἀπ’ αὐτῶν, He chose twelve OUT of them. Our Lord at this time had several disciples, persons who were converted to God under his ministry; and, out of these converts, he chose twelve, whom he appointed to the work of the ministry; and called them apostles, i.e. persons sent or commissioned by himself, to preach that Gospel to others by which they had themselves been saved. These were favored with extraordinary success: 1. Because they were brought to the knowledge of God themselves. 2. Because they received their commission from the great Head of the Church. And 3. Because, as he had sent them, he continued to accompany their preaching with the power of his Spirit. These three things always unite in the character of a genuine apostle. See on Matthew 10:1-4.

**Verse 15. *Called Zelotes***— Some Jews gave this name to themselves, according to Josephus, (War, b. iv. c. iii. s. 9, and vii. c. viii. s. 1,) “because they pretended to be more than ordinarily zealous for religion, and yet practised the very worst of actions.” “But this (says the judicious Bp. Pearce) Josephus says of the zealots, at the time when Vespasian was marching towards Jerusalem. They probably were men of a different character above forty years before; which was the time when Jesus chose his twelve apostles, one of whom had the surname of the Zealot.” It is very probable that this name was first given to certain persons who were more zealous for the cause of pure and undefiled religion than the rest of their neighbors; but like many other sects and parties who have begun well, they transferred their zeal for the essentials of religion to nonessential things, and from these to inquisitorial cruelty and murder. See on Matthew 10:4.

**Verse 17. *And stood in the plain***— In Matthew 5:1, which is supposed to be the parallel place, our Lord is represented as delivering this sermon on the mountain; and this has induced some to think that the sermon mentioned here by Luke, though the same in substance with that in Matthew, was delivered in a different place, and at another time; but, as Dr. Priestly justly observes, Matthew’s saying that Jesus was sat down after he had gone up to the mountain, and Luke’s saying that he stood on the plain when he healed the sick, before the discourse, are no inconsistencies. The whole picture is striking. Jesus ascends a mountain, employs the night in prayer; and, having thus solemnly invoked the Divine

blessing, authoritatively separates the twelve apostles from the mass of his disciples. He then descends, and heals in the plain all the diseased among a great multitude, collected from various parts by the fame of his miraculous power. Having thus created attention, he likewise satisfies the desire of the people to hear his doctrine; and retiring first to the mountain whence he came, that his attentive hearers might follow him and might better arrange themselves before him—*Sacro digna silentio mirantur omnes dicere.*

HORACE. All admire his excellent sayings with sacred silence. See Bishop Newcome's notes on his Harmony of the Gospels, p. 19.

**Verse 20. *Blessed be ye poor***— See the sermon on the mount paraphrased and explained, Matt. 5, 11, 7. {Matthew 5:1,ff 11:1ff, 7:1ff.}

**Verse 22. *They shall separate you***— Meaning, They will excommunicate you, *αφορισωσιν υμας*, or separate you from their communion. Luke having spoken of their separating or excommunicating them, continues the same idea, in saying that they would cast out their name likewise, as a thing evil in itself. By your name is meant their name as his disciples. As such, they were sometimes called Nazarenes, and sometimes Christians; and both these names were matter of reproach in the mouths of their enemies. So James (James 2:7) says to the converts, Do they not blaspheme that worthy name by which ye are called? So when St. Paul (in Acts 24:5) is called a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes, the character of a pestilent fellow, and, that of a mover of sedition, is joined to it; and, in Acts 28:22, the Jews say to Paul, As concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against; and this is implied in 1 Peter 4:14, when he says, If ye be reproached for the NAME of Christ, i.e. as Christians; agreeably to what follows there in 1 Peter 4:16, If any man suffer as a Christian, etc. In after times we find Pliny, Epist. x. 97, consulting the Emperor Trajan, whether or no he should PUNISH the NAME ITSELF, (of Christian,) though no evil should be found in it. NOMEN IPSUM, etiam si flagitiis careat, PUNIATUR. See PEARCE.

**Verse 23. *Did-unto the prophets.***— See 1 Kings 18:4; 19:20; 2 Chronicles 24:21; 36:16; Nehemiah 9:26.

**Verse 24. — 26. *But wo unto you that are rich!***— The Pharisees, who were laden with the spoils of the people which they received in gifts, etc. These three verses are not found in the sermon, as recorded by Matthew.

They seem to be spoken chiefly to the scribes and Pharisees, who, in order to be pleasing to all, spoke to every one what he liked best; and by finesse, flattery, and lies, found out the method of gaining and keeping the good opinion of the multitude.

**Verse 29. *Thy cloak-thy coat***— In Matthew 5:40, I have said that COAT, *χιτών*, signifies under garment, or strait coat; and CLOAK, *ἱμάτιον*, means upper garment, or great coat. This interpretation is confirmed by the following observations of Bishop Pearce. The *χιτών* was a tunica, or vestcoat, over which the Jews and other nations threw an outer coat, or gown, called a cloak, Matthew 5:40, (which is meant by *ἱμάτιον*,) when they went abroad, or were not at work. Hence the common people at Rome, who did not usually wear, or had no right to wear, the toga, are called by Horace tunicatus popellus, Epist. i. 7, 65. This account of the difference between the *χιτών* and the *ἱμάτιον* appears plainly from what Maximus Tyrius says, The inner garment which is over the body they call *χιτώνισκον*, and the outer one the *ἱμάτιον*. And so Plutarch, (in NUPT. p. 139, ed. Fran. 1620,) speaking of a man who felt the heat of the sun too much for him, says that he put off, *τον χιτώνα, τω ἱματίῳ*, his vestcoat also with his cloak.

**Verse 30. *Ask them not again***.— Or, Do not beg them off. This probably refers to the way in which the tax-gatherers and Roman soldiers used to spoil the people. “When such harpies as these come upon your goods, suffer the injury quietly, leaving yourselves in the hand of God, rather than attempt even to beg off what belongs to you, lest on their part they be provoked to seize or spoil more, and lest you be irritated to sue them at law, which is totally opposite to the spirit and letter of the Gospel; or to speak bad words, or indulge wrong tempers, which would wound the spirit of love and mercy.” Of such as these, and of all merciless creditors, who even sell the tools and bed of a poor man, it may be very truly said:-

*Tristius haud illis monstrum, nec saevior ulla  
Pestis et ira deum Stygiis sese extulit undis:-  
Diripiunt dapes, contactaque omnia faedant Immundo:-  
VIRG. AEn. iii. ver. 214*

*“Monsters more fierce offended heaven ne’er sent  
From hell’s abyss, for human punishment:-  
They snatch the meat, defiling all they find.”  
DRYDEN*

However, it is probable that what is here spoken relates to requiring a thing speedily that had been lent, while the reason for borrowing it still continues. In Ecclus. 20:15, it is a part of the character of a very bad man, that to-day he lendeth, and tomorrow will he ask it again. From Luke 6:27 to Luke 6:30 our blessed Lord gives us directions how to treat our enemies. 1. Wish them well. 2. Do them good. 3. Speak as well of them as possible. 4. Be an instrument of procuring them good from others; use your influence in their behalf. 5. Suffer patiently from them contempt and ill treatment. 6. Give up your goods rather than lose your meekness and charity towards them. The retaliation of those who hearken not to their own passion, but to Christ, consists in doing more good than they receive evil. Ever since our blessed Savior suffered the Jews to take away his life, it is by his patience that we must regulate our own. Quesnel.

**Verse 32. *For sinners also love those that love them.***— I believe the word *αμαρτωλοι* is used by St. Luke in the same sense in which *τελωναι*, tax-gatherers, is used by St. Matthew, Matthew 5:46, 47, and signifies heathens; not only men who have no religion, but men who acknowledge none. The religion of Christ not only corrects the errors and reforms the disorders of the fallen nature of man, but raises it even above itself: it brings it near to God; and, by universal love, leads it to frame its conduct according to that of the Sovereign Being. “A man should tremble who finds nothing in his life besides the external part of religion, but what may be found in the life of a Turk or a heathen.” The Gospel of the grace of God purifies and renews the heart, causing it to resemble that Christ through whom the grace came. See the note on Luke 7:37.

**Verse 34. *Of whom ye hope to receive***— Or, whom ye expect to return it. “To make our neighbor purchase, in any way, the assistance which we give him, is to profit by his misery; and, by laying him under obligations which we expect him in some way or other to discharge, we increase his wretchedness under the pretense of relieving it.”

**Verse 35. *Love ye your enemies***— This is the most sublime precept ever delivered to man: a false religion durst not give a precept of this nature, because, without supernatural influence, it must be for ever impracticable. In these words of our blessed Lord we see the tenderness, sincerity, extent,

disinterestedness, pattern, and issue of the love of God dwelling in man: a religion which has for its foundation the union of God and man in the same person, and the death of this august being for his enemies; which consists on earth in a reconciliation of the Creator with his creatures, and which is to subsist in heaven only in the union of the members with the head: could such a religion as this ever tolerate hatred in the soul of man, even to his most inveterate foe?

**Lend, hoping for nothing again**— *μηδεν απελπιζοντες*. The rabbins say, he who lends without usury, God shall consider him as having observed every precept. Bishop Pearce thinks that, instead of *μηδεν* we should read *μηδενα* with the Syriac, later Arabic, and later Persic; and as *απελπίζειν* signifies to despair, or cause to despair, the meaning is, not cutting off the hope (of longer life) of any man, neminis spem amputantes, by denying him those things which he requests now to preserve him from perishing.

**Verse 36. Be ye therefore merciful**— Or, compassionate; *οικτιρμινες*, from *οικτος*, commiseration, which etymologists derive from *εικω* to give place, yield, because we readily concede those things which are necessary to them whom we commiserate. As God is ever disposed to give all necessary help and support to those who are miserable, so his followers, being influenced by the same spirit, are easy to be entreated, and are at all times ready to contribute to the uttermost of their power to relieve or remove the miseries of the distressed. A merciful or compassionate man easily forgets injuries; pardons them without being solicited; and does not permit repeated returns of ingratitude to deter him from doing good, even to the unthankful and the unholy. See on Matthew 5:7.

**Verse 37. Judge not**— See on Matthew 7:1. “How great is the goodness of God, in being so willing to put our judgment into our own hands as to engage himself not to enter into judgment with us, provided we do not usurp the right which belongs solely to him in reference to others!”

**Condemn not**— “Mercy will ever incline us not to condemn those unmercifully whose faults are certain and visible; to lessen, conceal, and excuse them as much as we can without prejudice to truth and justice; and to be far from aggravating, divulging, or even desiring them to be punished.”

**Forgive**— The mercy and compassion which God recommends extend to the forgiving of all the injuries we have received, or can receive. To imitate in this the mercy of God is not a mere counsel; since it is proposed as a necessary mean, in order to receive mercy. What man has to forgive in man is almost nothing: man's debt to God is infinite. And who acts in this matter as if he wished to receive mercy at the hand of God! The spirit of revenge is equally destitute of faith and reason.

**Verse 38. Give, and it shall be given**— “Christian charity will make no difficulty in giving that which eternal truth promises to restore. Let us give, neither out of mere human generosity, nor out of vanity, nor from interest, but for the sake of God, if we would have him place it to account. There is no such thing as true unmixed generosity but in God only; because there is none but him who receives no advantage from his gifts, and because he engages himself to pay these debts of his creatures with an excessive interest. So great is the goodness of God, that, when he might have absolutely commanded us to give to our neighbor, he vouchsafes to invite us to this duty by the prospect of a reward, and to impute that to us as a desert which he has a right to exact of us by the title of his sovereignty over our persons and estates.”

Men live in such a state of social union as renders mutual help necessary; and, as self-interest, pride, and other corrupt passions mingle themselves ordinarily in their commerce, they cannot fail of offending one another. In civil society men must, in order to taste a little tranquillity, resolve to bear something from their neighbors; they must suffer, pardon, and give up many things; without doing which they must live in such a state of continual agitation as will render life itself insupportable. Without this giving and forgiving spirit there will be nothing in civil society, and even in Christian congregations, but divisions, evil surmisings, injurious discourses, outrages, anger, vengeance, and, in a word, a total dissolution of the mystical body of Christ. Thus our interest in both worlds calls loudly upon us to GIVE and to FORGIVE.

**Bosom.**— *κολπον*, or lap. Almost all ancient nations wore long, wide, and loose garments; and when about to carry any thing which their hands could not contain, they used a fold of their robe in nearly the same way as women here use their aprons. The phrase is continually occurring in the



best and purest Greek writers. The following example from Herodotus, b. vi., may suffice to show the propriety of the interpretation given above, and to expose the ridiculous nature of covetousness. “When Croesus had promised to Alcmaeon as much gold as he could carry about his body at once, in order to improve the king’s liberality to the best advantage, he put on a very wide tunic, (κίθωνα μέγαν,) leaving a great space in the BOSOM, κολπον βαθύν, and drew on the largest buskins he could find. Being conducted to the treasury, he sat down on a great heap of gold, and first filled the buskins about his legs with as much gold as they could contain, and, having filled his whole BOSOM, κολπον, loaded his hair with ingots, and put several pieces in his mouth, he walked out of the treasury, etc.” What a ridiculous figure must this poor sinner have cut, thus heavy laden with gold, and the love of money! See many other examples in Kypke and Raphaelius. See also Psalm 129:7; Proverbs 6:27; 17:23.

*The same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again.*— The same words we find in the Jerusalem Targum on Genesis 38:26. Our Lord therefore lays down a maxim which themselves allowed.

**Verse 39. *Can the blind lead the blind?***— This appears to have been a general proverb, and to signify that a man cannot teach what he does not understand. This is strictly true in spiritual matters. A man who is not illuminated from above is utterly incapable of judging concerning spiritual things, and wholly unfit to be a guide to others. Is it possible that a person who is enveloped with the thickest darkness should dare either to judge of the state of others, or attempt to lead them in that path of which he is totally ignorant! If he do, must not his judgment be rashness, and his teaching folly?-and does he not endanger his own soul, and run the risk of falling into the ditch of perdition himself, together with the unhappy objects of his religious instruction?

**Verse 40. *Every one that is perfect***— Or, thoroughly instructed, κατηρτισμενος:-from καταρτιζω, to adjust, adapt, knit together, restore, or put in joint. The noun is used by the Greek medical writers to signify the reducing a luxated or disjointed limb. It sometimes signifies to repair or mend, and in this sense it is applied to broken nets, Matthew 4:21; Mark 1:19; but in this place, and in Hebrews 13:21; 2 Timothy 3:17, it means complete instruction and information. Every one who is thoroughly

instructed in Divine things, who has his heart united to God, whose disordered tempers and passions are purified and restored to harmony and order; every one who has in him the mind that was in Christ, though he cannot be above, yet will be as, his teacher-holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.

“The disciple who perfectly understands the rules and sees the example of his master, will think it his business to tread exactly in his steps, to do and suffer upon like occasions, as his master did: and so he will be like his master.” WHITBY.

**Verse 41. *And why beholdest thou the mote***— See this explained on Matthew 7:3-5.

**Verse 43. *Corrupt fruit***— *καρπον σαπρον*, literally, rotten fruit: but here it means, such fruit as is unfit for use. See on Matthew 7:17-20.

**Verse 45. *A good man***— See on Matthew 12:35.

**Verse 46. *Lord, Lord***— God judges of the heart, not by words, but by works. A good servant never disputes, speaks little, and always follows his work. Such a servant a real Christian is: such is a faithful minister, always intent either on the work of his own salvation, or that of his neighbor; speaking more to God than to men; and to these as in the presence of God. The tongue is fitly compared by one to a pump, which empties the heart, but neither fills nor cleanses it. The love of God is a hidden spring, which supplies the heart continually, and never permits it to be dry or unfruitful. Quesnel.

**Verse 47. *I will show you***— *ὑποδειξω*, I will show you plainly. I will enable you fully to comprehend my meaning on this subject by the following parable. See this word explained Matthew 3:7.

**Verse 48. *He is like a man, etc.***— See on Matthew 7:24-27.

**Verse 49. *The ruin of that house was great.***— On this passage, father Quesnel, who was a most rigid predestinarian, makes the following judicious remark. “It is neither by the speculations of astrologers, nor by the Calvinian assurance of predestination, that we can discover what will be our portion for ever: but it is by the examination of our heart, and the consideration of our life, that we may in some measure prognosticate our

eternal state. Without a holy heart and a holy life, all is ruinous in the hour of temptation, and in the day of wrath.” To this may be added, He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the WITNESS in HIMSELF: 1 John 5:10.

The subjects of this chapter have been so amply explained and enforced in the parallel places in Matthew, to which the reader has been already referred, that there appears to be no necessity to make any additional observations.

## CHAPTER 7

*Christ heals the servant of a centurion, who is commended for his faith, 1-10. Raises a widow's son to life at Nain, 11-17. John Baptist hears of his fame, and sends two of his disciples to inquire whether he was the Christ, 18-23. Christ's character of John, 24-30. The obstinate blindness and capriciousness of the Jews, 31-35. A Pharisee invites him to his house, where a woman anoints his head with oil, and washes his feet with her tears, 36-38. The Pharisee is offended 39. Our Lord reproves him by a parable, and vindicates the woman, 40-46; and pronounces her sins forgiven, 47-50.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 7.

**Verse 2. *A certain centurion's servant***— See this miracle explained on Matthew 8:5-13.

**Verse 3. *Elders of the Jews***— These were either magistrates in the place, or the elders of the synagogue which the centurion had built, Luke 7:5. He sent these, probably, because he was afraid to come to Christ himself, not being a Jew, either by nation or religion. In the parallel place in Matthew, he is represented as coming to Christ himself; but it is a usual form of speech in all nations, to attribute the act to a person which is done not by himself, but by his authority.

**Verse 5. *He loveth our nation***— He is a warm friend to the Jews; and has given a full proof of his affection to them in building them a synagogue. This he had done at his own proper charges; having no doubt employed his own men in the work.

**Verse 10. *Found the servant whole***— This cure was the effect of the faith, prayer, and humility of the centurion, through which the almighty energy of Jesus Christ was conveyed to the sick man. But these very graces in the centurion were the products of grace. It is God himself who, by the gifts of his mercy, disposes the soul to receive its cure; and nothing can contribute to the reception of his grace but what is the fruit of grace

itself. The apostle says, The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, Titus 2:11. It should therefore be our concern, not to resist the operations of this grace: for though we cannot endue ourselves with by gracious disposition, yet we can quench the Spirit, by whose agency these are produced in the soul. The centurion had not received the grace of God in vain.

**Verse 11. *Nain***— A small city of Galilee, in the tribe of Issachar. According to Eusebius, it was two miles from Mount Tabor, southward; and near to Endor.

**Verse 12. *Carried out***— The Jews always buried their dead without the city, except those of the family of David. No burying places should be tolerated within cities or towns; much less in or about churches and chapels. This custom is excessively injurious to the inhabitants; and especially to those who frequent public worship in such chapels and churches. God, decency, and health forbid this shocking abomination.

On the impropriety of burying in towns, churches, and chapels, take the following testimonies: *Extra urbem soliti sunt alii mortuos sepelire: Nos Christiani, eos non in urbes solum, sed et in TEMPLA recepimus, quo fit ut multi faetore nimis, fere exanimentur.* SCHOETTGEN. “Others were accustomed to bury their dead without the city. We Christians not only bury them within our cities, but receive them even into our churches! Hence many nearly lose their lives through the noxious effluvia.” “Both the Jews and other people had their burying places without the city:—*Et certe ita postulat ratio publicae sanitatis, quae multum laedi solet aura sepulchrorum*:—and this the health of the public requires, which is greatly injured by the effluvia from graves.”—Rosenmuller. From long observation I can attest that churches and chapels situated in grave-yards, and those especially within whose walls the dead are interred, are perfectly unwholesome; and many, by attending such places, are shortening their passage to the house appointed for the living. What increases the iniquity of this abominable and deadly work is, that the burying grounds attached to many churches and chapels are made a source of private gain. The whole of this preposterous conduct is as indecorous and unhealthy as it is profane. Every man should know that the gas which is disengaged from putrid flesh, and particularly from a human body, is not only unfriendly

to, but destructive of, animal life. Superstition first introduced a practice which self-interest and covetousness continue to maintain.

For a general improvement of all the circumstances of this miracle, see the end of the chapter.

**Verse 16. *God hath visited his people.***— Several MSS. and versions add, *εις αγαθον*, for good. Sometimes God visited his people in the way of judgment, to consume them in their transgressions; but it was now plain that he had visited them in the most tender compassion and mercy. This seems to have been added by some ancient copyist, by way of explanation.

**Verse 18. *The disciples of John showed him, etc.***— It is very likely that John's disciples attended the ministry of our Lord at particular times; and this, we may suppose, was a common case among the disciples of different Jewish teachers. Though bigotry existed in its most formidable shape between the Jews and Samaritans, yet we do not find that it had any place between Jews and Jews, though they were of different sects, and attached to different teachers.

**Verse 19. *Art thou he that should come?***— That is, to save. Art thou the promised Messiah? See on Matthew 11:3.

Some have thought that this character of our Lord, *ο ερχομενος*, he who cometh, refers to the prophecy of Jacob, Genesis 49:10, where he is called *שִׁלֹה* Shiloh, which Grotius and others derive from *שָׁלַח* shalach, he sent: hence, as the time of the fulfillment of the prophecy drew nigh, he was termed, He who cometh, i.e. he who is just now ready to make his appearance in Judea. In Zechariah 9:9, a similar phrase is used, Behold, thy king COMETH unto thee—having SALVATION. This is meant of the Messiah only; therefore I think the words to save, are necessarily implied.

**Verse 21. *Infirmities and plagues***— The following judicious note from Bp. PEARCE is worthy of deep attention: “Luke mentions here *σοσοι, μαστιγες*, leprosias, and *πνευματα πονηρα*, i.e. diseases or ill habits of body, sores or lamenesses, and evil spirits: from whence we may conclude that evil spirits are reckoned by him (who speaks of distempers with more accuracy than the other evangelists) as things different from any disorders of the body, included in the two former words.”

**Unto many that were blind he gave light.**— Rather, he kindly gave sight-*εχαρισατο το βλεπειν*; or, he graciously gave sight. This is the proper meaning of the original words. In all his miracles, Jesus showed the tenderest mercy and kindness: not only the cure, but the manner in which he performed it, endeared him to those who were objects of his compassionate regards.

**Verse 22.-28.** See these verses explained at large on Matthew 11:4-15.

**Verse 29. *Justified God***— Or, declared God to be just-*δικαιωσαν τον θεον*. The sense is this: John preached that the Divine wrath was coming upon the Jews, from which they might flee by repentance, Luke 3:7. The Jews, therefore, who were baptized by him, with the baptism of repentance, did thereby acknowledge that it is but justice in God to punish them for their wickedness unless they repented, and were baptized in token of it. Bp. PEARCE proves that this is the sense in which the word *δικαιωω* is used here and in Psalm 51:4, compared with Job 32:2, and by this evangelist again in Luke 10:29, and 16:15.

**Verse 30. *Rejected the counsel of God***— Or, frustrated the will of God-*την βουλην του θεου ηθετησαν*. Kypke says the verb *αθετειν* has two meanings:-1, to disbelieve; 2, despise, or disobey: and that both senses may be properly conjoined here. The will of God was that all the inhabitants of Judea should repent at the preaching of John, be baptized, and believe in Christ Jesus. Now as they did not repent, etc., at John's preaching, so they did not believe his testimony concerning Christ: thus the will, gracious counsel, or design of God, relative to their salvation, was annulled or frustrated. They disbelieved his promises, despised the Messiah, and disobeyed his precepts.

**Verse 31. *And the Lord said***— Almost every MS. of authority and importance, with most of the versions, omit these words. As the Evangelistaria (the books which contained those portions of the Gospels which were read in the Churches) began at this verse, the words were probably at first used by them, to introduce the following parable. There is the fullest proof that they never made a part of Luke's text. Every critic rejects them. Bengel and Griesbach leave them out of the text.

**Verse 32. *They are like unto children***— See on Matthew 11:16-19. It is probable that our Lord alludes here to some play or game among the Jewish children, no account of which is now on record.

**Verse 35. *Wisdom is justified, etc.***— Probably the children of wisdom is a mere Hebraism here for the products or fruits of wisdom; hence the Vatican MS., one other, and some versions, have *εργων*, works, instead of *τεκνων*, sons, in the parallel place, Matthew 11:19. True wisdom shows itself by its works; folly is never found in the wise man's way, any more than wisdom is in the path of a fool. Theophylact's note on this place should not be overlooked. *εδικαιωθη, τουτ' εστιν επιμηθη*, Wisdom Is JUSTIFIED, that is, Is HONORED, by all her children.

**Verse 36. *One of the Pharisees***— Called Simon, Luke 7:40. This account is considered by many critics and commentators to be the same with that in Matthew 26:6, etc., Mark 14:3; and John 12:3. This subject is considered pretty much at large in the notes on Matthew 26:6, etc., to which the reader is requested to refer.

**Verse 37. *A woman-which was a sinner***— Many suppose that this woman had been a notorious public prostitute; but this is taking the subject by the very worst handle. My own opinion is, that she had been a mere heathen who dwelt in this city, (probably Capernaum,) who, through the ministry of Christ, had been before this converted to God, and came now to give this public testimony of her gratitude to her gracious deliverer from the darkness and guilt of sin. I am inclined to think that the original word, *αματωλος*, is used for heathen or Gentile in several places of the sacred writings. I am fully persuaded that this is its meaning in Matthew 9:10, 11, 13; 11:19; and 26:45. The Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners, i.e. is delivered into the hands of the heathens, viz. the Romans, who alone could put him to death. See Mark 2:15-17; 14:41. I think also it has this meaning in Luke 6:32-34; 15:1, 2, 7, 10; 19:7; John 9:31. I think no other sense can be justly assigned to it in Galatians 2:15: We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles. We Jews, who have had the benefit of a Divine revelation, know that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Christ, (Galatians 2:16,) which other nations, who were heathens, not having a Divine revelation, could not know. It is, I think, likely that the grand subject of the self-righteous



Pharisee's complaint was her being a heathen. As those who were touched by such contracted a legal defilement, he could not believe that Christ was a conscientious observer of the law, seeing he permitted her to touch him, knowing who she was; or, if he did not know that she was a heathen, it was a proof that he was no prophet, Luke 7:39, and consequently had not the discernment of spirits which prophets were supposed to possess. As the Jews had a law which forbade all iniquity, and they who embraced it being according to its requisitions and their profession saints; and as the Gentiles had no law to restrain evil, nor made any profession of holiness, the term **αμαρτωλοι**, or sinners, was first with peculiar propriety applied to them, and afterwards to all others, who, though they professed to be under the law, yet lived as Gentiles without the law. Many suppose this person to be the same as Mary Magdalene, but of this there is no solid proof.

**Brought an alabaster box**— See on Mark 14:3.

**Verse 38. Stood at his feet behind him**— In taking their meals, the eastern people reclined on one side; the loins and knees being bent to make the more room, the feet of each person were turned outwards behind him. This is the meaning of standing **BEHIND** at his **FEET**.

**Began to wash his feet with tears**— **ηρξατο βρεχειν-τοις δακρυσι**, She began to water his feet-to let a shower of tears fall on them. As the Jews wore nothing like our shoes, (theirs being a mere sole, bound about the foot and ankle with thongs,) their feet being so much exposed had frequent need of washing, and this they ordinarily did before taking their meals.

**Kissed his feet**— With affectionate tenderness, **κατεφιλει**, or kissed them again and again. See on Matthew 26:49.

The kiss was used in ancient times as the emblem of love, religious reverence, subjection, and supplication. It has the meaning of supplication, in the way of adoration, accompanied with subjection, in 1 Kings 19:18, Whose mouths have not kissed Baal; and in Job 31:27, My mouth hath not kissed my hand; I have paid no sort of adoration to false gods; and in Psalm 2:12, Kiss the Son lest he be angry,-close in with him, embrace affectionately, the offers of mercy made unto you through Christ Jesus, lest he (the Lord) be angry with you, and ye perish: which commandment

this woman seems to have obeyed, both in the literal and spiritual sense. Kissing the feet was practised also among the heathens, to express subjection of spirit, and earnest supplication. See a long example in Raphelius, produced from Polybius, concerning the Carthaginian ambassadors when supplicating the Romans for peace. With an humble and abject mind, *πεσοντες επι την γην*, they fell down on the earth, *τους ποδας καταφιλοιεν τω συνεδριω*, and kissed the feet of the council. See also several examples in Kypke. Kissing the feet is a farther proof that this person had been educated a heathen. This was no part of a Jew's practice.

**Verse 41. *A certain creditor, etc.***— It is plain that in this parable our Lord means, by the creditor, GOD, and, by the two debtors, Simon and the woman who was present. Simon, who had the light of the law, and who, in consequence of his profession as a Pharisee, was obliged to abstain from outward iniquity, might be considered as the debtor who owed only fifty pence, or denarii. The woman, whom I have supposed to be a heathen, not having these advantages, having no rule to regulate her actions, and no curb on her evil propensities, may be considered as the debtor who owed five hundred pence, or denarii. And when both were compared, Simon's debt to God might be considered, in reference to hers, as fifty to five hundred. However, we find, notwithstanding this great disparity, both were insolvent. Simon, the religious Pharisee, could no more pay his fifty to God than this poor heathen her five hundred; and, if both be not freely forgiven by the Divine mercy, both must finally perish. Having NOTHING to PAY, he kindly FORGAVE them both. Some think that this very Simon was no inconsiderable debtor to our Lord, as having been mercifully cleansed from a leprosy; for he is supposed to be the same as Simon the leper. See the note on Matthew 26:6.

**Verse 42. *Which of them will love him most?***— Which is under the greater obligation and should love him most?

**Verse 43. *He to whom he forgave most.***— By this acknowledgment he was, unknowingly to himself, prepared to receive our Lord's reproof.

**Verse 44. *Thou gavest me no water***— In this respect Simon was sadly deficient in civil respect, whether this proceeded from forgetfulness or contempt. The custom of giving water to wash the guest's feet was very

ancient. See instances in Genesis 18:4; 24:32; Judges 19:21; 1 Samuel 25:41. In Hindoostan it is the custom, that when a superior enters the house of an inferior, the latter washes his feet, and gives him water to rinse his mouth before he eats. See *AYEEN AKBERRY*, vol. iii. p. 226.

**Verse 45. *Since the time I came in***— Rather, Since the time SHE came in, *αφ ης εισηλθεν*, not *εισηλθον*, I came in, for it is clear from Luke 7:37 that the woman came in after Christ, having heard that he was sitting at meat in the Pharisee's house. The reading which I have adopted is supported by several MSS. and Versions.

**Verse 46. *My head with oil thou didst not anoint***— Anointing the head with oil was as common among the Jews as washing the face with water is among us. See Ruth 3:3; 2 Samuel 12:20; 14:2; 2 Kings 4:2; and Psalm 23:5, where the author alludes to the Jewish manner of receiving and entertaining a guest. Thou preparest a table for me; anointest my head with oil; givest me an overflowing cup. See Matthew 5:17.

**Verse 47. *For she loved much***— Or, THEREFORE she loved much. It appears to have been a consciousness of God's forgiving love that brought her at this time to the Pharisee's house. In the common translation her forgiveness is represented to be the consequence of her loving much, which is causing the tree to produce the root, and not the root the tree. I have considered *οτι* here as having the sense of *διοτι*, therefore; because, to make this sentence suit with the foregoing parable, Luke 7:42, 43, and with what immediately follows here, but he to whom little is forgiven loveth little, we must suppose her love was the effect of her being pardoned, not the cause of it. *οτι* seems to have the sense of therefore in Matthew 13:13; John 8:44; 1 Corinthians 10:17; and in the Septuagint, in Deuteronomy 33:52; Isaiah 49:19; Ho 9:15; and Ecclesiastes 5:6. Both these particles are often interchanged in the New Testament.

***Loved much-loveth little***— That is, A man's love to God will be in proportion to the obligations he feels himself under to the bounty of his Maker.

**Verse 48. *Thy sins are forgiven***.— He gave her the fullest assurance of what he had said before to Simon, (Luke 7:47,) Thy sins are forgiven. While the Pharisee murmured, the poor penitent rejoiced.

**Verse 50. *Thy faith hath saved thee***— Thy faith hath been the instrument of receiving the salvation which is promised to those who repent. Go in peace. Though peace of conscience be the inseparable consequence of the pardon of sin, yet here it seems to be used as a valediction or farewell: as if he had said, May goodness and mercy continue to follow thee! In this sense it is certainly used Judges 18:6; 1 Samuel 1:17; 20:42; 29:7; 2 Samuel 15:9; James 2:16.

THE affecting account of raising the widow's son to life, Luke 7:11-17, is capable of farther improvement. The following may be considered to be sober, pious uses of this transaction.

In this resurrection of the widow's son, four things are highly worthy of notice:-1. The meeting. 2. What Christ did to raise the dead man. 3. What the man did when raised to life: and 4. The effect produced on the minds of the people.

## I. THE MEETING

1. It was uncommon: it was a meeting of life and death, of consolation and distress. On the one part JESUS, accompanied by his disciples, and an innumerable crowd of people, advance towards the gate of the city of Nain: on the other part, a funeral solemnity proceeds out of the gate,-a person of distinction, as we may imagine from the number of the people who accompanied the corpse, is carried out to be buried. Wherever Jesus goes, he meets death or misery; and wherever he comes, he dispenses life and salvation.

2. It was instructive. A young man was carried to the grave-an only son-cut off in the flower of his age from the pleasures, honors, profits, and expectations of life; a multitude of relatives, friends, and neighbors, in tears, affliction, and distress, accompanied the corpse. Behold the present life in its true point of light! How deceitful is the world! To hide its vanity and wretchedness, funeral pomp takes the place of the decorations of life and health; and pride, which carries the person through life, cleaves to the putrid carcass in the ridiculous adornments of palls, scarfs, cloaks, and feathers! Sin has a complete triumph, when pride is one of the principal bearers to the tomb.

And shall not the living lay these things to heart? Remember, ye that are young, the young die oftener than the old; and it is because so many of the former die, that there are so few of the latter to die.

3. It was an affecting meeting. The mother of this young man followed the corpse of her son; her distress was extreme. She had already lost her husband, and in losing her only son she loses all that could be reckoned dear to her in the world. She lost her support, her glory, and the name of her family from among the tribes of her people. Jesus sees her in this state of affliction, and was moved with compassion towards her. This God of goodness cannot see the wretched without commiserating their state, and providing for their salvation.

4. It was a happy meeting. Jesus approaches this distressed widow, and says, Weep not. But who, with propriety, can give such advice in a case like this? Only that God who can dry up the fountain of grief, and remove the cause of distress. Weep for thy sin, weep for thy relatives, weep after Christ, and God will infallibly comfort thee.

## **II. WHAT CHRIST DID TO RAISE THIS DEAD MAN**

1. He came up, Luke 7:14. When the blessed God is about to save a soul from spiritual death, he comes up to the heart by the light of his Spirit, by the preaching of his word, and by a thousand other methods, which all prove that his name is mercy, and his nature love.

2. He touched the bier. God often stretches out his hand against the matter or occasion of sin, renders that public that was before hidden, lays afflictions upon the body; by some evil disease effaces that beauty, or impairs that strength, which were the occasions of sin; disconcerts the schemes and blasts the property of the worldly man. These were carrying him down to the chambers of death, and the merciful God is thus delivering him out of the hands of his murderers.

3. He commanded-Young man! I say unto thee, Arise. Sinners! You have been dead in trespasses and sins too long; now hear the voice of the Son of God. Young people! to you in particular is this commandment addressed. Delay not a moment: it will be more easy for you to return to God now than at any future time. And perhaps the present call may never be

repeated. The sooner you hear the voice of God, the sooner you shall be happy.

### **III. WHAT THE MAN DID WHEN RAISED TO LIFE**

1. He sat up, Luke 7:15. When the quickening voice of God reaches the heart of a sinner, his first business is to lift up his head to contemplate the awful state in which he is found, and the horrible pit over which he hangs, and look about for a deliverer from the hell that is moved from beneath to meet him at his coming.
2. He began to speak. Prayer to God, for the salvation he needs, is indispensably requisite to every awakened sinner. Let him speak in prayer and praise; prayer for present salvation, and praise, because he is still out of hell. Let him also declare the power and goodness of God which have thus rescued him from the bitter pains of an eternal death.
3. He walked. He (Christ) presented him to his mother. Those who were carrying the corpse having heard the voice of the young man, immediately laid down the bier, and the young man stepping directly on the ground, Jesus took him by the hand and conducted him to his mother. What a change from the deepest affliction to the highest ecstasy of joy must have now taken place in this widow's heart! Happy moment!-when the quickening power of Christ restores a prodigal son to a disconsolate parent, and a member to Christ's mystical body, the Church militant!

### **IV. THE EFFECT PRODUCED ON THE MINDS OF THE PEOPLE**

1. Fear seized them, Luke 7:16. A religious reverence penetrated their hearts, while witnessing the effects of the sovereign power of Christ. Thus should we contemplate the wonders of God's grace in the conviction and conversion of sinners.
2. They glorified God. They plainly saw that he had now visited his people: the miracle proclaimed his presence, and that a great prophet was risen among them, and they expect to be speedily instructed in all righteousness. The conversion of a sinner to God should be matter of public joy to all that fear his name; and should be considered as a full proof that the God of our fathers is still among their children. See Luke 7:16.

3. They published abroad the account. The work of the grace of God should be made known to all: the Gospel should be preached in every place; and the miracle-working power of Christ every where recommended to notice. If those who are raised from the death of sin were more zealous in discoursing of, walking in, and recommending the Gospel of the grace of God, the kingdom of Christ would soon have a more extensive spread; and the souls thus employed would be incessantly watered from on high.

## CHAPTER 8

*Jesus preaches through every city and village, 1. Women minister to him, 2, 3. Instructs the multitudes by the parable of the sower, 4-8. Explains it at large to his disciples, 9-15. Directions how to improve by hearing the Gospel, 16-18. His mother and brethren seek him, 19-21. He and his disciples go upon the lake, and are taken in a storm, 22-25. They arrive among the Gadarenes, 26, where he cures a demoniac, 27-39. He returns from the Gadarenes, and is requested by Jairus to heal his daughter, 40-42. On the way he cures a diseased woman, 43-48. Receives information that the daughter of Jairus is dead, 49. Exhorts the father to believe; arrives at the house, and raises the dead child to life, 60-66.*

### NOTES ON CHAP 8

**Verse 1.** *Throughout every city and village*— That is, of Galilee.

**Verse 2.** *Out of whom went seven devils*—. Who had been possessed in a most extraordinary manner; probably a case of inveterate lunacy, brought on by the influence of evil spirits. The number seven may here express the superlative degree.

Mary Magdalene is commonly thought to have been a prostitute before she came to the knowledge of Christ, and then to have been a remarkable penitent. So historians and painters represent her: but neither from this passage, nor from any other of the New Testament, can such a supposition be legitimately drawn. She is here represented as one who had been possessed with seven demons; and as one among other women who had been healed by Christ of evil (or wicked) spirits and infirmities. As well might Joanna and Susanna, mentioned Luke 8:3, come in for a share of the censure as this Mary Magdalene; for they seem to have been dispossessed likewise by Jesus, according to St. Luke's account of them. They had all had infirmities, of what sort it is not said, and those infirmities were occasioned by evil spirits within them; and Jesus had healed them all: but Mary Magdalene, by her behavior, and constant attendance on Jesus in his life-time, at his crucifixion, and at his grave,



seems to have exceeded all the other women in duty and respect to his person. Bishop PEARCE.

There is a marvellous propensity in commentators to make some of the women mentioned in the Sacred Writings appear as women of ill fame; therefore Rahab must be a harlot; and Mary Magdalene, a prostitute: and yet nothing of the kind can be proved either in the former or in the latter case; nor in that mentioned Luke 7:36, etc., where see the notes. Poor Mary Magdalene is made the patroness of penitent prostitutes, both by Papists and Protestants; and to the scandal of her name, and the reproach of the Gospel, houses fitted up for the reception of such are termed Magdalene hospitals! and the persons themselves Magdalenes! There is not only no proof that this person was such as commentators represent her, but there is the strongest presumptive proof against it: for, if she ever had been such, it would have been contrary to every rule of prudence, and every dictate of wisdom, for Christ and his apostles to have permitted such a person to associate with them, however fully she might have been converted to God, and however exemplary her life, at that time, might have been. As the world, who had seen her conduct, and knew her character, (had she been such as is insinuated,) could not see the inward change, and as they sought to overwhelm Christ and his disciples with obloquy and reproach on every occasion, they would certainly have availed themselves of so favorable an opportunity to subject the character and ministry of Christ to the blackest censure, had he permitted even a converted prostitute to minister to him and his disciples. They were ready enough to say that he was the friend of publicans and sinners, because he conversed with them in order to instruct and save their souls; but they could never say he was a friend of prostitutes, because it does not appear that such persons ever came to Christ; or that he, in the way of his ministry, ever went to them. I conclude therefore that the common opinion is a vile slander on the character of one of the best women mentioned in the Gospel of God; and a reproach cast on the character and conduct of Christ and his disciples. From the whole account of Mary Magdalene, it is highly probable that she was a person of great respectability in that place; such a person as the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, could associate with, and a person on whose conduct or character the calumniating Jews could cast no aspersions.

**Verse 3. *Herod's steward***— Though the original word, *ἐπιτροπος*, signifies sometimes the inspector or overseer of a province, and sometimes a tutor of children, yet here it seems to signify the overseer of Herod's domestic affairs: the steward of his household. Steward of the household was an office in the king's palace by s. 24, of Hen. VIII. The person is now entitled lord steward of the king's household, and the office is, I believe, more honorable and of more importance than when it was first created. Junius derives the word from the Islandic *stivardur*, which is compounded of *stia*, work, and *vardur*, a keeper, or overseer: hence our words, warder, warden, ward, guard, guardian, etc. The Greek word in Hebrew letters is frequent in the rabbinical writings, *אפיטרופוס*, and signifies among them the deputy ruler of a province. See on Luke 16:1. In the Islandic version, it is *forsionarmanns*.

***Unto him***— Instead of *αὐτῷ*, to him, meaning Christ, many of the best MSS. and versions have *αὐτοῖς*, to them, meaning both our Lord and the twelve apostles, see Luke 8:1. This is unquestionably the true meaning. Christ receives these assistances and ministrations, says pious Quesnel,-

1. To honor poverty by subjecting himself to it.
2. To humble himself in receiving from his creatures.
3. That he may teach the ministers of the Gospel to depend on the providence of their heavenly Father.
4. To make way for the gratitude of those he had healed. And,
5. That he might not be burthensome to the poor to whom he went to preach.

**Verse 5. *A sower went out to sow***— See all this parable largely explained on Matthew 13:1-23.

**Verse 12. *Those by the way side***— Bishop PEARCE thinks that Luke by *οἱ* here means *σποροι*, the seeds, though he acknowledges that he has never found such a word as *σποροι* in the plural number signifying seeds.

**Verse 15. *With patience***.— Rather, with perseverance. The Greek word *υπομονη*, which our translators render patience, properly signifies here, and in Romans 2:7, perseverance. The good ground, because it is good,

strong and vigorous, continues to bear: bad or poor ground cannot produce a good crop, and besides it is very soon exhausted. The persons called the good ground in the text are filled with the power and influence of God, and therefore continue to bring forth fruit; i.e. they persevere in righteousness. From this we may learn that the perseverance of the saints, as it is termed, necessarily implies that they continue to bring forth fruit to the glory of God. Those who are not fruitful are not in a state of perseverance.

**Verse 16. *Lighted a candle***— This is a repetition of a part of our Lord's sermon on the mount. See the notes on Matthew 5:15; 10:26; and on Mark 4:21, 22.

**Verse 17. *For nothing is secret, etc.***— Whatever I teach you in private, ye shall teach publicly; and ye shall illustrate and explain every parable now delivered to the people.

**Verse 18. *Even that which he seemeth to have.***— Or rather, even what he hath. ὁδοκεῖ εχειν, rendered by our common version, what he seemeth to have, seems to me to contradict itself. Let us examine this subject a little.

1. To seem to have a thing, is only to have it in appearance, and not in reality; but what is possessed in appearance only can only be taken away in appearance; therefore on the one side there is no gain, and on the other side no loss. On this ground, the text speaks just nothing.

2. It is evident that ο δοκεῖ εχειν, what he seemeth to have, here, is equivalent to ο εχει, what he hath, in the parallel places, Mark 4:25; Matthew 13:12; 25:29; and in Luke 19:26.

3. It is evident, also, that these persons had something which might be taken away from them. For 1. The word of God, the Divine seed, was planted in their hearts. 2. It had already produced some good effects; but they permitted the devil, the cares of the world, the desire of riches, and the love of pleasure, to destroy its produce.

4. The word δοκειν is often an expletive: so Xenophon in Hellen, vi. οτι εδοκει πατρικος φιλος αυτοις, Because he seemed to be (i.e. WAS) their father's friend. So in his OEeon. Among the cities that seemed to be (δοκουσαις, actually were) at war. So Athenaeus, lib. vi. chap. 4. They

who seemed to be (**δοκουντες**, who really were) the most opulent, drank out of brazen cups.

5. It often strengthens the sense, and is thus used by the very best Greek writers. ULPIAN, in one of his notes on Demosthenes' Orat. Olinth. 1, quoted by Bishop PEARCE, says expressly, **το δοκειν ου παντως επι αμφιβολου ταπτουσιν οι παλαιοι, αλλα πολλακις και επι του αληθευειν**. The word **δοκειν** is used by the ancients to express, not always what is doubtful, but oftentimes what is true and certain. And this is manifestly its meaning in Matthew 3:9; Luke 22:24; John 5:39; 1 Corinthians 7:40; 10:12; 11:16; Galatians 2:9; Philippians 3:4; and in the text. See these meanings of the word established beyond the possibility of successful contradiction, in Bishop PEARCE'S notes on Mark 10:42, and in KYPKE in loc. See also the notes on Matthew 13:12.

**Verse 19. *His mother and brethren***— See the notes on Matthew 12:46, etc., and on Mark 3:31, etc.

**Verse 22. *Let us go over, etc.***— See on Matthew 8:24, etc., and Mark 4:36-41.

**Verse 23. *There came down a storm of wind-and they-were in jeopardy.***— This is a parallel passage to that in Jonah 1:4. There was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken: the latter clause of which is thus translated by the Septuagint: **και το πλοιον εκινδυνευε του συντριβηναι**, And the ship was in the utmost danger of being dashed to pieces. This is exactly the state of the disciples here; and it is remarkable that the very same word, **εκινδυνευον**, which we translate, were in jeopardy, is used by the evangelist, which is found in the Greek version above quoted. The word jeopardy, an inexpressive French term, and utterly unfit for the place which it now occupies, is properly the exclamation of a disappointed gamester, *Jeu perdu!* The game is lost! or, *j'ai perdu!* I have lost! i.e. the game.

**Verse 25. *Where is your faith?***— Ye have a power to believe, and yet do not exercise it! Depend on God. Ye have little faith, (Matthew 8:26,) because you do not use the grace which I have already given you. Many are looking for more faith without using that which they have. It is as possible to hide this talent as any other.

**Verse 26. *The country of the Gedarenes***— Or, according to several MSS., Gerasenes or Gergasenes. See on Matthew 8:28, and Mark 5:1.

**Verse 27. *A certain man***— See the case of this demoniac considered at large, on the parallel places, Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20. In India deranged persons walk at liberty through the streets and country in all manner of dresses; sometimes entirely naked; and often perish while strolling from place to place. It is the same in Ireland, as there are no public asylums either there or in India for insane people.

**Verse 28. *Jesus, thou Son of God most high***— The words Jesus and God are both omitted here by several MSS. I think it is very likely that the demons mentioned neither. They were constrained in a summary way to acknowledge his power; but it is probable they did not pronounce names which were of such dreadful import to themselves. The words which they spoke on the occasion seem to have been these, What is it to thee and me, O Son of the most high? See the note on Matthew 8:29.

**Verse 31. *And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep.***— In the Chaldaic philosophy, mention is made of certain material demons, who are permitted to wander about on the earth, and are horribly afraid of being sent into abysses and subterranean places. Psellus says, Deuteronomy Daemonibus: “These material demons fearing to be sent into abysses, and standing in awe of the angels who send them thither, if even a man threaten to send them thither and pronounce the names of those angels whose office that is, it is inexpressible how much they will be affrighted and troubled. So great will their astonishment be, that they cannot discern the person that threatens them. And though it be some old woman or little old man that menaces them, yet so great is their fear that they depart as if the person who menaces had a power to kill them.” See Stanley’s Chaldaic Philosophy.

**Verse 33. *Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine***— Some critics and commentators would have us to understand all this of the man himself, who, they say, was a most outrageous maniac; and that, being permitted by our Lord, he ran after the swine, and drove them all down a precipice into the sea! This is solemn trifling indeed; or, at least, trifling with solemn things. It is impossible to read over the account, as given here by Luke, and admit this mode of explanation. The devils went

out of the man, and entered into the swine; i.e. the madman ran after the swine! On this plan of interpretation there is nothing certain in the word of God; and every man may give it what meaning he pleases. Such comments are intolerable.

**Verse 34. *They fled, and went and told it***— *απελθοντες*, They went, is omitted by almost every MS. of repute, and by the best of the ancient versions. Griesbach leaves it out, and with propriety too, as it is not likely that so correct a writer as Luke would say, They fled, and WENT and told it.

**Verse 40. *Gladly received him***— This is the proper import of the word *απεδεξατο*; therefore our translators needed not to have put gladly in italics, as though it were not expressed in the text. Raphelius gives several proofs of this in loc.

**Verse 41. *A man named Jairus***— See these two miracles-the raising of Jairus's daughter, and the cure of the afflicted woman-considered and explained at large, on Matthew 9:18-26, and Mark 5:22-43.

**Verse 42. *The people thronged him.***— *συνεπιγιγον αυτον*-almost suffocated him-so great was the throng about him.

**Verse 43. *Spent all her living upon physicians***— See the note on Mark 5:26.

**Verse 46. *I perceive that virtue***— *δυναμιν*, Divine or miraculous power. This Divine emanation did not proceed always from Christ, as necessarily as odours do from plants, for then all who touched him must have been equally partakers of it. Of the many that touched him, this woman and none else received this Divine virtue; and why? Because she came in faith. Faith alone attracts and receives the energetic influence of God at all times. There would be more miracles, at least of spiritual healing, were there more faith among those who are called believers.

**Verse 54. *He put them all out***— That is, the pipers and those who made a noise, weeping and lamenting. See Matthew 9:23; Mark 5:38. Pompous funeral ceremonies are ridiculous in themselves, and entirely opposed to the spirit and simplicity of the religion of Christ. Every where they meet with his disapprobation.

**Verse 55.** *And he commanded to give her meat.*— Though she was raised to life by a miracle, she was not to be preserved by a miracle. Nature is God's great instrument, and he delights to work by it; nor will he do any thing by his sovereign power, in the way of miracle, that can be effected by his ordinary providence. Again, God will have us be workers together with him: he provides food for us, but he does not eat for us; we eat for ourselves, and are thus nourished on the bounty that God has provided. Without the food, man cannot be nourished; and unless he eat the food, it can be of no use to him. So, God provides salvation for a lost world, and bestows it on every penitent believing soul; but he neither repents nor believes for any man. A man repents and believes for himself, under the succours of God's grace.

## CHAPTER 9

*Christ sends his apostles to preach and work miracles, 1-6. Herod, hearing of the fame of Jesus, is perplexed; some suppose that John Baptist is risen from the dead; others, that Elijah or one of the old prophets was come to life, 7-9. The apostles return and relate the success of their mission. He goes to a retired place, and the people follow him, 10, 11. He feeds five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes, 12-17. He asks his disciples what the public think of him, 18-21. Foretells his passion, 22. Shows the necessity of self-denial, and the importance of salvation, 23-25. Threatens those who deny him before men, 26. The transfiguration, 27-36. Cures a demoniac, 37-43. Again foretells his passion, 44, 45. The disciples contend who shall be greatest, 46-48. Of the person who cast out devils in Christ's name, but did not associate with the disciples, 49, 50. Of the Samaritans who would not receive him, 51-56. Of the man who wished to follow Jesus, 57, 58. He calls another disciple who asks permission first to bury his father, 59. Our Lord's answer 60-62.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 9

**Verse 1. *Power and authority***— *δυναμιν και εξουσιαν*. The words properly mean here, the power to work miracles; and that authority by which the whole demoniac system was to be subjected to them. The reader will please to observe: 1. That Luke mentions both demons and diseases; therefore he was either mistaken, or demons and diseases are not the same. 2. The treatment of these two was not the same:-the demons were to be cast out, the diseases to be healed. See Matthew 10:1.

**Verse 2. *To preach the kingdom of God***— For an explication of this phrase, see on Matthew 3:1.

**Verse 3. *Take nothing***— See on Mark 6:7, 8.

***Neither money***— See on Matthew 10:9.



***Neither have two coats***— Show that in all things ye are ambassadors for God; and go on his charges.

**Verse 4. *There abide, and thence depart.***— That is, remain in that lodging till ye depart from that city. Some MSS. and versions add **μη**, which makes the following sense: There remain, and depart NOT thence. See the note on Matthew 10:11.

**Verse 7. *Herod the tetrarch***— See on Matthew 2:1; 14:1.

***By him***— This is omitted by BCDL, two others, the Coptic, Sahidic, Armenian, and four of the Itala. It is probable that Luke might have written, Herod, hearing of all the things that were done, etc.; but Matthew says particularly, that it was the fame of Jesus of which he heard: Matthew 14:1.

***He was perplexed;***— He was greatly perplexed **διηπορει**· from **δια** emphat. and **απορεω**, I am in perplexity. It is a metaphor taken from a traveler, who in his journey meets with several paths, one only of which leads to the place whither he would go; and, not knowing which to take, he is distressed with perplexity and doubt. The verb comes from **α**, negative, and **πορος**, a way or passage. A guilty conscience is a continual pest:—Herod had murdered John, and he is terribly afraid, lest he should arise from the dead, and bring his deeds to light, and expose him to that punishment which he deserved. See Mark 6:16.

**Verse 10. *Told him all***— Related distinctly-**διηγησαντο**, from **δια**, through, and **ηγεομαι**, I declare: hence the whole of this Gospel, because of its relating every thing so particularly, is termed **διηγησις**, Luke 1:1, a particular and circumstantially detailed narration. See on Mark 6:30.

**Verse 11. *The people-followed him***— Observe here five grand effects of Divine grace. 1. The people are drawn to follow him. 2. He kindly receives them. 3. He instructs them in the things of God. 4. He heals all their diseases. 5. He feeds their bodies and their souls. See Quesnel. Reader! Jesus is the same to the present moment. Follow him, and he will receive, instruct, heal, feed, and save thy soul unto eternal life.

**Verse 12. *Send the multitude away***— See this miracle explained at large, on the parallel places, Matthew 14:15-21; Mark 6:36-44.

**Verse 16. *Then he took the five loaves***— A minister of the Gospel, who is employed to feed souls, should imitate this conduct of Christ:

1. He ought to exhort the people to hear with sedate and humble reverence.
2. He should first take the bread of life himself, that he may be strengthened to feed others.
3. He ought frequently to lift his soul to God, in order to draw down the Divine blessing on himself and his hearers.
4. He should break the loaves-divide rightly the word of truth, and give to all such portions as are suited to their capacities and states.
5. What he cannot perform himself, he should endeavor to effect by the ministry of others; employing every promising talent, for the edification of the whole, which he finds among the members of the Church of God. Under such a pastor, the flock of Christ will increase and multiply. See Quesnel.

**Verse 18. *Whom say the people***— οἱ ὄχλοι, the common people, i.e. the mass of the people. See this question considered on Matthew 16:13, etc.

**Verse 20. *But whom say ye that I am?***— Whom do ye tell the people that I am? What do ye preach concerning me? See also on Matthew 16:14; and see the observations at the end of this chapter.

***The Christ of God.***— The Coptic and later Persic read, Thou art Christ God. After this comes in Peter's confession of our Lord, as related Matthew 16:16, etc., where see the notes; and see also the observations of Granville Sharp, Esq., at the end of this chapter. {Luke 9:62}

**Verse 23. *If any man will come after me***— See on Matthew 16:24, and on Mark 8:34, where the nature of proselytism among the Jews is explained.

***Daily***— καθ' ἡμέραν is omitted by many reputable MSS., versions, and fathers. It is not found in the parallel places, Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34.

**Verse 24. *Will save his life***— See on Matthew 16:24, etc.

**Verse 25. *Lose himself***— That is, his life or soul. See the parallel places, Matthew 16:25; Mark 8:35, and especially the note on the former.

***Or be cast away?***— Or receive spiritual damage *η ζημιωθεις*. I have added the word spiritual here, which I conceive to be necessarily implied. Because, if a man received only temporal damage in some respect or other, yet gaining the whole world must amply compensate him. But if he should receive spiritual damage-hurt to his soul in the smallest degree, the possession of the universe could not indemnify him. Earthly goods may repair earthly losses, but they cannot repair any breach that may be made in the peace or holiness of the soul. See on Matthew 16:26.

**Verse 26. *Ashamed of me***— See on Mark 8:38.

**Verse 28. *About an eight days after***— See the whole of this important transaction explained at large on Matthew 17:1-13.

**Verse 31. *His decease***— *την εξοδον αυτον*, That going out (or death) of his. That peculiar kind of death-its nature, circumstances, and necessity being considered. Instead of *εξοδον*, thirteen MSS. have *δοξαν*, glory. They spoke of that glory of his, which he was about to fill up (*πληρουν*) at Jerusalem. The AEthiopic unites both readings. The death of Jesus was his glory, because, by it, he gained the victory over sin, death, and hell, and purchased salvation and eternal glory for a lost world.

**Verse 33. *It is good for us to be here***— Some MSS. add *παντοτε*, It is good for us to be ALWAYS here.

**Verse 35. *This is my beloved Son***— Instead of *ο αγαπητος*, the beloved one, some MSS. and versions have *εκλεκτος*, the chosen one: and the AEthiopic translator, as in several other cases, to be sure of the true reading, retains both.

In whom I am well pleased, or have delighted-is added by some very ancient MSS. Perhaps this addition is taken from Matthew 17:5.

**Verse 37. *Much people***— See on Matthew 17:14.

**Verse 39. *A spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out***— *πνευμα λαμβανει αυτον*. This very phrase is used by heathen writers, when they speak of supernatural influence. The following, from Herodotus, will make

the matter, I hope, quite plain. Speaking of Scyles, king of the Scythians, who was more fond of Grecian manners and customs than of those of his countrymen, and who desired to be privately initiated into the Bacchic mysteries, he adds: “Now because the Scythians reproach the Greeks with these Bacchanals, and say that to imagine a god driving men into paroxysms of madness is not agreeable to sound reason, a certain Borysthenian, while the king was performing the ceremonies of initiation, went out, and discovered the matter to the Scythian army in these words: ‘Ye Scythians ridicule us because we celebrate the Bacchanals, **και ημεας ο θεος λαμβανει**, and the GOD POSSESSES US: but now the same demon, **ουτος ο δαιμων**, has TAKEN POSSESSION, **λελαβηκε**, of your king, for he celebrates the Bacchanals, and **υπο του θεου μαινεται**, is filled with fury by this god.” Herodot. l. iv. p. 250, edit. Gale.

This passage is exceedingly remarkable. The very expressions which Luke uses here are made use of by Herodotus. A demon, **δαιμων**, is the agent in the Greek historian, and a demon is the agent in the case mentioned in the text, Luke 9:42. In both cases it is said the demon possesses the persons, and the very same word, **λαμβάνει** is used to express this in both historians. Both historians show that the possessions were real, by the effects produced in the persons: the heathen king rages with fury through the influence of the demon called the god Bacchus; the person in the text screams out, (**κραζει**,) is greatly convulsed, and foams at the mouth. Here was a real possession, and such as often took place among those who were worshippers of demons.

**Verse 42. *The devil threw him down, and tare him.***— See this case considered at large, on Matthew 17:15-18, and on Mark 9:14-27.

**Verse 43. *The mighty power***— This majesty of God, **μεγαλειοτητι του θεου**. They plainly saw that it was a case in which any power inferior to that of God could be of no avail; and they were deeply struck with the majesty of God manifested in the conduct of the blessed Jesus.

**Verse 44. *Let these sayings sink down into your ears***— Or, put these words into your ears. To other words, you may lend occasional attention-but to what concerns my sufferings and death you must ever listen. Let them constantly occupy a place in your most serious meditations and reflections.

**Verse 45. *But they understood not***— See the note on Mark 9:32.

**Verse 46. *There arose a reasoning***— εισηλθε δε διαλογισμος, A dialogue took place—one inquired, and another answered, and so on. See this subject explained on Matthew 18:1, etc.

**Verse 49. *We forbade him***— See this subject considered on Mark 9:38, etc.

**Verse 51. *That he should be received up***— Bishop PEARCE says: “I think the word αναληψεως must signify, of Jesus’s retiring or withdrawing himself, and not of his being received up: because the word συμπληρουσθαι, here used before it, denotes a time completed, which that of his ascension was not then. The sense is, that the time was come, when Jesus was no longer to retire from Judea and the parts about Jerusalem as he had hitherto done; for he had lived altogether in Galilee, lest the Jews should have laid hold on him, before the work of his ministry was ended, and full proofs of his Divine mission given, and some of the prophecies concerning him accomplished. John says, John 7:1: Jesus walked in Galilee; for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him. Let it be observed, that all which follows here in Luke, to Luke 19:45, is represented by him as done by Jesus in his last journey from Galilee to Jerusalem.”

***He steadfastly set his face***— That is, after proper and mature deliberation, he chose now to go up to Jerusalem, and firmly determined to accomplish his design.

**Verse 52. *Sent messengers***— αγγελους, angels, literally; but this proves that the word angel signifies a messenger of any kind, whether Divine or human. The messengers in this case were probably James and John.

**Verse 53. *His face was***— They saw he was going up to Jerusalem to keep the feast; (it was the feast of tabernacles, John 7:2;) and knowing him thereby to be a Jew, they would afford nothing for his entertainment; for, in religious matters, the Samaritans and Jews had no dealings: see John 4:9. The Samaritans were a kind of mongrel heathens; they feared Jehovah, and served other gods, 2 Kings 17:34. They apostatized from the true religion, and persecuted those who were attached to it. See an account of them, Matthew 16:1. Those only who have deserted the truth of God, or who

are uninfluenced by it, hate them who embrace and act by it. When a man has once decidedly taken the road to heaven, he can have but little credit any longer in the world, 1 John 3:1.

**Verse 54. *That we command fire***— Vengeance belongs to the Lord. What we suffer for his sake, should be left to himself to reprove or punish. The insult is offered to him, not to us. See the note on Mark 3:17.

**Verse 55. *Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.***— Ye do not consider that the present is a dispensation of infinite mercy and love; and that the design of God is not to destroy sinners, but to give them space to repent, that he may save them unto eternal life. And ye do not consider that the zeal which you feel springs from an evil principle, being more concerned for your own honor than for the honor of God. The disciples of that Christ who died for his enemies should never think of avenging themselves on their persecutors.

**Verse 56. *And they went to another village.***— Which probably did entertain them; being, perhaps, without the Samaritan borders.

The words, Ye know not of what spirit ye are; for the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them, are wanting in ABCEGHLS-V, and in many others. Griesbach leaves the latter clause out of the text. It is probable that the most ancient MSS. read the passage thus: But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not of what spirit ye are. And they went to another village. See the authorities in GRIESBACH.

**Verse 57. *A certain man***— He was a scribe. See on Matthew 8:19-22. It is probable that this took place when Christ was at Capernaum, as Matthew represents it, and not on the way to Jerusalem through Samaria.

**Verse 61. *Another also said***— This circumstance is not mentioned by any of the other evangelists; and Matthew alone mentions the former case, Luke 9:57, 58.

***Let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home***— επιτρεψον μοι αποταξασθαι τοις εις τον οικον μου—Permit me to set in order my affairs at home. Those who understand the Greek text will see at once that it will bear this translation well; and that this is the most natural. This

person seems to have had in view the case of Elisha, who made a similar request to the Prophet Elijah, 1 Kings 19:19, 20, which request was granted by the prophet; but our Lord, seeing that this person had too much attachment to the earth, and that his return to worldly employments, though for a short time, was likely to become the means of stifling the good desires which he now felt, refused to grant him that permission. That which we object to the execution of God's designs is sometimes the very thing from which we should immediately disengage ourselves.

**Verse 62. *Put his hand to the plough***— Can any person properly discharge the work of the ministry who is engaged in secular employments? A farmer and a minister of the Gospel are incompatible characters. As a person who holds the plough cannot keep on a straight furrow if he look behind him; so he who is employed in the work of the ministry cannot do the work of an evangelist, if he turn his desires to worldly profits. A good man has said: "He who thinks it necessary to cultivate the favor of the world is not far from betraying the interests of God and his Church." Such a person is not fit, *ευθετος*, properly disposed, has not his mind properly directed towards the heavenly inheritance, and is not fit to show the way to others. In both these verses there is a plain reference to the call of Elisha. See 1 Kings 19:19, etc.

1. CONSIDERING the life of mortification and self-denial which Christ and his disciples led, it is surprising to find that any one should voluntarily offer to be his disciple. But there is such an attractive influence in truth, and such a persuasive eloquence in the consistent steady conduct of a righteous man, that the first must have admirers, and the latter, imitators. Christianity, as it is generally exhibited, has little attractive in it; and it is no wonder that the cross of Christ is not prized, as the blessings of it are not known; and they can be known and exhibited by him only who follows Christ fully.

2. It is natural for man to wish to do the work of God in his own spirit; hence he is ready to call down fire and brimstone from heaven against those who do not conform to his own views of things. A spirit of persecution is abominable. Had man the government of the world, in a short time, not only sects and parties, but even true religion itself, would be banished from the face of the earth. Meekness, long-suffering, and

benevolence, become the followers of Christ; and his followers should ever consider that his work can never be done but in his own spirit.

Since the notes on Matthew were published, I have received from Granville Sharp, Esq., a short Treatise, entitled, Remarks on an important Text, (viz. Matthew 16:18,) which has long been perverted by the Church of Rome, IN SUPPORT OF HER VAIN AND BANEFUL PRETENSIONS TO A SUPERIORITY OR SUPREME DOMINION OVER ALL OTHER EPISCOPAL CHURCHES.

As I should feel it an honor to introduce the name of such a veteran in the cause of religion, liberty, and learning, into my work, so it gives me pleasure to insert the substance of his tract here, as forming a strong argument against a most Anti-christian doctrine.

“And I also say unto thee, That thou art PETER; and upon this ROCK I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”  
Matthew 16:18.

“The Greek word **πετρος** (Petros or Peter) does not mean a rock, though it has, indeed, a relative meaning to the word **πετρα**, a rock; for it signifies only a little piece of a rock, or a stone, that has been dug out of a rock; whereby the dignity of the real foundation intended by our Lord, which he expressed by the prophetic figure of Petra, (a rock,) must necessarily be understood to bear a proportionable superiority of dignity and importance above the other preceding word, Petros; as **petra**, a real rock, is, comparatively, superior to a mere stone, or particle from the rock; because a rock is the regular figurative expression in Holy Scripture for a Divine Protector: **יְהוָה לֵעֵי** Jehovah (is) my rock, (2 Samuel 22:2, and Psalm 18:2.) Again, **אֱלֹהֵי צוּר**, my God (is) my rock; (2 Samuel 22:2, and Psalm 18:2;) and again, **וּמִי צוּר מְבַלְעֵדֵי אֱלֹהֵינוּ**, and who (is) a rock except our God? 2 Samuel 22:32.

“Many other examples may be found throughout the Holy Scriptures; but these six alone are surely sufficient to establish the true meaning of the figurative expression used by our Lord on this occasion; as they demonstrate that nothing of less importance was to be understood than that of our Lord’s own Divine divinity, as declared by St. Peter in the preceding context-‘Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!’



“That our Lord really referred to this declaration of Peter, relating to his own Divine dignity, as being the true rock, on which he would build his Church, is established beyond contradiction by our Lord himself, in the clear distinction which he maintained between the stone (**πετρος**, petros) and the rock, (**πετρα**, petra,) by the accurate grammatical terms in which both these words are expressly recorded. (For whatsoever may have been the language in which they were really spoken, perhaps in Chaldee or Syriac, yet in this point the Greek record is our only authoritative instructor.) The first word, **πετρος**, being a masculine noun, signifies merely a stone; and the second word, **πετρα**, though it is a feminine noun, cannot signify any thing of less magnitude and importance than a rock, or strong mountain of defense. The true meaning of the name was at first declared by our Lord to be Cephas, a stone; and a learned commentator, Edward Leigh, Esq., asserts that **πετρος**, doth always signify a STONE, never a rock. *Critica Sacra*, p. 325.

“With respect to the first.-The word **πετρος**, petros, in its highest figurative sense of a stone, when applied to Peter, can represent only one true believer, or faithful member of Christ’s Church, that is, one out of the great multitude of true believers in Christ, who, as figurative stones, form altogether the glorious spiritual building of Christ’s Church, and not the foundation on which that Church is built; because that figurative character cannot, consistently with truth, be applied to any other person than to God, or to Christ alone, as I have already demonstrated by several undeniable texts of Holy Scripture. And though even Christ himself is sometimes, in Holy Scripture, called a stone, (**λοθος**, but not **πετρος**,) yet, whenever this figurative expression is applied to him, it is always with such a clear distinction of superiority over all other figurative stones as will not admit the least idea of any vicarial stone to be substituted in his place; as, for instance: He is called ‘the head stone of the corner,’ (Psalm 118:22,) ‘in Zion a precious corner stone,’ (Isaiah 28:16,) by whom alone the other living stones of the spiritual house are rendered ‘acceptable to God;’ as St. Peter himself (previous to his citation of that text of Isaiah) has clearly declared in his address to the Churches dispersed throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; wherein he manifestly explains that very text of Isaiah, as follows:-‘Ye also,’ (says the apostle,) ‘as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer

up spiritual sacrifices ACCEPTABLE TO GOD, BY' (or through) 'JESUS CHRIST.' (1 Peter 2:5.) Thus plainly acknowledging the true foundation, on which the other living stones of the primitive catholic Church were built, in order to render them 'acceptable to God,' as 'a holy priesthood.'

And the apostle then proceeds (in the very next verse) to his citation of the above-mentioned text from Isaiah:-'Wherefore also,' (says he, 1 Peter 2:6,) 'it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a CHIEF CORNER STONE, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him' ( $\epsilon\pi'$   $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omega$ , on him, that is, on Jesus Christ, the only CHIEF CORNER STONE) 'shall not be confounded. Unto you, therefore, which believe' (he) 'IS PRECIOUS,' (or, an honor; as rendered in the margin,) 'but unto them which be disobedient' (he is,  $\delta\epsilon$ , also) 'the stone which the builders disallowed, the same' ( $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma$ , for there is no other person that can be entitled to this supreme distinction in the Church) 'is made the HEAD OF THE CORNER.'

"From this whole argument of St. Peter, it is manifest that there cannot be any other true head of the Church than Christ himself; so that the pretense for setting up a vicarial head on earth, is not only contrary to St. Peter's instruction to the eastern Churches, long after Christ's ascent into heaven; but also (with respect to the inexpediency and impropriety of acknowledging such a vicar on earth as the Roman pretender) is equally contrary to our Lord's own instruction to his disciples (and, of course, also contrary to the faith of the true primitive catholic Church throughout the whole world) when he promised them, that, 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name' (said our Lord JESUS, the true rock of the Church) 'there am I in the midst of them,' Matthew 18:20.

"So that the appointment of any 'vicar on earth,' to represent that rock or eternal head of the Church whose continual presence, even with the smallest congregations on earth, is so expressly promised, would be not only superfluous and vain, but must also be deemed a most ungrateful affront to the benevolent Promiser of his continual presence; such as must have been suggested by our spiritual enemies to promote an apostasy from the only sure foundation, on which the faith, hope, and confidence of the true catholic Church can be built and supported!

“Thus, I trust that the true sense of the first noun, **πετρος**, a stone, is here fairly stated; and also, its relative meaning to the second noun, **πετρα**, a rock, as far as it can reasonably be deemed applicable to the Apostle Peter.

“And a due consideration also of the second noun, **πετρα**, a rock, will produce exactly the same effect; that is, it will demonstrate that the supreme title of the rock, which, in other texts of Holy Scripture, is applied to Jehovah, or God, alone, (as I have already shown,) most certainly was not intended by our Lord to be understood as applicable to his disciple Peter; but only to that true testimony which St. Peter had just before declared, concerning the Divine dignity of the Messiah-‘Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.’

“I have already remarked that **πετρα** (a rock) is a feminine noun; and a clear distinction is maintained between **πετρος**, the masculine noun, in this text, and the said feminine noun **πετρα**, the rock, by the grammatical terms in which the latter, in its relatives and articles, is expressed, which are all regularly feminine throughout the whole sentence; and thereby they demonstrate that our Lord did not intend that the new appellation, or nominal distinction, which he had just before given to Simon, (viz. **πετρος**, the masculine noun in the beginning of the sentence,) should be construed as the character of which he spoke in the next part of the sentence; for, if he had really intended that construction, the same masculine noun, **πετρος**, must necessarily have been repeated in the next part of the sentence with a masculine pronoun, viz. **ἐπὶ τούτῳ τῷ πετρῷ**, instead of **ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πετρᾷ**, the present text; wherein, on the contrary; not only the gender is changed from the masculine to the feminine, but also the figurative character itself, which is as much superior, in dignity, to the Apostle Simon, and also to his new appellative **πετρος**, as a rock is superior to a mere stone. For the word **πετρος** cannot signify any thing more than a stone; so that the popish application to Peter, (or **πετρος**,) as the foundation of Christ’s Church, is not only inconsistent with the real meaning of the appellative which Christ, at that very time, conferred upon him, and with the necessary grammatical construction of it, but also with the figurative importance of the other word, **πετρα**, the rock; **ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πετρᾷ**, ‘upon this rock;’ the declared foundation of the Church, a title of dignity, which (as I have already shown by several texts of Scripture) is applicable only to God or to Christ.

“And be pleased to observe farther, that the application of this supreme title (the rock) to Peter, is inconsistent (above all) with the plain reference to the preceding CONTEXT; made by our Lord in the beginning of this very verse-‘AND I ALSO say unto thee’-which manifestly points out (both by the copulative ‘and,’ and the connective adverb ‘also’) the inseparable connection of this verse with the previous declaration of Peter, concerning our Lord’s Divine dignity in the preceding sentence-‘Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;’ and thereby demonstrates that our Lord’s immediate reply (‘AND I ALSO SAY unto thee, etc.) did necessarily include this declaration of Peter, as being the principal object of the sentence-the true foundation, or rock, on which alone the catholic Church can be properly built; because our faith in Christ (that he is truly ‘the Son of the living God’) is unquestionably the only security or rock of our salvation.

“And Christ was also the rock even of the primitive Church of Israel; for St. Paul testifies, that ‘they’ (i.e. the hosts of Israel) ‘did all drink of that spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual ROCK that followed them, and that ROCK was CHRIST,’ 1 Corinthians 10:4. And the apostle, in a preceding chapter, (1 Corinthians 3:11,) says, ‘Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is JESUS CHRIST.’

“In the margin of our English version of 1 Corinthians 10:4, instead of ‘followed them,’ we find, ‘went with them;’ which is not only the literal meaning of the Greek, ‘followed them,’ but it is also unquestionably true that Christ was, in a more particular manner, the ROCK of their defense, when he ‘followed them,’ than when he ‘went before them,’ as related in Exodus 13:21, ‘And the Lord’ (in the Hebrew, expressly, Jehovah) ‘WENT BEFORE THEM by day in a pillar of a cloud to LEAD THEM the way, and by night in a pillar of fire,’ etc. Yet, afterwards, a necessary change was made by the Protector of the hosts of Israel, in his military manoeuvres with the two marching armies, as we are informed in the next chapter, Exodus 14:19. For though, at first, ‘he went BEFORE the camp of Israel,’ yet he afterwards ‘removed, and went BEHIND them; and the pillar of the cloud removed from before them, and stood’ (or rather, was stationed in the order of marching) ‘behind them.’ Which is properly expressed by St. Paul (in the above-cited text, 1 Corinthians 10:4) as ‘the rock that followed them.’ For Christ was more particularly ‘a rock of defense to Israel,’ by this changed manoeuvre in following them; because he thereby prevented

the pursuit of their cruel enemies, the standing armies of the Egyptian tyrant.

“I must remark, however, that in the text, which is parallel to St. Paul’s testimony that Christ was the ROCK which followed, viz. Exodus 14:19, 20, Christ is not mentioned under the supreme title of Jehovah, (as in the preceding chapter, Exodus 13:21,) but only as ‘an angel of God.’ But the angel appointed to this most gracious and merciful purpose of the Almighty was really of a supreme Divine dignity, infinitely superior to all other angels, For (in another parallel text on the same subject, wherein the title of angel is also given, viz. Exodus 23:20-23,) God declared, saying, ‘My name is in him,’ (viz. the name Jehovah, signifying all time, past, present, and future, or the eternal Being.) ‘Behold,’ (said God to the hosts of Israel,) ‘I send AN ANGEL’ (or a messenger) ‘before thee, to keep thee in the way,’ (the object of intention before described,) ‘and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him,’ [or rather, watch, (thyself,) or be respectful before him, **לפניך** or in his presence,] ‘and obey his VOICE,’ (i.e. the WORD of God, the true character of Christ, even before the creation;) ‘provoke him not,’ (or rather, murmur not, against him,) ‘for he will not pardon your transgressions, for MY NAME IS IN HIM,’ (not placed upon him, as the outward tokens of mere temporary authority are given, to be exhibited like the insignia of nobility, or robes of magistrates, but really ‘in him,’ **בקרבו** ‘within him,’ i.e. thoroughly included in his personal existence.) ‘But if thou shalt indeed obey HIS VOICE,’ (i.e. ‘the word of God,’ the true figurative character of the Son of God,) ‘and shalt do all that I SPEAK,’ (for it is Jehovah, the Lord God, that speaketh in Christ,) ‘then I will be an enemy to thine enemies,’ etc. It is therefore unquestionably evident, from the examination of all these texts, that Christ, whom St. Paul has declared to be ‘the rock that followed’ the Israelites, was also the Lord, or Jehovah, (as he is expressly called in the first text here cited, Exodus 13:21,) that ‘went before’ the Israelites ‘by day,’ in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them in ‘the way, and by night in a pillar of fire,’ etc., as expressly declared in the first text cited in this note; and, therefore, an attempt to set up any mere mortal man, as the rock or foundation of the true catholic Church, must be attributed either to extreme ignorance of the Holy Scriptures, or to extreme wickedness; but certainly, also, to the delusions of spiritual enemies.”

That the power of the keys, or of binding and loosing, belonged equally to all the apostles, the author goes on to prove.

“But there is a testimony of high authority, which renders it unquestionable that this declaration of our Lord respecting the power of ‘binding and loosing,’ related ‘to them,’ (the other disciples,) ‘as well as to him:’-even another declaration, made by our Lord himself, ‘to his disciples,’ respecting the same identical power, which our Lord attributed equally to all the disciples then present.

“The particular discourse of our Lord to which I now refer seems to have been made at Capernaum, after the miracle of the fish (bearing the tribute money in his mouth) which Peter was sent to catch; as related in the 17th chapter of St. Matthew. {Matthew 17:1 etc.} And in the beginning of the very next chapter {Matthew 18:1} we are informed as follows:-‘At the SAME TIME came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?’ Our Lord’s answer to this question (wherein he urges the necessity of a humiliation like that of little children, as the proper disposition to qualify mankind for the kingdom of heaven) is continued from the 2d verse to the 14th verse of this chapter; {Matthew 18:2-14} which shows that the disciples, in general, were still present, as they would certainly wait for the desired answer to their own question; and then our Lord immediately afterwards proceeded to instruct them (from the 15th to the 17th verse) {Matthew 18:15-17} in the general duty of behavior towards a brother that has trespassed against us. After which our Lord added, (in the 18th verse,) {Matthew 18:18} ‘Verily I say unto YOU, (ὁμιν, a plural pronoun, which must refer unto all the disciples that were then assembled,) ‘Whatsoever YE SHALL BIND on earth,’ (δησητε, a verb in the second person plural, plainly including all the disciples that were then present,) ‘shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever YE SHALL LOOSE on earth,’ (λυσητε, another plural verb,) ‘shall be loosed in heaven.’

“This is exactly the power of the keys, which the Church of Rome has, most absurdly, attributed to St. Peter alone, in order to invest the bishops of Rome (on the vain pretense of their being St. Peter’s successors) with an exclusive claim to all these ecclesiastical privileges of binding and loosing, which our Lord manifestly, in this parallel text, attributed to all his faithful apostles, without any partial distinction.

“But the importance of examining, not only parallel texts, but also more particularly the context, of any difficult sentence in Holy Scripture, for a more easy comprehension of the true meaning, is clearly exemplified in the examination of the first text in question, viz. Matthew 16:18, 19; for we are informed in the very next verse, the 20th, {Matthew 16:20} that our Lord ‘THEN charged his disciples,’ (τοτε, then, that is, immediately after his discourse about the rock and keys,) ‘that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ;’ manifestly referring to the first circumstance of the context concerning himself, viz. the declaration of Peter, ‘Thou art the Christ,’ etc. (Matthew 16:16,) in answer to his own question to all the disciples-‘Whom say ye that I am?’

“That this question was not addressed to Peter alone is manifest by the plural pronoun and verb, (υμεις λεγετε,) ‘Whom say YE that I am?’ And therefore St. Peter’s answer must be considered as intended not merely for himself, but also for his brethren, the other faithful witnesses of Christ’s miracles and doctrines; so that the substance of this answer-‘Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God’-must necessarily be understood as the true foundation or rock of the Catholic Church, revealed to Peter by our heavenly Father, as stated in the 17th and 18th verses. {Matthew 16:17, 18}

“This declaration, therefore, that he was the Christ, was manifestly the subject of our Lord’s charge to the disciples, that ‘they should tell no man;’ that is, not until after the time of his sufferings and death, which were the next topics in the continuation of his discourse. The declaration of Peter, therefore, demonstrated the true foundation, or rock, of the Church, which (as Christ himself testified) our heavenly Father had revealed to Peter. And it is also remarkable, that the very next discourse of our Lord to his disciples, recorded in the context, (Matthew 16:21,) should produce that severe censure against Peter, which still farther demonstrated that Peter could not be the rock on which Christ’s Church was to be built. (Matthew 16:21.) ‘From that time forth’ (απο τοτε) ‘began Jesus to show unto his disciples how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and SUFFER many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and BE KILLED,’ (all the predicted consequences of his being the CHRIST, the character which Peter himself had declared,) ‘and’ (that he should) ‘be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him,’ (Matthew 16:22,) ‘and began to rebuke him, saying,

Be it far from thee, Lord,’ (or, rather, according to the Greek original, as rendered in the margin-‘Pity thyself, Lord’)-‘this shall not be unto thee. But he’ (Christ, Matthew 16:23) ‘turned and said unto Peter,’ [τῷ πετρῷ, the same appellative (signifying a stone, or a small part of a rock) which was given to Peter by our Lord, in the 18th verse:-‘Get thee behind me, Satan, (said our Lord,) thou art an offense unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God; but those that be of men.’ {Matthew 16:18}

“Thus a fair examination and comparison of the whole context, completely sets aside the vain supposition of the Romish Church, that Peter was the rock of Christ’s Church. And I sincerely hope that a similar attention to this whole context may prevent any future attempts, that might otherwise be prompted by the prejudices of Roman Catholics, to bring forward again this long-disputed question, on which they have vainly set up the pretended supremacy of the Romish Church above all other episcopal Churches; and that it may be silenced, and set at rest, for ever hereafter.”



## CHAPTER 10

*Christ appoints seventy disciples to go before him, two by two, to preach, heal, etc., 1-12. Pronounces woes on Chorazin and Capernaum, 13-16. The seventy return, and give account of their mission, 17-20. Christ rejoices that the things which were hidden from the wise and prudent had been revealed unto babes, and shows the great privileges of the Gospel, 21-24. A lawyer inquires how he shall inherit eternal life, and is answered, 25-29. The story of the good Samaritan, 30-37. The account of Martha and Mary, 38-42.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 10

**Verse 1. *The Lord appointed other seventy***— Rather, seventy others, not other seventy, as our translation has it, which seems to intimate that he had appointed seventy before this time, though, probably, the word other has a reference to the twelve chosen first: he not only chose twelve disciples to be constantly with him; but he chose seventy others to go before him. Our blessed Lord formed every thing in his Church on the model of the Jewish Church; and why? Because it was the pattern shown by God himself, the Divine form, which pointed out the heavenly substance which now began to be established in its place. As he before had chosen twelve apostles, in reference to the twelve patriarchs, who were the chiefs of the twelve tribes, and the heads of the Jewish Church, he now publicly appointed (for so the word ἀνεδειξεν means) seventy others, as Moses did the seventy elders whom he associated with himself to assist him in the government of the people. Exodus 18:19; 24:1-9. These Christ sent by two and two: 1. To teach them the necessity of concord among the ministers of righteousness. 2. That in the mouths of two witnesses every thing might be established. And, 3. That they might comfort and support each other in their difficult labor. See on Mark 6:7. Several MSS. and versions have seventy-two. Sometimes the Jews chose six out of each tribe: this was the number of the great Sanhedrin. The names of these seventy disciples are found in the margin of some ancient MSS., but this authority is questionable.

**Verse 2. *That he would send forth***— ἐκβαλῆ. There seems to be an allusion here to the case of reapers, who, though the harvest was perfectly ripe, yet were in no hurry to cut it down. News of this is brought to the Lord of the harvest the farmer, and he is entreated to exert his authority, and hurry them out; and this he does because the harvest is spoiling for want of being reaped and gathered in. See the notes on Matthew 9:37, 38.

**Verse 3. *Lambs among wolves***.— See on Matthew 10:16.

**Verse 4. *Carry neither purse nor scrip***— See on Matthew 10:9, etc., and Mark 6:8, etc.

***Salute no man by the way***.— According to a canon of the Jews, a man who was about any sacred work was exempted from all civil obligations for the time; forasmuch as obedience to God was of infinitely greater consequence than the cultivation of private friendships, or the returning of civil compliments.

**Verse 5. *Peace be to this house***— See on Matthew 10:12.

**Verse 6. *The son of peace***— In the Jewish style, a man who has any good or bad quality is called the son of it. Thus, wise men are called the children of wisdom, Matthew 11:19; Luke 7:35. So, likewise, what a man is doomed to, he is called the son of, as in Ephesians 2:3, wicked men are styled the children of wrath: so Judas is called the son of perdition, John 17:12; and a man who deserves to die is called, 2 Samuel 12:5, a son of death. Son of peace in the text not only means a peaceable, quiet man, but one also of good report for his uprightness and benevolence. It would have been a dishonor to this mission, had the missionaries taken up their lodgings with those who had not a good report among them who were without.

**Verse 7. *The laborer is worthy***— See on Matthew 10:8, 12.

***Go not from house to house***.— See on Matthew 10:11. It would be a great offense among the Hindoos if a guest, after being made welcome at a house, were to leave it and go to another.

**Verse 9. *The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you***.— ἐφ' ὑμᾶς, is just upon you. This was the general text on which they were to preach all their sermons. See it explained, Matthew 3:2.

**Verse 11. *Even the very dust of your city***— See on Matthew 10:14, 15.

**Verse 13. *Wo unto thee, Chorazin!***— See on Matthew 11:21-24.

**Verse 15. *To hell***.— To hades. See this explained, Matthew 11:23.

**Verse 16. *He that despiseth you, despiseth me***— “The holy, blessed God said: ‘Honor my statutes, for they are my ambassadors: and a man’s ambassador is like to himself. If thou honor my precepts, it is the same as if thou didst honor me; and if thou despise them, thou despisest me.’” R. Tancum. “He that murmurs against his teacher is the same as if he had murmured against the Divine Shekinah.” Sanhedrin, fol. 110.

**Verse 17. *The seventy returned again with joy***— Bishop PEARCE thinks they returned while our Lord was on his slow journey to Jerusalem, and that they had been absent only a few days.

**Verse 18. *I beheld Satan***— Or, Satan himself, τον σαταναν, the very Satan, the supreme adversary, falling as lightning, with the utmost suddenness, as a flash of lightning falls from the clouds, and at the same time in the most observable manner. The fall was both very sudden and very apparent. Thus should the fall of the corrupt Jewish state be, and thus was the fall of idolatry in the Gentile world.

**Verse 19. *To tread on serpents, etc.***— It is possible that by serpents and scorpions our Lord means the scribes and Pharisees, whom he calls serpents and a brood of vipers, Matthew 23:33, (see the note there,) because, through the subtilty and venom of the old serpent, the devil, they opposed him and his doctrine; and, by trampling on these, it is likely that he means, they should get a complete victory over such: as it was an ancient custom to trample on the kings and generals who had been taken in battle, to signify the complete conquest which had been gained over them. See Joshua 10:24. See also Romans 16:20. See the notes on Mark 16:17, 18.

**Verse 20. *Because your names are written in heaven***.— This form of speech is taken from the ancient custom of writing the names of all the citizens in a public register, that the several families might be known, and the inheritances properly preserved. This custom is still observed even in these kingdoms, though not particularly noticed. Every child that is born in

the land is ordered to be registered, with the names of its parents, and the time when born, baptized, or registered; and this register is generally kept in the parish church, or in some public place of safety. Such a register as this is called in Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5, etc., the book of life, i.e. the book or register where the persons were enrolled as they came into life. It appears also probable, that when any person died, or behaved improperly, his name was sought out and erased from the book, to prevent any confusion that might happen in consequence of improper persons laying claim to an estate, and to cut off the unworthy from the rights and privileges of the peaceable, upright citizens. To this custom of blotting the names of deceased and disorderly persons out of the public registers, there appear to be allusions, Exodus 32:32, where see the note; and Revelation 3:5; Deuteronomy 9:14; 25:19; 29:20; 2 Kings 14:27; Psalm 69:28; 109:13, and in other places.

**Verse 21. *Rejoiced in spirit***— Was truly and heartily joyous: felt an inward triumph. But **τῷ πνεύματι, τῷ ἁγίῳ**, the HOLY Spirit, is the reading here of BCDKL, six others; the three Syriac, later Persic, Coptic, Aethiopic, Armenian, Vulgate, all the Itala except one, and Augustin and Bede. These might be considered sufficient authority to admit the word into the text.

***I thank thee***— Bishop PEARCE justly observes, the thanks are meant to be given to God for revealing them to babes, not for hiding them from the others. See on Matthew 11:25.

***Thou hast hid***— That is, thou hast not revealed them to the scribes and Pharisees, who idolized their own wisdom; but thou hast revealed them to the simple and humble of heart.

**Verse 22.** The Codex Alexandrinus, several other very ancient MSS., and some ancient versions, as well as the margin of our own, begin this verse with, And turning to his disciples, he said. But as this clause begins Luke 10:23, it is not likely that it was originally in both. Griesbach has left these words out of the text, and Professor WHITE says, Certissime delenda, “These words should most assuredly be erased.”

**Verse 22. *All things are delivered to me***— See on Matthew 11:27.

**Verse 23. *Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see***— There is a similar saying to this among the rabbins, in Sohar. Genes., where it is said, “Blessed is that generation which the earth shall bear, when the King Messiah cometh.”

**Verse 24. *Many prophets***— See on Matthew 13:11, 17.

**Verse 25. *A certain lawyer***— See on Matthew 24:35.

**Verse 27. *Thou shalt love the Lord***— See this important subject explained at large, on Matthew 22:37-40.

***Thy neighbor as thyself.***— See the nature of self-love explained, on Matthew 19:19.

**Verse 29. *Willing to justify himself***— Wishing to make it appear that he was a righteous man, and that consequently he was in the straight road to the kingdom of God, said, Who is my neighbor? supposing our Lord would have at once answered, “Every Jew is to be considered as such, and the Jews only.” Now as he imagined he had never been deficient in his conduct to any person of his own nation, he thought he had amply fulfilled the law. This is the sense in which the Jews understood the word neighbor, as may be seen from Leviticus 29:15-18. But our Lord shows here, that the acts of kindness which a man is bound to perform to his neighbor when in distress, he should perform to any person, of whatever nation, religion, or kindred, whom he finds in necessity. As the word **πλησιον** signifies one who is near, Anglo Saxon [A.S.], he that is next, this very circumstance makes any person our neighbor whom we know; and, if in distress, an object of our most compassionate regards. If a man came from the most distant part of the earth, the moment he is near you he has a claim upon your mercy and kindness, as you would have on his, were your dwelling-place transferred to his native country. It is evident that our Lord uses the word **πλησιον** (very properly translated neighbor, from nae or naer, near, and buer, to dwell) in its plain, literal sense. Any person whom you know, who dwells hard by, or who passes near you, is your neighbor while within your reach.

**Verse 30. *And Jesus answering***— Rather, Then Jesus took him up. This I believe to be the meaning of the word **υπολαβον**; he threw out a challenge,

and our Lord took him up on his own ground. See WAKEFIELD'S Testament.

***A certain man went down from Jerusalem***— Or, A certain man of Jerusalem going down to Jericho. This was the most public road in all Judea, as it was the grand thoroughfare between these two cities for the courses of priests, twelve thousand of whom are said to have resided at Jericho. See Lightfoot.

***Fell among thieves***— At this time the whole land of Judea was much infested with hordes of banditti; and it is not unlikely that many robberies might have been committed on that very road to which our Lord refers.

**Verse 31. *And by chance***— *κατα συγκυριαν* properly means the coincidence of time and circumstance. At the time in which the poor Jew was half dead, through the wounds which he had received, a priest came where he was. So the priest's coming while the man was in that state is the coincidence marked out by the original words.

**Verses 31. — 32.** Priest and Levite are mentioned here, partly because they were the most frequent travelers on this road, and partly to show that these were the persons who, from the nature of their office, were most obliged to perform works of mercy; and from whom a person in distress had a right to expect immediate succor and comfort; and their inhuman conduct here was a flat breach of the law, Deuteronomy 22:1-4.

**Verse 33.** Samaritan is mentioned merely to show that he was a person from whom a Jew had no right to expect any help or relief, because of the enmity which subsisted between the two nations.

**Verse 34. *Pouring in oil and wine***— These, beaten together, appear to have been used formerly as a common medicine for fresh wounds. Bind up a fresh cut immediately in a soft rag or lint, moistened with pure olive oil, and the parts will heal by what is called the first intention, and more speedily than by any other means.

***An inn***— *πανδοχειον*, from *παν*, all, and *δεχομαι*, I receive; because it receives all comers.

**Verse 35. *Two pence***— Two denarii, about fifteen pence, English; and which, probably, were at that time of ten times more value there than so much is with us now.

**Verse 36. *Which-was neighbor***— Which fulfilled the duty which one neighbor owes to another?

**Verse 37. *He that showed mercy***— Or, so much mercy. His prejudice would not permit him to name the Samaritan, yet his conscience obliged him to acknowledge that he was the only righteous person of the three.

***Go, and do thou likewise***— Be even to thy enemy in distress as kind, humane, and merciful, as this Samaritan was. As the distress was on the part of a Jew, and the relief was afforded by a Samaritan, the lawyer, to be consistent with the decision he had already given, must feel the force of our Lord's inference, that it was his duty to act to any person, of whatever nation or religion he might be, as this Samaritan had acted toward his countryman. It is very likely that what our Lord relates here was a real matter of fact, and not a parable; otherwise the captious lawyer might have objected that no such case had ever existed, and that any inference drawn from it was only begging the question; but as he was, in all probability, in possession of the fact himself, he was forced to acknowledge the propriety of our Lord's inference and advice.

Those who are determined to find something allegorical, even in the plainest portions of Scripture, affirm that the whole of this relation is to be allegorically considered; and, according to them, the following is the true exposition of the text.

The certain man means Adam-went down, his fall-from Jerusalem, **שָׁלוֹם** **יֵרָאֶה** yorih shalom, he shall see peace, perfection, etc., meaning his state of primitive innocence and excellence-to Jericho, (**יָרֵאֶחֻ** yareacho, his moon,) the transitory and changeable state of existence in this world-thieves, sin and Satan-stripped, took away his righteousness, which was the clothing of the soul-wounded, infected his heart with all evil and hurtful desires, which are the wounds of the spirit-half dead, possessing a living body, carrying about a soul dead in sin.

The priest, the moral law-the Levite, the ceremonial law-passed by, either could not or would not afford any relief, because by the law is the knowledge of sin, not the cure of it. A certain Samaritan, Christ; for so he was called by the Jews, John 8:48 -as he journeyed, meaning his coming from heaven to earth; his being incarnated-came where he was, put himself in man's place, and bore the punishment due to his sins-had compassion, it is through the love and compassion of Christ that the work of redemption was accomplished-went to him, Christ first seeks the sinner, who, through his miserable estate, is incapable of seeking or going to Christ-bound up his wounds, gives him comfortable promises, and draws him by his love-pouring in oil, pardoning mercy-wine, the consolations of the Holy Ghost-set him on his own beast, supported him entirely by his grace and goodness, so that he no longer lives, but Christ lives in him-took him to an inn, his Church, uniting him with his people-took care of him, placed him under the continual notice of his providence and love-when he departed, when he left the world and ascended to the Father-took out two pence, or denarii, the law and the Gospel; the one to convince of sin, the other to show how it is to be removed-gave them to the host, the ministers of the Gospel for the edification of the Church of Christ-take care of him, as they are Gods watchmen and God's stewards, they are to watch over the flock of Christ, and give to each his portion of meat in due season. What thou spendest more, if thou shouldst lose thy health and life in this work-when I come again, to judge the world, I will repay thee, I will reward thee with an eternity of glory.

Several primitive and modern fathers treat the text in this way. What I have given before is, I believe, the meaning of our blessed Lord. What I have given here is generally true in itself, but certainly does not follow from the text. Mr. Baxter's note here is good: "They who make the wounded man Adam, and the good Samaritan Christ, abuse the passage." A practice of this kind cannot be too strongly reprehended. Men may take that advantage of the circumstances of the case to illustrate the above facts and doctrines; but let no man say this is the meaning of the relation; no: but he may say, we may make this use of it. Though I cannot recommend this kind of preaching, yet I know that some simple upright souls have been edified by it. I dare not forbid a man to work by whom God may



choose to work a miracle, because he follows not with us. But such a mode of interpretation I can never recommend.

**Verse 38. *A certain village***— If this village was Bethany, where Martha and Mary lived, at less than two miles' distance from Jerusalem, see John 11:1, 18; 12:2, then this must have happened later than Luke places it; because, in Luke 19:29, he represents Jesus as having arrived after this at Bethany; and what is said in Luke 13:22, and Luke 17:11, seems to confirm that this visit of Jesus to Martha and Mary ought to be placed later. Bishop PEARCE.

***Received him***— Kindly received, *υπεδεξατο*, she received him in a friendly manner, under her roof; and entertained him hospitably. So the word is used in the best Greek writers. Martha is supposed by some to have been a widow, with whom her brother Lazarus and sister Mary lodged.

**Verse 39. *Sat at Jesus' feet***— This was the posture of the Jewish scholars, while listening to the instructions of the rabbins. It is in this sense that St. Paul says he was brought up at the FEET of Gamaliel, Acts 22:3.

**Verse 40. *Martha was cumbered***— *περιεσπατο*, perplexed, from *περι*, about, and *σπαω*, I draw. She was harassed with different cares and employments at the same time; one drawing one way, and another, another: a proper description of a worldly mind. But in Martha's favor it may be justly said, that all her anxiety was to provide suitable and timely entertainment for our Lord and his disciples; for this is the sense in which the word *διακοσιας*, serving, should be taken. And we should not, on the merest supposition, attribute earthly-mindedness to a woman whose character stands unimpeachable in the Gospel; and who, by entertaining Christ and his disciples, and providing liberally for them, gave the highest proof that she was influenced by liberality and benevolence, and not by parsimony or covetousness.

***Dost thou not care***— Dost thou not think it wrong, that my sister thus leaves me to provide and prepare this supper, alone?

***Help me.***— *συναντιλαβηται*, from *συν*, together, and *αντιλαμβανομαι*, to support. The idea is taken from two pillars meeting together at the top,

exactly over the center of the distance between their bases, and thus mutually supporting each other. Order her to unite her skill and strength with mine, that the present business may be done with that speed and in that order which the necessity and importance of the case demand.

**Verse 41. *Thou art careful and troubled***— Thou art distracted, *μεριμνας*, thy mind is divided, (see on Matthew 13:22,) in consequence of which, *τυρβαζη*, thou art disturbed, thy spirit is thrown into a tumult.

***About many things.***— Getting a variety of things ready for this entertainment, much more than are necessary on such an occasion.

**Verse 42. *One thing is needful***— This is the end of the sentence, according to Bengel. “Now Mary hath chosen, etc.,” begins a new one. One single dish, the simplest and plainest possible, is such as best suits me and my disciples, whose meat and drink it is to do the will of our heavenly Father.

***Mary hath chosen that good part***— That is, of hearing my word, of which she shall not be deprived; it being at present of infinitely greater importance to attend to my teaching than to attend to any domestic concerns. While thou art busily employed in providing that portion of perishing food for perishing bodies, Mary has chosen that spiritual portion which endures for ever, and which shall not be taken away from her; therefore I cannot command her to leave her present employment, and go and help thee to bring forward a variety of matters, which are by no means necessary at this time. Our Lord both preached and practised the doctrine of self-denial; he and his disciples were contented with a little, and sumptuous entertainments are condemned by the spirit and design of his Gospel.

Multos morbos, multa fercula fecerunt. SENECA. “Many dishes, many diseases.”

Bishop PEARCE remarks that the word *χρεια*, needful, is used after the same manner for want of food in Mark 2:25, where of David it is said, *χρειαν εσχε*, he had need, when it means he was hungry. I believe the above to be the true meaning of these verses; but others have taken a somewhat different sense from them: especially when they suppose that by one thing needful our Lord means the salvation of the soul. To attend to

this is undoubtedly the most necessary of all things, and should be the first, the grand concern of every human spirit; but in my opinion it is not the meaning of the words in the text. It is only prejudice from the common use of the words in this way that could make such an interpretation tolerable. ΚΥΡΚΕ in loc. has several methods of interpreting this passage. Many eminent commentators, both ancient and modern, consider the text in the same way I have done. But this is termed by some, “a frigid method of explaining the passage;” well, so let it be; but he that fears God will sacrifice every thing at the shrine of TRUTH. I believe this alone to be the true meaning of the place, and I dare not give it any other. Bengelius points the whole passage thus: Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful. Now, Mary hath chosen that good portion, which shall not be taken away from her.

THAT the salvation of the soul is the first and greatest of all human concerns, every man must acknowledge who feels that he has a soul; and in humility of mind to hear Jesus, is the only way of getting that acquaintance with the doctrine of salvation without which how can he be saved? While we fancy we are in no spiritual necessity, the things which concern salvation will not appear needful to us! A conviction that we are spiritually poor must precede our application for the true riches. The whole, says Christ, need not the physician, but those who are sick. Martha has been blamed, by incautious people, as possessing a carnal, worldly spirit; and as Mary Magdalene has been made the chief of all prostitutes, so has Martha of all the worldly-minded. Through her affectionate respect for our Lord and his disciples, and through that alone, she erred. There is not the slightest intimation that she was either worldly-minded or careless about her soul; nor was she at this time improperly employed, only so far as the abundance of her affection led her to make a greater provision than was necessary on the occasion. Nor are our Lord’s words to be understood as a reproof; they are a kind and tender expostulation, tending to vindicate the conduct of Mary. The utmost that can be said on the subject is, Martha was well employed, but Mary, on this occasion, better.

If we attend to the punctuation of the original text, the subject will appear more plain. I shall transcribe the text from Bengel’s own edition, Stutgardiae, 1734, 12mo. Luke 10:41, 42-5:41, ἀποκριθεις δε ειπεν

αυτη ο ιησους, μαρθα, μαρθα, μεριμνας και τυρβαζη περι πολλων δε εστι χρεια. μαρια δε την αγαθην μεριδα εξελεξατο, ητις ουκ αφαιρεθησεται απ' αυτης. "Then Jesus answered her, Martha, Martha, thou art anxiously careful and disturbed about many things; but one thing is necessary. But Mary hath chosen that good portion which shall not be taken away from her." I have shown, in my notes, that Martha was making a greater provision for her guests than was needful; that it was in consequence of this that she required her sister's help; that Jesus tenderly reproved her for her unnecessary anxiety and superabundant provision, and asserted that but one thing, call it course or dish, was necessary on the occasion, yet she had provided many; and that this needless provision was the cause of the anxiety and extra labor. Then, taking occasion, from the circumstances of the case, to vindicate Mary's conduct, and to direct his loving reproof more pointedly at Martha's heart, he adds, Mary hath chosen a good portion; that is, she avails herself of the present opportunity to hear my teaching, and inform herself in those things which are essential to the salvation of the soul. I cannot, therefore, order her to leave my teaching, to serve in what I know to be an unnecessary service, however kindly designed: for it would be as unjust to deprive her of this bread of life, after which she so earnestly hungers, as to deprive thee, or thy guests, of that measure of common food necessary to sustain life. All earthly portions are perishing: "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats, but God will destroy both it and then; but the work of the Lord abideth for ever;" her portion, therefore, shall not be taken away from her. This is my view of the whole subject; and all the terms in the original, not only countenance this meaning, but necessarily require it. The words, one thing is needful, on which we lay so much stress, are wanting in some of the most ancient MSS., and are omitted by some of the fathers, who quote all the rest of the passage: a plain proof that the meaning which we take out of them was not thought of in very ancient times; and in other MSS., versions, and fathers, there is an unusual variety of readings where even the thing, or something like it, is retained. Some have it thus; Martha, Martha, thou labourest much, and yet a little is sufficient, yea, one thing only. Others: And only one thing is required. Others: Thou art curious and embarrassed about many things, when that which is needful is very small. Others: But here there need only a few things. Others: But a few things, or one only, is necessary. Now these are the readings of almost all the ancient

versions; and we plainly perceive, by them, that what we term the one thing needful, is not understood by one of them as referring to the salvation of the soul, but to the provision THEN to be made. It would be easy to multiply authorities, but I spare both my own time and that of my reader. In short, I wonder how the present most exceptionable mode of interpretation ever obtained; as having no countenance in the text, ancient MSS. or versions, and as being false in itself; for even Christ himself could not say, that sitting at his feet, and hearing his word, was the ONE thing NEEDFUL. Repentance, faith, prayer, obedience, and a thousand other things are necessary to our salvation, besides merely hearing the doctrines of Christ, even with the humblest heart.

## CHAPTER 11

*Christ teaches his disciples to pray, 1-4. Shows the necessity of importunity in prayer, 5-13. Casts out a dumb demon, 14. The Jews ascribe this to the power of Beelzebub; our Lord vindicates his conduct, 15-23. Miserable state of the Jews, 24-26. Who they are that are truly blessed, 27, 28. He preaches to the people, 29-36. A Pharisee invites him to dine with him, who takes offense because he washed not his hands, 37, 38. Our Lord exposes their hypocrisy, 39-44. He denounces woes against the lawyers, 45-52. The scribes and Pharisees are greatly offended, and strive to entangle him in his words, 53, 54.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 11

**Verse 1. — 5. *Teach us to pray***— See the nature of prayer, with an ample explanation of the different parts of the Lord's Prayer, treated of in Matthew 6:5-16. The prayer related here by Luke is not precisely the same as that mentioned by Matthew; and indeed it is not likely that it was given at the same time. That in Matthew seems to have been given after the second passover; and this in Luke was given probably after the third passover, between the feasts of tabernacles, and the dedication. It is thus that Bishop Newcome places them in his Greek Harmony of the Gospels.

There are many variations in the MSS. in this prayer; but they seem to have proceeded principally from the desire of rendering this similar to that in Matthew. Attempts of this nature have given birth to multitudes of the various readings in the MSS. of the New Testament. It should be remarked, also, that there is no vestige of the doxology found in Matthew, in any copy of St. Luke's Gospel.

**Verse 4. *Lead us not into temptation, etc.***— Dr. Lightfoot believes that this petition is intended against the visible apparitions of the devil, and his actual obsessions; he thinks that the meaning is too much softened by our translation. Deliver us from evil, is certainly a very inadequate rendering of ῥυσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπο τοῦ πονηροῦ; literally, Deliver us from the wicked one.

**Verse 6. *In his journey is come***— Or, perhaps more literally, A friend of mine is come to me out of his way, *ἐξ ὁδοῦ*, which renders the case more urgent—a friend of mine, benighted, belated, and who has lost his way, is come unto me. This was a strong reason why he should have prompt relief.

**Verse 7. *My children are with me in bed***— Or, I and my children are in bed; this is Bishop PEARCE'S translation, and seems to some preferable to the common one. See a like form of speech in 1 Corinthians 16:11, and in Ephesians 3:18. However, we may conceive that he had his little children, *τα παῖδια*, in bed with him; and this heightened the difficulty of yielding to his neighbor's request.

But if he persevere knocking. (At si ille perseveraverit pulsans.) This sentence is added to the beginning of Luke 11:8, by the Armenian, Vulgate, four copies of the Itala, Ambrose, Augustin, and Bede. On these authorities (as I find it in no Greek MS.) I cannot insert it as a part of the original text; but it is necessarily implied; for, as Bishop Pearce justly observes, unless the man in the parable be represented as continuing to solicit his friend, he could not possibly be said to use importunity: once only to ask is not to be importunate.

**Verse 9. *And (or, therefore) I say unto you, Ask***— Be importunate with God, not so much to prevail on him to save you, as to get yourselves brought into a proper disposition to receive that mercy which he is ever disposed to give. He who is not importunate for the salvation of his soul does not feel the need of being saved; and were God to communicate his mercy to such they could not be expected to be grateful for it, as favors are only prized and esteemed in proportion to the sense men have of their necessity and importance. See this subject explained Matthew 7:7, 8.

**Verse 12. *Offer him a scorpion?***— *σκορπιον*. The Greek etymologists derive the name from *σκορπιζειν τον ιον*, scattering the poison. But is there any similitude between a scorpion and an egg, that the one might be given and taken in place of the other? We know there is the utmost similitude between some fish, especially those of the eel kind, and serpents: and that there are stones exactly similar to bread in their appearance; from which we may conjecture that our Lord intended to convey the same idea of similitude between an egg and a scorpion. Perhaps

the word scorpion here may be used for any kind of serpent that proceeds from an egg, or the word egg may be understood: the common snake is oviparous; it brings forth a number of eggs, out of which the young ones are hatched. If he asks an egg, will he, for one that might nourish him, give him that of a serpent. But Bochart states, that the body of a scorpion is like to an egg, especially if it be a white scorpion; which sort Nicander, Aelian, Avicenna, and others, maintain to be the first species. Nor do scorpions differ much in size from an egg in Judea, if we may credit what the monks of Messua say, that there are about Jerusalem, and through all Syria, great scorpions, etc. Hieroz. l. iv. cap. xxix. col. 641, edit. 1692. To this it may be said, there may be such a similitude, between a white scorpion and an egg, if the legs and tail of the former be taken away; but how there can be a resemblance any other way, I know not. It is, however, a fact, that the alligator and crocodile come from eggs; two of those lie now before me, scarcely so large as the egg of the goose, longer, but not so thick. Now, suppose reference be made to one such egg, in which the young crocodile is hatched, and is ready to burst from its enclosure, would any father give such an egg to a hungry child? No. If the child asked an egg, he would not, instead of a proper one, give him that of the crocodile or the alligator, in which the young serpent was hatched, and from which it was just ready to be separated.

**Verse 13. *The Holy Spirit***— Or, as several MSS. have it, πνευμα αγαθον, the good spirit. See on Matthew 7:11.

**Verse 14. *Casting out a devil***— See on Matthew 12:22.

**Verse 19. *Beelzebub***— See on Matthew 10:25.

**Verse 20. *Finger of God***— See on Exodus 8:19.

**Verse 24. *When the unclean spirit***— See on Matthew 12:43.

**Verse 27. *A certain woman-lifted up her voice, and said***— It was very natural for a woman, who was probably a mother, to exclaim thus. She thought that the happiness of the woman who was mother to such a son was great indeed; but our blessed Lord shows her that even the holy virgin could not be benefited by her merely being the mother of his human nature, and that they only were happy who carried Christ in their hearts. True



happiness is found in hearing the glad tidings of salvation by Christ Jesus, and keeping them in a holy heart, and practising them in an unblamable life.

**Verse 29. *This is an evil generation***— Or, This is a wicked race of men. See on Matthew 12:38-42.

**Verse 31. *The queen of the south, etc.***— Perhaps it would be better to translate, A queen of the south, and the men of this race, shall rise up in judgment, etc. See the note on Luke 11:7. The 32d verse {Luke 11:32} may be read in the same way.

**Verse 33. *No man, when he hath lighted, etc.***— See on Matthew 5:15. Our Lord intimates, that if he worked a miracle among such an obstinate people, who were determined to disbelieve every evidence of his Messiahship, he should act as a man who lighted a candle and then covered it with a bushel, which must prevent the accomplishment of the end for which it was lighted. See also on Mark 4:21, etc.

**Verse 34. *The light of the body is the eye***— Or, the eye is the lamp of the body. See on Matthew 6:22, etc.

The 35th and 36th verses are wanting in some MSS., and are variously read in others.

**Verse 36. *The whole shall be full of light***— Or, altogether enlightened; i.e. when the eye is perfect, it enlightens the whole body. Every object within the reach of the eye is as completely seen as if there was an eye in every part. So the eye is to every part of the body what the lamp is to every part of the house.

When the light of Christ dwells fully in the heart, it extends its influence to every thought, word, and action; and directs its possessor how he is to act in all places and circumstances. It is of the utmost importance to have the soul properly influenced by the wisdom that comes from above. The doctrine that is contrary to the Gospel may say, Ignorance is the mother of devotion; but Christ shows that there can be no devotion without heavenly light. Ignorance is the mother of superstition; but with this the heavenly light has nothing to do.

**Verse 37. *To dine***— ὅπως ἀριστησῇ. The word ἀριστεῖν dignifies the first eating of the day. The Jews made but two meals in the day; their

ἄριστον may be called their breakfast or their dinner, because it was both, and was but a slight meal. Their chief meal was their δεῖπνον or supper, after the heat of the day was over; and the same was the principal meal among the Greeks and Romans. Josephus, in his Life, says, sect. 54, that the legal hour of the ἄριστον, on the Sabbath, was the sixth hour, or at twelve o'clock at noon, as we call it. What the hour was on the other days of the week, he does not say; but probably it was much the same. Bishop PEARCE.

**Verse 38. *First washed***— See on Mark 7:2-4.

**Verse 39. *Ye make clean the outside***— See on Matthew 23:25.

**Verse 40. *Did not he that made that which is without***— Did not the maker of the dish form it so, both outwardly and inwardly, as to answer the purpose for which it was made? And can it answer this purpose without being clean in the inside as well as on the outside? God has made you such, both as to your bodies and souls, as he intended should show forth his praise; but can you think that the purpose of God can be accomplished by you while you only attend to external legal purifications, your hearts being full of rapine and wickedness? How unthinking are you to imagine that God can be pleased with this outward purification, when all within is unholy!

**Verse 41. *Give alms of such things as ye have***— Meaning either what was within the dishes spoken of before; or what was within their houses or power: or what they had at hand, for so τὰ ἐνόντα is used by the purest Greek writers. Cease from rapine: far from spoiling the poor by wicked exactions, rather give them alms of every thing you possess; and when a part of every thing you have is sincerely consecrated to God for the use of the poor, then all that remains will be clean unto you; you will have the blessing of God in your basket and store, and every thing will be sanctified to you. These verses are very difficult, and are variously translated and interpreted by critics and divines. I have given what I believe to be our Lord's meaning, in the preceding paraphrase. For a description of the rapine, etc., of the Pharisees, see on Matthew 23:25.

**Verse 42. *Ye tithe mint and rue***— See on Matthew 23:23.

**Verse 43. *Ye love the uppermost seats***— Every one of them affected to be a ruler in the synagogues. See on Matthew 23:5.

**Verse 44. *Ye are as graves which appear not***— In Matthew 23:27, our Lord tells them that they exactly resembled white-washed tombs: they had no fairness but on the outside: (see the note there:) but here he says they are like hidden tombs, graves which were not distinguished by any outward decorations, and were not elevated above the ground, so that those who walked over them did not consider what corruption was within; so they, under the veil of hypocrisy, covered their iniquities, so that those who had any intercourse or connection with them did not perceive what accomplished knaves they had to do with.

**Verse 45. *Thou reproachest as***— He alone who searches the heart could unmask these hypocrites; and he did it so effectually that their own consciences acknowledged the guilt, and re-echoed their own reproach.

**Verse 46. *Ye lade men with burdens***— By insisting on the observance of the traditions of the elders, to which it appears, by the way, they paid no great attention themselves. See on Matthew 23:4.

**Verse 47. *Ye build the sepulchres***— That is, ye rebuild and beautify them. See on Matthew 23:29.

**Verse 48. *Truly ye bear witness***— Ye acknowledge that those of old who killed the prophets were your fathers, and ye are about to show, by your conduct towards me and my apostles, that ye are not degenerated, that ye are as capable of murdering a prophet now, as they were of old.

**Verse 49. *The wisdom of God***— These seem to be Luke's words, and to mean that Jesus, the wisdom of God, (as he is called, 1 Corinthians 1:24,) added the words which follow here, on that occasion: and this interpretation of the words is agreeable to that of Matthew, who makes Jesus speak in his own person: Wherefore behold, I send you prophets, etc., Matthew 23:34. See the note there, and see Bishop PEARCE.

**Verse 50. *That the blood***— That the particle *ὅτι* may be translated so that, pointing out the event only, not the design or intention, Bishop Pearce has well shown in his note on this place, where he refers to a like

use of the word in Luke 9:45; 14:10; John 10:17; Romans 5:20; 11:11; 1 Corinthians 1:15, 31, etc.

**Verse 51. *From the blood of Abel***— See this subject explained at large on Matthew 23:34.

**Required**— *εκζητηθῆσεται* may be translated either by the word visited or revenged, and the latter word evidently conveys the meaning of our Lord. They are here represented as having this blood among them; and it is intimated that God will come by and by to require it, and to inquire how it was shed, and to punish those who shed it.

**Verse 52. *Ye have taken away the key of knowledge***— By your traditions ye have taken away the true method of interpreting the prophecies: ye have given a wrong meaning to those scriptures which speak of the kingdom of the Messiah, and the people are thereby hindered from entering into it. See on Matthew 23:13.

**Verse 53. *Began to urge him vehemently***— *δεινῶς ἐνεχεῖν*, They began to be furious. They found themselves completely unmasked in the presence of a vast concourse of people. See Luke 12:1, (for we can not suppose that all this conversation passed while Christ was at meat in the Pharisee's house, as Matthew, Matthew 23:25, shows that these words were spoken on another occasion.) They therefore questioned him on a variety of points, and hoped, by the multitude and impertinence of their questions, to puzzle or irritate him, so as to induce him to speak rashly, (for this is the import of the word *αποστοματίζειν*,) that they might find some subject of accusation against him. See Wetstein and Kypke.

A MINISTER of the Gospel of God should, above all men, be continent of his tongue; his enemies, in certain cases, will crowd question upon question, in order so to puzzle and confound him that he may speak unadvisedly with his lips, and thus prejudice the truth he was laboring to promote and defend. The following is a good prayer, which all who are called to defend or proclaim the truths of the Gospel may confidently offer to their God. "Let thy wisdom and light, O Lord, disperse their artifice and my darkness! Cast the bright beams of thy light upon those who have to defend themselves against subtle and deceitful men! Raise and animate their hearts, that they may not be wanting to the cause of truth. Guide

their tongue, that they may not be deficient in prudence, nor expose thy truth by any indiscretions or unseasonable transports of zeal. Let meekness, gentleness, and longsuffering influence and direct their hearts; and may they ever feel the full weight of that truth: The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God!" The following advice of one of the ancients is good: **στηθι εδαιος ως ακμων τυπτομενος, καλου γαρ αθλητου δερεσθαι και νικαν.** "Stand thou firm as a beaten anvil: for it is the part of a good soldier to be flayed alive, and yet conquer."

## CHAPTER 12

*Christ preaches to his disciples against hypocrisy; and against timidity in publishing the Gospel, 1-5. Excites them to have confidence in Divine providence, 6, 7. Warns them against denying him, or betraying his cause, 8, 9. Of the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, 10. Promises direction and support in persecution, 11, 12. Warns the people against covetousness, 13-15. Parable of the rich man who pulled down his granaries to build greater, 16-21. Cautions against carking cares and anxieties, 22-32. The necessity of living to God, and in reference to eternity, 33-40. At the request of Peter, he farther explains the preceding discourse, 41-48. The effects that should be produced by the preaching of the Gospel, 49-53. The signs of the times, 54-57. The necessity of being prepared to appear before the judgment seat of God, 58, 59.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 12

**Verse 1.** *An innumerable multitude of people*— των μυριαδων του οχλου, myriads of people. A myriad is ten thousand, and myriads must, at the very lowest, mean twenty thousand. But the word is often used to signify a crowd or multitude which cannot be readily numbered. There was doubtless a vast crowd assembled on this occasion, and many of them were deeply instructed by the very important discourse which our Lord delivered.

*Leaven of the Pharisees*— See Matthew 16:1-12.

*Which is hypocrisy.*— These words are supposed by some to be an addition to the text, because it does not appear that it is their hypocrisy which Christ alludes to, but their false doctrines. They had, however, a large proportion of both.

**Verse 2.** *There is nothing covered*— See the notes on Matthew 5:15; 10:26, 27; Mark 4:22.

**Verse 4.** *Kill the body*— See on Matthew 10:28.

**Verse 5. *Fear him***— Even the friends of God are commanded to fear God, as a being who has authority to send both body and soul into hell. Therefore it is proper even for the most holy persons to maintain a fear of God, as the punisher of all unrighteousness. A man has but one life to lose, and one soul to save; and it is madness to sacrifice the salvation of the soul to the preservation of the life.

**Verse 6. *Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings?***— See this explained on Matthew 10:29, from which place we learn that two sparrows were sold for one farthing, and here; that five were sold for two farthings: thus we find a certain proportion—for one farthing you could get but two, while for two farthings you could get five.

**Verse 7. *Fear not therefore***— Want of faith in the providence and goodness of God is the source of all human inquietudes and fears. He has undertaken to save and defend those to the uttermost who trust in him. His wisdom cannot be surprised, his power cannot be forced, his love cannot forget itself. Man distrusts God, and fears that he is forgotten by him, because he judges of God by himself; and he knows that he is apt to forget his Maker, and be unfaithful to him. See on Matthew 10:29-31.

**Verse 8. *Shall confess***— See on Matthew 10:32, 33.

**Verse 10. *Him that blasphemeth***— See the sin against the Holy Ghost explained, Matthew 12:32.

**Verse 11. *Unto magistrates and powers***— See Matthew 10:17-20.

***Take ye no thought***— See Matthew 6:25; 10:19.

**Verse 13. *Speak to my brother, that he divide***— Among the Jews, the children had the inheritance of their fathers divided among them; the eldest had a double portion, but all the rest had equal parts. It is likely the person complained of in the text was the elder brother; and he wished to keep the whole to himself—a case which is far from being uncommon. The spirit of covetousness cancels all bonds and obligations, makes wrong right, and cares nothing for father or brother.

**Verse 14. *A judge***— Without some judgment given in the case, no division could be made; therefore Jesus added the word judge. PEARCE. A minister of Christ ought not to concern himself with secular affairs, any farther than

charity and the order of discipline require it. Our Lord could have decided this difference in a moment; but the example of a perfect disengagement from worldly things was more necessary for the ministers of his Church than that of a charity applying itself to temporal concerns. He who preaches salvation to all should never make himself a party man; otherwise he loses the confidence, and consequently the opportunity of doing good to the party against whom he decides. Better to leave all these things to the civil magistrate, unless where a lawsuit may be prevented, and the matter decided to the satisfaction or acquiescence of both parties.

**Verse 15. *Beware of covetousness***— Or rather, Beware of all inordinate desires. I add *πάσης*, all, on the authority of ABDKLM-Q, twenty-three others, both the Syriac, all the Persic, all the Arabic, Coptic, AEthiopic, Armenian, Vulgate, all the Itala, and several of the primitive fathers.

Inordinate desires. *πλεονεξίας*, from *πλειον*, more, and *εχειν*, to have; the desire to have more and more, let a person possess whatever he may. Such a disposition of mind is never satisfied; for, as soon as one object is gained, the heart goes out after another.

***Consisteth not in the abundance***— That is, dependeth not on the abundance. It is not superfluities that support man's life, but necessities. What is necessary, God gives liberally; what is superfluous, he has not promised. Nor can a man's life be preserved by the abundance of his possessions: to prove this he spoke the following parable.

**Verse 16. *The ground of a certain rich man, etc.***— He had generally what is called good luck in his farm, and this was a remarkably plentiful year.

**Verse 17. *He thought within himself***— Began to be puzzled in consequence of the increase of his goods. Riches, though ever so well acquired, produce nothing but vexation and embarrassment.

**Verse 18. *I will pull down, etc.***— The rich are full of designs concerning this life, but in general take no thought about eternity till the time that their goods and their lives are both taken away.

**Verse 19. *Soul, thou hast much goods***— Great possessions are generally accompanied with pride, idleness, and luxury; and these are the greatest



enemies to salvation. Moderate poverty, as one justly observes, is a great talent in order to salvation; but it is one which nobody desires.

***Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.***— This was exactly the creed of the ancient Atheists and Epicureans. Ede, bibe, lude; post mortem nulla voluptas. What a wretched portion for an immortal spirit! and yet those who know not God have no other, and many of them not even this.

**Verse 20. *Thou fool!***— To imagine that a man's comfort and peace can depend upon temporal things; or to suppose that these can satisfy the wishes of an immortal spirit!

***This night***— How awful was this saying! He had just made the necessary arrangements for the gratification of his sensual appetites; and, in the very night in which he had finally settled all his plans, his soul was called into the eternal world! What a dreadful awakening of a soul, long asleep in sin! He is now hurried into the presence of his Maker; none of his worldly goods can accompany him, and he has not a particle of heavenly treasure! There is a passage much like this in the book of Ecclesiasticus, 11:18, 19. There is that waxeth rich by his wariness and pinching, and this is the portion of his reward: Whereas he saith, I have found rest, and now will eat continually of my goods; and yet he knoweth not what time shall come upon him; and that he must leave those things to others, and die. We may easily see whence the above is borrowed.

**Verse 21. *So is he***— That is, thus will it be. This is not an individual case; all who make this life their portion, and who are destitute of the peace and salvation of God, shall, sooner or later, be surprised in the same way.

***Layeth up treasure for himself***— This is the essential characteristic of a covetous man: he desires riches; he gets them; he lays them up, not for the necessary uses to which they might be devoted, but for himself; to please himself, and to gratify his avaricious soul. Such a person is commonly called a miser, i.e. literally, a wretched, miserable man.

**Verse 22. *Take no thought***— Be not anxiously careful. See on Matthew 6:25.

**Verse 25. *To his stature one cubit?***— See on Matthew 6:27.

**Verse 28. *Into the oven***— See the note on Matthew 6:30.

**Verse 29. *Neither be ye of doubtful mind.***— Or, in anxious suspense, **μη μετεωριζεσθε**. Raphelius gives several examples to prove that the meaning of the word is, to have the mind agitated with useless thoughts, and vain imaginations concerning food, raiment, and riches, accompanied with perpetual uncertainty.

**Verse 30. *The nations of the world seek after***— Or, earnestly seek, **επιζητει** from **επι** above, over, and **ζητεω**, I seek; to seek one thing after another, to be continually and eagerly coveting. This is the employment of the nations of this world, utterly regardless of God and eternity! It is the essence of heathenism to live only for this life; and it is the property of Christianity to lead men to live here in reference to another and better world. Reader! how art thou living?

Dr. Lightfoot observes on this place, that **κοσμος**, the world, and **αιων**, world or age, have a meaning in the sacred writings which they have not in profane authors. **αιων** has relation to the Jewish ages, and **κοσμος** to the ages that are not Jewish: hence, by **συντελεια του αιωνος**, Matthew 24:3, is meant the end of the Jewish age or world: and **προ χρονων αιωνιων**, Titus 1:2, means before the Jewish world began; and hence it is that the term world is very often, in the New Testament, to be understood only of the Gentiles.

**Verse 32. *Fear not, little flock***— Or, very little flock, **το μικρον ποιμνιον**. This is what some term a double diminutive, and, literally translated, is, little little flock. Though this refers solely to the apostles and first believers, of whom it was literally true, yet we may say that the number of genuine believers has been, and is still, small, in comparison of heathens and false Christians.

***It is your Father's good pleasure***— **ευδοκησεν**, It hath pleased, etc., though this tense joined with an infinitive has often the force of the present. Our Lord intimated, God has already given you that kingdom which consists in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and has undertaken to protect and save you to the uttermost; therefore, fear not; the smallness of your number cannot hurt you, for omnipotence itself has undertaken your cause.

**Verse 33. *Sell that ye have***— Dispose of your goods. Be not like the foolish man already mentioned, who laid up the produce of his fields, without permitting the poor to partake of God's bounty: turn the fruits of your fields (which are beyond what you need for your own support) into money, and give it in alms; and the treasure thus laid out, shall be as laid up for yourselves and families in heaven. This purse shall not grow old, and this treasure shall not decay. Ye shall by and by find both the place where you laid up the treasure, and the treasure itself in the place; for he who hath pity on the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and he may rest assured, that whatever, for Christ's sake, he thus lays out, it will be paid him again.

**Verse 34. *Where your treasure is***— Men fix their hearts on their treasures, and often resort to the place where they have deposited them, to see that all is safe and secure. Let God be the treasure of your soul, and let your heart go frequently to the place where his honor dwelleth. There is a curious parallel passage to this in Plautus, quoted by Bishop Pearce on Matthew 6:21. *Nam ego sum hic; animus domi est, sc. cum argento meo.* "I am here; but my heart is at home, i.e. with my money."

**Verse 35. *Let your loins***— Be active, diligent, determined ready; let all hinderances be removed out of the way; and let the candle of the Lord be always found burning brightly in your hand. See on Luke 12:37.

**Verse 36. *That wait for their lord***— See the notes on Matthew 25:1, etc.

***The wedding***— How the Jewish weddings were celebrated, see in the notes on Matthew 8:12; 22:13.

**Verse 37. *He shall gird himself***— Alluding to the long garments which were worn in the eastern countries; and which, in travelling and serving, were tucked up in their belts. That those among the Romans who waited on the company at table were girded, and had their clothes tucked up, appears from what Horace says, *Sat. b. vi. l. 107: Veluti SUCCINCTUS cursitat HOSPES*, He runs about like a girded waiter. The host himself often performed this office. And *ibid. viii. 10: Puer alle cinctus*; and that the same custom prevailed among the Jews appears from John 13:4, 5, and Luke 17:8. From this verse we may gather likewise, that it was the custom of those days, as it was, not long since, among us, for the bridegroom, at

the wedding supper, to wait as a servant upon the company. See Bishop PEARCE.

**Verse 38. *If he shall come in the second watch***— See the note on Matthew 14:25.

**Verse 40. *Be ye therefore ready also***— It is pretty evident that what is related here, from verse 35 to 49, {Luke 12:35-49} was spoken by our Lord at another time. See Matthew 24:42, etc., and the notes there.

**Verse 42. *Faithful and wise steward***— See on Matthew 24:45; where the several parts of the steward's office are mentioned and explained. Those appear to have been stewards among the Jews, whose business it was to provide all the members of a family, not only with food, but with raiment.

**Verse 45. *Begin to beat, etc.***— See the different parts of this bad minister's conduct pointed out on Matthew 24:48, 49.

**Verse 46. *With the unbelievers.***— Or, rather, the unfaithful; τῶν σπιστῶν. Persons who had the light and knowledge of God's word, but made an improper use of the privileges they received. The persons mentioned here differ widely from unbelievers or infidels, viz. those who were in a state of heathenism, because they had not the revelation of the Most High: the latter knew not the will of God, Luke 12:48, and, though they acted against it, did not do it in obstinacy; the former knew that will, and daringly opposed it. They were unfaithful, and therefore heavily punished.

**Verse 47. *Shall be beaten with many stripes.***— Criminals among the Jews could not be beaten with more than forty stripes; and as this was the sum of the severity to which a whipping could extend, it may be all that our Lord here means. But, in some cases, a man was adjudged to receive fourscore stripes! How could this be, when the law had decreed only forty? Answer: By doubling the crime. He received forty for each crime; if he were guilty of two offenses, he might receive fourscore. See Lightfoot.

**Verse 48. *Shall be beaten with few***— For petty offenses the Jews in many cases inflicted so few as four, five, and six stripes. See examples in Lightfoot.

From this and the preceding verse we find that it is a crime to be ignorant of God's will; because to every one God has given less or more of the means of instruction. Those who have had much light, or the opportunity of receiving much, and have not improved it to their own salvation, and the good of others, shall have punishment proportioned to the light they have abused. On the other hand, those who have had little light, and few means of improvement, shall have few stripes, shall be punished only for the abuse of the knowledge they possessed. See at the end of the chapter. {Luke 12:59}

**Verse 49. *I am come to send fire***— See this subject largely explained on Matthew 10:34, etc. From the connection in which these words stand, both in this place and in Matthew, it appears as if our Lord intended by the word fire, not only the consuming influence of the Roman sword, but also the influence of his own Spirit in the destruction of sin. In both these senses this fire was already kindled: as yet, however, it appeared but as a spark, but was soon to break out into an all-consuming flame.

**Verse 50. *But I have a baptism***— The fire, though already kindled, cannot burn up till after the Jews have put me to death: then the Roman sword shall come, and the Spirit of judgment, burning, and purification shall be poured out.

**Verse 51. *To give peace***— See Matthew 10:34.

**Verse 52. *Five in one house divided***— See on Matthew 10:35, 36.

**Verse 54. *A cloud rise***— See on Matthew 16:2, 3.

**Verse 56. *This time?***— Can ye not discover from the writings of the prophets, and from the events which now take place, that this is the time of the Messiah, and that I am the very person foretold by them?

**Verse 57. *And why-judge ye***— Even without the express declarations of the prophets, ye might, from what ye see and hear yourselves, discern that God has now visited his people in such a manner as he never did before.

**Verse 58. *When thou goest with thine adversary***— This and the next verse are a part of our Lord's sermon upon the mount. See them explained Matthew 5:25, 26. St. Luke is very particular in collecting and relating every word and action of our blessed Lord, but seldom gives them in the

order of time in which they were spoken or done. See the Preface to this Gospel.

**Give diligence**— **δος ερασιαν**, Give labor, do every thing in thy power to get free before a suit commences.

**The officer**— **πρακτωρ** properly signifies such an officer as was appointed to levy the fines imposed by the law for a violation of any of its precepts. See Kypke.

**Verse 59. Till thou hast paid the very last mite.**— And when can this be, if we understand the text spiritually? Can weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, pay to Divine justice the debt a sinner has contracted? This is impossible: let him who readeth understand.

THE subject of the 47th and 48th verses {Luke 12:47, 48} has been greatly misunderstood, and has been used in a very dangerous manner. Many have thought that their ignorance of Divine things would be a sufficient excuse for their crimes; and, that they might have but few stripes, they voluntarily continued in ignorance. But such persons should know that God will judge them for the knowledge they might have received, but refused to acquire. No criminal is excused because he has been ignorant of the laws of his country, and so transgressed them, when it can be proved that those very laws have been published throughout the land. Much knowledge is a dangerous thing if it be not improved; as this will greatly aggravate the condemnation of its possessor. Nor will it avail a person, in the land of light and information, to be ignorant, as he shall be judged for what he might have known; and, perhaps, in this case, the punishment of this voluntarily ignorant man will be even greater than that of the more enlightened; because his crimes are aggravated by this consideration, that he refused to have the light, that he might neither be obliged to walk in the light, nor account for the possession of it. So we find that the plea of ignorance is a mere refuge of lies, and none can plead it who has the book of God within his reach, and lives in a country blessed with the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

## CHAPTER 13

*Christ preaches the necessity of repentance, from the punishment of the Galileans massacred by Pilate, 1-3. And by the death of those on whom the tower in Siloam fell, 4, 5. The parable of the barren fig tree, 6-29. Christ cures a woman who had been afflicted eighteen years, 10-13. The ruler of the synagogue is incensed and is reproved by our Lord, 14-17. The parable of the mustard seed, 18, 19; of the leaven, 20-21. He journeys towards Jerusalem, and preaches, 22. The question, Are there few saved? and our Lords answer, with the discourse thereon, 23-30. He is informed that Herod purposes to kill him, 31, 32. Predicts his own death at Jerusalem, and denounces judgments on that impenitent city, 33-35.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 13

**Verse 1. *At that season***— At what time this happened is not easy to determine; but it appears that it was now a piece of news which was told to Christ and his disciples for the first time.

***Whose blood Pilate had mingled***— This piece of history is not recorded (as far as I can find) by Josephus: however, he states that the Galileans were the most seditious people in the land: they belonged properly to Herod's jurisdiction; but, as they kept the great feasts at Jerusalem, they probably, by their tumultuous behavior at some one of them, gave Pilate, who was a mortal enemy to Herod, a pretext to fall upon and slay many of them; and thus, perhaps, sacrifice the people to the resentment he had against the prince. Archelaus is represented by Josephus as sending his soldiers into the temple, and slaying 3000 men while they were employed in offering sacrifices. Josephus, War, b. ii. c. 1, s. 3, and ii. c. 5. Some suppose that this refers to the followers of Judas Gaulonites, (see Acts 5:37,) who would not acknowledge the Roman government, a number of whom Pilate surrounded and slew, while they were sacrificing in the temple. See Josephus, Antiq. lib. 18: but this is not very certain.

**Verse 4. *The tower in Siloam***— This tower was probably built over one of the porticoes near the pool, which is mentioned John 9:7. See also Nehemiah 3:15.

Debtors, *οφειλεται*, a Jewish phrase for sinners. Persons professing to be under the law are bound by the law to be obedient to all its precepts; those who obey not are reckoned debtors to the law, or rather to that Divine justice from which the law came. A different word is used when speaking of the Galileans: they are termed *αμαρτωλοι*, as this word is often used to signify heathens; see the notes on Luke 7:37; it is probably used here in nearly a similar sense. “Do ye who live in Jerusalem, and who consider your selves peculiarly attached to the law, and under the strongest obligations to obey it—do ye think that those Galileans were more heathenish than the rest of the Galileans, because they suffered such things? No. It was not on this account that they perished: both these cases exhibit a specimen of the manner in which ye shall all perish, if ye do not speedily repent, and turn to God.”

**Verse 5. *Ye shall all likewise perish.***— *ὡσαυτως, ομοιως*, In a like way, in the same manner. This prediction of our Lord was literally fulfilled. When the city was taken by the Romans, multitudes of the priests, etc., who were going on with their sacrifices, were slain, and their blood mingled with the blood of their victims; and multitudes were buried under the ruins of the walls, houses, and temple. See Josephus, War, b. vi. ch. iv., v., vi.; and see the notes on Matthew 24.

It is very wrong to suppose that those who suffer by the sword, or by natural accidents, are the most culpable before God. An adequate punishment for sin cannot be inflicted in this world: what God does here, in this way, is in general: 1st, through mercy, to alarm others; 2, to show his hatred to sin; 3, to preserve in men’s minds a proper sense of his providence and justice; and 4, to give sinners, in one or two particular instances, a general specimen of the punishment that awaits all the perseveringly impenitent.

**Verse 6. *A certain man***— Many meanings are given to this parable, and divines may abound in them; the sense which our Lord designed to convey by it appears to be the following:-



1. A person, **τις**, God Almighty. 2. Had a fig tree, the Jewish Church. 3. Planted in his vineyard-established in the land of Judea. 4. He came seeking fruit-he required that the Jewish people should walk in righteousness, in proportion to the spiritual culture he bestowed on them. 5. The vine-dresser-the Lord Jesus, for God hath committed all judgment to the Son, John 5:22. 6. Cut it down-let the Roman sword be unsheathed against it. 7. Let it alone-Christ is represented as intercessor for sinners, for whose sake the day of their probation is often lengthened; during which time he is constantly employed in doing every thing that has a tendency to promote their salvation. 8. Thou shalt cut it down-a time will come, that those who have not turned at God's invitations and reproofs shall be cut off, and numbered with the transgressors.

**Verse 7. *Behold these three years***— From this circumstance in the parable, it may be reasonably concluded that Jesus had been, at the time of saying this, exercising his ministry for three years past; and, from what is said in Luke 13:8, of letting it alone this year also, it may be concluded likewise that this parable was spoken about a year before Christ's crucifixion; and, if both these conclusions are reasonable, we may thence infer that this parable was not spoken at the time which appears to be assigned to it, and that the whole time of Christ's public ministry was about four years. See Bishop Pearce. But it has already been remarked that St. Luke never studies chronological arrangement. See the Preface to this Gospel.

***Why cumbereth it the ground?***— Or, in other words, Why should the ground be also useless? The tree itself brings forth no fruit; let it be cut down that a more profitable one may be planted in its place. Cut it down. The Codex Bezae has added here, **φερε την αξινην**, Bring the axe and cut it down. If this reading be genuine, it is doubtless an allusion to Matthew 3:10: Now the axe lieth at the root of the trees. If the writer has added it on his own authority, he probably referred to the place above mentioned. See the note on the above text.

There is something very like this in the **γεωπονικα**, or Deuteronomy Revelation Rustica of the ancient Greek writers on agriculture. I refer to cap. 83 of lib. x., p. 773; edit. Niclas, entitled, **δενδρον ακαρπον καρποφορειν**, How to make a barren tree fruitful. Having girded yourself, and tied up your garments, take a bipen or axe, and with an angry mind

approach the tree as if about to cut it down. Then let some person come forward and deprecate the cutting down of the tree, making himself responsible for its future fertility. Then, seem to be appeased, and so spare the tree, and afterwards it will yield fruit in abundance. “Bean straw (manure of that material,) scattered about the roots of the tree, will make it fruitful.” That a similar superstition prevailed among the Asiatics, Michaelis proves from the Cosmographer Ibn Alvardi, who prescribes the following as the mode to render a sterile palm tree fruitful: “The owner, armed with an axe, having an attendant with him, approaches the tree, and says, I must cut this tree down, because it is unfruitful. Let it alone, I beseech thee, says the other, and this year it will bring forth fruit. The owner immediately strikes it thrice with the back of his axe; but the other preventing him says, I beseech thee to spare it, and I will be answerable for its fertility. Then the tree becomes abundantly fruitful.” Does not our Lord refer to such a custom?

**Verse 11. *A woman which had a spirit of infirmity***— Relative to this subject three things may be considered:-

I. The woman’s infirmity.

II. Her cure. And

III. The conduct of the ruler of the synagogue on the occasion.

I. The woman’s infirmity.

1. What was its origin? SIN. Had this never entered into the world, there had not been either pain, distortion, or death.

2. Who was the agent in it? Satan; Luke 13:16. God has often permitted demons to act on and in the bodies of men and women; and it is not improbable that the principal part of unaccountable and inexplicable disorders still come from the same source.

3. What was the nature of this infirmity? She was bowed together, bent down to the earth, a situation equally painful and humiliating; the violence of which she could not support, and the shame of which she could not conceal.

4. What was the duration of this infirmity? Eighteen years. A long time to be under the constant and peculiar influence of the devil.

What was the effect of this infirmity? The woman was so bowed together that she could in no case stand straight, or look toward heaven.

## II. The woman's cure.

1. Jesus saw her, Luke 13:12. Notwithstanding her infirmity was great, painful, and shameful, she took care to attend the synagogue. While she hoped for help from God, she saw it was her duty to wait in the appointed way, in order to receive it. Jesus saw her distress, and the desire she had both to worship her Maker and to get her health restored, and his eye affected his heart.

2. He called her to him. Her heart and her distress spoke loudly, though her lips were silent; and, as she was thus calling for help, Jesus calls her to himself that she may receive help.

3. Jesus laid his hands on her. The hand of his holiness terrifies, and the hand of his power expels, the demon. Ordinances, however excellent, will be of no avail to a sinner, unless he apprehend Christ in them.

4. Immediately she was made straight, Luke 13:13. This cure was-1. A speedy one-it was done in an instant. 2. It was a perfect one-she was made completely whole. 3. It was a public one-there were many to attest and render it credible. 4. It was a stable and permanent one-she was loosed, for ever loosed from her infirmity. 5. Her soul partook of the good done to her body-she glorified God. As she knew before that it was Satan who had bound her, she knew also that it was God only that could loose her; and now, feeling that she is loosed, she gives God that honor which is due to his name.

## III. The conduct of the ruler of the synagogue on the occasion.

1. He answered with indignation, Luke 13:14. It would seem as if the demon who had left the woman's body had got into his heart. It is not an infrequent case to find a person filled with rage and madness, while beholding the effects of Christ's power upon others. Perhaps, like this ruler, he pretends zeal and concern for the honor of religion: "These preachings, prayer meetings, convictions, conversions, etc., are not carried

on in his way, and therefore they cannot be of God.” Let such take care, lest, while denying the operation of God’s hand, they be given up to demonic influence.

2. He endeavors to prevent others from receiving the kind help of the blessed Jesus—He said unto the people, etc., Luke 13:14. Men of this character who have extensive influence over the poor, etc., do immense harm: they often hinder them from hearing that word which is able to save their souls. But for this also they must stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Reader, hast thou ever acted in this way?

3. Jesus retorts his condemnation with peculiar force; Luke 13:15, 16. Thou hypocrite to pretend zeal for God’s glory, when it is only the workings of thy malicious, unfeeling, and uncharitable heart. Wouldst thou not even take thy ass to water upon the Sabbath day? And wouldst thou deprive a daughter of Abraham (one of thy own nation and religion) of the mercy and goodness of God upon the Sabbath? Was not the Sabbath instituted for the benefit of man?

4. His adversaries were ashamed, Luke 13:17. The mask of their hypocrisy, the only covering they had, is taken away; and now they are exposed to the just censure of that multitude whom they deceived, and from whom they expected continual applause.

5. His indignation and uncharitable censure, not only turn to his own confusion, but are made the instruments of the edification of the multitude—they rejoiced at all the glorious things which he did. Thus, O Lord! the wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder thereof thou shalt restrain.

A preacher will know how to apply this subject to general edification.

**Verse 18. — 19. *The kingdom-is like a grain of mustard seed***— See on Matthew 13:31.

**Verse 21. *Like leaven***— See this explained, Matthew 13:33.

**Verse 22. *Journeying toward Jerusalem.***— Luke represents all that is said, from Luke 9:51, as having been done and spoken while Christ was on his last journey to Jerusalem. See the notes on Luke 9:51, and Luke 12:58, and see the Preface.

**Verse 23. *Are there few that be saved?***— A question either of impertinence or curiosity, the answer to which can profit no man. The grand question is, Can I be saved? Yes. How? Strive earnestly to enter in through the strait gate-*αγωνιζεσθε*, agonize-exert every power of body and soul-let your salvation be the grand business of your whole life.

**Verse 24. *Many-will seek***— They seek-wish and desire; but they do not strive; therefore, because they will not agonize-will not be in earnest, they shall not get in. See this subject more particularly explained on Matthew 7:13, 14.

**Verse 25. *And hath shut to the door***— See the notes on Matthew 7:22, 23, and 25:10-41.

**Verse 28. *Abraham, and Isaac, etc.***— See on Matthew 8:12, where the figures and allusions made use of here are particularly explained.

**Verse 29. *They shall come***— That is, the Gentiles, in every part of the world, shall receive the Gospel of the grace of God, when the Jews shall have rejected it.

**Verse 30. *There are last which shall be first***— See on Matthew 19:30.

**Verse 31. *Depart hence, etc.***— It is probable that the place from which Christ was desired to depart was Galilee or Perea; for beyond this Herod had no jurisdiction. It can scarcely mean Jerusalem, though it appears from Luke 23:7, that Herod Antipas was there at the time of our Lord's crucifixion.

***Herod will kill thee.***— Lactantius says that this Herod was the person who chiefly instigated the Jewish rulers to put our Lord to death: Tum Pontius, et illorum clamoribus, et Herodis tetrarchae instigatione, metuentis ne regno pelleretur, victus est:-fearing lest himself should be expelled from the kingdom, if Christ should be permitted to set up his. See LACT. Inst. Div. lib. iv. c. xviii., and Bishop Pearce on Luke 23:7.

**Verse 32. *Tell that fox***— Herod was a very vicious prince, and lived in public incest with his sister-in-law, Mark 6:17: if our Lord meant him here, it is hard to say why the character of fox, which implies cunning, design, and artifice, to hide evil intentions, should be attributed to him, who never seemed studious to conceal his vices. But we may suppose that Christ,

who knew his heart, saw that he covered his desire for the destruction of our Lord, under the pretense of zeal for the law and welfare of the Jewish people. A fox among the Jews appears to have been the emblem of a wicked ruler, who united cunning with cruelty, and was always plotting how he might aggrandize himself by spoiling the people. See a quotation in Schoettgen.

The following observation from the judicious Bishop Pearce deserves attention. “It is not certain,” says he, “that Jesus meant Herod here; he might only have intended to call that man so, from whom the advice of departing came, (whether from the speaker himself, or the person who sent him,) for it is probable, that the advice was given craftily, and with design to frighten Jesus, and, make him go from that place.”

**To-day and to-morrow**— I am to work miracles for two days more, and on the third day I shall be put to death. But it is probable that this phrase only means, that he had but a short time to live, without specifying its duration.

**Perfected.**— Or finished, **τελειουμαι**. I shall then have accomplished the purpose for which I came into the world, leaving nothing undone which the counsel of God designed me to complete. Hence, in reference to our Lord, the word implies his dying; as the plan of human redemption was not finished, till he bowed his head and gave up the ghost on the cross: see John 19:30, where the same word is used. It is used also in reference to Christ’s death, Hebrews 2:10; 5:9; see also Acts 20:24, and Hebrews 12:23. The word finish, etc., is used in the same sense both by the Greeks and Latins. See **ΚΥΡΚΕ**.

**Verse 33. I must walk, etc.**— I must continue to work miracles and teach for a short time yet, and then I shall die in Jerusalem: therefore I cannot depart, according to the advice given me, (Luke 13:31,) nor can a hair of my head fall to the ground till my work be all done.

**To-day and to-morrow, etc.**— Kypke contends that the proper translation of the original is, I must walk to-day and to-morrow IN THE NEIGHBORING COASTS: and that **εχομενη** is often understood in this way: see Mark 1:38, and his notes there. That Christ was now in the jurisdiction of Herod, as he supposes, is evident from Luke 13:31; that he was on his last journey

to Jerusalem, Luke 9:51; that he had just passed through Samaria, Luke 9:52, 56; that as Samaria and Judea were under the Roman procurator, and Perea was subject to Herod Antipas, therefore he concludes that Christ was at this time in Perea; which agrees with Matthew 19:1, and Mark 10:1, and Luke 17:11. He thinks, if the words be not understood in this way, they are contrary to Luke 13:32, which says that on it Christ is to die, while this says he is to live and act.

***Perish out of Jerusalem.***— A man who professes to be a prophet can be tried on that ground only by the grand Sanhedrin, which always resides at Jerusalem; and as the Jews are about to put me to death, under the pretense of my being a false prophet, therefore my sentence must come from this city, and my death take place in it.

**Verse 34. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem***— See the note on Matthew 23:37-39, where the metaphor of the hen is illustrated from the Greek Anthology.

**Verse 35. *Your house***— ὁ οἶκος, the temple-called here your house, not my house-I acknowledge it no longer; I have abandoned it, and will dwell in it no more for ever. So he said, 2 Chronicles 36:17, when he delivered the temple into the hands of the Chaldeans-the house of YOUR sanctuary. A similar form of speech is found, Exodus 32:7, where the Lord said to Moses, THY people, etc., to intimate that he acknowledged them no longer for his followers. See the notes on Matthew 23:21, 38. But some think that our Lord means, not the temple, but the whole commonwealth of the Jews.

The principal subjects of this chapter may be found considered at large, on the parallel places in Matthew and Mark, to which the reader is referred. As to the account of the woman with the spirit of infirmity, which is not mentioned by any other of the evangelists, see it largely illustrated in the notes on Luke 13:11, etc.

## CHAPTER 14

*Christ heals a man ill of the dropsy, on a Sabbath day, 1-6. He inculcates humility by a parable, 7-11. The poor to be fed, and not the rich, 12-14. The parable of the great supper, 15-24. How men must become disciples of Christ, 25-27. The parable of the prudent builder, who estimates the cost before he commences his work, 28-30. And of the provident king, 31, 32. The use of these parables, 33. The utility of salt while in its strength and perfection; and its total uselessness when it has lost its savor; 34, 35.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 14

**Verse 1. Chief Pharisees**— Or, one of the rulers of the Pharisees. A man who was of the sect of the Pharisees, and one of the rulers of the people.

**To eat bread on the Sabbath day**— But why is it that there should be an invitation or dinner given on the Sabbath day? Answer: The Jews purchased and prepared the best viands they could procure for the Sabbath day, in order to do it honor. See several proofs in Lightfoot. As the Sabbath is intended for the benefit both of the body and soul of man, it should not be a day of austerity or fasting, especially among the laboring poor. The most wholesome and nutritive food should be then procured if possible; that both body and soul may feel the influence of this Divine appointment, and give God the glory of his grace. On this blessed day, let every man eat his bread with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God. In doing this, surely there is no reason that a man should feed himself without fear. If the Sabbath be a festival, let it be observed unto the Lord; and let no unnecessary acts be done; and avoid that bane of religious solemnity, giving and receiving visits on the Lord's day.

**They watched him.**— Or, were maliciously watching, παρατηρουμενοι—from παρα, intens. or denoting ill, and τηρεω, to observe, watch. Raphelius, on Mark 3:2, has proved from a variety of authorities that this is a frequent meaning of the word:—clam et insidiosè observare, quid alter agat—to observe privately and insidiously what another does. The context plainly proves that this is the sense in which it



is to be taken here. The conduct of this Pharisee was most execrable. Professing friendship and affection, he invited our blessed Lord to his table, merely that he might have a more favorable opportunity of watching his conduct, that he might accuse him, and take away his life. In eating and drinking, people feel generally less restraint than at other times, and are apt to converse more freely. The man who can take such an advantage over one of his own guests must have a baseness of soul, and a fellness of malice, of which, we would have thought, for the honor of human nature, that devils alone were capable. Among the Turks, if a man only taste salt with another, he holds himself bound, in the most solemn manner, never to do that person any injury. I shall make no apology for inserting the following anecdote.

A public robber in Persia, known by the name of Yacoub, ibn Leits Saffer, broke open the treasury of Dirhem, the governor of Sistan. Notwithstanding the obscurity of the place, he observed, in walking forward, something that sparkled a little: supposing it to be some precious stones, he put his hand on the place, and taking up something, touched it with his tongue, and found it to be salt. He immediately left the treasury, without taking the smallest article with him! The governor finding in the morning that the treasury had been broken open, and that nothing was carried off, ordered it to be published, that “Whoever the robber was who had broke open the treasury, if he declared himself, he should be freely pardoned, and that he should not only receive no injury, but should be received into the good graces of the governor.” Confiding in the promise of Dirhem, Yacoub appeared. The governor asked; How it came to pass that, after having broken open the treasury, he took nothing away? Yacoub related the affair as it happened, and added, “I believed that I was become your FRIEND in eating of your SALT, and that the LAWS of that friendship would not permit me to touch any thing that appertained to you.” D’Herbelot. Bib. Orient. p. 415. How base must that man be, who professes Christianity, and yet makes his own table a snare for his friend!

**Verse 2. *The dropsy.***— ὑδρωπικός, dropsical; from ὑδωπ, water, and ωψ, the countenance, because in this disorder the face of the patient is often very much bloated. Probably the insidious Pharisee had brought this dropsical man to the place, not doubting that our Lord’s eye would affect his heart, and that he would instantly cure him; and then he could most

plausibly accuse him for a breach of the Sabbath. If this were the case, and it is likely, how deep must have been the perfidy and malice of the Pharisee!

**Verse 4. *They held their peace.***— They could not answer the question but in the affirmative; and as they were determined to accuse him if he did heal the man, they could not give an answer but such as would condemn themselves, and therefore they were silent.

**Verse 5. *An ass or an ox***— See on Luke 13:15.

**Verse 7. *They chose out the chief rooms***— When custom and law have regulated and settled places in public assemblies, a man who is obliged to attend may take the place which belongs to him, without injury to himself or to others: when nothing of this nature is settled, the law of humility, and the love of order, are the only judges of what is proper. To take the highest place when it is not our due is public vanity: obstinately to refuse it when offered is another instance of the same vice; though private and concealed. Humility takes as much care to avoid the ostentation of an affected refusal, as the open seeking of a superior place. See Quesnel. In this parable our Lord only repeats advices which the rabbins had given to their pupils, but were too proud to conform to themselves. Rabbi Akiba said, Go two or three seats lower than the place that belongs to thee, and sit there till they say unto thee, Go up higher; but do not take the uppermost seat, lest they say unto thee, Come down: for it is better that they should say unto thee, Go up, go up; than that they should say, Come down, come down. See Schoettgen.

**Verse 11. *For whosoever exalteth himself, etc.***— This is the unchangeable conduct of God: he is ever abasing the proud, and giving grace, honor, and glory to the humble.

**Verse 12. *Call not thy friends, etc.***— Our Lord certainly does not mean that a man should not entertain at particular times, his friends, etc.; but what he inculcates here is charity to the poor; and what he condemns is those entertainments which are given to the rich, either to flatter them, or to procure a similar return; because the money that is thus criminally laid out properly belongs to the poor.

**Verse 14. *For they cannot recompense thee***— Because you have done it for God's sake only, and they cannot make you a recompense, therefore God will consider himself your debtor, and will recompense you in the resurrection of the righteous. There are many very excellent sayings among the rabbins on the excellence of charity. They produce both Job and Abraham as examples of a very merciful disposition. "Job, say they, had an open door on each of the four quarters of his house, that the poor, from whatever direction they might come, might find the door of hospitality open to receive them. But Abraham was more charitable than Job, for he traveled over the whole land in order to find out the poor, that he might conduct them to his house."

**Verse 15. *That shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.***— This is spoken in conformity to the general expectation of the Jews, who imagined that the kingdom of the Messiah should be wholly of a secular nature. Instead of *ἄρτον*, bread, EKMS-V, more than one hundred others, with some versions and fathers, read *ἀριστον*, a dinner. This is probably the best reading, as it is likely it was a dinner at which they now sat; and it would be natural for the person to say, Happy is he who shall dine in the kingdom of God. It does not appear that there was any but this person present, who was capable of relishing the conversation of our Lord, or entering at all into its spiritual reference.

**Verse 16. — 24. *A certain man made a great supper, etc.***— See a similar parable to this, though not spoken on the same occasion, explained, Matthew 22:1-14.

**Verse 17. *Sent his servant***— Messengers are sent to invite the guests to a Hindoo feast; when not only relations, but all persons of the same division of caste in the neighborhood, are invited. A refusal to attend is considered as a great affront.

**Verse 22. *And yet there is room.***— On some occasions, so numerous are the guests that there is not room for them to sit in the court of the person who makes the feast, and a larger is therefore borrowed.

**Verse 23. *Compel them to come in***— *ἀναγκάσον*, Prevail on them by the most earnest entreaties. The word is used by Matthew, Matthew 14:22, and by Mark, Mark 6:45; in both which places, when Christ is said,

*αναγκάζειν*, to constrain his disciples to get into the vessel, nothing but his commanding or persuading them to do it can be reasonably understood. The Latins use *cogo*, and *compello*, in exactly the same sense, i.e. to prevail on by prayers, counsels, entreaties, etc. See several examples in Bishop PEARCE, and in *ΚΥΡΚΕ*. No other kind of constraint is ever recommended in the Gospel of Christ; every other kind of compulsion is antichristian, can only be submitted to by cowards and knaves, and can produce nothing but hypocrites, See at the end of the chapter. {Luke 14:34}

**Verse 26. *And hate not***— Matthew, Matthew 10:37, expresses the true meaning of this word, when he says, He who loveth his father and mother MORE than me. In Matthew 6:24, he uses the word hate in the same sense. When we read, Romans 9:13, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated, the meaning is simply, I have loved Jacob-the Israelites, more than Esau-the Edomites; and that this is no arbitrary interpretation of the word hate, but one agreeable to the Hebrew idiom, appears from what is said on Genesis 29:30, 31, where Leah's being hated is explained by Rachel's being loved more than Leah. See also Deuteronomy 21:15-17; and Bishop Pearce on this place. See also the notes on Matthew 10:37.

**Verse 27. *Doth not bear his cross***— See on Matthew 10:38; 16:24.

**Verse 28. *To build a tower***— Probably this means no more than a dwelling house, on the top of which, according to the Asiatic manner, battlements were built, both to take the fresh air on, and to serve for refuge from and defense against an enemy. It was also used for prayer and meditation.

This parable represents the absurdity of those who undertook to be disciples of Christ, without considering what difficulties they were to meet with, and what strength they had to enable them to go through with the undertaking. He that will be a true disciple of Jesus Christ shall require no less than the mighty power of God to support him; as both hell and earth will unite to destroy him.

**Verse 33. *Whosoever he be of you***— This seems to be addressed particularly to those who were then, and who were to be, preachers of his

Gospel; and who were to travel over all countries, publishing salvation to a lost world.

**Verse 34. *Salt is good***— See on Matthew 5:13, and Mark 9:51.

ON the subject referred to this place from Luke 14:23, Compel them to come in, which has been adduced to favor religious persecution, I find the following sensible and just observations in Dr. Dodd's notes.

"1st. Persecution for conscience' sake, that is, inflicting penalty upon men merely for their religious principles or worship, is plainly founded on a supposition that one man has a right to judge for another in matters of religion, which is manifestly absurd, and has been fully proved to be so by many excellent writers of our Church.

"2nd. Persecution is most evidently inconsistent with that fundamental principle of morality, that we should do to others as we could reasonably wish they should do to us; a rule which carries its own demonstration with it, and was intended to take off that bias of self-love which would divert us from the straight line of equity, and render us partial judges betwixt our neighbors and ourselves. I would ask the advocate of wholesome severities, how he would relish his own arguments if turned upon himself? What if he were to go abroad into the world among Papists, if he be a Protestant; among Mohammedans if he be a Christian? Supposing he were to behave like an honest man, a good neighbor, a peaceable subject, avoiding every injury, and taking all opportunities to serve and oblige those about him; would he think that, merely because he refused to follow his neighbors to their altars or their mosques, he should be seized and imprisoned, his goods confiscated, his person condemned to tortures or death?

Undoubtedly he would complain of this as a very great hardship, and soon see the absurdity and injustice of such a treatment when it fell upon him, and when such measure as he would mete to others was measured to him again.

"3rd. Persecution is absurd, as being by no means calculated to answer the end which its patrons profess to intend by it; namely, the glory of God, and the salvation of men. Now, if it does any good to men at all, it must be by making them truly religious; but religion is not a mere name or a ceremony. True religion imports an entire change of the heart, and it must

be founded in the inward conviction of the mind, or it is impossible it should be, what yet it must be, a reasonable service. Let it only be considered what violence and persecution can do towards producing such an inward conviction. A man might as reasonably expect to bind an immaterial spirit with a cord, or to beat down a wall with an argument, as to convince the understanding by threats and tortures. Persecution is much more likely to make men hypocrites than sincere converts. They may perhaps, if they have not a firm and heroic courage, change their profession while they retain their sentiments; and, supposing them before to be unwarily in the wrong, they may learn to add falsehood and villany to error. How glorious a prize! especially when one considers at what an expense it is gained. But,

“4th. Persecution tends to produce much mischief and confusion in the world. It is mischievous to those on whom it falls; and in its consequences so mischievous to others, that one would wonder any wise princes should ever have admitted it into their dominions, or that they should not have immediately banished it thence; for, even where it succeeds so far as to produce a change in men’s forms of worship, it generally makes them no more than hypocritical professors of what they do not believe, which must undoubtedly debase their characters; so that, having been villains in one respect, it is very probable that they will be so in another, and, having brought deceit and falsehood into their religion, that they will easily bring it into their conversation and commerce. This will be the effect of persecution where it is yielded to; and where it is opposed (as it must often be by upright and conscientious men, who have the greater claim upon the protection and favor of government) the mischievous consequences of its fury will be more flagrant and shocking. Nay, perhaps, where there is no true religion, a native sense of honor in a generous mind may stimulate it to endure some hardships for the cause of truth. ‘Obstinacy,’ as one well observes, ‘may rise as the understanding is oppressed, and continue its opposition for a while, merely to avenge the cause of its injured liberty.’

“Nay, 5th. The cause of truth itself must, humanly speaking, be not only obstructed, but destroyed, should persecuting principles universally prevail. For, even upon the supposition that in some countries it might tend to promote and establish the purity of the Gospel, yet it must surely

be a great impediment to its progress. What wise heathen or Mohammedan prince would ever admit Christian preachers into his dominions, if he knew it was a principle of their religion that as soon as the majority of the people were converted by arguments, the rest, and himself with them, if he continued obstinate, must be proselyted or extirpated by fire and sword? If it be, as the advocates for persecution have generally supposed, a dictate of the law of nature to propagate the true religion by the sword; then certainly a Mohammedan or an idolater, with the same notions, supposing him to have truth on his side, must think himself obliged in conscience to arm his powers for the extirpation of Christianity; and thus a holy war must cover the face of the whole earth, in which nothing but a miracle could render Christians successful against so vast a disproportion in numbers. Now, it seems hard to believe that to be a truth which would naturally lead to the extirpation of truth in the world; or that a Divine religion should carry in its own bowels the principle of its own destruction.

“But, 6th. This point is clearly determined by the lip of truth itself; and persecution is so far from being encouraged by the Gospel, that it is most directly contrary to many of its precepts, and indeed to its whole genius. It is condemned by the example of Christ, who went about doing good; who came not to destroy men’s lives, but to save them; who waived the exercise of his miraculous power against his enemies, even when they most unjustly and cruelly assaulted him, and never exerted it to the corporal punishment, even of those who had most justly deserved it. And his doctrine also, as well as his example, has taught us to be harmless as doves; to love our enemies; to do good to them that hate us; and pray for them that despitefully use and persecute us.”

From all this we may learn that the Church which tolerates, encourages, and practises persecution, under the pretense of concern for the purity of the faith, and zeal for God’s glory, is not the Church of Christ; and that no man can be of such a Church without endangering his salvation. Let it ever be the glory of the Protestant Church, and especially of the Church of England, that it discountenances and abhors all persecution on a religious account; and that it has diffused the same benign temper through that STATE with which it is associated.





## CHAPTER 15

*Publicans and sinners draw near to hear our Lord, at which the Pharisees are offended, 1, 2. Christ vindicates his conduct in receiving them by the parable of the lost sheep, 3-7. The parable of the lost piece of money, 8-10; and the affecting parable of the prodigal son, 11-32.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 15

**Verse 1. *Publicans and sinners***— *τελωναι και αμαρτωλοι*, tax-gatherers and heathens; persons who neither believed in Christ nor in Moses. See the note on Luke 7:36. Concerning the tax-gatherers, see the note on Matthew 5:46.

**Verse 2. *Receiveth sinners***— *προσδεχεται*. He receives them cordially, affectionately-takes them to his bosom; for so the word implies. What mercy! Jesus receives sinners in the most loving, affectionate manner, and saves them unto eternal life! Reader, give glory to God for ever!

**Verse 4. *What man of you***— Our Lord spoke this and the following parable to justify his conduct in receiving and conversing with sinners or heathens.

***A hundred sheep***— Parables similar to this are frequent among the Jewish writers. The whole flock of mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, belongs unto this Divine Shepherd; and it is but reasonable to expect, that the gracious proprietor will look after those who have gone astray, and bring them back to the flock. The lost sheep is an emblem of a heedless, thoughtless sinner: one who follows the corrupt dictates of his own heart, without ever reflecting upon his conduct, or considering what will be the issue of his unholy course of life. No creature strays more easily than a sheep; none is more heedless; and none so incapable of finding its way back to the flock, when once gone astray: it will bleat for the flock, and still run on in an opposite direction to the place where the flock is: this I have often noticed. No creature is more defenceless than a sheep, and more exposed to be devoured by dogs and wild beasts. Even the fowls of the air seek their

destruction. I have known ravens often attempt to destroy lambs by picking out their eyes, in which, when they have succeeded, as the creature does not see whither it is going, it soon falls an easy prey to its destroyer. Satan is ever going about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour; in order to succeed, he blinds the understanding of sinners, and then finds it an easy matter to tumble them into the pit of perdition. Who but a Pharisee or a devil would find fault with the shepherd who endeavors to rescue his sheep from so much danger and ruin!

**Verse 7. *Just persons, which need no repentance.***— Who do not require such a change of mind and purpose as these do—who are not so profligate, and cannot repent of sins they have never committed. Distinctions of this kind frequently occur in the Jewish writings. There are many persons who have been brought up in a sober and regular course of life, attending the ordinances of God, and being true and just in all their dealings; these most materially differ from the heathens mentioned, Luke 15:1, because they believe in God, and attend the means of grace: they differ also essentially from the tax-gatherers mentioned in the same place, because they wrong no man, and are upright in their dealings. Therefore they cannot repent of the sins of a heathen, which they have not practised; nor of the rapine of a tax-gatherer, of which they have never been guilty. As, therefore, these just persons are put in opposition to the tax-gatherers and heathens, we may at once see the scope and design of our Lord's words: these needed no repentance in comparison of the others, as not being guilty of their crimes. And as these belonged, by outward profession at least, to the flock of God, and were sincere and upright according to their light, they are considered as being in no danger of being lost; and as they fear God, and work righteousness according to their light, he will take care to make those farther discoveries to them, of the purity of his nature, the holiness of his law, and the necessity of the atonement, which he sees to be necessary. See the case of Cornelius, Acts 10:1, etc. On this ground, the owner is represented as feeling more joy in consequence of finding one sheep that was lost, there having been almost no hope of its recovery, than he feels at seeing ninety and nine still safe under his care. "Men generally rejoice more over a small unexpected advantage, than over a much greater good to which they have been accustomed." There are some, and their opinion need not be hastily rejected, who imagine that by the ninety and nine just persons,

our Lord means the angels—that they are in proportion to men, as ninety-nine are to one, and that the Lord takes more pleasure in the return and salvation of one sinner, than in the uninterrupted obedience of ninety-nine holy angels; and that it was through his superior love to fallen man that he took upon him his nature, and not the nature of angels. I have met with the following weak objection to this: viz. “The text says just persons; now, angels are not persons, therefore angels cannot be meant.” This is extremely foolish; there may be the person of an angel, as well as of a man; we allow persons even in the Godhead; besides, the original word, **δικαιοις**, means simply just ones, and may be, with as much propriety, applied to angels as to men. After all, our Lord may refer to the Essenes, a sect among the Jews, in the time of our Lord, who were strictly and conscientiously moral; living at the utmost distance from both the hypocrisy and pollutions of their countrymen. These, when compared with the great mass of the Jews, needed no repentance. The reader may take his choice of these interpretations, or make a better for himself. I have seen other methods of explaining these words; but they have appeared to me either too absurd or too improbable to merit particular notice.

**Verse 8. *Ten pieces of silver*—****δραχμας δεκα**, ten drachmas. I think it always best to retain the names of these ancient coins, and to state their value in English money. Every reader will naturally wish to know by what names such and such coins were called in the countries in which they were current. The Grecian drachma was worth about sevenpence three farthings of our money; being about the same value as the Roman denarius.

The drachma that was lost is also a very expressive emblem of a sinner who is estranged from God, and enslaved to habits of iniquity. The longer a piece of money is lost, the less probability is there of its being again found; as it may not only lose its color, and not be easily observed, but will continue to be more and more covered with dust and dirt: or its value may be vastly lessened by being so trampled on that a part of the substance, together with the image and superscription, may be worn off. So the sinner sinks deeper and deeper into the impurities of sin, loses even his character among men, and gets the image and superscription of his Maker defaced from his heart. He who wishes to find the image of God, which he has lost by sin, must attend to that word which will be a lantern to his steps, and receive that Spirit which is a light to the soul, to convince

of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He must sweep the house—put away the evil of his doings; and seek diligently—use every means of grace, and cry incessantly to God, till he restore to him the light of his countenance. Though parables of this kind must not be obliged to go on all fours, as it is termed; yet they afford many useful hints to preachers of the Gospel, by which they may edify their hearers. Only let all such take care not to force meanings on the words of Christ which are contrary to their gravity and majesty.

**Verse 12. *Give me the portion of goods***— It may seem strange that such a demand should be made, and that the parent should have acceded to it, when he knew that it was to minister to his debauches that his profligate son made the demand here specified. But the matter will appear plain, when it is considered, that it has been an immemorial custom in the east for sons to demand and receive their portion of the inheritance during their father's lifetime; and the parent, however aware of the dissipated inclinations of the child, could not legally refuse to comply with the application. It appears indeed that the spirit of this law was to provide for the child in case of ill treatment by the father: yet the demand must first be acceded to, before the matter could be legally inquired into; and then, "if it was found that the father was irreproachable in his character, and had given no just cause for the son to separate from him, in that case, the civil magistrate fined the son in two hundred puns of cowries." See Code of Gentoo laws, pr. disc. p. 56; see also do. chap. 2: sec. 9, p. 81, 82; xxi. sec. 10, p. 301.

**Verse 13. *Not many days after***— He probably hastened his departure for fear of the fine which he must have paid, and the reproach to which he must have been subjected, had the matter come before the civil magistrate. See above.

***Riotous living.***— ζῶν ασωτῶς, in a course of life that led him to spend all: from α not, and σωω I save. And this we are informed, Luke 15:30, was among harlots; the readiest way in the world to exhaust the body, debase the mind, ruin the soul, and destroy the substance.

**Verse 14. *A mighty famine in that land***— As he was of a profligate turn of mind himself, it is likely he sought out a place where riot and excess were the ruling characteristics of the inhabitants; and, as poverty is the

sure consequence of prodigality, it is no wonder that famine preyed on the whole country.

**Verse 15. *To feed swine.***— The basest and vilest of all employments; and, to a Jew, peculiarly degrading. Shame, contempt, and distress are wedded to sin, and can never be divorced. No character could be meaner in the sight of a Jew than that of a swineherd: and Herodotus informs us, that in Egypt they were not permitted to mingle with civil society, nor to appear in the worship of the gods, nor would the very dregs of the people have any matrimonial connections with them. HEROD. lib. ii. cap. 47.

**Verse 16. *With the husks***— **κερατιων**. Bochart, I think, has proved that **κερατια** does not mean husks: to signify which the Greek botanical writers use the word **λοβοι**; several examples of which he gives from Theophrastus. He shows, also, that the original word means the fruit of the ceratonia or charub tree, which grows plentifully in Syria. This kind of pulse, Columella observes, was made use of to feed swine. See BOCHART, Hieroz. lib. ii. cap. lvi. col. 707-10.

**Verse 17. *When he came to himself***— A state of sin is represented in the sacred writings as a course of folly and madness; and repentance is represented as a restoration to sound sense. See this fully explained on Matthew 3:2.

***I perish with hunger!***— Or, I perish HERE. **ὥδε**, here, is added by BDL, Syriac, all the Arabic and Persic, Coptic, AÆthiopic, Gothic, Saxon, Vulgate, all the Itala, and several of the fathers.

**Verse 18. *Against heaven***— **εις τον ουρανον**; that is, against God. The Jews often make use of this periphrasis in order to avoid mentioning the name of God, which they have ever treated with the utmost reverence. But some contend that it should be translated, even unto heaven; a Hebraism for, I have sinned exceedingly-beyond all description.

**Verse 20. *And kissed him.***— Or, kissed him again and again; the proper import of **καταεφιλησεν αυτον**. The father thus showed his great tenderness towards him, and his great affection for him.

**Verse 21.** Make me as one of thy hired servants, is added here by several MSS. and versions; but it is evident this has been added, merely to make

his conduct agree with his resolution, Luke 15:19. But by this a very great beauty is lost: for the design of the inspired penman is to show, not merely the depth of the profligate son's repentance, and the sincerity of his conversion, but to show the great affection of the father, and his readiness to forgive his disobedient son. His tenderness of heart cannot wait till the son has made his confession; his bowels yearn over him, and he cuts short his tale of contrition and self-reproach, by giving him the most plenary assurances of his pardoning love.

**Verse 22. *Bring forth the best robe***— Bring out that chief garment, *την στολην την πρωτην*, the garment which was laid by, to be used only on birth-days or festival times. Such as that which Rebecca had laid by for Esau, and which she put on Jacob when she made him personate his brother. See the notes on Genesis 27:15.

***Put a ring on his hand***— Giving a ring was in ancient times a mark of honor and dignity. See Genesis 41:42; 1 Kings 21:8; Esther 8:2; Daniel 6:17; James 2:2.

***Shoes on his feet***— Formerly those who were captivated had their shoes taken off, Isaiah 20:1; and when they were restored to liberty their shoes were restored. See 2 Chronicles 28:15. In Bengal, shoes of a superior quality make one of the distinguishing parts of a person's dress. Some of them cost as much as a hundred rupees a pair; ú10 or ú12. Reference is perhaps made here to some such costly shoes. It is the same among the Chinese: some very costly shoes and boots of that people are now before me.

**Verse 23. *The fatted calf, and kill it***— *θυσατε*, Sacrifice it. In ancient times the animals provided for public feasts were first sacrificed to God. The blood of the beast being poured out before God, by way of atonement for sin, the flesh was considered as consecrated, and the guests were considered as feeding on Divine food. This custom is observed among the Asiatics to this day.

**Verse 24. *Was dead***— Lost to all good—given up to all evil. In this figurative sense the word is used by the best Greek writers. See many examples in Kypke.

**Verse 25. *His elder son***— Meaning probably persons of a regular moral life, who needed no repentance in comparison of the prodigal already described.

***In the field***— Attending the concerns of the farm.

***He heard music***— συμφωνίας, a number of sounds mingled together, as in a concert.

***Dancing.***— χορὼν. But Leviticus Clerc denies that the word means dancing at all, as it properly means a choir of singers. The symphony mentioned before may mean the musical instruments which accompanied the choirs of singers.

**Verse 28. *He was angry***— This refers to the indignation of the scribes and Pharisees, mentioned Luke 15:1, 2. In every point of view, the anger of the older son was improper and unreasonable. He had already received his part of the inheritance, see Luke 15:12, and his profligate brother had received no more than what was his just dividend. Besides, what the father had acquired since that division he had a right to dispose of as he pleased, even to give it all to one son; nor did the ancient customs of the Asiatic countries permit the other children to claim any share in such property thus disposed of. The following is an institute of the GENTOO law on this subject: (CODE, chap. ii. sect. 9, p. 79:) “If a father gives, by his own choice, land, houses, orchards, and the earning of his own industry, to one of his sons, the other sons shall not receive any share of it.” Besides, whatever property the father had acquired after the above division, the son or sons, as the prodigal in the text, could have no claim at all on, according to another institute in the above Asiatic laws, see chap. ii. sect. ii. p. 85, but the father might divide it among those who remained with him: therefore is it said in the text, “Son, thou art ALWAYS with me, and ALL that I have is THINE,” Luke 15:31.

**Verse 29. *Never-a kid***— It is evident from Luke 15:12, that the father gave him his portion when his profligate brother claimed his; for he divided his whole substance between them. And though he had not claimed it, so as to separate from, and live independently of, his father, yet he might have done so whenever he chose; and therefore his complaining was both undutiful and unjust.

**Verse 30. *This thy son***— THIS son of THINE—words expressive of supreme contempt: THIS son—he would not condescend to call him by his name, or to acknowledge him for his brother; and at the same time, bitterly reproaches his amiable father for his affectionate tenderness, and readiness to receive his once undutiful, but now penitent, child!

**For HIM**— I have marked those words in small capitals which should be strongly accented in the pronunciation: this last word shows how supremely he despised his poor unfortunate brother.

**Verse 31. *All that I have is thine***.— See on Luke 15:28.

**Verse 32. *This thy brother***— Or, THIS brother of THINE. To awaken this ill-natured, angry, inhumane man to a proper sense of his duty, both to his parent and brother, this amiable father returns him his own unkind words, but in a widely different spirit. This son of mine to whom I show mercy is THY brother, to whom thou shouldst show bowels of tenderness and affection; especially as he is no longer the person he was: he was dead in sin—he is quickened by the power of God: he was lost to thee, to me, to himself, and to our God; but now he is found: and he will be a comfort to me, a help to thee, and a standing proof, to the honor of the Most High, that God receiveth sinners. This, as well as the two preceding parables, was designed to vindicate the conduct of our blessed Lord in receiving tax-gatherers and heathens; and as the Jews, to whom it was addressed, could not but approve of the conduct of this benevolent father, and reprobate that of his elder son, so they could not but justify the conduct of Christ towards those outcasts of men, and, at least in the silence of their hearts, pass sentence of condemnation upon-themselves. For the sublime, the beautiful, the pathetic, and the instructive, the history of Joseph in the Old Testament, and the parable of the prodigal son in the New, have no parallels either in sacred or profane history.

THE following reflections, taken chiefly from pious Quesnel, cannot fail making this incomparable parable still more instructive.

Three points may be considered here: I. The degrees of his fall. II. The degrees of his restoration; and, III. The consequences of his conversion.

I. The prodigal son is the emblem of a sinner who refuses to depend on and be governed by the Lord. How dangerous is it for us to desire to be at our



own disposal, to live in a state of independency, and to be our own governors! God cannot give to wretched man a greater proof of his wrath than to abandon him to the corruption of his own heart.

Not many days, etc., Luke 15:13. The misery of a sinner has its degrees; and he soon arrives, step by step, at the highest pitch of his wretchedness.

The first degree of his misery is, that he loses sight of God, and removes at a distance from him. There is a boundless distance between the love of God, and impure self-love; and yet, strange to tell, we pass in a moment from the one to the other!

The second degree of a sinner's misery is, that the love of God being no longer retained in the heart, carnal love and impure desires necessarily enter in, reign there, and corrupt all his actions.

The third degree is, that he squanders away all spiritual riches, and wastes the substance of his gracious Father in riot and debauch.

When he had spent all, etc., Luke 15:14. The fourth degree of an apostate sinner's misery is, that having forsaken God, and lost his grace and love, he can now find nothing but poverty, misery, and want. How empty is that soul which God does not fill! What a famine is there in that heart which is no longer nourished by the bread of life!

In this state, he joined himself-εκολληθη, he cemented, closely united himself, and fervently cleaved to a citizen of that country, Luke 15:15.

The fifth degree of a sinner's misery is, that he renders himself a slave to the devil, is made partaker of his nature, and incorporated into the infernal family. The farther a sinner goes from God, the nearer he comes to eternal ruin.

The sixth degree of his misery is, that he soon finds by experience the hardship and rigour of his slavery. There is no master so cruel as the devil; no yoke so heavy as that of sin; and no slavery so mean and vile as for a man to be the drudge of his own carnal, shameful, and brutish passions.

The seventh degree of a sinner's misery is, that he has an insatiable hunger and thirst after happiness; and as this can be had only in God, and he seeks it in the creature, his misery must be extreme. He desired to fill his belly

with the husks, Luke 15:16. The pleasures of sense and appetite are the pleasures of swine, and to such creatures is he resembled who has frequent recourse to them, 2 Peter 2:22.

II. Let us observe, in the next place, the several degrees of a sinner's conversion and salvation.

The first is, he begins to know and feel his misery, the guilt of his conscience, and the corruption of his heart. He comes to himself, because the Spirit of God first comes to him, Luke 15:17.

The second is, that he resolves to forsake sin and all the occasions of it; and firmly purposes in his soul to return immediately to his God. I will arise, etc., Luke 15:18.

The third is, when, under the influence of the spirit of faith, he is enabled to look towards God as a compassionate and tender-hearted father. I will arise and go to my father.

The fourth is, when he makes confession of his sin, and feels himself utterly unworthy of all God's favors, Luke 15:19.

The fifth is, when he comes in the spirit of obedience, determined through grace to submit to the authority of God; and to take his word for the rule of all his actions, and his Spirit for the guide of all his affections and desires.

The sixth is, his putting his holy resolutions into practice without delay; using the light and power already mercifully restored to him, and seeking God in his appointed ways. And he arose and came, etc., Luke 15:20.

The seventh is, God tenderly receives him with the kiss of peace and love, blots out all his sins, and restores him to, and reinstates him in, the heavenly family. His father-fell on his neck, and kissed him, Luke 15:20.

The eighth is, his being clothed with holiness, united to God, married as it were to Christ Jesus, 2 Corinthians 11:2, and having his feet shod with the shoes of the preparation of the Gospel of peace, Ephesians 6:15, so that he may run the ways of God's commandments with alacrity and joy. Bring the best robe-put a ring-and shoes, etc., Luke 15:22.

III. The consequences of the sinner's restoration to the favor and image of God are, first, the sacrifice of thanksgiving is offered to God in his behalf; he enters into a covenant with his Maker, and feasts on the fatness of the house of the Most High.

Secondly, The whole heavenly family are called upon to share in the general joy; the Church above and the Church below both triumph; for there is joy (peculiar joy) in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. See Luke 15:10.

Thirdly, God publicly acknowledges him for his son, not only by enabling him to abstain from every appearance of evil, but to walk before him in newness of life, Luke 15:24. The tender-hearted father repeats these words at Luke 15:32, to show more particularly that the soul is dead when separated from God; and that it can only be said to be alive when united to him through the Son of his love. A Christian's sin is a brother's death; and in proportion to our concern for this will our joy be at his restoration to spiritual life. Let us have a brotherly heart towards our brethren, as God has that of a father towards his children, and seems to be afflicted at their loss, and to rejoice at their being found again, as if they were necessary to his happiness.

In this parable, the younger profligate son may represent the Gentile world; and the elder son, who so long served his father, Luke 15:20, the Jewish people. The anger of the elder son explains itself at once—it means the indignation evidenced by the Jews at the Gentiles being received into the favor of God, and made, with them, fellow heirs of the kingdom of heaven.

It may also be remarked, that those who were since called Jews and Gentiles, were at first one family, and children of the same father: that the descendants of Ham and Japhet, from whom the principal part of the Gentile world was formed, were, in their progenitors, of the primitive great family, but had afterwards fallen off from the true religion: and that the parable of the prodigal son may well represent the conversion of the Gentile world, in order that, in the fullness of time, both Jews and Gentiles may become one fold, under one Shepherd and Bishop of all souls.

## CHAPTER 16

*The parable of the unjust steward, 1-8. Christ applies this to his hearers, 9-13. The pharisees take offense, 14. Our Lord reproves them, and shows the immutability of the law, 15-17. Counsels against divorce, 18. The story of the rich man and the beggar, commonly called Dives and Lazarus, 10-31.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 16

**Verse 1. A steward**—οικονομος, from οίκος, a house, or οικία, a family, and νεμω, I administer; one who superintends domestic concerns, and ministers to the support of the family, having the products of the field, business, etc., put into his hands for this very purpose. See on Luke 8:3.

There is a parable very like this in Rab. Dav. Kimchi's comment on Isaiah, Isaiah 40:21: "The whole world may be considered as a house builded up: heaven is its roof; the stars its lamps; and the fruits of the earth, the table spread. The owner and builder of this house is the holy blessed God; and man is the steward, into whose hands all the business of the house is committed. If he considers in his heart that the master of the house is always over him, and keeps his eye upon his work; and if, in consequence, he act wisely, he shall find favor in the eyes of the master of the house: but if the master find wickedness in him, he will remove him, מ'פ'קדוֹ min pakidato, from his STEWARDSHIP. The foolish steward doth not think of this: for as his eyes do not see the master of the house, he saith in his heart, 'I will eat and drink what I find in this house, and will take my pleasure in it; nor shall I be careful whether there be a Lord over this house or not.' When the Lord of the house marks this, he will come and expel him from the house, speedily and with great anger. Therefore it is written, He bringeth the princes to nothing." As is usual, our Lord has greatly improved this parable, and made it in every circumstance more striking and impressive. Both in the Jewish and Christian edition, it has great beauties.

**Wasted his goods.**— Had been profuse and profligate; and had embezzled his master's substance.

**Verse 2. Give an account of thy, etc.**— Produce thy books of receipts and disbursements, that I may see whether the accusation against thee be true or false. The original may be translated, Give up the business, *τον λογον*, of the stewardship.

**Verse 3. I cannot dig**— He could not submit to become a common day-laborer, which was both a severe and base employment: To beg I am ashamed. And as these were the only honest ways left him to procure a morsel of bread, and he would not submit to either, he found he must continue the system of knavery, in order to provide for his idleness and luxury, or else starve. Wo to the man who gets his bread in this way! The curse of the Lord must be on his head, and on his heart; in his basket, and is his store.

**Verse 4. They may receive me**— That is, the debtors and tenants, who paid their debts and rents, not in money, but in kind; such as wheat, oil, and other produce of their lands.

**Verse 6. A hundred measures of oil.**— *ἑκατον βατους*, A hundred baths. The  bath was the largest measure of capacity among the Hebrews, except the homer, of which it was the tenth part: see Ezekiel 45:11, 14. It is equal to the ephah, i.e. to seven gallons and a half of our measure.

**Take thy bill**— Thy account-*το γραμμα*. The writing in which the debt was specified, together with the obligation to pay so much, at such and such times. This appears to have been in the hand-writing of the debtor, and probably signed by the steward: and this precluded imposition on each part. To prevent all appearance of forgery in this case, he is desired to write it over again, and to cancel the old engagement. In carrying on a running account with a tradesman, it is common among the Hindoos for the buyer to receive from the hands of the seller a daily account of the things received; and according to this account, written on a slip of paper, and which remains in the hands of the buyer, the person is paid.

**Verse 7. *A hundred measures of wheat.***— ἑκατον κορους, a hundred cors. κορος, from the Hebrew כֹּר cor, was the largest measure of capacity among the Hebrews, whether for solids or liquids. As the bath was equal to the ephah, so the cor was equal to the homer. It contained about seventy-five gallons and five pints English. For the same reason for which I preserve the names of the ancient coins, I preserve the names of the ancient measures. What idea can a mere English reader have of the word measure in this and the preceding verse, when the original words are not only totally different, but the quantity is as seven to seventy-five? The original terms should be immediately inserted in the text, and the contents inserted in the margin. The present marginal reading is incorrect. I follow Bishop Cumberland's weights and measures. See on Luke 15:8.

In the preceding relation, I have no doubt our Lord alluded to a custom frequent in the Asiatic countries: a custom which still prevails, as the following account, taken from Capt. Hadley's Hindostan Dialogues, sufficiently proves. A person thus addresses the captain: "Your Sirkar's deputy, whilst his master was gone to Calcutta, established a court of justice.

"Having searched for a good many debtors and their creditors, he learned the accounts of their bonds.

"He then made an agreement with them to get the bonds out of the bondsmen's hands for half the debt, if they would give him one fourth.

"Thus, any debtor for a hundred rupees, having given fifty to the creditor, and twenty-five to this knave, got his bond for seventy-five rupees.

"Having seized and flogged 125 bondholders, he has in this manner determined their loans, and he has done this business in your name." Hadley's Gram. Dialogues, p. 79. 5th edit. 1801.

**Verse 8. *The lord commended***— Viz. the master of this unjust steward. He spoke highly of the address and cunning of his iniquitous servant. He had, on his own principles, made a very prudent provision for his support; but his master no more approved of his conduct in this, than he did in his wasting his substance before. From the ambiguous and improper manner in which this is expressed in the common English translation, it has been supposed that our blessed Lord commended the conduct of this wicked

man: but the word **κύριος**, there translated lord, simply means the master of the unjust steward.

***The children of this world***— Such as mind worldly things only, without regarding God or their souls. A phrase by which the Jews always designate the Gentiles.

***Children of light***.— Such as are illuminated by the Spirit of God, and regard worldly things only as far as they may subserve the great purposes of their salvation, and become the instruments of good to others. But ordinarily the former evidence more carefulness and prudence, in providing for the support and comfort of this life, than the latter do in providing for another world.

**Verse 9. *The mammon of unrighteousness***— **μαμωνά της αδικίας** -literally, the mammon, or riches, of injustice. Riches promise MUCH, and perform NOTHING: they excite hope and confidence, and deceive both: in making a man depend on them for happiness, they rob him of the salvation of God and of eternal glory. For these reasons, they are represented as unjust and deceitful. See the note on Matthew 6:24, where this is more particularly explained. It is evident that this must be the meaning of the words, because the false or deceitful riches, here, are put in opposition to the true riches, Luke 16:11; i.e. those Divine graces and blessings which promise all good, and give what they promise; never deceiving the expectation of any man. To insinuate that, if a man have acquired riches by unjust means, he is to sanctify them, and provide himself a passport to the kingdom of God, by giving them to the poor, is a most horrid and blasphemous perversion of our Lord's words. Ill gotten gain must be restored to the proper owners: if they are dead, then to their successors.

***When ye fail***— That is, when ye die. The Septuagint use the word **ἐκλείπειν** in this very sense, Jeremiah 42:17, 22. See the note on Genesis 25:8. So does Josephus, War, chap. iv. 1, 9.

***They may receive you***— That is, say some, the angels. Others, the poor whom ye have relieved will welcome you into glory. It does not appear that the poor are meant: 1. Because those who have relieved them may die a long time before them; and therefore they could not be in heaven to receive them on their arrival. 2. Many poor persons may be relieved, who

will live and die in their sins, and consequently never enter into heaven themselves. The expression seems to be a mere Hebraism:-they may receive you, for ye shall be received; i.e. God shall admit you, if you make a faithful use of his gifts and graces. He who does not make a faithful use of what he has received from his Maker has no reason to hope for eternal felicity. See Matthew 25:33; and, for similar Hebraisms, consult in the original, Luke 6:38; 12:20; Revelation 12:6; 16:15.

**Verse 10. *He that is faithful in that which is least, etc.***—He who has the genuine principles of fidelity in him will make a point of conscience of carefully attending to even the smallest things; and it is by habituating himself to act uprightly in little things that he acquires the gracious habit of acting with propriety fidelity, honor, and conscience, in matters of the greatest concern. On the contrary, he who does not act uprightly in small matters will seldom feel himself bound to pay much attention to the dictates of honor and conscience, in cases of high importance. Can we reasonably expect that a man who is continually falling by little things has power to resist temptations to great evils?

**Verse 12. *That which is another man's***—Or rather another's, **τῷ ἀλλοτρίῳ**. That is, worldly riches, called another's: 1. Because they belong to God, and he has not designed that they should be any man's portion. 2. Because they are continually changing their possessors, being in the way of commerce, and in providence going from one to another. This property of worldly goods is often referred to by both sacred and profane writers. See a fine passage in Horace, Sat. l. ii. s. 2. v. 129.

*Nam propriae telluris herum natura neque illum,  
Nec me, nec quemquam statuit*

*Nature will no perpetual heir assign,  
Nor make the farm his property, or mine. FRANCIS*

And the following in one of our own poets:-

“Who steals my purse steals trash; ‘tis something, nothing; ‘Twas mine, ‘tis his, and has been slave to thousands.”

***That which is your own?***—Grace and glory, which God has particularly designed for you; which are the only proper satisfying portion for the



soul, and which no man can enjoy in their plenitude, unless he be faithful to the first small motions and influences of the Divine Spirit.

**Verse 13. *No servant can serve two masters***— The heart will be either wholly taken up with God, or wholly engrossed with the world. See on Matthew 6:24.

**Verse 14. *They derided him***— Or rather, They treated him with the utmost contempt. So we may translate the original words ἐξευκτερίζον αὐτόν, which literally signifies, in illum emunxerunt-but must not be translated into English, unless, to come a little near it, we say, they turned up their noses at him; and why! Because they were lovers of money, and he showed them that all such were in danger of perdition. As they were wedded to this life, and not concerned for the other, they considered him one of the most absurd and foolish of men, and worthy only of the most sovereign contempt, because he taught that spiritual and eternal things should be preferred before the riches of the universe. And how many thousands are there of the very same sentiment to the present day!

**Verse 15. *Ye-justify yourselves***— Ye declare yourselves to be just. Ye endeavor to make it appear to men that ye can still feel an insatiable thirst after the present world, and yet secure the blessings of another; that ye can reconcile God and mammon,-and serve two masters with equal zeal and affection; but God knoweth your hearts,-and he knoweth that ye are alive to the world, and dead to God and goodness. Therefore, howsoever ye may be esteemed among men, ye are an abomination before him. See the note on Luke 7:29.

**Verse 16. *The law and the prophets were until John***— The law and the prophets continued to be the sole teachers till John came, who first began to proclaim the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and now, he who wishes to be made a partaker of the blessings of that kingdom must rush speedily into it; as there will be but a short time before an utter destruction shall fall upon this ungodly race. They who wish to be saved must imitate those who take a city by storm-rush into it, without delay, as the Romans are about to do into Jerusalem. See also on Matthew 11:12.

**Verse 17. *For heaven and earth to pass***— See on Matthew 5:17, 18.

**Verse 18. *Putteth away (or divorceth) his wife***— See on Matthew 5:31, 32; 19:9, 10; Mark 10:12; where the question concerning divorce is considered at large. These verses, from the 13th to the 18th {Luke 16:13-18} inclusive, appear to be part of our Lord's sermon on the mount; and stand in a much better connection there than they do here; unless we suppose our Lord delivered the same discourse at different times and places, which is very probable.

**Verse 19. *There was a certain rich man***— In the Scholia of some MSS. the name of this person is said to be Ninive. This account of the rich man and Lazarus is either a parable or a real history. If it be a parable, it is what may be: if it be a history, it is that which has been. Either a man may live as is here described, and go to perdition when he dies; or, some have lived in this way, and are now suffering the torments of an eternal fire. The account is equally instructive in whichever of these lights it is viewed. Let us carefully observe all the circumstances offered hereto our notice, and we shall see—I. The CRIME of this man; and II. His PUNISHMENT.

1. There was a certain rich man in Jerusalem. Provided this be a real history, there is no doubt our Lord could have mentioned his name; but, as this might have given great offense, he chose to suppress it. His being rich is, in Christ's account, the first part of his sin. To this circumstance our Lord adds nothing: he does not say that he was born to a large estate; or that he acquired one by improper methods; or that he was haughty or insolent in the possession of it. Yet here is the first degree of his reprobation—he got all he could, and kept all to himself.

2. He was clothed with purple and fine linen. Purple was a very precious and costly stuff; but our Lord does not say that in the use of it he exceeded the bounds of his income, nor of his rank in life; nor is it said that he used his superb dress to be an agent to his crimes, by corrupting the hearts of others. Yet our Lord lays this down as a second cause of his perdition.

3. He fared sumptuously every day. Now let it be observed that the law of Moses, under which this man lived, forbade nothing on this point, but excess in eating and drinking; indeed, it seems as if a person was authorized to taste the sweets of an abundance, which that law promised as a reward of fidelity. Besides, this rich man is not accused of having eaten food which was prohibited by the law, or of having neglected the abstinences

and fasts prescribed by it. It is true, he is said to have feasted sumptuously every day; but our Lord does not intimate that this was carried to excess, or that it ministered to debauch. He is not accused of licentious discourse, of gaming, of frequenting any thing like our modern plays, balls, masquerades, or other impure and unholy assemblies; of speaking an irreverent word against Divine revelation, or the ordinances of God. In a word, his probity is not attacked, nor is he accused of any of those crimes which pervert the soul or injure civil society. As Christ has described this man, does he appear culpable? What are his crimes? Why, 1. He was rich. 2. He was finely clothed. And 3. He feasted well. No other evil is spoken of him. In comparison of thousands, he was not only blameless, but he was a virtuous man.

4. But it is intimated by many that “he was an uncharitable, hard-hearted, unfeeling wretch.” Yet of this there is not a word spoken by Christ. Let us consider all the circumstances, and we shall see that our blessed Lord has not represented this man as a monster of inhumanity, but merely as an indolent man, who sought and had his portion in this life, and was not at all concerned about another.

Therefore we do not find that when Abraham addressed him on the cause of his reprobation, Luke 16:25, that he reproached him with hard-heartedness, saying, “Lazarus was hungry, and thou gavest him no meat; he was thirsty, and thou gavest him no drink, etc.,” but he said simply, Son, remember that thou didst receive thy good things in thy lifetime, Luke 16:25. “Thou hast sought thy consolation upon the earth, thou hast borne no cross, mortified no desire of the flesh, received not the salvation God had provided for thee; thou didst not belong to the people of God upon earth, and thou canst not dwell with them in glory.”

There are few who consider that it is a crime for those called Christians to live without Christ, when their lives are not stained with transgression. If Christianity only required men to live without gross outward sin, paganism could furnish us with many bright examples of this sort. But the religion of Christ requires a conformity, not only in a man’s conduct, to the principles of the Gospel; but also a conformity in his heart to the spirit and mind of Christ.

**Verse 20. *There was a certain beggar named Lazarus***— His name is mentioned, because his character was good, and his end glorious; and because it is the purpose of God that the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance. Lazarus, **לעזר** is a contraction of the word **אלעזר** Eliezar, which signifies the help or assistance of God—a name properly given to a man who was both poor and afflicted, and had no help but that which came from heaven.

**Verse 21. *And desiring to be fed with the crumbs***— And it is likely this desire was complied with, for it is not intimated that he spurned away the poor man from the gate, or that his suit was rejected. And as we find, Luke 16:24, that the rich man desired that Lazarus should be sent with a little water to him, it is a strong intimation that he considered him under some kind of obligation to him; for, had he refused him a few crumbs in his lifetime, it is not reasonable to suppose that he would now have requested such a favor from him; nor does Abraham glance at any such uncharitable conduct on the part of the rich man.

We may now observe,

II. In what the punishment of this man consisted.

1. Lazarus dies and is carried into Abraham's bosom. By the phrase, Abraham's bosom, an allusion is made to the custom at Jewish feasts, when three persons reclining on their left elbows on a couch, the person whose head came near the breast of the other, was said to lie in his bosom. So it is said of the beloved disciple, John 13:25. Abraham's bosom was a phrase used among the Jews to signify the paradise of God. See Josephus's account of the Maccabees, chap. xiii.

**Verse 22. *The rich man also died, and was buried***— There is no mention of this latter circumstance in the case of Lazarus; he was buried, no doubt—necessity required this; but he had the burial of a pauper, while the pomp and pride of the other followed him to the tomb. But what a difference in these burials, if we take in the reading of my old MS. BIBLE, which is supported by several versions: forsothe the riche man is deed: and is buried in helle. And this is also the reading of the Anglo-saxon, [A.S.], and was in hell buried. In some MSS. the point has been wanting after **εταφη**, he was buried; and the following **και**, and, removed and set before

**επαρας** he lifted up: so that the passage reads thus: The rich man died also, and was buried in hell; and lifting up his eyes, being in torment, he saw, etc. But let us view the circumstances of this man's punishment.

Scarcely had he entered the place of his punishment, when he lifted up his eyes on high; and what must his surprise be, to see himself separated from God, and to feel himself tormented in that flame! Neither himself, nor friends, ever suspected that the way in which he walked could have led to such a perdition.

1. And seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom, Luke 16:23. He sees Lazarus clothed with glory and immortality-this is the first circumstance in his punishment. What a contrast! What a desire does he feel to resemble him, and what rage and despair because he is not like him? We may safely conclude that the view which damned souls have, in the gulf of perdition, of the happiness of the blessed, and the conviction that they themselves might have eternally enjoyed this felicity, from which, through their own fault, they are eternally excluded, will form no mean part of the punishment of the lost.

2. The presence of a good to which they never had any right, and of which they are now deprived, affects the miserable less than the presence of that to which they had a right, and of which they are now deprived. Even in hell, a damned spirit must abhor the evil by which he is tormented, and desire that good that would free him from his torment. If a lost soul could be reconciled to its torment, and to its situation, then, of course, its punishment must cease to be such. An eternal desire to escape from evil, and an eternal desire to be united with the supreme good, the gratification of which is for ever impossible, must make a second circumstance in the misery of the lost.

3. Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, Luke 16:25. The remembrance of the good things possessed in life, and now to be enjoyed no more for ever, together with the remembrance of grace offered or abused, will form a third circumstance in the perdition of the ungodly. Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime, etc.

4. The torments which a soul endures in the hell of fire will form, through all eternity, a continual present source of indescribable wo. Actual torment

in the flames of the bottomless pit forms a fourth circumstance in the punishment of the lost. I am tormented in this flame, Luke 16:24.

5. The known impossibility of ever escaping from this place of torment, or to have any alleviation of one's misery in it, forms a fifth circumstance in the punishment of ungodly men. Besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf, Luke 16:26. The eternal purpose of God, formed on the principles of eternal reason, separates the persons, and the places of abode, of the righteous and the wicked, so that there can be no intercourse: They who wish to pass over hence to you, cannot; neither can they pass over, who would come from you hither. A happy spirit cannot go from heaven to alleviate their miseries; nor can any of them escape from the place of their confinement, to enter among the blessed. There may be a discovery from hell of the paradise of the blessed; but there can be no intercourse nor connection.

6. The iniquitous conduct of relatives and friends, who have been perverted by the bad example of those who are lost, is a source of present punishment to them; and if they come also to the same place of torment, must be, to those who mere the instruments of bringing them thither, an eternal source of anguish. Send Lazarus to my father's family, for I have five brothers, that he may earnestly testify (*διαμαρτυρηται*) to them, that they come not to this place of torment. These brothers had probably been influenced by his example to content themselves with an earthly portion, and to neglect their immortal souls. Those who have been instruments of bringing others into hell shall suffer the deeper perdition on that account.

**Verse 29. *They have Moses and the prophets***— This plainly supposes they were all Jewish believers: they had these writings in their hands, but they did not permit them to influence their lives.

**Verse 30. *If one went to them from the dead, etc.***— Many are desirous to see an inhabitant of the other world, and converse with him, in order to know what passes there. Make way! Here is a damned soul, which Jesus Christ has evoked from the hell of fire! Hear him! Hear him tell of his torments! Hear him utter his regrets! "But we cannot see him." No: God has, in his mercy, spared you for the present this punishment. How could you bear the sight of this damned spirit? Your very nature would fail at the

appearance. Jesus keeps him as it were behind the curtain, and holds a conversation with him in your hearing, which you have neither faith nor courage sufficient to hold with him yourselves.

**Verse 31. *If they hear not Moses, etc.***— This answer of Abraham contains two remarkable propositions. 1. That the sacred writings contain such proofs of a Divine origin, that though all the dead were to arise, to convince an unbeliever of the truths therein declared, the conviction could not be greater, nor the proof more evident, of the divinity and truth of these sacred records, than that which themselves afford. 2. That to escape eternal perdition, and get at last into eternal glory, a man is to receive the testimonies of God, and to walk according to their dictates. And these two things show the sufficiency and perfection of the sacred writings. What influence could the personal appearance of a spirit have on an unbelieving and corrupted heart? None, except to terrify it for the moment, and afterwards to leave it ten thousand reasons for uncertainty and doubt. Christ caused this to be exemplified, in the most literal manner, by raising Lazarus from the dead. And did this convince the unbelieving Jews? No. They were so much the more enraged; and from that moment conspired both the death of Lazarus and of Christ! Faith is satisfied with such proofs as God is pleased to afford! Infidelity never has enow. See a Sermon on this subject, by the author of this work.

To make the parable of the unjust steward still more profitable, let every man consider:-

1. That God is his master, and the author of all the good he enjoys, whether it be spiritual or temporal.
2. That every man is only a steward, not a proprietor of those things.
3. That all must give an account to God, how they have used or abused the blessings with which they have been entrusted.
4. That the goods which God has entrusted to our care are goods of body and soul: goods of nature and grace: of birth and education: His word, Spirit, and ordinances: goods of life, health, genius, strength, dignity, riches; and even poverty itself is often a blessing from the hand of God.

5. That all these may be improved to God's honor, our good, and our neighbor's edification and comfort.
6. That the time is coming in which we shall be called to an account before God, concerning the use we have made of the good things with which he has entrusted us.
7. That we may, even now, be accused before our Maker, of the awful crime of wasting our Lord's substance.
8. That if this crime can be proved against us, we are in immediate danger of being deprived of all the blessings which we have thus abused, and of being separated from God and the glory of his power for ever.
9. That on hearing of the danger to which we are exposed, though we cannot dig to purchase salvation, yet we must beg, incessantly beg, at the throne of grace for mercy to pardon all that is past.
10. That not a moment is to be lost: the arrest of death may have gone out against us; and this very night-hour-minute, our souls may be required of us. Let us therefore learn wisdom from the prudent despatch which a worldly-minded man would use to retrieve his ruinous circumstances; and watch and pray, and use the little spark of the Divine light which yet remains, but which is ready to die, that we may escape the gulf of perdition, and obtain some humble place in the heaven of glory. Our wants are pressing; God calls loudly; and eternity is at hand!



## CHAPTER 17

*Christ teaches the necessity of avoiding offenses, 1, 2. How to treat an offending brother, 3, 4. The efficacy of faith, 5, 6. No man by his services or obedience can profit his Maker, 7-10. He cleanses ten lepers, 11-19. The Pharisees inquire when the kingdom of God shall commence; Christ answers them, and corrects their improper views of the subject, 20-37.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 17

**Verse 1. *It is impossible but that offenses will come***— Such is the corrupt state of the human heart that, notwithstanding all the influences of grace, and the promises of glory, men will continue to sin against God; and his justice must continue to punish. See on Matthew 18:6.

**Verse 2. *A mill-stone***— That drowning a person with a stone tied about the neck was an ancient mode of punishment, see proved in the note on Matthew 18:6, 7, to which let the following be added. To have a mill-stone hanged about the neck, was a common proverb. “Samuel saith, A man may marry, and after that addict himself to the study of the law. Rab. Jochanan saith, No: shall he addict himself to the study of the law with a mill-stone about his neck?”

The place in Aristophanes, to which the reader is referred in the note on Matthew 18:6, is the following:-

αραν μετεωρον εις το βαραθρον εμβαλω,  
εκ του λαρυγγος εκκρεμασας υπερβολον

“Lifting him up into the air, I will plunge him into the deep: a great stone being hung about his neck.” Aristoph. in Equit. ver. 1359.

**Verse 3. — 4. *If thy brother trespass***— See the notes on Matthew 18:21, 22.

**Verse 5. *Increase our faith***.— This work of pardoning every offense of every man, and that continually, seemed so difficult, even to the disciples

themselves, that they saw, without an extraordinary degree of faith, they should never be able to keep this command. But some think that this and what follows relate to what Matthew has mentioned. Matthew 17:19, 20.

**Verse 6. *As a grain of mustard seed***— A faith that increases and thrives as that is described to do, Matthew 13:32, where see the note. See also Matthew 17:20.

***This sycamine***— The words seem to intimate that they were standing by such a tree. The sycamine is probably the same as the sycamore. Sycamore with us, says Mr. Evelyn, is falsely so called, being our acer majus, greater maple. The true sycamore is the ficus Pharaonis or AEGyptia, Pharaoh's, or Egyptian fig-tree; called also, from its similitude in leaves and fruit, morosyous, or mulberry fig-tree. The Arabians call it guimez: it grows in Cyprus, Caria, Rhodes, and in Judea and Galilee, where our Lord at this time was: see Luke 17:11. St. Jerome, who was well acquainted with these countries, translates the word mulberry-tree.

***Be thou plucked up by the root***— See the note on Matthew 21:21, where it is shown that this mode of speech refers to the accomplishment of things very difficult, but not impossible.

**Verse 7. — 9. *Which of you, having a servant***— It is never supposed that the master waits on the servant- -the servant is bound to wait on his master, and to do every thing for him to the uttermost of his power: nor does the former expect thanks for it, for he is bound by his agreement to act thus, because of the stipulated reward, which is considered as being equal in value to all the service that he can perform.

**Verse 10. *We are unprofitable servants***— This text has often been produced to prove that no man can live without committing sin against God. But let it be observed, the text says unprofitable servants, not sinful servants. If this text could be fairly construed to countenance sinful imperfection, it would be easy to demonstrate that there is not one of the spirits of just men made perfect, in paradise, nor a ministering angel at the throne of God, but is sinfully imperfect: for none of these can work righteousness, in the smallest degree, beyond those powers which God has given them; and justice and equity require that they should exert those powers to the uttermost in the service of their Maker; and, after having

acted thus, it may be justly said, They have done only what it was their duty to do. The nature of God is illimitable, and all the attributes of that nature are infinitely glorious: they cannot be lessened by the transgressions of his creatures, nor can they be increased by the uninterrupted, eternal obedience, and unceasing hallelujahs, of all the intelligent creatures that people the whole vortex of nature. When ages, beyond the power of arithmetic to sum up, have elapsed, it may be said of the most pure and perfect creatures, “Ye are unprofitable servants.” Ye have derived your being from the infinite fountain of life: ye are upheld by the continued energy of the Almighty: his glories are infinite and eternal, and your obedience and services, however excellent in themselves, and profitable to you, have added nothing, and can add nothing, to the absolute excellencies and glories of your God.

**Verse 11. *He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee***— He first went through Galilee, whence he set out on his journey; and then through Samaria, of which mention is made, Luke 9:51, 52. All who went from Galilee to Jerusalem must have necessarily passed through Samaria, unless they had gone to the westward, a very great way about. Therefore John tells us, John 4:4, that when Jesus left Judea to go into Galilee, it was necessary for him to pass through Samaria; for this plain reason, because it was the only proper road. “It is likely that our Lord set out from Capernaum, traversed the remaining villages of Galilee as far as Samaria, and then passed through the small country of Samaria, preaching and teaching every where, and curing the diseased, as usual.” Calmet.

**Verse 12. *Ten-lepers***— Concerning the leprosy see the note on Matthew 8:2; and on Leviticus 13:1, etc. and 14:1, etc..

***Which stood afar off***— They kept at a distance, because forbidden by law and custom to come near to those who were sound, for fear of infecting them. See Leviticus 13:46; Numbers 5:2; 2 Kings 15:5.

**Verse 13. *They lifted up their voices***— They cried with one accord—they were all equally necessitous, and there was but one voice among them all, though ten were engaged in crying at the same time. As they were companions in suffering, they were also companions in prayer. Prayer should be strong and earnest, when the disease is great and inveterate. Sin is the worst of all leprosy; it not only separates those to whom it cleaves

from the righteous, but it separates them from God; and nothing but the pitying heart and powerful hand of Christ Jesus can set any soul free from it.

**Verse 14. *Show yourselves unto the priests.***— According to the direction, Leviticus 13:2, etc.; Leviticus 14:2, etc. Our Lord intended that their cure should be received by faith: they depended on his goodness and power; and though they had no promise, yet they went at his command to do that which those only were required by the law to do who were already healed.

***And-as they went***— In this spirit of implicit faith; they were cleansed. God highly honors this kind of faith, and makes it the instrument in his hand of working many miracles. He who will not believe till he receives what he calls a reason for it, is never likely to get his soul saved. The highest, the most sovereign reason, that can be given for believing, is that God has commanded it.

**Verse 15. *One of them, when he saw that he was healed, etc.***— It seems that he did not wait to go first to the priest, but turned immediately back, and gave public praise to the kind hand from which he had received his cure.

**Verse 16. *He was a Samaritan.***— One who professed a very corrupt religion; and from whom much less was to be expected than from the other nine, who probably were Jews.

**Verse 17. *Where are the nine?***— Where are the numbers that from time to time have been converted to God? Are they still found praising him, with their faces on the dust, as they did at first? Alas! how many are turned back to perdition! and how many are again mingled with the world! Reader! art thou of this number?

**Verse 18. *This stranger.***— Often God receives more praise and affectionate obedience from those who had long lived without his knowledge and fear, than from those who were bred up among his people, and who profess to be called by his name. The simple reason is, Those who have MUCH forgiven will love much, Luke 7:47.

**Verse 19. *Thy faith hath made thee whole.***— Thy faith hath been the means of receiving that influence by which thou hast been cleansed.

**Verse 20. *Cometh not with observation***— With scrupulous observation. That this is the proper meaning of the original, *μετα παρατηρησεως*, KYPKE and others have amply proved from the best Greek writers. As if he had said: “The kingdom of God, the glorious religion of the Messiah, does not come in such a way as to be discerned only by sagacious critics, or is only to be seen by those who are scrupulously watching for it; it is not of such a nature as to be confined to one place, so that men might say of it, Behold it is only here, or only there: for this kingdom of God is publicly revealed; and behold it is among you; I proclaim it publicly, and work those miracles which prove the kingdom of God is come; and none of these things are done in a corner.”

Dr. Lightfoot has well observed that there are two senses especially in which the phrase “kingdom of heaven,” is to be understood. 1. The promulgation and establishment of the Christian religion. 2. The total overthrow of the Jewish polity. The Jews imagined that when the Messiah should come he would destroy the Gentiles, and reign gloriously over the Jews: the very reverse of this, our Lord intimates, should be the case. He was about to destroy the whole Jewish polity, and reign gloriously among the Gentiles. Hence he mentions the case of the general deluge, and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. As if he had said: “The coming of this kingdom shall be as fatal to you as the deluge was to the old world, and as the fire and brimstone from heaven were to Sodom and Gomorrah.” Our Lord states that this kingdom of heaven was within them, i.e. that they themselves should be the scene of these desolations, as, through their disobedience and rebellion, they possessed the seeds of these judgments. See on Matthew 3:2.

**Verse 21. *Lo here! or, lo there!***— Perhaps those Pharisees thought that the Messiah was kept secret, in some private place, known only to some of their rulers; and that by and by he should be proclaimed in a similar way to that in which Joash was by Jehoiada the priest. See the account, 2 Chronicles 23:1-11.

**Verse 22. *When ye shall desire to see one of the days***— As it was our Lord’s constant custom to support and comfort the minds of his disciples, we cannot suppose that he intimates here that they shall be left destitute of those blessings necessary for their support in a day of trial. When he

says, Ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, he either means, ye of this nation, ye Jews, and addresses his disciples as if they should bear witness to the truth of the declaration; intimating that heavy calamities were about to fall upon them, and that they should desire in vain to have those opportunities of returning to God which now they rejected; or, he means that such should the distressed state of this people be, that the disciples would through pity and tenderness desire the removal of those punishments from them, which could not be removed because the cup of their iniquity was full. But the former is more likely to be the sense of the place.

**Verse 23. *And they shall say***— Or, And IF they shall say. Two MSS., the Syriac and Armenian, have εαν, IF.

**See here**— KM, sixteen others, and the later Syriac, have ο χριστος, Behold the Christ is here. This is undoubtedly the meaning of the place. See on Matthew 24:23.

**Verse 24. *As the lightning, that lighteneth***— See this particularly explained, Matthew 24:27, 28.

**Verse 25. *But first must he suffer many things***— As the cup of the iniquity of this people shall not be full till they have finally rejected and crucified the Lord of life and glory, so this desolation cannot take place till after my death.

**Verse 26. *As it was in the days of Noe***— See on Matthew 24:38.

**Verse 27. *They did eat, they drank, etc.***— They spent their whole lives in reference to this world; and made no sort of provision for their immortal souls. So it was when the Romans came to destroy Judea; there was a universal carelessness, and no one seemed to regard the warnings given by the Son of God.

**Verse 29. *It rained fire and brimstone***— Instead of it rained, Genesis 19:24 justifies the insertion of the pronoun he, as implied in the verb εβρεξε; for it is there said that Jehovah rained fire and brimstone from Jehovah out of heaven.

**Verse 31. *He which shall be upon the housetop***— See this explained on Matthew 24:17.

**Verse 32. *Remember Lot's wife.***— Relinquish every thing, rather than lose your souls. She looked back, Genesis 19:26; probably she turned back also to carry some of her goods away—for so much the preceding verse seems to intimate, and became a monument of the Divine displeasure, and of her own folly and sin. It is a proof that we have loved with a criminal affection that which we leave with grief and anxiety, though commanded by the Lord to abandon it.

**Verse 33. *Whosoever shall seek to save his life***— These or similar words were spoken on another occasion. See on Matthew 10:39; 16:25, 26.

**Verse 34. — 36.** On the subject of these verses see Matthew 24:40, 41. The 36th verse {Luke 17:36} is, without doubt, an interpolation; see the margin. It was probably borrowed from Matthew 24:40. The whole verse is wanting in-ABEGHKLQS, more than fifty others, the Coptic, Aethiopic, Gothic, Slavonic, and many of the fathers: Griesbach has left it out of the text. Well might our translators say in the margin, This 36th verse is wanting in most of the Greek copies. Griesbach thinks it might have been omitted on account of the similar ending, (see the preceding verse,) or that it was borrowed from Matthew 24:40.

**Verse 37. *Where, Lord?***— In what place shall all these dreadful evils fall? The answer our Lord gives in a figure, the application of which they are to make themselves. Where the dead carcass is, there will be the birds of prey—where the sin is, there will the punishment be. See on Matthew 24:28.

Thither will the eagles (or vultures) be gathered together. The jackal or chakal is a devourer of dead bodies; and the vulture is not less so: it is very remarkable how suddenly these birds appear after the death of an animal in the open field, though a single one may not have been seen on the spot for a long period before. The following chapter seems to be a continuation of this discourse: at least it is likely they were spoken on the same occasion. Both contain truths which the reader should carefully ponder, and receive in the spirit of prayer and faith, that he may not come into the same condemnation into which these have fallen.

## CHAPTER 18

*The parable of the importunate widow, 1-8. Of the Pharisee and the publican, 9-14. Infants brought to Christ, 15-17. The ruler who wished to know how he might inherit eternal life, 18-23. Our Lord's reflections on his case, 24-27. What they shall receive who follow Christ, 28-30. He foretells his approaching passion and death, 31-34. He restores a blind man to sight at Jericho, 35-43.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 18

**Verse 1. *Men ought always to pray***— Therefore the plain meaning and moral of the parable are evident; viz. that as afflictions and desolations were coming on the land, and they should have need of much patience and continual fortitude, and the constant influence and protection of the Almighty, therefore they should be instant in prayer. It states, farther, that men should never cease praying for that the necessity of which God has given them to feel, till they receive a full answer to their prayers. No other meaning need be searched for in this parable: St. Luke, who perfectly knew his Master's meaning, has explained it as above.

**Verse 2. *A judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man***— It is no wonder that our Lord calls this person an unrighteous judge, Luke 18:6. No person is worthy to be put in the sacred office of a judge who does not deeply fear God, and tenderly respect his fellow creatures. Because this person feared not God, he paid no attention to the calls of justice; and because he respected not man, he was unmoved at the complaint of the widow. Even among the heathens this was the character of a man totally abandoned to all evil. So Dion Cassius says of Vitellius, that he neither regarded gods nor men—*ουτε των ανθρωπων, ουτε των θεων εφροντιζεν*.

**Verse 3. *Avenge me of mine adversary***.— The original, *εκδικησον με απο του αντιδικου μου*, had better be translated, Do me justice against, or vindicate me from, my adversary. If the woman had come to get revenge, as our common translation intimates, I think our blessed Lord



would never have permitted her to have the honor of a place in the sacred records. She desired to have justice, and that only; and by her importunity she got that which the unrighteous judge had no inclination to give, but merely for his own ease.

**Verse 4. *He said within himself***— How many actions which appear good have neither the love of God, nor that of our neighbor, but only self-love of the basest kind, for their principle and motive!

**Verse 5. *She weary me.***— ὑπωπιάζει με, Stun me. A metaphor taken from boxers, who bruise each other, and by beating each other about the face blacken the eyes. See 1 Corinthians 9:27.

**Verse 6. *Hear what the unjust judge saith.***— Our blessed Lord intimates that we should reason thus with ourselves: “If a person of such an infamous character as this judge was could yield to the pressing and continual solicitations of a poor widow, for whom he felt nothing but contempt, how much more ready must God be, who is infinitely good and merciful, and who loves his creatures in the tenderest manner, to give his utmost salvation to all them who diligently seek it!”

**Verse 7. *And shall not God avenge his own elect***— And will not God the righteous Judge do justice for his chosen? Probably this may refer to the cruel usage which his disciples had met with, and were still receiving, from the disobedient and unbelieving Jews; and which should be finally visited upon them in the destruction of their city, and the calamities which should follow. But we may consider the text as having a more extensive meaning. As God has graciously promised to give salvation to every soul that comes unto him through his Son, and has put his Spirit in their hearts, inducing them to cry unto him incessantly for it; the goodness of his nature and the promise of his grace bind him to hear the prayers they offer unto him, and to grant them all that salvation which he has led them by his promise and Spirit to request.

***Which cry day and night unto him, etc.***— This is a genuine characteristic of the true elect or disciples of Christ. They feel they have neither light, power, nor goodness, but as they receive them from him; and, as he is the desire of their soul, they incessantly seek that they may be upheld and saved by him.

***Though he bear long with them?***— Rather, and HE is compassionate towards THEM, and consequently not at all like to the unrighteous judge. Instead of μακροθυμων, and be long-suffering, as in our translation, I read μακροθυμει, he is compassionate, which reading is supported by ABDLQ, and several others. The reason which our Lord gives for the success of his chosen, is, 1. They cry unto him day and night. 2. HE is compassionate towards THEM. In consequence of the first, they might expect justice even from an unrighteous judge; and, in consequence of the second, they are sure of salvation, because they ask it from that God who is towards them a Father of eternal love and compassion. There was little reason to expect justice from the unrighteous judge. 1. Because he was unrighteous; and 2. Because he had no respect for man: no, not even for a poor desolate widow. But there is all the reason under heaven to expect mercy from God: 1. Because he is righteous, and he has promised it; and 2. Because he is compassionate towards his creatures; being ever prone to give more than the most enlarged heart can request of him.

Every reader must perceive that the common translation is so embarrassed as to be almost unintelligible; while that in this note, from the above authorities, is as plain as possible, and shows this beautiful parable to be one of the most invaluable pieces in the word of God.

**Verse 8. *He will avenge them speedily.***— Or, He will do them justice speedily-εν ταχει, instantly, in a trice. 1. Because he has promised it; and 2. Because he is inclined to do it.

***When the Son of man cometh***— To require the produce of the seed of the kingdom sown among this people.

***Shall he find faith on the earth?***— Or rather, Shall he find fidelity in this land? Shall he find that the soil has brought forth a harvest proportioned to the culture bestowed on it? No! And therefore he destroyed that land.

**Verse 9. *Despised***— εξουθενουντας, Disdained, made nothing of others, treated them with sovereign contempt. Our Lord grants that the Pharisees made clean the outside: but, alas! what pride, vain glory, and contempt for others, were lodged within!

**Verse 10. *A Pharisee***— For a description of the Pharisees and their tenets, see on Matthew 16:1.

**Publican.**— See an account of these on Matthew 5:46. Both these persons went to the temple to pray, i.e. to worship God: they were probably both Jews, and felt themselves led by different motives to attend at the temple, at the hour of prayer: the one to return thanks for the mercies he had received; the other to implore that grace which alone could redeem him from his sins.

**Verse 11. *Stood and prayed thus with himself***— Or, stood by himself and prayed, as some would translate the words. He probably supposed it disgraceful to appear to have any connection with this penitent publican: therefore his conduct seemed to say, “Stand by thyself; I am more holy than thou.” He seems not only to have stood by himself, but also to have prayed by himself; neither associating in person nor in petitions with his poor guilty neighbor.

***God, I thank thee, etc.***— In Matthew 5:20, our Lord says, Unless your righteousness abound more than that of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of God: see the note there. Now, the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees is described here by a Pharisee himself. We find it was twofold: 1. It consisted in doing no harm to others. 2. In attending all the ordinances of God, then established in the Jewish economy; and in these things they were not like other men, the bulk of the inhabitants of the land paying little or no attention to them. That the Pharisees were in their origin a pure and holy people can admit of little doubt; but that they had awfully degenerated before our Lord’s time is sufficiently evident. They had lost the spirit of their institution, and retained nothing else than its external regulations. See on Matthew 16:1.

1. This Pharisee did no harm to others—I am not rapacious, nor unjust, nor an adulterer. I seize no man’s property through false pretences. I take the advantage of no man’s ignorance in buying or selling. I avoid every species of uncleanness. In a word, I do to others as I wish them to do to me. How many of those called Christians are not half as good as this Pharisee! And, yet, he was far from the kingdom of God.

2. He observed the ordinances of religion—I fast twice in the week. The Jewish days of fasting, in each week, were the second and fifth; what we call Monday and Thursday. These were instituted in remembrance of Moses’ going up to the mount to give the law, which they suppose to

have been on the fifth day; and of his descent, after he had received the two tables, which they suppose was on the second day of the week.

**Verse 12. *I give tithes of all that I possess.***— Or, of all I acquire, κτομαι. Raphelius has well observed, that this verb, in the present tense, signifies to acquire—in the preter, to possess: the Pharisee’s meaning seems to be, “As fast as I gain any thing, I give the tenth part of it to the house of God and to the poor.” Those who dedicate a certain part of their earnings to the Lord should never let it rest with themselves, lest possession should produce covetousness. This was the Pharisee’s righteousness, and the ground on which he builded his hope of final salvation. That the Pharisees had a strong opinion of their own righteousness, the following history will prove:—

“Rabbi Simeon, the son of Jochai, said: The whole world is not worth thirty righteous persons, such as our father Abraham. If there were only thirty righteous persons in the world, I and my son should make two of them; but if there were but twenty, I and my son would be of the number; and if there were but ten, I and my son would be of the number: and if there were but five, I and my son would be of the five; and if there were but two, I and my son would be those two; and if there were but one, myself should be that one.” Bereshith Rabba, s. 35, fol. 34. This is a genuine specimen of Pharisaic pride. No wonder that our Lord accused these of pride and vain glory: they were far from humility, and consequently far from righteousness.

**Verse 13. *The publican, standing afar off***— Not because he was a heathen, and dared not approach the holy place; (for it is likely he was a Jew;) but because he was a true penitent, and felt himself utterly unworthy to appear before God.

***Would not lift up-his eyes***— Holding down the head, with the eyes fixed upon the earth, was, 1. A sign of deep distress. 2. Of a consciousness and confession of guilt. And, 3. It was the very posture that the Jewish rabbins required in those who prayed to God. See Ezra 9:6; and Mishna, in Berachoth, chap. v.; and Kypke’s note here. So the Pharisee appears to have forgotten one of his own precepts.

***But smote upon his breast***— Smiting the breast was a token of excessive grief, commonly practised in all nations. It seems to intimate a desire, in the penitent, to punish that heart through the evil propensities of which the sin deplored had been committed. It is still used among the Roman Catholics in their general confessions.

***God be merciful to me***— ἱλασθητι μοι—Be propitious toward me through sacrifice-or, let an atonement be made for me. I am a sinner, and cannot be saved but in this way. The Greek word ἱλασκω, or ἱλασκομαι, often signifies to make expiation for sin; and is used by the Septuagint, Psalm 65:4; 78:38; 79:9, for כִּפֶּה kipper, he made an atonement. So ἱλασμος a propitiation, is used by the same, for חַטָּאת chataah, a sacrifice for sin, Ezekiel 44:27; and ἱλαστήριον, the mercy seat, is, in the above version, the translation of כַּפֹּרֶת kapporeth, the lid of the ark of the covenant, on and before which the blood of the expiatory victim was sprinkled, on the great day of atonement. The verb is used in exactly the same sense by the best Greek writers. The following from Herodotus, lib. i. p. 19, edit. Gale, is full in point. θυσισι μεγαλησι τον εν δελφοισι θεον ἱλασκετο, Croesus appeased, or made an atonement to, the Delphic god by immense sacrifices. We see then, at once, the reason why our blessed Lord said that the tax-gatherer went down to his house justified rather than the other:-he sought for mercy through an atonement for sin, which was the only way in which God had from the beginning purposed to save sinners. As the Pharisee depended on his doing no harm, and observing the ordinances of religion for his acceptance with God, according to the economy of grace and justice, he must be rejected: for as all had sinned and come short of the glory of God, and no man could make an atonement for his sins, so he who did not take refuge in that which God's mercy had provided must be excluded from the kingdom of heaven. This was no new doctrine: it was the doctrine publicly and solemnly preached by every sacrifice offered under the Jewish law. Without shedding of blood there is no remission, was the loud and constant cry of the whole Mosaic economy. From this we may see what it is to have a righteousness superior to that of the scribes and Pharisees. We must humble ourselves before God, which they did not: we must take refuge in the blood of the cross, which they would not; and be meek and humble of heart, which they were not.

Many suppose that the Pharisees thought they could acquire righteousness of themselves, independently of God, and that they did not depend on him for grace or power: but let us not make them worse than they were—for this is disclaimed by the Pharisee in the text, who attributes all the good he had to God: O God, I thank thee, that I am not as others—it is thou who hast made me to differ. But this was not sufficient: restraining grace must not be put in the place of the great atonement. Guilt he had contracted—and this guilt must be blotted out; and that there was no way of doing this, but through an atonement, the whole Jewish law declared. See the note on Matthew 5:20.

**Verse 14. *Went doom to his house justified***— His sin blotted out; and himself accepted.

***Rather than the other***— *ἡ ἐκεῖνος*: that is, the other was not accepted, because he exalted himself—he made use of the mercies which he acknowledged he owed to God, to make claims on the Divine approbation, and to monopolize the salvation of the Most High! He was abased, because he vainly trusted that he was righteous, and depended on what he had been enabled to do, and looked not for a change of heart, nor for reconciliation to God. It is a strange perversion of the human mind, to attempt to make God our debtor by the very blessings which his mere mercy has conferred upon us! It was a maxim among the Jews, that whoever brought a sacrifice to the temple returned justified. But our Lord shows that this depended on the state of mind—if they were not humbled under a sense of sin, they were not justified, though they had even offered a sacrifice.

**Verse 15. — 17. *They brought unto him also infants***— On these verses the reader is requested to consult the notes on Matthew 19:13, 14, and on Mark 10:16.

When a spiritual guide (a gooroo) visits his disciple, the latter takes his child to him for his blessing, forcing the head of the child down to the gooroo's feet, who gives what is called his blessing in some such words as these, Live long!-Be learned!-Be rich!

**Verse 18. — 23. *A certain ruler***— See the case of this person largely explained on Matthew 19:16-22, and Mark 10:21, 22.

**Verse 24. *How hardly shall they that have riches, etc.***— See the notes on this discourse of our Lord, on Matthew 19:21-30, and Mark 10:30.

**Verse 25. *It as easier for a camel***— Instead of *καμηλον*, a camel, S, and four other MSS., read *καμιλον*, a cable. See the same reading noticed on the parallel place, Matthew 19:24.

**Verse 28. *We have left all***— Our trades, our houses, and families. The reader is desired to consult the notes on Matthew 4:20; 19:27, etc.

**Verse 29. *That hath left house, or parents, etc.***— See on Matthew 19:28, 29, and Mark 10:29, 30.

***Or brethren***— *η αδελφας*, OR SISTERS, is added by the Cod. Bezae, and some others.

**Verse 31. *Behold, we go up to Jerusalem***— See the notes on this discourse, Matthew 20:17-19, and Mark 10:32.

**Verse 33. *And the third day he shall rise again.***— See Hosea 6:2; and let the reader observe that the passage should be read thus: In the third day he will raise HIM up, (*וְנִמְצָא*) and we shall live before him: his resurrection shall be the pledge, token, and cause of ours.

**Verse 34. *They understood none of these things***— Notwithstanding all the information which Christ had given them concerning this awful subject, they could not as yet fully comprehend how the Messiah should suffer; or how their Master, whose power they knew was unlimited, should permit the Jews and Gentiles to torment and slay him as he here intimates they would.

**Verse 35. *A certain blind man***— Bartimeus. See this transaction explained at large, on Matthew 20:29-34, and Mark 10:46, etc.

**Verse 40. *And when he was come near***— See the remarkable account of the negro and white man, related on Mark 10:50.

**Verse 43. *And all the people-gave: praise unto God.***— They saw the finger of God in what was done; and they gave him that praise which was due to his name. The Pharisees either saw not, or would not acknowledge this. The common people are often better judges of the work of God than

the doctors themselves. They are more simple, are not puffed up with the pride of learning, and are less liable to be warped by prejudice or self-interest. Happy are those spiritually blind persons, to whom Christ has given eyes, that they may know him: feet, that they may follow him: a tongue, that they may praise him: and a heart, that they may love him! A true conversion, which no way contradicts itself, but is followed by an edifying life, makes known the majesty and power of God in a more eminent manner than the greatest external miracles. Quesnel.

FOR a practical use of the principal subjects in this chapter, see the parallel places in Matthew and Mark. How shall I be justified? is a most important question, which the parable of the Pharisee and the publican most distinctly answers. A deep consciousness of sin, humiliation of heart, and taking refuge by faith in the great atonement, is the way, and the only way. Even the worst transgressors, coming thus to God, are accepted. Blessed news for penitent sinners!-for though they cannot boast of a righteousness equal to that of the scribes and Pharisees, yet they find they can, coming as the publican, be justified freely, through the blood of the cross, from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. If this be so, how shall they escape who neglect so GREAT a SALVATION!



## CHAPTER 19

*The conversion of Zaccheus, 1-10. The parable of the nobleman, his ten servants, and the ten pounds, 11-27. Christ sends his disciples for a colt on which he rides into Jerusalem, 28-40. He weeps over the city, and foretells its destruction, 41-44. Goes into the temple, and casts out the buyers and sellers, 45, 46. The chief priests and the scribes seek to destroy him, but are afraid of the people, who hear him attentively. 47, 48.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 19

**Verse 1. *Entered and passed through***— Was passing through. Our Lord had not as yet passed through Jericho—he was only passing through it; for the house of Zaccheus, in which he was to lodge, Luke 19:5, was in it.

**Verse 2. *Zaccheus***— It is not unlikely that this person was a Jew by birth, see Luke 19:9; but because he had engaged in a business so infamous, in the eyes of the Jews, he was considered as a mere heathen, Luke 19:7.

***Chief among the publicans***— Either a farmer-general of the taxes, who had subordinate collectors under him: or else the most respectable and honorable man among that class at Jericho.

***He was rich.***— And therefore the more unlikely to pay attention to an impoverished Messiah, preaching a doctrine of universal mortification and self-denial.

**Verse 3. *And he sought to see Jesus who he was***— So the mere principle of curiosity in him led to his conversion and salvation, and to that of his whole family, Luke 19:9.

**Verse 4. *He ran before***— The shortness of his stature was amply compensated by his agility and invention. Had he been as tall as the generality of the crowd, he might have been equally unnoticed with the rest. His getting into the tree made him conspicuous: had he not been so low of stature he would not have done so. Even the imperfections of our persons may become subservient to the grace of God in our eternal

salvation. As the passover was at hand, the road was probably crowded with people going to Jerusalem; but the fame of the cure of the blind man was probably the cause of the concourse at this time.

**Verse 5. *Make haste, and come down***— With this invitation, our blessed Lord conveyed heavenly influence to his heart; hence he was disposed to pay the most implicit and cheerful obedience to the call, and thus he received not the grace of God in vain.

**Verse 6. *Received him joyfully***.— He had now seen WHO he was, and he wished to hear WHAT he was; and therefore he rejoiced in the honor that God had now conferred upon him. How often does Christ make the proposal of lodging, not only in our house, but in our heart, without its being accepted! We lose much because we do not attend to the visitations of Christ: he passes by—he blesses our neighbors and our friends; but, often, neither curiosity nor any other motive is sufficient to induce us to go even to the house of God, to hear of the miracles of mercy which he works in behalf of those who seek him.

**Verse 7. *To be guest with a man that is a sinner***.— Meaning either that he was a heathen, or, though by birth a Jew, yet as bad as a heathen, because of his unholy and oppressive office. See the note on Luke 7:37.

**Verse 8. *The half of my goods I give to the poor***— Probably he had already done so for some time past; though it is generally understood that the expressions only refer to what he now purposed to do.

***If I have taken any thing-by false accusation***— εσυκοφαντησα, from συκον, a fig, and φαινω, I show or declare; for among the primitive Athenians, when the use of that fruit was first found out, or in the time of a dearth, when all sorts of provisions were exceedingly scarce, it was enacted that no figs should be exported from Attica; and this law (not being actually repealed, when a plentiful harvest had rendered it useless, by taking away the reason of it) gave occasion to ill-natured and malicious fellows to accuse all persons they found breaking the letter of it; and from them all busy informers have ever since been branded with the name of sycophants. POTTER'S Antiq. vol. i. c. 21, end.

***I restore him fourfold***.— This restitution the Roman laws obliged the tax-gatherers to make, when it was proved they had abused their power by

oppressing the people. But here was no such proof: the man, to show the sincerity of his conversion, does it of his own accord. He who has wronged his fellow must make restitution, if he have it in his power. He that does not do so cannot expect the mercy of God. See the observations at the end of Genesis 42, and Numbers 5:7.

**Verse 9. *Jesus said unto him***— Bishop PEARCE observes: “Probably Luke wrote *αὐτοῦς*, not *αὐτον*, said unto them, i.e. to those who had before called Zaccheus a sinner; (Luke 19:7;) for Jesus here speaks of Zaccheus in the third person, he also is a son of Abraham, and therefore he was not then speaking to him.” This conjecture of this respectable prelate is supported by the margin of the later Syriac, and by every copy of the Itala but two.

***To this house***— *τῷ οἴκῳ τούτῳ*, To this very house or family. As if he had said: “If he be a sinner, he stands in the greater need of salvation, and the Son of man is come to seek and save what was lost, Luke 19:10; and therefore to save this lost soul is a part of my errand into the world.” See the sentiment contained in this verse explained on Matthew 18:11.

**Verse 11. *And as they heard these things***— I believe the participle of the present tense, here, is used for the participle of the past, or rather that the participle of the present conveys sometimes the sense of the past; for this discourse appears to have taken place the next day after he had lodged at the house of Zaccheus; for the text says that he was then drawing nigh to Jerusalem, from which Jericho was distant nineteen miles. I have not ventured to translate it so, yet I think probably the text should be read thus: And after they had heard these things, he proceeded to speak a parable, because they were nigh to Jerusalem.

***Immediately appear.***— Perhaps the generality of his followers thought that, on his arrival at Jerusalem, he would proclaim himself king.

**Verse 12. *A certain nobleman***— In the following parable there are two distinct morals intended; let it be viewed in these two points of light. 1. The behavior of the citizens to the nobleman; and, 2. The behavior of his own servants to him. 1. By the behavior of the citizens, and their punishment, (Luke 19:14, 27,) we are taught that the Jews, who were the people of Christ, would reject him, and try to prevent his reigning over

them in his spiritual kingdom, and would for that crime be severely punished by the destruction of their state. And this moral is all that answers to the introductory words, Luke 19:11. And they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. 2. The other moral extends itself through the whole of the parable, viz. that the disciples of Christ, who are his servants; and who made a good improvement of the favors granted them by the Gospel, should be rewarded in proportion to the improvement made under the means of grace. This latter moral is all that is intended by Matthew in Luke 25:14, etc., who mentions this parable as spoken by Christ after his triumphant entry into Jerusalem; though Luke has here placed that event after the parable. See Bishop PEARCE.

The meaning of the different parts of this parable appears to be as follows.

A certain nobleman—The Lord Jesus, who was shortly to be crucified by the Jews.

***Went into a far country***— Ascended to the right hand of the Divine Majesty.

***To receive a kingdom***— To take possession of the mediatorial kingdom, the right to which, as Messiah, he had acquired by his sufferings: see Philippians 2:8, 9; Hebrews 1:3, 8, 9. In these words there is an allusion to the custom of those days, when they who had kingdoms or governments given unto them went to Rome to receive that dignity from the emperors. Bishop PEARCE. In proof of this, see Josephus, Ant. l. xiv. c. xiv., where we find Herod went to Rome to receive the sanction and authority of the Roman emperor. And, from lib. xvii. c. 3, we learn that his successors acted in the same way.

***And to return.***— To judge and punish the rebellious Jews.

**Verse 13. *Ten servants***— All those who professed to receive his doctrine. Ten was a kind of sacred number among the Hebrews, as well as seven. See Luke 14:31; 15:8; Matthew 15:1.

***Ten pounds***— Ten minas. The Septuagint use the original word μνᾶ for the Hebrew מנָה maneh, from which it is evidently derived; and it appears from Ezekiel 45:12, to have been equal to sixty shekels in money. Now suppose we allow the shekel, with Dean Prideaux, to be 3s., then the mina

or maneh was equal to 9ú English money. The impropriety of rendering the original word pound, will easily be seen by the most superficial reader. We should therefore retain the original word for the same reason so often before assigned. SUIDAS says, “The talent was sixty minas, the mina one hundred drachms, the drachm six oboli, the obolus six chalci, the chalcus seven mites or lepta.”

By the ten minas given to each, we may understand the Gospel of the kingdom given to every person who professes to believe in Christ, and which he is to improve to the salvation of his soul. The same word is given to all, that all may believe and be saved.

**Verse 14. *His citizens***— Or countrymen—the Jewish people, who professed to be subjects of the kingdom of God.

***Hated him***— Despised him for the meanness of his birth, his crucifixion to the world, and for the holiness of his doctrine. Neither mortification nor holiness suits the dispositions of the carnal mind.

***Sent a message after him***— As, in Luke 19:12, there is an allusion to a person’s going to Rome, when elected to be ruler of a province or kingdom, to receive that dignity from the hand of the emperor, so it is here intimated that, after the person went to receive this dignity, some of the discontented citizens took the opportunity to send an embassy to the emperor, to prevent him from establishing the object of their hatred in the government.

***We will not have this man, etc.***— The Jews rejected Jesus Christ, would not submit to his government, and, a short time after this, preferred even a murderer to him. Like cleaves to like. No wonder that those who murdered the Lord of glory should prefer a murderer, one of their own temper, to the Redeemer of their souls.

**Verse 15. *When he was returned***— When he came to punish the disobedient Jews; and when he shall come to judge the world. See the parable of the talents, Matthew 25:14, etc.

**Verse 16. *Lord, thy pound hath gained ten***— The principal difference between this parable and that of the talents above referred to is, that the mina given to each seems to point out the gift of the Gospel, which is the

same to all who hear it; but the talents distributed in different proportions, according to each man's ability, seem to intimate that God has given different capacities and advantages to men, by which this one gift of the Gospel may be differently improved.

**Verse 17. *Over ten cities.***— This is to be understood as referring to the new kingdom which the nobleman had just received. His former trustiest and most faithful servants he now represents as being made governors, under him, over a number of cities, according to the capacity he found in each; which capacity was known by the improvement of the minas.

**Verse 20. *Lord, behold, here is thy pound***— See Matthew 25:18.

**Verse 23. *With usury?***— *συν τοκῷ*, With its produce, i.e. what the loan of the money is fairly worth, after paying the person sufficiently for using it: for, in lent money, both the lender and borrower are supposed to reap profit.

**Verse 25. *And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.***— This whole verse is omitted by the Codex Bezae, a few others, and some copies of the Itala. It is probably an observation that some person made while our Lord was delivering the parable, with a design to correct him in the distribution: as if he had said, “Why give the mina to that person? he has got ten already; give it to one of those who has fewer.”

**Verse 26. *And from him that hath not***— See this particularly explained Matthew 13:12. Perhaps it would be well, with Bishop PEARCE, to supply the word *gained*—give it to him who hath gained ten minas; for I say unto you, That unto every one who hath gained shall be given; and, from him who hath not gained, even that which he hath received, shall be taken away.

**Verse 27. *Those-enemies-bring hither***— the Jews, whom I shall shortly slay by the sword of the Romans.

**Verse 28. *He went before***— Joyfully to anticipate his death, say some. Perhaps it means that he walked at the head of his disciples; and that he and his disciples kept on the road before other companies who were then also on their way to Jerusalem, in order to be present at the feast.

**Verse 29.** — 38. See this triumphal entry into Jerusalem explained at large on Matthew 21:1-11, and Mark 11:1-10.

**Verse 38.** *Glory in the highest.*— Mayst thou receive the uttermost degrees of glory! See on Matthew 21:9.

**Verse 40.** *If these should hold their peace, the stones would-cry out.*— Of such importance is my present conduct to you and to others, being expressly predicted by one of your own prophets, Zechariah 9:9, as pointing out the triumph of humility over pride, and of meekness over rage and malice, as signifying the salvation which I bring to the lost souls of men, that, if this multitude were silent, God would give even to the stones a voice, that the advent of the Messiah might be duly celebrated.

**Verse 41.** *And wept over it*— See Matthew 23:37.

**Verse 42.** *The things which belong unto thy peace!*— It is very likely that our Lord here alludes to the meaning of the word Jerusalem, ירושלים from ירה yereh, he shall see, and שלום shalom, peace or prosperity. Now, because the inhabitants of it had not seen this peace and salvation, because they had refused to open their eyes, and behold this glorious light of heaven which shone among them, therefore he said, Now they are hidden from thine eyes, still alluding to the import of the name.

**Verse 43.** *Cast a trench about thee*— This was literally fulfilled when this city was besieged by Titus. Josephus gives a very particular account of the building of this wall, which he says was effected in three days, though it was not less than thirty-nine furlongs in circumference; and that, when this wall and trench were completed, the Jews were so enclosed on every side that no person could escape out of the city, and no provision could be brought in, so that they were reduced to the most terrible distress by the famine which ensued. The whole account is well worth the reader's attention. See Josephus, War, book v. chap. xxii. sec. 1, 2, 3.

**Verse 44.** *The time of thy visitation.*— That is, the time of God's gracious offers of mercy to thee. This took in all the time which elapsed from the preaching of John the Baptist to the coming of the Roman armies, which included a period of above forty years.

**Verse 45. *Went into the temple***— See all this transaction explained, Matthew 21:12-16.

**Verse 47. *And he taught daily in the temple.***— This he did for five or six days before his crucifixion. Some suppose that it was on Monday in the passion week that he thus entered into Jerusalem, and purified the temple; and on Thursday he was seized late at night: during these four days he taught in the temple, and lodged each night at Bethany. See the note on Matthew 21:17.

**Verse 48. *Were very attentive to hear him.***— Or, They heard him with the utmost attention, *ἐξεκρεματοῦν αὐτοῦ ἀκουῶν*, literally, They hung upon him, hearing. The same form of speech is used often by both Greek and Latin writers of the best repute. \- Exodus vultu dicentis, pendet omnium vultus.

The face of every man hung on the face of the speaker.

— *Pendetque iterum narrantis ab ore. Virg. AEn. iv. 79*

And she hung again on the lips of the narrator. The words of the evangelist mark, not only the deepest attention because of the importance of the subject, but also the very high gratification which the hearers had from the discourse. Those who read or hear the words of Christ, in this way, must inevitably become wise to salvation.

THE reader is requested to refer to Matthew 24, and to Matthew 25:14, for more extensive information on the different subjects in this chapter, and to the other parallel places marked in the margin. The prophecy relative to the destruction of Jerusalem is one of the most circumstantial, and the most literally fulfilled, of any prediction ever delivered. See this particularly remarked at the conclusion of Matthew 24, where the whole subject is amply reviewed.



## CHAPTER 20

*The question concerning the authority of Christ, and the baptism of John, 1-8. The parable of the vine-yard let out to wicked husbandmen, 9-18. The chief priests and scribes are offended, and lay snares for him, 19, 20. The question about tribute, 21-26. The question about the resurrection of the dead, and our Lord's answer, 27-40. How Christ is the son of David, 41-44. He warns his disciples against the hypocrisy of the scribes, whose condemnation he points out, 45-47.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 20

**Verse 1.** *One of those days*— Supposed to have been one of the four last days of his life, mentioned Luke 19:47, probably Tuesday before the passover.

**Verse 2.** *By what authority, etc.*— See the note on Matthew 21:23-27.

**Verse 9.** *A certain man planted a vineyard, etc.*— See this parable largely explained, Matthew 21:33-46. See also on Mark 12:4-9.

**Verse 10.** *That they should give him of the fruit*— The Hindoo corn-merchants, that have lent money to husbandmen, send persons in harvest-time to collect their share of the produce of the ground.

**Verse 16.** *God forbid.*— Or, Let it not be, μη γενοιτο. Our phrase, God forbid, answers pretty well to the meaning of the Greek, but it is no translation.

**Verse 18.** *Grind him to powder.*— See on Matthew 21:44.

**Verse 20.** *They watched him*— παρατηρησαντες, Insidiously watching. See on Luke 14:1.

*Spies*— εγκαθετους, from εν, in, and καθημι, I let down, to set in ambush. One who crouches in some secret place to spy, listen, catch, or hurt. Hesychius explains the word by ενεδρευοντες, those who lie in wait, or in ambush, to surprise and slay. Josephus uses the word to signify

a person bribed for a particular purpose. See War, b. ii. c. ii. s. 5, and b. vi. c. v. s. 2. No doubt the persons mentioned in the text were men of the basest principles, and were hired by the malicious Pharisees to do what they attempted in vain to perform.

**Verse 22. *Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar***— See this insidious but important question considered at large on Matthew 22:16-22.

**Verse 29. *There were therefore seven brethren***— See on Matthew 22:23-33.

**Verse 34. *The children of this world***— Men and women in their present state of mortality and probation; procreation being necessary to restore the waste made by death, and to keep up the population of the earth.

**Verse 36. *Equal unto the angels***— Who neither marry nor die. See the Jewish testimonies to the resurrection of the human body quoted at length on 1 Corinthians 15:42.

**Verse 38. *All live unto him***.— There is a remarkable passage in Josephus's account of the Maccabees, chap. xvi., which proves that the best informed Jews believed that the souls of righteous men were in the presence of God in a state of happiness. "They who lose their lives for the sake of God, LIVE unto GOD, as do Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the rest of the patriarchs." And one not less remarkable in Shemoth Rabba, fol. 159. "Rabbi Abbin saith, The Lord said unto Moses, Find me out ten righteous persons among the people, and I will not destroy thy people. Then said Moses, Behold, here am I, Aaron, Eleazar, Ithamar, Phineas, Caleb, and Joshua; but God said, Here are but seven, where are the other three? When Moses knew not what to do, he said, O Eternal God, do those live that are dead! Yes, saith God. Then said Moses, If those that are dead do live, remember Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." So the resurrection of the dead, and the immortality and immateriality of the soul, were not strange or unknown doctrines among the Jews.

**Verse 40. *They durst not ask***— Or, did not venture to ask any other question, for fear of being again confounded, as they had already been.

**Verse 41. *How say they***— See the note on Matthew 22:42-46.

**Verse 43. *Thy footstool.***— Literally, the footstool of thy feet. They shall not only be so far humbled that the feet may be set on them; but they shall be actually subjected, and put completely under that Christ whom they now despise, and are about to crucify.

**Verse 46. *Beware of the scribes***— Take heed that ye be not seduced by those who should show you the way of salvation. See on Matthew 23:4-14.

1. How it can be supposed that the ancient Jewish Church had no distinct notion of the resurrection of the dead is to me truly surprising. The justice of God, so peculiarly conspicuous under the old covenant, might have led the people to infer that there must be a resurrection of the dead, if even the passage to which our Lord refers had not made a part of their law. As the body makes a part of the man, justice requires that not only they who are martyrs for the testimony of God, but also all those who have devoted their lives to his service, and died in his yoke, should have their bodies raised again. The justice of God is as much concerned in the resurrection of the dead, as either his power or mercy. To be freed from earthly incumbrances, earthly passions, bodily infirmities, sickness; and death, to be brought into a state of conscious existence, with a refined body and a sublime soul, both immortal, and both ineffably happy—how glorious the privilege! But of this, who shall be counted worthy in that day? Only those who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and who, by patient continuing in well doing, have sought for glory and honor and immortality.

2. A bad example, supported by the authority, reputation, and majesty of religion, is a very subtle poison, from which it is very difficult for men to preserve themselves. It is a great misfortune for any people to be obliged to beware of those very persons who ought to be their rule and pattern. This is a reflection of pious Father Quesnel; and, while we admire its depth, we may justly lament that the evil he refers to should be so prevalent as to render the observation, and the caution on which it is founded, so necessary. But let no man imagine that bad and immoral ministers are to be found among one class of persons only. They are to be found in the branches as well as in the root: in the different sects and parties as well as in the mother or national Churches, from which the

others have separated. On either hand there is little room for glorying.-Professors and ministers may change, but the truth of the Lord abideth for ever!

## CHAPTER 21

*The poor widow casting two mites into the treasury, 1-4. the destruction of the temple foretold, 5, 6. The signs of this desolation, 7. False Christs, 8. Wars, 9, 10. Earthquakes and fearful sights, 11. Persecutions against the godly, 12-19. Directions how to escape, 20-22. The tribulation of those times, 23-28. The parable of the fig tree, illustrative of the time when they may expect these calamities, 29-33. The necessity of sobriety and watchfulness, 34-36. He teaches by day in the temple, and lodges by night in the mount of Olives, and the people come early to hear him, 37, 38.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 21

**Verse 1.** *The rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.*— See all this, from Luke 21:1-4, explained on Mark 12:41-44.

**Verse 2.** *A certain poor widow*— A widow miserably poor; this is the proper import of *πενιχράν*, and her being miserably poor heightened the merit of the action.

*Two mites.*— Which Mark says, Mark 12:42, make a farthing or quadrans, the fourth part of an AS, or penny, as we term it. In Plutarch's time we find the smallest piece of brass coin in use among the Romans was the quadrans, but it appears that a smaller piece of money was in circulation among the Jews in our Lord's time, called here, and in Mark, Mark 12:42, a lepton, i.e. small, diminished, from *λειπο*, I fail. In ancient times our penny used to be marked with a deep indented cross, dividing the piece into four equal parts, which, when broken in two, made the half-penny, and, when broken into four, made the fourthing, what we have corrupted into farthing. Probably the Roman quadrans was divided in this way for the convenience of the poor. Our term mite seems to have been taken from the animal called by that name; for as that appeared to our ancestors to be the smallest of all animals, so this being the smallest of all coins was called by its name. Junius says that mite was a small base coin among the Dutch. Our word mite seems to be a contraction of the Latin minutum, a small

thing, whence the French miette, a crumb, a very small morsel. See the note on Mark 12:41.

**Verse 5. *Goodly stones***— Or, costly stones. It has been thought by some that this relates not so much to the stones of which the temple was built, as to the precious stones with which it was decorated. For an account of the stones of the temple, see on Mark 13:1.

***And gifts***— Or, consecrated things, *ἀναθημασι*. *ἀναθημα* properly signifies a thing consecrated to sacred uses: *ἀναθεμα* signifies a thing devoted to a curse, or to destruction. They both come from the same root, *ἀνατιθημι*, I lay up, separate; and though two meanings cannot be more opposite than those assigned to these words, yet in the words themselves a short vowel (ε) in the place of a long one (η) makes all the difference between blessing and cursing.

**Verse 6. *One stone upon another***— This was literally fulfilled. See Matthew 24:2.

**Verse 8. *Many shall come in my name***— Usurping my name: calling themselves the Messiah. See Matthew 24:5. Concerning this prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem, and its literal accomplishment, see the notes on Matthew 24:1-42.

**Verse 9. *Commotions***— Seditions and civil dissensions, with which no people were more agitated than the Jews.

**Verse 11. *Fearful sights***— What these were the reader will find in detail on Matthew 24:7.

**Verse 12. *Synagogues***— Or, assemblies, etc. See these all explained on Mark 13:9.

**Verse 13. *It shall turn to you for a testimony***.— That is, it shall turn out on your part for a testimony to them (your persecutors) that you are thoroughly persuaded of the truth of what you teach, and that you are no impostors.

**Verse 14. *Settle it therefore, etc.***— See on Matthew 10:19.

**Verse 15. *I will give you a mouth and wisdom***— *στομα*, a mouth, must appear plain to every person to be used here for a ready utterance, or

eloquence in speaking. They shall have an abundance of wisdom to know what to say; and they shall have an irresistible eloquence to say what they ought.

**Verse 18. *But there shall not a hair of your head perish.***— A proverbial expression for, Ye shall not suffer any essential injury. Every genuine Christian shall escape when this desolation comes upon the Jewish state.

**Verse 19. *In your patience***— Rather, your perseverance, your faithful continuance in my word and doctrine. Ye will preserve your souls. Ye shall escape the Roman sword, and not one of you shall perish in the destruction of Jerusalem. Instead of **κτησασθε**, possess, or preserve ye, I read **κτησεσθε**, ye shall preserve. This reading is supported by AB-B, five others; both the Syriac, all the Arabic, AEthiopic, Vulgate, all the Itala except two, Origen, Macarius, and Tertullian.

**Verse 22. *These be the days of vengeance***— See on Matthew 24:21.

**Verse 24. *They shall fall by the edge of the sword***— Those who perished in the siege are reckoned to be not less than eleven hundred thousand. See Matthew 24:22.

***And shall be led away captive***— To the number of ninety-seven thousand. See Josephus, War, b. vi. c. ix. s. 2, 3, and on Matthew 24:31.

***Trodden down of the Gentiles***— Judea was so completely subjugated that the very land itself was sold by Vespasian; the Gentiles possessing it, while the Jews were either nearly all killed or led away into captivity.

***Of the Gentiles be fulfilled.***— Till the different nations of the earth, to whom God shall have given the dominion over this land, have accomplished all that which the Lord hath appointed them to do; and till the time of their conversion to God take place. But when shall this be? We know not. The nations are still treading down Jerusalem, and the end is known only to the Lord. See the note on Matthew 24:31.

**Verse 25. *The sea and the waves roaring***— Figuratively pointing out the immense Roman armies by which Judea was to be overrun and destroyed.

**Verse 26. *Men's hearts failing them for fear***— Or, Men fainting away through fear, (**αποψυχοντων**,) being ready to die.

**Coming on the earth**— Or, Coming upon this land, *οικουμένη*. See this translation of the word vindicated in the note on Luke 2:1.

**Verse 29. *He spake to them a parable***— Illustrated all these predicted facts by the simile of a fig tree. See this explained on Matthew 24:32.

**Verse 31. *The kingdom of God is nigh at hand***.— After the destruction of the Jewish state, the doctrine of Christ crucified shall be preached every where, and every where prevail.

**Verse 32. *This generation***— This race of men; but see on Matthew 24:34, and Mark 13:30.

**Verse 34. *Take heed to yourselves***— See our Lord's parable, relative to this matter, explained, Mark 13:34.

***Be overcharged***— Literally, be made heavy, as is generally the case with those who have eaten or drank too much. Take heed that ye be not rendered secure by an improper use of lawful things: do not make this earth your portion: expect its dissolution, and prepare to meet your God.

**Verse 35. *The face of the whole earth***.— Or, of this whole land. The land of Judea, on which these heavy judgments were to fall. See Luke 21:25; see also Luke 2:1.

**Verse 36. *Watch ye therefore, and pray always***— Perhaps we should connect *ες παντι καιρω*, continually, with *αγρυπνειτε*, watch, as it appears to be the most natural order. Indeed the word continually belongs equally to both watch and pray; and no man is safe, at any time, who does not attend to this advice as literally as possible.

***That shall come to pass***— That is, the tribulations which are on their way to overwhelm and destroy the Jewish people. These are sufficiently stated in the preceding verses.

***To stand before the Son of man***.— To be acquitted, and to be condemned, are expressed, in Romans 14:4, by standing and falling. Those who were faithful to the grace they had received were not only not destroyed in the destruction of Jerusalem, but became heralds of the grace and mercy of God to the nations. Thus they were counted worthy to stand before the Son of man—to minister salvation in his name.



**Verse 37. *And in the day time***— Or, every day-*τας ημερας*. This probably relates to the four last days of his life already mentioned.

***Abode in the mount***— He taught all day in the temple, and withdrew every evening, and lodged in Bethany; a town at the foot, or on the declivity of the mount of Olives. See the note on Matthew 21:17.

**Verse 38. *The people came early***— He returned early from the mount of Olives, and the people came early in the morning to the temple to hear his teaching. For practical observations on the awful subject of this chapter, see Matthew 24 at the end. {Matthew 24:51}

## CHAPTER 22

*The chief priests and scribes plot our Lord's destruction, 1, 2. Judas, at the instigation of the devil, betrays him, 3-6. He eats his last supper with his disciples, 7-18. Institutes the eucharist, 19, 20. Announces one of his disciples as the traitor, 21-23: The contention which should be greatest, 24-30. Warns Peter against Satan's devices, 31, 32. Peter's resolution, 33. His denial foretold, 34. Tells his disciples to make prudent provision for their own support, 35-37. The two swords, 38. He goes to the Mount of Olives, and has his agony in the garden, 39-46. Judas comes with a mob, 47, 48. Peter cuts off the ear of the high priest's servant, which Christ heals by a touch, 49-51. He addresses the chief priests and captains of the temple, 52, 53. They lead him to the high priest's house, and Peter follows and denies his Master, 54-60. Christ looks upon him, he is stung with remorse, and weeps bitterly, 61, 62. Jesus is mocked, and variously insulted, 63-65. The next morning he is questioned before the council, 66, 67. He acknowledges himself to be the Son of God, 68-70. They condemn him, 71.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 22

**Verse 1. *The feast of unleavened bread, etc.***— See this largely explained, Exodus 23:14; Leviticus 23:2-40, and on Matthew 26:2.

**Verse 2. *They feared the people.***— The great mass of the people seem to have been convinced that Christ was at least a prophet sent from God; and it is likely they kept steady in their attachment to him. The multitude, who are represented as clamouring for his blood at the crucifixion, appear to have been a mere mob, formed out of the creatures of the chief priests and Pharisees.

**Verse 3. *Then entered Satan into Judas***— The devil filled the heart of Judas with avarice; and that infamous passion led him to commit the crime here specified. This at once accounts for the whole of this most unprincipled and unnatural transaction. None but a devil, or he who is possessed by one, could have been guilty of it:—let the living lay this to

heart. A minister of the Gospel, who is a lover of money, is constantly betraying the interests of Christ. He cannot serve two masters; and while his heart is possessed with the love of pelf, the love of God and zeal for perishing souls cannot dwell in him. What Satan could not do by the envy and malice of the high priests and Pharisees, he effects by Judas, a false and fallen minister of the Gospel of God. None are so dangerous to the interests of Christianity as persons of this stamp.

**Verse 4. *And captains***— Among the priests who were in waiting at the temple, some were appointed *φυλακες*, for a guard to the temple; and over these were *στρατηγοι* commanding officers: both sorts are mentioned by Josephus, War, b. vi. c. 5. s. 3. Bp. PEARCE, See another sense of captains, in the note on Matthew 27:65. Dr. Lightfoot supposes these to have been the captains over the watches; for in three places the priests kept watch and ward in the temple, viz. in Beth Abtenes, in Beth Nitsots, and in Beth Mokad. The Levites also in twenty-one places more, Middoth, chap. i. Though these watches consisted of several persons in each, there was one set over them, as the captain or head of that watch. He thinks that Matthew, Matthew 27:65, refers to one of these: Ye have a watch of your own; let some of them be sent to guard the sepulchre. The captain of the temple, he supposes to have been the chief or head of all these watches; and thus he was captain of the captains. In the same Talmudical tract it is said, The ruler of the mountain of the temple (i.e. captain of the temple) takes his walks through every watch with torches lighted before him: if he found any upon the watch, that was not standing on his feet, he said, Peace be with thee: but if he found him sleeping, he struck him with a stick, and he might also burn his clothes. And when it was said by others, What noise is that in the court? the answer was, It is the noise of a Levite under correction, whose garments they are burning, because he slept upon his watch. This custom casts light on Revelation 16:15: Behold, I come as a thief: blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. It is easy to distinguish this captain of the mountain of the temple from the ruler of the temple, or sagan: the former presided over the guards; the latter over the whole service of the temple. We have them both distinguished, Acts 4:1: there is the captain of the temple; and Annas, who was the sagan. See Lightfoot.

**Verse 5. *They-covenanted to give him money.***— Matthew says thirty pieces, or staters, of silver, about 4ú. 10s. English, the common price of the meanest slave. See the note on Matthew 26:15.

**Verse 6. *And he promised***— That is, to do it-εξωμολογησε: or, He accepted the proposal. See Wakefield.

**Verse 7. *The passover***— πασχα, Luke 22:1, is the name of the festival; το πασχα here is supposed to be the name of that on which they feasted, viz. the sacrificed paschal lamb. But see the notes on Matt. 26, and especially the observations at the end of that chapter. {Matthew 26:75}

**Verse 8. — 13. *He sent Peter and John, etc.***— See the subject of these verses largely explained on Matthew 26:17-19, and Mark 14:13, 15.

**Verse 14. *And when the hour was come***— That is, the evening. See Matthew 26:20, and Mark 14:17.

**Verse 15. *With desire I have desired***— A Hebraism for, I have desired most earnestly. Our Lord's meaning seems to be, that, having purposed to redeem a lost world by his blood, he ardently longed for the time in which he was to offer himself up. Such love did the holy Jesus bear to the human race. This eucharistic passover was celebrated once, by way of anticipation, before the bloody sacrifice of the victim of salvation, and before the deliverance it was appointed to commemorate; as the figurative passover had been likewise once celebrated before the going out of Egypt, and the deliverance of God's chosen people. Quesnel.

**Verse 16. *Until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.***— That is, until that of which the passover is a type is fulfilled in my death, through which the kingdom of God, or of heaven, (See Matthew 3:2,) shall be established among men.

**Verse 17. *He took the cup***— This was not the sacramental cup, for that was taken after supper, Luke 22:20, but was the cup which was ordinarily taken before supper.

***Divide it among yourselves***— Pass the cup from one to another; thus the cup which Christ gave to the first person on his right hand continued to be handed from one to another, till it came to the last person on his left.

**Verse 18. *I will not drink of the fruit of the vine***— That is, before the time of another passover, the Holy Ghost shall descend, the Gospel of the kingdom be established, and the sacramental supper shall take place of the paschal lamb; for in a few hours his crucifixion was to take place. See on Matthew 26:29.

**Verse 19. *Took bread***— See the nature and design of the Lord's Supper explained in the notes on Matthew 26:26-29.

***This do in remembrance of me.***— That the Jews, in eating the passover, did it to represent the sufferings of the Messiah, as evident from the tract Pesachim, fol. 119, quoted by Schoettgen. Why do we call this the great hallel? (i.e. the hymn composed of several psalms, which they sung after the paschal supper.) Ans. Because in it these five things are contained: 1. The exodus from Egypt. 2. The dividing of the Red Sea. 3. The promulgation of the law. 4. The resurrection of the dead. And, 5. The sufferings of the Messiah. The first is referred to, Psalm 114:1, When Israel went out of Egypt, etc. The second in Psalm 114:3, The sea saw it and fled. The third in Psalm 114:4, The mountains skipped like rams, etc. The fourth in Psalm 116:9, I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. The fifth in Psalm 115:1, Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory; for thy mercy and thy truth's sake. See the note on Matthew 26:30.

**Verse 20. *This cup is the new testament in my blood***— Perhaps it might be better to paraphrase the passage thus: This cup which is poured out for you, signifies the blood of the new covenant, which is shortly to be ratified in (or by) the shedding of my blood. Or, This cup is the new covenant, poured out for you with my blood:-that is, the paschal sacrifice and my sacrifice happen together. But see Kypke.

It does not appear that our Lord handed either the bread or the cup to each person; he gave it to him who was next to him, and, by handing it from one to another, they shared it among themselves, Luke 22:17. In this respect the present mode of administering the Lord's Supper is not strictly according to the original institution.

**Verse 21. *The hand of him that betrayeth me, etc.***— What can be desired more, says Dr. Lightfoot, as a demonstration that Judas was present at the

eucharist? And, whereas the contrary is endeavored to be proved out of John 13, nothing is made out of nothing; for there is not one syllable throughout that whole chapter of the paschal supper, but of a supper before the feast of the passover.

**Verse 22. *The Son of man goeth***— That is, he is about to die, *απερχεσθαι, οιχεσθαι*, abire, going, going away, and departing, are used, by the best Greek and Latin writers, for death and dying. See Rosenmuller.

**Verse 23. *They began to inquire among themselves***— See the notes on Matthew 26:23, 24.

**Verse 24. *There was also a strife among them***— There are two different instances of this sort of contention or strife mentioned by the evangelists, each of which was accompanied with very different circumstances; one by Matthew, in Matthew 18:1, etc., by Mark, Mark 9:33, etc.; and by Luke, in Luke 9:46, etc. That contention cannot have been the same with this which is mentioned here. The other, related in Matthew 20:20, etc., and Mark 10:35, etc., must be what Luke intended here to record; and this strife or contention was occasioned by the request which Zebedee's wife made to our Lord in favor of her sons, James and John; but, then, Luke has mentioned this very much out of the order of time, it having happened while our Lord and his disciples were on their way to Jerusalem: Matthew 20:17; Mark 10:32. See Bp. PEARCE.

**Verse 25. *Are called benefactors***.— The very Greek word used by the evangelist, *ευεργεται*, was the surname of some of the Ptolemies of Egypt; Ptolemy Euergetes, i.e. the Benefactor. It was a custom among the ancient Romans to distribute part of the lands which they had conquered on the frontiers of the empire to their soldiers; those who enjoyed such lands were called *beneficarii*, benefited persons; and the lands themselves were termed *beneficia*, benefices, as being held on the beneficence of the sovereign; and it is no wonder that such sovereigns, however tyrannical or oppressive they might have been in other respects, were termed benefactors by those who were thus dependent on their bounty.

**Verse 26. *Let him be as the younger***— Dr. Lightfoot justly conjectures that Peter was the eldest of all the disciples; and he supposes that the strife was kindled between him and the sons of Zebedee, James and John.

These three disciples were those whom Christ had distinguished by peculiar marks of his favor; and therefore it is natural to conclude that the strife lay between these three, the two brothers and Peter. Shall we or Peter be at the head? Neither, says our Lord. Let him, Peter, who is chief (ο μαιζων, the eldest) among you, be as, John, ο νεωτερος, the younger. The younger part of the disciples do not appear to have taken any part in this contention; and our Lord shows Peter, and the sons of Zebedee, that they must be as unambitious as the younger in order to be acknowledged as his disciples. Dr. Lightfoot thinks that Peter was the mover of this strife, and therefore our Lord rebukes him by name.

**Verse 29. *I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me***— The Codex Alexandrinus, with some other MSS., the later Syriac, and Origen, read in the first clause, διαθηκην, a covenant. I appoint unto you a COVENANT, as my Father hath appointed unto me a kingdom:—Ye shall be ministers of the new covenant, as I am king in that spiritual kingdom to which it relates. This is a curious reading; but our Lord is probably to be understood as promising that they should get a kingdom—a state of blessedness, as he should get it—they must go through much tribulation in order to enter into the kingdom of God. So the Son of man suffered that he might enter into his glory: for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, and despised the shame, and is set down on the right hand of God.

**Verse 30. *Sit on thrones***— See on Matthew 19:28. Marcion left the whole of this verse out, according to Epiphanius: probably because he did not understand it.

**Verse 31. *Simon, Simon***— When a name is thus repeated in the sacred writings, it appears to be always intended as an expression of love, manifested by a warning voice. As if he had said, While thou and the others are contending for supremacy, Satan is endeavoring to destroy you all: but I have prayed for thee, as being in most danger.

***Satan hath desired-you***— That is, all the apostles, but particularly the three contenders: the plural pronoun, υμας, sufficiently proves that these words were not addressed to Peter alone. Satan had already got one, Judas; he had nearly got another, Peter; and he wished to have all. But we see by

this that the devil cannot even tempt a man unless he receive permission. He desires to do all evil; he is permitted only to do some.

**Verse 32. *I have prayed for thee***— From the natural forwardness and impetuosity of thy own spirit, thou wilt be brought into the most imminent danger; but I have supplicated for thee, that thy faith may not utterly fail-*εκλειπη*, from *εκ*, out, and *λειπω*, I fail, to fall utterly or entirely off. Peter's faith did fail, but not utterly: he did fall, but he did not fall off, apostatize, or forsake his Master and his cause finally, as Judas did. Every body sees, from Peter's denial of his Lord, that his faith did fail, and his great courage too; and yet they read, in the common translation, that Christ prayed that it might not fail: can they then conceive that our Lord's prayer was heard? The translation which I have given above removes this embarrassment and apparent contradiction. It was certainly Peter's advantage that our Lord did pray for him; but it was not so much for his honor that he should stand in need of such a prayer, beyond all others. Lightfoot.

***When thou art converted***— Restored to a sense of thy folly and sin, and to me and my cause-establish these thy brethren. All the disciples forsook Jesus and fled, merely through fear of losing their lives; Peter, who continued for a while near him, denied his Master with oaths, and repeated this thrice: our Lord seems to intimate that, after this fall, Peter would become more cautious and circumspect than ever; and that he should become uncommonly strong in the faith, which was the case; and that, notwithstanding the baseness of his past conduct, he should be a proper instrument for strengthening the feeble minded, and supporting the weak. His two epistles to the persecuted Christians show how well he was qualified for this important work.

**Verse 34. *The cock shall not crow this day***— Matthew 26:34, and Mark 14:30, say, this night; both expressions are right, because the Jewish day, of twenty-four hours, began with the evening, and ended at the evening of the following day. On Peter's denial, see the notes on Matthew 26:31-35.

**Verse 35. *When I sent you without purse***— See the notes on Matthew 10:9, 10.



**Verse 36. *He that hath no sword***— Bishop PEARCE supposes that the word *μαχαίραν*, sword, has been inserted here from what is said in Luke 22:38, as it is evident our Lord never intended to make any resistance, or to suffer a sword to be used on the occasion; see Matthew 26:52. The word stands rather oddly in the passage: the verse, translated in the order in which it stands, is as follows: And he who hath none, let him sell his garment and buy-a sword. Now it is plain that the verb *πωλησάτω*, let him buy, may be referred to *πηραν* a scrip, in the former part of the verse: therefore if, according to the bishop's opinion, the word sword be omitted, the passage may be understood thus: "When I sent you out before, Luke 10:1, etc., I intended you to continue itinerants only for a few days, and to preach the Gospel only to your country-men; therefore you had but little need of a staff, purse, or scrip, as your journey was neither long, nor expensive; but now I am about to send you into all the world, to preach the Gospel to every creature; and, as ye shall be generally hated and persecuted for my sake, ye shall have need to make every prudent provision for your journey; and so necessary will it be for you to provide yourselves victuals, etc., for your passage through your inhospitable country, that, if any of you have no scrip or wallet, he should sell even his upper garment to provide one." Others, who are for retaining the word sword, think that it was a proverbial expression, intimating a time of great difficulty and danger, and that now the disciples had need to look to themselves, for his murderers were at hand. The reader will observe that these words were spoken to the disciples just before he went to the garden of Gethsemane, and that the danger was now so very near that there could be no time for any of them to go and sell his garment in order to purchase a sword to defend himself and his Master from the attack of the Jewish mob.

Judea was at this time, as we have already noticed, much infested by robbers: while our Lord was with his disciples, they were perfectly safe, being shielded by his miraculous power. Shortly they must go into every part of the land, and will need weapons to defend themselves against wild beasts, and to intimidate wicked men, who, if they found them totally defenceless, would not hesitate to make them their prey, or take away their life. However the matter may be understood, we may rest satisfied that these swords were neither to be considered as offensive weapons, nor

instruments to propagate the truth. The genius and spirit of the Christian religion is equally against both. Perhaps, in this counsel of our Lord, he refers to the contention about supremacy: as if he had said, Instead of contending among yourselves about who shall be the greatest, ye have more need to unite yourselves against the common enemy, who are now at hand: this counsel was calculated to show them the necessity of union among themselves, as their enemies were both numerous and powerful.

**Verse 37. *Must yet be accomplished***— Probably meaning that, though this prophecy did refer to some particular matter in the time of the prophet, yet it farther (ετι) related to Christ, and could not have its complete accomplishment but in his crucifixion as a criminal.

***For the things concerning me have an end.***— As if he had said, My work is now almost done; yours is only beginning; I am now about to be crucified and numbered with the transgressors; think what will be done to you, and what ought to be done by you; and then think if this be a time for you to be contending with each other. Lightfoot.

**Verse 38. *Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.***— These words cannot be well understood as being an answer to the supposed command of Christ, for every one who had no sword to go and sell his garment and buy one; for, in this case, they were not enough, or sufficient, as nine of the disciples must be without any instrument of defense; but they may be understood as pointing out the readiness and determination of Peter, and perhaps some others, to defend our Lord: Thou shalt not be treated as a transgressor; here are two swords, and we will fight for thee. In Luke 22:33, Peter had said, he was ready to go with Christ either to prison or death; which showed his strong resolution to stand by and defend his Master, even at the expense of his life. But, alas, he depended too much on himself!

It is enough. The meaning probably is, there is enough said on the subject; as immediately after this he entered into his agony.

I must here confess that the matter about the swords appear to me very obscure. I am afraid I do not understand it, and I know of none who does. Schoettgen and Lightfoot have said much on the subject; others have endeavored to get rid of the difficulty by translating μαχαίραν a knife,

which was necessary on long journeys for providing forage and fuel; as they were to depend wholly on their own industry, under God, for all the necessities of life, while going through the nations of the earth, preaching the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles. I cannot say which sense the reader should prefer.

**Verse 40. *When he was at the place***— Viz. Gethsemane. On this agony of our Lord see the notes on Matthew 26:36-46.

**Verse 43. *There appeared an angel-from heaven***— It was as necessary that the fullest evidence should be given, not only of our Lord's Divinity, but also of his humanity: his miracles sufficiently attested the former; his hunger, weariness, and agony in the garden, as well as his death and burial, were proofs of the latter. As man, he needs the assistance of an angel to support his body, worn down by fatigue and suffering. See at the end of Luke 22:44.

**Verse 44. *Prayed more earnestly***— With greater emphasis and earnestness than usual, with strong crying and tears, Hebrews 5:7; the reason given for which is, that he was in an agony. Kypke well observes, Vox *αγωνια* summum animi angorem et dolorem indicat; et idem est, quod *αδημονειν*, Matthew 26:37; Mark 14:34. "The word *αγωνια* (agony) points out the utmost anguish and grief of soul, and is of the same import with *αδημονειν* in Matthew and Mark." See the note on Matthew 26:37.

***Drops of blood***— See the note on Matthew 26:38. Some have thought that the meaning of the words is, that the sweat was so profuse that every drop was as large as a drop of blood, not that the sweat was blood itself: but this does not appear likely. There have been cases in which persons in a debilitated state of body, or through horror of soul, have had their sweat tinged with blood. Dr. Mead from Galen observes, *Contingere interdum, poros ex multo aut fervido spiritu adeo dilatari, ut etiam exeat sanguis per eos, fiatque sudor sanguineus*. "Cases sometimes happen in which, through mental pressure, the pores may be so dilated that the blood may issue from them; so that there may be a bloody sweat." And Bishop PEARCE gives an instance from Thuanus (Deuteronomy Thou) of an Italian gentleman being so distressed with the fear of death that his body was covered with a bloody sweat. But it is fully evident that the fear of death could have no place in the mind of our blessed Lord. He was in the bloom

of life, in perfect health, and had never suffered any thing from disease of any kind; this sweat was most assuredly produced by a preternatural cause. See at the end of the chapter. {Luke 22:71}

**Verse 48. *Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?***— Dost thou attempt to kiss me as a friend, while thou art delivering me up into the hands of my enemies? We need not wonder at all this, as Satan himself had entered into the heart of this traitor, see Luke 22:3; consequently we can expect nothing from him but what is fell, deceitful, and cruel.

**Verse 50. *Cut off his right ear.***— See the note on Matthew 26:51.

**Verse 51. *Suffer ye thus far.***— Or, Suffer me to go thus far. As they had now a firm hold of Christ, Matthew 26:50, he wished them to permit him to go as far as Malchus, whose ear was cut off, that he might heal it. See the objections brought against this interpretation answered by Kypke; and see the examples he produces. However, the words may be understood as an address to his disciples: Let them proceed; make no resistance; for in this way only are the Scriptures to be fulfilled.

**Verse 53. *I was daily with you in the temple***— Alluding to the four preceding days, during the whole of which he taught in the temple, see Luke 21:37, and Matthew 21:17.

***This is your hour, and the power of darkness.***— That is, the time in which you are permitted to unrein your malice; which ye could not do before, because God did not permit you; and so perfectly are ye under his control that neither you nor the prince of darkness can proceed a hair's breadth against me but through this permission: see at the end of the chapter. What a comfortable thought is it to the followers of Christ, that neither men nor demons can act against them but by the permission of their heavenly Father, and that he will not suffer any of those who trust in him to be tried above what they are able to bear, and will make the trial issue in their greater salvation, and in his glory!

**Verse 56. *A certain maid beheld him***— Or, Attentively beholding him, *ἀτενίσασα*. And this she did by the help of the light of the fire at which Peter sat.

**Verse 57. *And he denied him***— See the notes on Matthew 26:58, 69, etc.

**Verse 61. *The Lord turned, and looked upon Peter.***— See the note on Matthew 26:75, where this delicate reproof is particularly noted.

**Verse 62. *And Peter went out***— The word Peter is omitted by BDKLM, and many other good MSS., with some of the ancient versions. Griesbach leaves it out of the text.

**Verse 63. *Mocked him, and smote him.***— This and the following verses are placed by Matthew and Mark before the relation of Peter's denial. For their explanation, see on Matthew 26:67, 68.

**Verse 68. *And if I also ask you***— Concerning the Christ, in case ye cannot give me such an answer as may prove I am not the Christ, ye will not let me go; for I know ye are determined to put me to death.

**Verse 69. *Hereafter***— From this very time, *απο του νυν*. The kingdom of God is now going to be set up. See the note on Matthew 16:27, 28.

**Verse 70. *Art thou then the Son of God?***— They all insisted on an answer to this question, and the high priest particularly put it to him, Matthew 26:63.

**Verse 71. *We ourselves have heard***— We have heard him profess himself the Son of God; he is therefore guilty of blasphemy, and, as an impious pretender to a Divine mission, we must proceed against and condemn him to death. See the note on Matthew 26:66. Thus they proceeded as far as they could; he must now be brought before Pilate, as the Jews had no power to put him to death. His trial before Pilate is related in the subsequent chapter.

ON our Lord's agony in the garden, related in the 43d and 44th verses, {Luke 22:43, 44} much has been written, but to little purpose. The cause of this agony seems not to have been well understood; and there have been many wild conjectures concerning it. Some think it was occasioned by "the Divine wrath pressing in upon him; for, as he was bearing the sin of the world, God looked on and treated him as if he were a sinner." There is something very shocking in this supposition; and yet it is truly astonishing how general it is. The ministry of the angel, in this case, is a sufficient refutation of this opinion; for what sort of strength could an angel give Christ against God's indignation? Angelic strength could not enable him to

bear either the sin of the world or God's wrath. If an angel could have succoured him in this, an angel might have made the whole atonement. Indeed, the ministry of the angel, who must have been sent from God, and sent in love too, is a full proof that God's wrath was not poured out on our blessed Redeemer at this time. Dr. Lightfoot conjectures that his conflict in the garden was with a devil, who appeared to him in a bodily shape, most horrible; and that it was through this apparition that he began to be sore amazed, and very heavy, Mark 14:33; for, as Satan assaulted the first Adam in a garden in a bodily shape, it is not unreasonable to conclude that in the same way he assaulted the second Adam in a garden. St. Luke tells us, Luke 4:13, that when the devil had finished all his temptations, he departed from him for a season: this season in the garden, probably, was the season, or fit opportunity, for him to return-the prince of this world came and found nothing in him, John 14:30. But, though there was nothing in the immaculate Jesus on which Satan could work, yet he might, as the doctor supposes, assume some horrible shape, in order to appal his mind, and shake his firmness; and the evangelist seems to intimate that he had desired to be permitted to try or sift the disciples in this way, see Luke 22:31; and it is probable that it is to some personal, horrid appearance, that the apostle alludes when he speaks of the messenger of Satan that buffeted him, 2 Corinthians 12:7. The angel, therefore, from heaven, may be supposed to come against this angel from hell; and, as the one appeared to terrify, the other appeared to strengthen him. It was not necessary to exert the Divine power to crush this devil, and therefore an angel from heaven is sent to counteract his influence. This is the sum of Dr. Lightfoot's reasonings upon this very difficult subject.

Others suppose that, while our Lord was praying intensely in the garden, the extreme fervor of his application to God in the behalf of the poor deluded Jews, and in behalf of the world, was too much for his human nature to support; that he, in consequence, fell into a swoon, in which he had a VISION of an angel coming from heaven to strengthen him. Let these sentiments stand on their respective merits.

What renders this circumstance more difficult is, that there is no mention of it in any of the other evangelists: and it is worthy of remark that, among many of the ancients, the authenticity of these two verses, the 43d and 44th, {Luke 22:43, 44} has been doubted, and in consequence they are

omitted in several MSS., and in some versions and fathers. The Codex Alexandrinus and the Codex Vaticanus, the two oldest MSS. in the world, omit both verses; in some other very ancient MSS. they stand with an asterisk before them, as a mark of dubiousness; and they are both wanting in the Coptic Fragments published by Dr. Ford. They are however extant in such a vast number of MSS., versions, and fathers, as to leave no doubt with most critics of their authenticity. After all that has been said, or perhaps can be said on this subject, there will remain mysteries which only the bright light of the eternal world can sufficiently illustrate. That Christ was now suffering, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, and that he was bearing in his body the punishment due to their sins, I have no doubt: and that the agony of his mind, in these vicarious sufferings, caused the effusion from his body, of the bloody sweat, may be easily credited without supposing him to be at all under the displeasure of his heavenly Father; for, as God can see nothing but as it is, he could not see him as a sinner who was purity itself. In every act, Jesus was that beloved Son in whom the Father was ever well pleased.

As to the angel strengthening him, probably no more is meant by it than a friendly sympathizing of one of those heavenly beings with their Lord in distress: this circumstance is the most difficult in the whole relation; but, understood thus, the difficulty is removed; for what strength could the highest angel in heaven afford to our blessed Lord in his atoning acts? Surely, none. The bare supposition is insupportable. But, if we allow that the angel came to sympathize with him during his passions the whole account will appear plain and consistent.

## CHAPTER 23

*Christ is led to Pilate, and accused by the Jews, 1, 2. Pilate examines, and pronounces him innocent, 3, 4. The Jews virulently accuse him, 5. Pilate, understanding that he was of Galilee, sends him to Herod, by whom he is examined, 6-9. The chief priests and scribes vehemently accuse him, and Herod and his soldiers mock him, 10, 11. Pilate and Herod become friends, 12. Pilate, before the chief priests, rulers, and people, pronounces Christ to be innocent, and offers to release him, 13-20. The Jews clamor for his condemnation, and Pilate gives him up to their will, 21-25. Simon bears his cross, 26. The people bewail him, and he foretells the destruction of the Jewish state, 27-31. He and two malefactors are brought to Calvary, and are crucified, 32, 33. He prays for his crucifiers, 34. He is derided, mocked, and insulted by the rulers, and by the soldiers, 35-37. The superscription on the cross, 38. The conduct of the two malefactors, to one of whom he promises paradise, 39-43. The great darkness, 44, 45. He gives up the ghost, 46. The centurion and many others are greatly affected at his death, 47-49. Joseph of Arimathea begs the body, and puts it in his own new tomb, 50-53. The women prepare spices and ointments to embalm him, 54-56.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 23

**Verse 1. *The whole multitude***— It seems most probable that the chief priests, elders, scribes, and captains of the temple, together with their servants, dependents, and other persons hired for the purpose, made up the multitude mentioned here. The common people were generally favourers of Christ; and for this reason the Jewish rulers caused him to be apprehended in the night, and in the absence of the people, Luke 22:6, and it was now but just the break of day, Luke 22:66.

**Verse 2. *Perverting the nation***— The Greek word *διαστρεφοντα*, signifies stirring up to disaffection and rebellion. Many MSS. and versions add *ἡμῶν*, OUR nation. They intimated that he not only preached corrupt doctrine, but that he endeavored to make them disaffected towards the



Roman government, for which they now pretended to feel a strong affection!

Several copies of the Itala add, Destroying our law and prophets. Et solventem legem nostram et prophetas.

***Forbidding to give tribute to Caesar***— These were the falsest slanders that could be invented. The whole of our Lord's conduct disproved them. And his decision in the case of the question about the lawfulness of paying tribute to Caesar, Matthew 22:21, was so fully known that we find Pilate paid not the least attention to such evidently malicious and unfounded accusations. Neither Christ nor any of his followers, from that day until now, ever forbade the paying tribute to Caesar; that is, constitutional taxes to a lawful prince.

**Verse 4. *I find no fault in this man.***— According to John 18:36, 38, Pilate did not say this till after our Lord had declared to him that his kingdom was not of this world; and probably not till after he had found, on examining witnesses, (Luke 23:14,) that all their evidence amounted to no proof, of his having set up himself for a temporal king. See Bishop PEARCE.

**Verse 5. *Saying, He stirreth up the people, etc.***— In the Codex Colbertinus, a copy of the ancient Itala or Antehieronymian version, this verse stands thus: He stirreth up the people, beginning from Galilee, and teaching through all Judea unto this place; our wives and our children he hath rendered averse from us, and he is not baptized as we are. As the Jews found that their charge of sedition was deemed frivolous by Pilate, they changed it, and brought a charge equally false and groundless against his doctrine.

**Verse 7. *Herod's jurisdiction***— The city of Nazareth, in which Christ had continued till he was thirty years of age, and that of Capernaum, in which he principally resided the last years of his life, were both in Lower Galilee, of which Herod Antipas was tetrarch. Pilate was probably glad of this opportunity to pay a little respect to Herod, whom it is likely he had irritated, and with whom he now wished to be friends. See Luke 23:12.

**Verse 10. *The chief priests-vehemently accused him.***— Corrupt priests and teachers are generally the most implacable enemies of Christ and his

truth. Evil passions betray those who are slaves to them. An affected moderation would have rendered these accusers less suspected, their accusations more probable, and the envy less visible than this vehemence: but envy seldom or never consults prudence: and God permits this to be so for the honor of truth and innocence. Quesnel.

**Verse 11. *A gorgeous robe*—** εσθητα λαμπραν. It probably means a white robe, for it was the custom of the Jewish nobility to wear such. Hence, in Revelation 3:4, it is said of the saints, They shall walk with me in WHITE (garments,) because they are WORTHY. In such a robe, Herod, by way of mockery, caused our Lord to be clothed; but, the nobility among the Romans wearing purple for the most part, Pilate's soldiers, who were Romans, put on Jesus a purple robe, Mark 15:17; John 19:2; both of them following the custom of their own country, when, by way of mocking our Lord as a king, they clothed him in robes of state. See Bishop PEARCE.

**Verse 12. *Pilate and Herod were made friends*—** I do not find any account of the cause of the enmity which subsisted between Herod and Pilate given by ancient authors; and the conjectures of the moderns on the subject should be considered as mere guesses. It is generally supposed that this enmity arose from what is related Luke 13, of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate hath mingled with that of their sacrifices. These were Herod's subjects, and Pilate seems to have fallen on them at the time they were offering sacrifices to God at the temple. Wicked men cannot love one another: this belongs to the disciples of Christ. But when Christ, his truth, or his followers are to be persecuted, for this purpose the wicked unite their counsels and their influence. The Moabites and Ammonites, who were enemies among themselves, united against poor Israel, and, as Rabbi Tanchum says, may be likened to two contending dogs, who, when the wolf comes, join together to destroy him; each knowing that, if he do not, the wolf will kill both in succession: whereas, by their union, they may now kill or baffle him. There is a proverb among the rabbins, that, when the cat and weasel marry together, misery becomes increased.

**Verse 15. *No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him*—** That is, to see whether he could find that Christ had ever attempted to raise any disaffection or sedition among the Galileans, among whom he had spent the principal part of his life; and yet Herod has not been able to find out

any evil in his conduct. Your own accusations I have fully weighed, and find them to the last degree frivolous.

Instead of *ανεπεμψα γαρ υμας προς αυτον*, for I sent you to him, BHKLM, and many other MSS., with some versions, read *ανεπεμωεν γαρ αυτον προς ημας*, for he hath sent him to us. As if he had said, Herod hath sent him back to us, which is a sure proof that he hath found no blame in him.”

***Nothing worthy of death is done unto him.***— Or rather, nothing worthy of death is committed by him, *πεπραγμενον αυτω*, not, done unto him. This phrase is of the same sense with *ουδεν πεπραχεν αυτος*, he hath done nothing, and is frequent in the purest Attic writers. See many examples in Kypke.

**Verse 17. *For of necessity he must release one***— That is, he was under the necessity of releasing one at this feast. The custom, however it originated, had now been so completely established that Pilate was obliged to attend to it. See on Matthew 27:15.

**Verse 18. *Away with this man***— That is, Put him to death-*αιρε τουτον*, literally, Take this one away, i.e. to punishment-to death.

**Verse 22. *I have found no cause of death in him***— I find no crime worthy of death in him. There is nothing proved against him that can at all justify me in putting him to death, So here our blessed Lord was in the most formal manner justified by his judge. Now as this decision was publicly known, and perhaps registered, it is evident that Christ died as an innocent person, and not as a malefactor. On the fullest conviction of his innocence, his judge pronounced him guiltless, after having patiently heard every thing that the inventive malice of these wicked men could allege against him; and, when he wished to dismiss him, a violent mob took and murdered him.

**Verse 26. *Simon, a Cyrenian***— See on Matthew 27:32.

**Verse 27. *Bewailed and lamented him.***— *εκοπτοντο*, Beat their breasts. See on Matthew 11:17.

**Verse 28. *Weep not for me***— Many pious persons have been greatly distressed in their minds, because they could not weep on reading or

hearing of the sufferings of Christ. For the relief of all such, let it be for ever known that no human spirit can possibly take any part in the passion of the Messiah. His sufferings were such as only God manifested in the flesh could bear; and, as they were all of an expiatory nature, no man can taste of or share in them. Besides, the sufferings of Christ are not a subject of sorrow to any man; but, on the contrary, of eternal rejoicing to the whole of a lost world. Some have even prayed to participate in the sufferings of Christ. The legend of St. Francis and his stigmata is well known.—He is fabled to have received the marks in his hands, feet, and side.

Relative to this point, there are many unwarrantable expressions used by religious people in their prayers and hymns. To give only one instance, how often do we hear these or similar words said or sung:-

*“Give me to feel thy agonies!  
One drop of thy sad cup afford!”*

Reader! one drop of this cup would bear down thy soul to endless ruin; and these agonies would annihilate the universe. He suffered alone: for of the people there was none with him; because his sufferings were to make an atonement for the sins of the world: and in the work of redemption he had no helper.

**Verse 30. *Mountains, fall on us***— As this refers to the destruction of Jerusalem, and as the same expressions are used, Revelation 6:16, Dr. Lightfoot conjectures that the whole of that chapter may relate to the same event.

**Verse 31. *If they do these things in a green tree***— This seems to be a proverbial expression, the sense of which is: If they spare not a tree which, by the beauty of its foliage, abundance and excellence of its fruits, deserves to be preserved, then the tree which is dry and withered will surely be cut down. If an innocent man be put to death in the very face of justice, in opposition to all its dictates and decisions, by a people who profess to be governed and directed by Divine laws, what desolation, injustice, and oppression may not be expected, when anarchy and confusion sit in the place where judgment and justice formerly presided? Our Lord alludes prophetically to those tribulations which fell upon the Jewish people about forty years after. See the notes on Matthew 24:1-51.

**Verse 32. *Two other malefactors***— ἄτεροι δυο κακουργοι, should certainly be translated two others, malefactors, as in the Bibles published by the King's printer, Edinburgh. As it now stands in the text, it seems to intimate that our blessed Lord was also a malefactor.

**Verse 33. *The place-called Calvary***— See on Matthew 27:33.

***They crucified him***— See the nature of this punishment explained Matthew 27:35.

**Verse 34. *They know not what they do.***— If ignorance do not excuse a crime, it at least diminishes the atrocity of it. However, these persons well knew that they were crucifying an innocent man; but they did not know that, by this act of theirs, they were bringing down on themselves and on their country the heaviest judgments of God. In the prayer, Father, forgive them! that word of prophecy was fulfilled, He made intercession for the transgressors, Isaiah 53:12.

**Verse 35. *Derided him***— Treated him with the utmost contempt, εξευμυκτηριζον, in the most infamous manner. See the meaning of this word explained, Luke 16:14.

**Verse 36. *Offering him vinegar***— See on Matthew 27:34. Vinegar or small sour wine, was a common drink of the Roman soldiers; and it is supposed that wherever they were on duty they had a vessel of this liquor standing by. It appears that at least two cups were given to our Lord; one before he was nailed to the cross, viz. of wine mingled with myrrh, and another of vinegar, while he hung on the cross. Some think there were three cups: ONE of wine mixed with myrrh; the SECOND, of vinegar mingled with gall; and the THIRD, of simple vinegar. Allow these three cups, and the different expressions in all the evangelists will be included. See Lightfoot.

**Verse 38. *A superscription***— See Matthew 27:37.

***In letters of Greek, and Latin and Hebrew***— The inscription was written in all these languages, which were the most common, that all might see the reason why he was put to death. The inscription was written in Greek, on account of the Hellenistic Jews, who were then at Jerusalem because of the passover; it was written in Latin, that being the language of the government under which he was crucified; and it was written in Hebrew, that being the

language of the place in which this deed of darkness was committed. But, by the good providence of God, the inscription itself exculpated him, and proved the Jews to be rebels against, and murderers of, their king. See the note on Matthew 27:37. It is not to be wondered at that they wished Pilate to alter this inscription, John 19:21, as it was a record of their infamy.

**Verse 39. *One of the malefactors which were hanged.***— It is likely that the two robbers were not nailed to their crosses, but only tied to them by cords, and thus they are represented in ancient paintings. If not nailed, they could not have suffered much, and therefore they were found still alive when the soldiers came to give the coup de grace, which put a speedy end to their lives. John 19:31-33.

**Verse 40. *Dost not thou fear God***— The sufferings of this person had been sanctified to him, so that his heart was open to receive help from the hand of the Lord: he is a genuine penitent, and gives the fullest proof he can give of it, viz. the acknowledgment of the justice of his sentence. He had sinned, and he acknowledges his sin; his heart believes unto righteousness, and with his tongue he makes confession unto salvation. While he condemns himself he bears testimony that Jesus was innocent. Bishop PEARCE supposes that these were not robbers in the common sense of the word, but Jews who took up arms on the principle that the Romans were not to be submitted to, and that their levies of tribute money were oppressive; and therefore they made no scruple to rob all the Romans they met with. These Jews Josephus calls *λησται*, robbers, the same term used by the evangelists. This opinion gains some strength from the penitent thief's confession: We receive the reward of our deeds—we rose up against the government, and committed depredations in the country; but this man hath done nothing amiss—*ατοπον*, out of place, disorderly,—nothing calculated to raise sedition or insurrection; nor inconsistent with his declarations of peace and good will towards all men, nor with the nature of that spiritual kingdom which he came to establish among men; though he is now crucified under the pretense of disaffection to the Roman government.

**Verse 42. *Lord, remember me, etc.***— It is worthy of remark, that this man appears to have been the first who believed in the intercession of Christ.

**Verse 43. *To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.***— Marcion and the Manichees are reported to have left this verse out of their copies of this evangelist. This saying of our Lord is justly considered as a strong proof of the immateriality of the soul; and it is no wonder that those who have embraced the contrary opinion should endeavor to explain away this meaning. In order to do this, a comma is placed after *σημερον*, to-day, and then our Lord is supposed to have meant, “Thou shalt be with me after the resurrection I tell thee this, TO-DAY.” I am sorry to find men-of great learning and abilities attempting to support this most feeble and worthless criticism. Such support a good cause cannot need; and, in my opinion, even a bad cause must be discredited by it.

In paradise. The garden of Eden, mentioned Genesis 2:8, is also called, from the Septuagint, the garden of Paradise. The word *עדן* Eden, signifies pleasure and delight. Several places were thus called; see Genesis 4:16; 2 Kings 19:12; Isaiah 37:12; Ezekiel 27:23; and Amos 1:5; and such places probably had this name from their fertility, pleasant situation, etc., etc. In this light the Septuagint have viewed Genesis 2:8. as they render the passage thus: *εφυντευσεν ο θεος παραδεισον εν εδεμ*, God planted a paradise in Eden. Hence the word has been transplanted into the New Testament; and is used to signify a place of exquisite pleasure and delight. From this the ancient heathens borrowed their ideas of the gardens of the Hesperides, where the trees bore golden fruit; and the gardens of Adonis, a word which is evidently derived from the Hebrew *עדן* Eden: and hence the origin of sacred groves, gardens, and other enclosures dedicated to purposes of devotion, some comparatively innocent, others impure. The word paradise is not Greek, but is of Asiatic origin. In Arabic and Persian it signifies a garden, a vineyard, and also the place of the blessed. In the *Kushuf ul Loghat*, a very celebrated Persian dictionary, the [A] *Jenet al Ferdoos*, Garden of Paradise, is said to have been “created by God out of light, and that the prophets and wise men ascend thither.”

Paradise was, in the beginning, the habitation of man in his state of innocence, in which he enjoyed that presence of his Maker which constituted his supreme happiness. Our Lord’s words intimate that this penitent should be immediately taken to the abode of the spirits of the just, where he should enjoy the presence and approbation of the Most High. In the *Institutes of Menu*, chap. OEconomics, Inst. 243, are the

following words: “A man habitually pious, whose offenses have been expiated, is instantly conveyed, after death, to the higher world, with a radiant form, and a body of ethereal substance.” The state of the blessed is certainly what our Lord here means: in what the locality of that state consists we know not. The Jews share a multitude of fables on the subject.

**Verse 44. *Darkness over all the earth***— See the note on Matthew 27:45. The darkness began at the sixth hour, about our twelve o’clock at noon, and lasted till the ninth hour, which answered to our three o’clock in the afternoon.

**Verse 45. *The sun was darkened***— See an examination of the accounts of Phlegon, Thallus, and Dionysius, on Matthew 27:45.

***The veil was rent***— See Matthew 27:51.

**Verse 46. *Into thy hands I commend my spirit***— Or, I will commit my spirit—I deposit my soul in thy hands. Another proof of the immateriality of the soul, and of its separate existence when the body is dead.

**Verse 48. *And all the people***— All were deeply affected except the priests, and those whom they had employed to serve their base purposes. The darkness, earthquake, etc., had brought terror and consternation into every heart. How dreadful is the state of those who, in consequence of their long opposition to the grace and truth of God, are at last given up to a reprobate mind!

**Verse 50. — 51. *Joseph of Arimathea***— See the notes on Matthew 27:57-60, and those especially on Mark 15:43.

**Verse 54. *And the Sabbath drew on***.— Or, The Sabbath was lighting up, *επεφωσκε*, i.e. with the candles which the Jews light just before six in the evening, when the Sabbath commences. The same word is used for the dawning of the day, Matthew 28:1. Wakefield. The Jews always lighted up candles on the Sabbath; and it was a solemn precept that, “if a man had not bread to eat, he must beg from door to door to get a little oil to set up his Sabbath light.” The night of the Sabbath drew on, which the Jews were accustomed to call the light. See Lightfoot.

**Verse 55. *The women also, which came***— These were Mary of Magdala, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, Luke 24:10. To these three, Mark,



in Mark 16:1, adds, Salome; but some think that this was only a surname of one of these Marys.

**Verse 56. *Prepared spices and ointments***— This was in order to embalm him; which sufficiently proves that they had no hope of his resurrection the third day.

***And rested the Sabbath day***— For though the Jewish canons allowed all works, necessary for the dead, to be done, even on the Sabbath, such as washing and anointing, provided they moved not a limb of the dead person, yet, as the Jews had put Christ to death under the pretense of his being a malefactor, it would not have been either prudent or safe to appear too forward in the present business; and therefore they rested on the Sabbath.

CERTAIN copies of the Itala have some remarkable additions in these concluding verses. The conclusion of the 48th verse, {Luke 23:48} in one of them, is read thus: Beating their breasts and their foreheads, and saying, Wo to us because of what is done this day, on account of our sins; for the desolation of Jerusalem is at hand. To Luke 23:52, another adds: And when Pilate heard that he was dead, he glorified God and gave the body to Joseph. On the circumstances of the crucifixion, see the observations at the end of Matt. 27, {Matthew 27:66} and consider how heinous sin must be in the sight of God, when it required such a sacrifice!

## CHAPTER 24

*The women coming early to the sepulchre on the first day of the week, bringing their spices, find the stone rolled away, and the tomb empty, 1-3. They see a vision of angels, who announce Christ's resurrection, 4-8. The women return and tell this to the eleven, 9, 10. They believe not, but Peter goes and examines the tomb, 11, 12. Christ, unknown, appears to two of the disciples who were going to Emmaus, and converses with them, 13-29. While they are eating together, he makes himself known, and immediately disappears, 30, 31. They return to Jerusalem, and announce his resurrection to the rest of the disciples, 32-35. Jesus himself appears to them, and gives them the fullest proof of the reality of his resurrection, 36-43. He preaches to them, and gives them the promise of the Holy Spirit, 44-49. He takes them to Bethany, and ascends to heaven in their sight, 50, 51. They worship him, and return to Jerusalem, 52, 53.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 24

**Verse 1. *Bringing the spices***— To embalm the body of our Lord: but Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea had done this before the body was laid in the tomb. See John 19:39, 40. But there was a second embalming found necessary: the first must have been hastily and imperfectly performed; the spices now brought by the women were intended to complete the preceding operation.

***And certain others with them.***— This clause is wanting in BCL, two others; Coptic, AEthiopic, Vulgate, and in all the Itala except two. Dionysius Alexandrinus, and Eusebius also omit it. The omission is approved by Mill, Bengel, Wetstein, Griesbach, and others. Bishop Pearce thinks it should be left out for the following reasons: 1. "They who came to the sepulchre, as is here said, being the same with those who, in Luke 23:55, are called the women which came with him from Galilee, there was no room for Luke (I think) to add as here, and some others came with them; because the words in Luke 23:55, to which these refer, include all that can be supposed to be designed by the words in question. 2. Luke has

named no particular woman here, and therefore he could not add and some others, etc., these words necessarily requiring that the names of the women should have preceded, as is the case in Luke 24:10, where, when Mary Magdalene, the other Mary, and Joanna, had been named, it is very rightly added, and other women that were with them.”

**Verse 2. *They found the stone rolled away***— An angel from God had done this before they reached the tomb, Matthew 28:2: On this case we cannot help remarking, that, when persons have strong confidence in God, obstacles do not hinder them from undertaking whatever they have reason to believe he requires; and the removal of them they leave to him: and what is the consequence? They go on their way comfortably, and all difficulties vanish before them.

**Verse 3. *And found not the body of the Lord***— His holy soul was in Paradise, Luke 23:43; and the evangelist mentions the body particularly, to show that this only was subject to death. It is, I think, evident enough, from these and other words of Luke, that the doctrine of the materiality of the soul, made no part of his creed.

**Verse 5. *Why seek ye the living among the dead?***— This was a common form of speech among the Jews, and seems to be applied to those who were foolishly, impertinently, or absurdly employed. As places of burial were unclean, it was not reasonable to suppose that the living should frequent them; or that if any was missing he was likely to be found in such places.

**Verse 7. *Sinful men***— Or heathens, *ανθρωπος αματωλων*, i.e. the Romans, by whom only he could be put to death; for the Jews themselves acknowledged that this power was now vested in the hands of the Roman governor alone. See John 19:15.

**Verse 8. *They remembered his words.***— Even the simple recollection of the words of Christ becomes often a source of comfort and support to those who are distressed or tempted: for his words are the words of eternal life.

**Verse 10. *And Joanna***— She was the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward. See Luke 8:3.

**Verse 12. *Then arose Peter***— John went with him, and got to the tomb before him. See John 20:2, 3.

***The linen clothes laid by themselves***— Or, The linen clothes only. This was the fine linen which Joseph of Arimathea bought, and wrapped the body in: Mark 15:46. Small as this circumstance may at first view appear, it is, nevertheless, no mean proof of the resurrection of our Lord. Had the body been stolen away, all that was wrapped about it would have been taken away with it; as the delay which must have been occasioned by stripping it might have led to the detection of the theft; nor would the disciples have run such a risk if they had stolen him, when stripping the body could have answered no end. This circumstance is related still more particularly by John, John 20:5-7. Peter seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin that was about his head not lying with the linen clothes, but WRAPPED together in a place by itself. All these circumstances prove that the thing was done leisurely; order and regularity being observed through the whole. Hurry and confusion necessarily mark every act of robbery.

**Verse 13. *Behold, two of them***— This long and interesting account is not mentioned by Matthew nor John, and is only glanced at by Mark, Mark 16:12, 13. One of these disciples was Cleopas, Luke 24:18, and the other is supposed by many learned men, both ancient and modern, to have been Luke himself. See the sketch of his life prefixed to these notes. Some of the ancient versions have called the other disciple Ammaus and Ammaon, reading the verse thus: Behold two of them, Ammaus and Cleopas, were going in that very day to a village about sixty furlongs distant from Jerusalem. But the Persian says positively that it was Luke who accompanied Cleopas. See the inscription to section 140 of this Gospel in the Polyglott. Dr. Lightfoot thinks it was Peter, and proves that Cleopas and Alpheus were one and the same person.

***Threescore furlongs.***— Some MSS. say 160 furlongs, but this is a mistake; for Josephus assigns the same distance to this village from Jerusalem as the evangelist does. War, b. vii. c. 6. s. 6. *αμμαουο απεχει των ἱεροσολυμων σταδιους εξηκοντα*, Ammaus is sixty stadia distant from Jerusalem, about seven English miles and three-quarters. A stadium was about 243 yards, according to Arbuthnot.

**Verse 15. *And reasoned***— συζητεῖν, concerning the probability or improbability of Christ being the Messiah, or of his resurrection from the dead. It was a laudable custom of the Jews, and very common also, to converse about the law in all their journeyings; and now they had especial reason to discourse together, both of the law and the prophets, from the transactions which had recently taken place.

**Verse 16. *Their eyes were holden***— It does not appear that there was any thing supernatural here, for the reason why these persons (who were not apostles, see Luke 24:33) did not recollect our Lord is given by Mark, Mark 16:12, who says that Christ appeared to them in another form.

**Verse 18. *Cleopas***— The same as Alpheus, father of the Apostle James, Mark 3:18, and husband of the sister of the virgin. John 19:25.

***Art thou only a stranger***— As if he had said, What has been done it Jerusalem, within these few days, has been so public, so awful, and so universally known, that, if thou hadst been but a lodger in the city for a single night, I cannot conceive how thou couldst miss hearing of these things: indeed, thou appearest to be the only person unacquainted with them.

**Verse 19. *Which was a prophet***— ἀνὴρ προφητῆς, a man prophet, a genuine prophet; but this has been considered as a Hebraism: “for, in Exodus 2:14, a man prince is simply a prince; and in 1 Samuel 31:3, men archers mean no more than archers.” But my own opinion is, that this word is often used to deepen the signification, so in the above quotations: Who made thee a man prince (i.e. a mighty sovereign) and a judge over us! Exodus 2:14. And, the battle went sore against Saul, and the men archers (i.e. the stout, or well aiming archers) hit him, 1 Samuel 31:3. So in PALAEPHATUS, de Incredib. c. 38. p. 47, quoted by Kypke, ἦν ἀνὴρ βασιλεὺς μέγας, He was a great and eminent king. So ἀνὴρ προφητῆς here signifies, he was a GENUINE prophet, nothing like those false ones by whom the people have been so often deceived; and he has proved the divinity of his mission by his heavenly teaching, and astonishing miracles.

***Mighty in-word***— Irresistibly eloquent. Powerful in deed, working incontrovertible miracles. See Kypke in loco.

**Verse 21. — 24.** Cleopas paints the real state of his own mind in these verses. In his relation there is scarcely any thing well connected; important points are referred to, and not explained, though he considered the person to whom he spoke as entirely unacquainted with these transactions: his own hopes and fears he cannot help mixing with the narration, and throwing over the whole that confusion that dwells in his own heart. The narration is not at all in Luke's style; but as it is probable he was the other disciple who was present, and had heard the words of Cleopas, he gave them in that simple, natural, artless manner in which they were spoken. Had the account been forged, those simple, natural touches would not have appeared.

**To-day is the third day**— Our Lord had often said that he would rise again the third day; and though Alpheus had little hope of this resurrection, yet he could not help recollecting the words he had heard, especially as they seemed to be confirmed by the relation of the women, Luke 24:22-24.

**Verse 25. O fools and slow of heart to believe**— Inconsiderate men, justly termed such, because they had not properly attended to the description given of the Messiah by the prophets, nor to his teaching and miracles, as proofs that HE alone was the person they described.

Slow of heart-Backward, not easy to be persuaded of the truth, always giving way to doubtfulness and distrust. This very imperfection in them is a strong evidence of the truth of the doctrine which they afterwards believed, and proclaimed to the world. Had they not had the fullest assurance of these things, they never would have credited them; and it is no small honor to the new-covenant Scriptures that such persons were chosen, first, to believe them; secondly, to proclaim them in the world; and, thirdly, to die on the evidence of those truths, the blessed influence of which they felt in their own hearts, and fully exemplified in their lives.

**Verse 26. Ought not Christ to have suffered**— οὐχι εδει παθειν τον χριστον, Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer. This was the way in which sin must be expiated, and, without this, no soul could have been saved. The suffering Messiah is he alone by whom Israel and the world can be saved.

**Verse 27. *Beginning at Moses, etc.***— What a sermon this must have been, where all the prophecies relative to the incarnation, birth, teaching, miracles, sufferings, death, and resurrection of the blessed Jesus were all adduced, illustrated, and applied to himself, by an appeal to the well known facts which had taken place during his life! We are almost irresistibly impelled to exclaim, What a pity this discourse had not been preserved! No wonder their hearts burned within them, while hearing such a sermon, from such a preacher. The law and the prophets had all borne testimony, either directly or indirectly, to Christ; and we may naturally suppose that these prophecies and references were those which our Lord at this time explained and applied to himself. See Luke 24:32.

**Verse 28. *He made as though he would have gone farther.***— That is, he was going on, as though he intended to go farther; and so he doubtless would had they not earnestly pressed him to lodge with them. His preaching had made a deep impression upon their hearts, Luke 24:32, and now they feel it their greatest privilege to entertain the preacher.

This is a constant effect of the doctrine of Christ: wherever it is felt, the Author of it, the ever-blessed Jesus, is earnestly entreated to dwell in the heart; and he who preaches it, is amply provided with the necessities of life by those who have received his testimony.

**Verse 29. *For it is toward evening***— And consequently both inconvenient and unsafe to proceed to another village. Reader! it is probably the eve of thy life, whether thou be old or young: thy day may have already declined, and there is, possibly, but a step between thee and the eternal world! Hath the Lord Jesus taught thee by his word and Spirit to believe in him, that thou mightest be saved? Is he come into thy heart? Hast thou the witness of his Spirit that thy sin is blotted out through his blood? Romans 8:16; Galatians 4:6; 1 John 5:10-12. If thou have not, get thee to God right humbly. Jesus is about to pass by, perhaps for ever! O, constrain him, by earnest faith and prayer, to enter into thy soul, and lodge with thee! May God open THY eyes! May he stir up and inflame THY heart!

***And he went in***— And so he will to thee, thou penitent soul! Therefore take courage, and be not faithless but believing.

**Verse 30. *He took bread***— This was the office of the master and father of a family, and this was our Lord's usual custom among his disciples. Those whom Christ lodges with he feeds, and feeds too with bread that himself hath blessed, and this feeding not only strengthens, but also enlightens the soul.

**Verse 31. *Their eyes were opened***— But we are not to imagine that he administered the holy eucharist at this time; there is not the most distant evidence of this. It was a mere family meal, and ended before it was well begun.

***They knew him***— His acting as father of the family, in taking, blessing, and distributing the bread among them, caused them to recollect those lips which they had often heard speak, and those hands by which they had often been fed. Perhaps he also threw off the disguise which he had before assumed; and now appeared in his own person.

***He vanished out of their sight.***— Probably, during their surprise, he took the opportunity of withdrawing from the place; leaving them to reflect and meditate on what they had heard and seen.

**Verse 32. *Did not our heart burn within us***— His word was in our heart as a burning fire, Jeremiah 20:9. Our hearts waxed hot within us, and while we were musing the fire burned, Psalm 39:3. In some such way as this the words of the disciples may be understood: but there is a very remarkable reading here in the Codex Bezae; instead of *καιομενη*, burned, it has *κεκαλυμμενη*, veiled; and one of the Itala has, fuit excaecatum, was blinded. Was not our heart veiled (blinded) when he conversed with us on the way, and while he unfolded the Scriptures to us, seeing we did not know him?

**Verse 34. *Saying, The Lord is risen indeed***— The meaning here is, that these two disciples found the apostles, and those who were with them, unanimously testifying that Christ had risen from the dead. It is not the two disciples to whom we are to refer the word *λεγοντας*, saying; but to the body of the disciples. See the note on Mark 16:12.

**Verse 35. *And they***— The two disciples who were just come from Emmaus, related what had happened to them on the way, going to



Emmaus, and how he had been known unto them in the breaking of bread, while supping together at the above village. See on Luke 24:31.

**Verse 36. *And as they thus spake***— While the two disciples who were going to Emmaus were conversing about Christ, he joined himself to their company. Now, while they and the apostles are confirming each other in their belief of his resurrection, Jesus comes in, to remove every doubt, and to give them the fullest evidence of it. And it is ever true that, wherever two or three are gathered together in his name, he is in the midst of them.

***Peace be unto you.***— The usual salutation among the Jews. May you prosper in body and soul, and enjoy every heavenly and earthly good! See the notes on Matthew 5:9; 10:12.

**Verse 37. *And supposed that they had seen a spirit.***— But if there be no such thing as a disembodied spirit, would not our Lord have shown them their error? Instead of this, he confirms them in their opinion, by saying, A spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see me have, Luke 24:39; therefore he says, handle me and see me. They probably imagined that it was the soul only of our blessed Lord which they saw; but they were soon fully convinced of the identity of his person, and the reality of his resurrection; for, 1. They saw his body. 2. They heard him speak. 3. They handled him. 4. They saw him eat a piece of broiled fish and honeycomb, which they gave him. In these things it was impossible for them to have been deceived.

**Verse 41. *They-believed not for joy***— They were so overcome with the joy of his resurrection, that they did not, for some time, properly receive the evidence that was before them—as we phrase it, they thought the news too good to be true.

**Verse 44. *The law-the prophets-the psalms***— This was the Jewish division of the whole old covenant. The LAW contained the five books of Moses; the PROPHETS, the Jews divided into former and latter; they were, according to Josephus, thirteen. “The PSALMS included not only the book still so named, but also three other books, Proverbs, Job, and Canticles. These all,” says the above author, “contain hymns to God, and rules for the conduct of the lives of men.” Joseph. Cont. App. i. 8. This account is imperfect: the common Jewish division of the writings of the old covenant

is the following, and indeed seems to be the same to which our Lord alludes:-

I. The LAW, תּוֹרָה, *thorah*, including Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

II. The PROPHETS, נְבִיאִים, *nabiaim*, or teachers, including Joshua, Judges, the two books of Samuel, and the two books of Kings: these were termed the former prophets. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi: these were termed the latter prophets.

III. The HAGIOGRAPHIA, (holy writings,) כְּתוּבִים *kethuvim*, which comprehended the Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the two books of Chronicles. The Jews made anciently only twenty-two books of the whole, to bring them to the number of the letters in the Hebrew alphabet; and this they did by joining Ruth to Judges, making the two books of Samuel only one; and so of Kings and Chronicles; joining the Lamentations to Jeremiah, and making the twelve minor prophets only one book.

**Verse 45.** *Then opened he their understanding*—διηνοιξεν, He fully opened. They had a measure of light before, so that they discerned the Scriptures to be the true word of God, and to speak of the Messiah; but they had not light sufficient to enable them to apply these Scriptures to their Lord and Master; but now, by the influence of Christ, they see, not only, the prophecies which pointed out the Messiah, but also the Messiah who was pointed out by these prophecies. The book of God may be received in general as a Divine revelation, but the proper meaning, reference, and application of the Scriptures can only be discerned by the light of Christ. Even the very plain word of God is a dead letter to those who are not enlightened by the grace of Christ; and why? because this word speaks of spiritual and heavenly things; and the carnal mind of man cannot discern them. They who receive not this inward teaching continue dark and dead while they live.

**Verse 47.** *Repentance*— See its nature fully explained on Matthew 3:1.

**Remission of sins**— *αφεσιν αμαρτιων*, The taking away-removal of sins, in general every thing that relates to the destruction of the power, the pardoning of the guilt, and the purification of the heart from the very nature of sin.

**Should be preached in his name**— See the office of a proclaimer, herald, or preacher, explained in the note on Matthew 3:1, and particularly at the end of that chapter. {Matthew 3:17}

In his name—On his authority, and in virtue of the atonement made by him: for on what other ground could the inhabitants of the earth expect remission of sins?

**Among all nations**— Because God wills the salvation of ALL; and Jesus Christ by his grace has tasted death for EVERY man. Hebrews 2:9.

**Beginning at Jerusalem**— Making the first overtures of mercy to my murderers! If, then, the sinners of Jerusalem might repent, believe, and be saved, none, on this side hell, need despair.

**Verse 48. Ye are witnesses of these things.**— He gave them a full commission to proclaim these glad tidings of peace and salvation to a lost world. The disciples were witnesses not only that Christ had suffered and rose again from the dead; but also that he opens the understanding by the inspiration of his Spirit, that he gives repentance, that he pardons sin, and purifies from all unrighteousness, and that he is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come unto the knowledge of the truth and be saved. And these are the things of which their successors in the Gospel ministry must bear witness. As far as a man steadily and affectionately proclaims these doctrines, so far God will bless his labor to the salvation of those who hear him. But no man can with any propriety bear witness of that grace that saves the soul, whose own soul is not saved by that grace.

**Verse 49. The promise of my Father**— That is, the Holy Ghost, promised, John 15:26. See Acts 1:4; 2:33.

**Until ye be endued with power**— The energy of the Holy Ghost was to be communicated to them for three particular purposes. 1. That he might be in them, a sanctifying comforter, fortifying their souls and bringing to their remembrance whatever Jesus had before spoken to them.

2. That their preaching might be accompanied by his demonstration and power to the hearts of their hearers, so that they might believe and be saved.
3. That they might be able to work miracles to confirm their pretensions to a Divine mission, and to establish the truth of the doctrines they preached.

**Verse 50. *He led them out as far as to Bethany***— The difficulties in this verse, when collated with the accounts given by the other evangelists, are thus reconciled by Dr. Lightfoot.

“I. This very evangelist (Acts 1:12) tells us, that when the disciples came back from the place where our Lord had ascended, they returned from mount Olivet, distant from Jerusalem a Sabbath day’s journey. But now the town of Bethany was about fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem, John 11:18, and that is double a Sabbath day’s journey.

“II. Josephus tells us that mount Olivet was but five furlongs from the city, and a Sabbath day’s journey was seven furlongs and a half. Antiq. lib. 20, cap. 6. About that time there came to Jerusalem a certain Egyptian, pretending himself a prophet, and persuading the people that they should go out with him to the mount of Olives, ὁ και την πολεως αντικρυς κειμενον, απεχει σταδια πεντε; which, being situated on the front of the city, is distant five furlongs. These things are all true: 1. That the mount of Olives lay but five furlongs distant from Jerusalem. 2. That the town of Bethany was fifteen furlongs. 3. That the disciples were brought by Christ as far as Bethany. 4. That, when they returned from the mount of Olives, they traveled more than five furlongs. And, 5. Returning from Bethany, they traveled but a Sabbath day’s journey. All which may be easily reconciled, if we would observe:-That the first space from the city was called Bethphage, which I have cleared elsewhere from Talmudic authors, the evangelists themselves also confirming it. That part of that mount was known by that name to the length of about a Sabbath day’s journey, till it came to that part which is called Bethany. For there was a Bethany, a tract of the mount, and the town of Bethany. The town was distant from the city about fifteen furlongs, i.e. about two miles, or a double Sabbath day’s journey: but the first border of this tract (which also bore the name of Bethany) was distant but one mile, or a single Sabbath day’s journey.

“Our Savior led out his disciples, when he was about to ascend, to the very first region or tract of mount Olivet, which was called Bethany, and was distant from the city a Sabbath day’s journey. And so far from the city itself did that tract extend itself which was called Bethphage; and when he was come to that place where the bounds of Bethphage and Bethany met and touched one another, he then ascended; in that very place where he got upon the ass when he rode into Jerusalem, Mark 11:1. Whereas, therefore, Josephus saith that mount Olivet was but five furlongs from the city, he means the first brink and border of it. But our evangelist must be understood of the place where Christ ascended, where the name of Olivet began, as it was distinguished from Bethphage.”

Between the appearance of Christ to his apostles, mentioned in Luke 24:36, etc., almost all the forty days had passed, before he led them out to Bethany. They went by his order into Galilee, Matthew 26:32; 28:10; Mark 14:28; 16:7; and there he appeared to them, as is mentioned by Matthew, Matthew 28:16, etc., and more particularly by John, John 21:1, etc. See Bishop PEARCE.

***Lifted up his hands***— Probably to lay them on their heads, for this was the ordinary way in which the paternal blessing was conveyed, See Genesis 48:8-20.

**Verse 51. *Carried up into heaven.***— *ανεφερετο*-into that heaven from which he had descended, John 1:18; 3:13. This was forty days after his resurrection, Acts 1:3, during which time he had given the most convincing proofs of that resurrection, not only to the apostles, but to many others-to upwards of five hundred at one time, 1 Corinthians 15:6.

As in his life they had seen the way to the kingdom, and in his death the price of the kingdom, so in his ascension they had the fullest proof of the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the human body, and of his continual intercession at the right hand of God.

There are some remarkable circumstances relative to this ascension mentioned in Acts 1:4-12.

**Verse 52. *They worshipped him***— Let it be observed that this worship was not given by way of civil respect, for it was after he was parted from them, and carried back into heaven, that they offered it to him; but acts of

civil respect are always performed in the presence of the person. They adored him as their God, and were certainly too much enlightened to be capable of any species of idolatry.

***Returned to Jerusalem with great joy***— Having the fullest proof that Jesus was the promised Messiah; and that they had a full commission to preach repentance and remission of sin to mankind, and that they should be Divinely qualified for this great work by receiving the promise of the Father, Luke 24:49.

**Verse 53. *Were continually in the temple***— Especially till the day of pentecost came, when they received the promise, mentioned Luke 24:49.

***Praising and blessing God.***— Magnifying his mercy, and speaking good of his name. Thus the days of their mourning were ended; and they began that life upon earth in which they still live in the kingdom of God. May the God of infinite love give the reader the same portion in time and in eternity, through the same glorious and ever-blessed Jesus! Amen and amen.

THERE are various subscriptions to this book in the MSS. and versions. The following are the principal.

Through the assistance of the Most High God, the Gospel of St. Luke the physician, the proclaimer of eternal life, is finished. ARAB.-The most holy Gospel of Luke the Evangelist is completed. SYR.-The end of the holy Gospel according to Luke-written in Greek-published in Alexandria the Great,-in Troas,-in Rome,-in the confines of Achaia and Baeotia,-in Bithynia,-in Macedonia,-in the Italic (or Latin) character, fifteen years after the ascension of Christ.

It is likely, the word Amen was added by the Church, on the reading of this book; but there is no evidence that it was affixed by the evangelist. It is omitted by some of the best MSS. and versions.

It is evident that, at the conclusion of this Gospel, St. Luke passes very rapidly over a number of interesting circumstances related by the other evangelists, and particularly by St. John, concerning the last forty days of our Lord's sojourning on earth; but, to compensate for this, he has mentioned a variety of important particulars which the others have passed

by, a list of which I think it necessary to subjoin. It seems as if the providence of God had designed that none of these evangelists should stand alone: each has his peculiar excellence, and each his own style and mode of narration. They are all witnesses to the truth in general; and each most pointedly to every great fact of the Gospel history. In each there is something new; and no serious reader ever finds that the perusal of any one supersedes the necessity of carefully consulting and reading the others. The same facts and doctrines are exhibited by all in different points of view, which renders them both impressive and interesting; and this one circumstance serves to fix the narrative more firmly in the memory. We should have had slighter impressions from the Gospel history, had we not had the narrative at four different hands. This variety is of great service to the Church of God, and has contributed very much to diffuse the knowledge of the facts and doctrines contained in this history. Parallel passages have been carefully studied, and the different shades of meaning accurately marked out; and the consequence has been, what the wisdom of God designed, the fuller edification of the faithful. It is not the business of a commentator to point out beauties in the composition of the sacred text. Many might be selected from the evangelists in general, and not a few from Luke, who not only tells a true story, but tells it well; especially when he has occasion to connect the different parts of the narration with observations of his own. But this is his least praise: from his own account we learn that he took the utmost pains to get the most accurate and circumstantial information relative to the facts he was to relate: see the note on Luke 1:3. While, therefore, he thus diligently and conscientiously sought for truth, the unerring Spirit of God led him into all truth. Even he who expected the revelation of the Almighty, and to be inspired by the Holy Spirit, that he might correctly, forcibly, and successfully proclaim the truth and righteousness of his Maker, must stand upon his watch, and set himself upon his tower, and watch to see what God would speak IN him, Habakkuk 2:1. In a similar spirit we may expect the fruits of these revelations. He who carefully and conscientiously uses the means may expect the accomplishment of the end.

I cannot close these observations with a more profitable word than what is contained in that truly apostolic and sublime prayer for the second Sunday in Advent; and may he who reads it weigh every word in the spirit of faith

and devotion! “Blessed God! who hast caused all holy scriptures to be written for our learning; grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that, by patience and comfort of thy holy word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Savior Jesus Christ!”

Now to him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever! Amen.

**FACTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES RELATED AT LARGE BY ST. LUKE, WHICH  
ARE EITHER NOT MENTIONED AT ALL, OR BUT VERY TRANSIENTLY, —  
BY THE OTHER EVANGELISTS**

The conception of Elisabeth, Luke 1:5-25.

The salutation of Mary, Luke 1:26-38.

Mary’s visit to Elisabeth, Luke 1:39-56.

The birth of John the Baptist, Luke 1:57-79.

The decree of Caesar Augustus, Luke 2:1-6.

Apparition of the angel to the shepherds, Luke 2:8-20.

The circumcision of Christ, Luke 2:21.

The presentation of Christ in the temple, Luke 2:22-38.

Dispute with the doctors when twelve years of age, Luke 2:40-52.

Chronological dates at the commencement of our Lord’s ministry, Luke 3:1, 2.

Success of the preaching of John the Baptist, Luke 3:10-15.

Christ’s preaching and miraculous escape at Nazareth, Luke 4:15-30.

Remarkable particulars in the call of Simon, Andrew, James, and John, Luke 5:1-10.

The calamities that fell on certain Galileans, Luke 13:1-9.



Mission of the seventy disciples, Luke 10:1-16.

The return of the seventy disciples, with an account of their success, Luke 10:17-24.

Story of the good Samaritan, Luke 10:25-37.

Cure of the woman who had been diseased eighteen years, Luke 13:10-20.

The question answered, Are there few that be saved? Luke 13:22, 23.

Curing of the man with the dropsy, Luke 14:1-24.

Difficulties attending the profession of Christianity, to be carefully preconsidered, Luke 14:25-35.

Parable of the lost sheep, and the lost piece of money, Luke 15:1-10.

Parable of the prodigal son, Luke 15:11-32.

Parable of the unjust steward, Luke 16:1-18;

Parable of the rich man and the beggar, Luke 16:19-31.

Various instructions to his disciples, Luke 17:1-10.

The refusal of the Samaritans to receive him into their city, Luke 9:52-56; 17:11.

The cleansing of the ten lepers, Luke 17:12-19.

The Pharisees ask when the kingdom of God should come, and our Lord's answer, Luke 17:20-38.

The Pharisee and the publican, Luke 18:1-14.

Account of the domestic avocations of Martha and Mary, Luke 10:38-42.

The account of Zaccheus, Luke 19:2-10.

The parable of the nobleman that went to obtain a kingdom, Luke 19:11-28.

Pilate sends Jesus to Herod, Luke 23:6-16.

Account of the women that deplored our Lord's sufferings, Luke 23:27-32.

Remarkable particulars concerning the two thieves that were crucified with our Lord, Luke 23:39-43.

Account of the two disciples going to Emmaus, Luke 24:13-35.

Remarkable circumstances concerning his appearance to the eleven, after his resurrection, Luke 24:37-49.

Finished the correction for a new edition, Oct. 31, 1831. A. C.