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# THE NEW TESTAMENT FOR SCHOOLS

THE TEXT OF THE REVISED VERSION,  
WITH INTRODUCTIONS, NOTES AND MAPS  
TO EACH VOLUME.

EDITED BY THE REV. A. R. WHITHAM, M.A.

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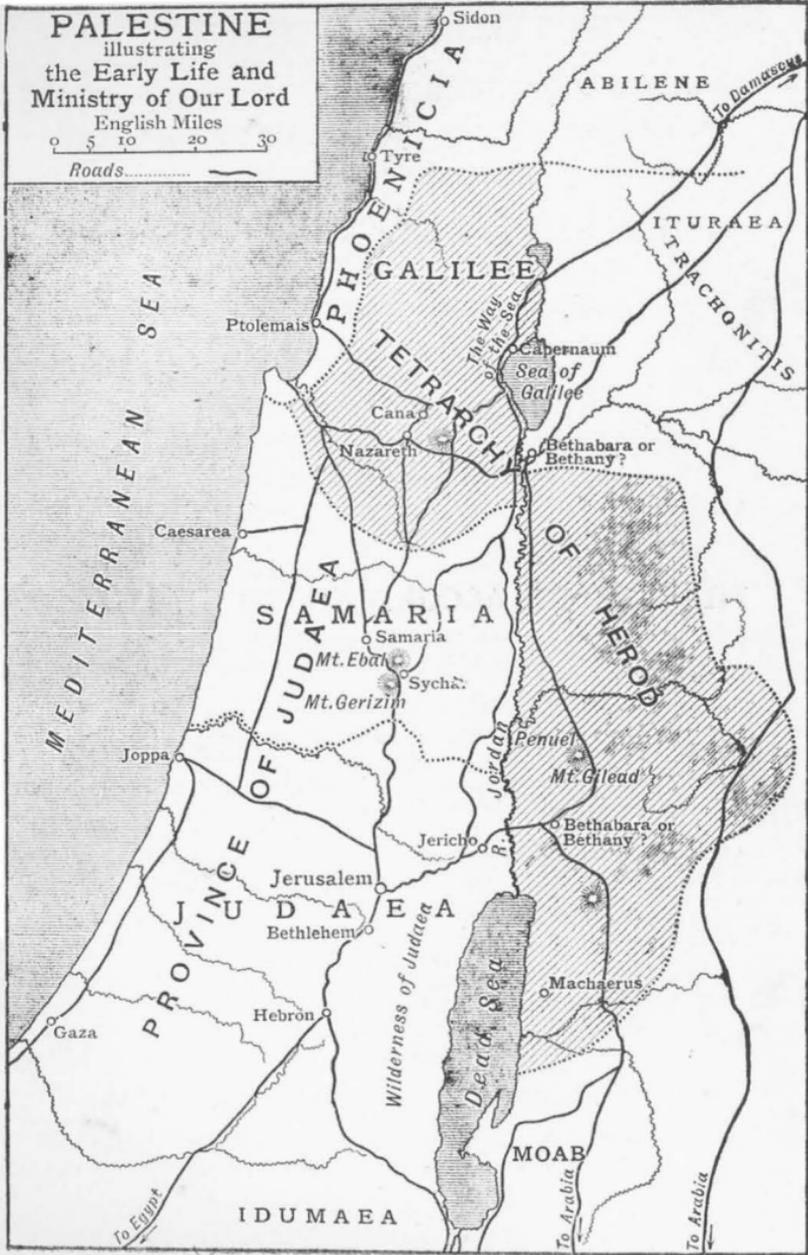
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LONDON: RIVINGTONS

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE

**PALESTINE**  
 illustrating  
 the Early Life and  
 Ministry of Our Lord

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The New Testament for Schools

THE GOSPEL  
ACCORDING TO  
S T. L U K E

THE TEXT OF THE REVISED VERSION  
WITH INTRODUCTIONS AND NOTES

BY

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"THE LIFE OF OUR BLESSED LORD," "A SHORT NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY"  
AND "OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY," ETC., ETC.

*SECOND EDITION*

RIVINGTONS  
34 KING STREET, COVENT GARDEN  
LONDON

1922

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY  
WILLIAM BRENDON AND SON, LIMITED, PLYMOUTH

## PREFATORY NOTE

THIS edition of St. Luke's Gospel in English is intended for the Middle and Upper Forms of Schools, and aims at supplying information on modern lines, but from a Christian standpoint, and in harmony with the general teaching of the Christian Church.

It has been thought convenient to summarise in the short introductions a good deal of the matter which is distributed in the notes. But the notes will be found, it is hoped, full enough to furnish sufficient help in all the ordinary difficulties of the text, without the labour of constant reference to other parts of the book.

The questions at the end of each chapter will be found useful for class work, especially for written answers. Subjects for further study, with a few suggestions as to authorities easy to be consulted, have also been added.

The text is that of the Revised Version, by special permission of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFATORY NOTE . . . . .	vii
ST. LUKE AND HIS GOSPEL . . . . .	ix
PALESTINE AND ITS PEOPLE . . . . .	xiv
MESSIANIC PROPHECIES . . . . .	xxiii
SYNOPSIS OF ST. LUKE'S GOSPEL . . . . .	xxiii
TEXT OF ST. LUKE IN THE REVISED VERSION, WITH NOTES . . . . .	1
INDEX . . . . .	245

## MAPS AND PLANS

1. PALESTINE IN THE TIME OF OUR LORD . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
2. NORTHERN PALESTINE . . . . .	41
3. JERUSALEM AND MOUNT OF OLIVES . . . . .	187
4. GROUND-PLAN OF HEROD'S TEMPLE . . . . .	189

## St. Luke and his Gospel

THE Third of the Synoptic\* Gospels is universally ascribed to St. Luke, the author also of the Acts of the Apostles, and possibly (according to one early conjecture†) of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The Greek form of his name, Lucas, is perhaps a diminutive of the Roman name Lucanus. Our knowledge of him is derived almost entirely from a few allusions in the N.T. and from deductions drawn from these.

St. Paul in Colossians iv. 14 (written at Rome during his first imprisonment about A.D. 59 or 60) speaks of Luke as one of those with him who send greetings. His name comes after those who are described as being "of the circumcision," i.e. Jews by birth, from which we gather that Luke was a Gentile. St. Paul calls him "the beloved physician," and there are frequent traces in the Gospel and the Acts of Luke's medical interest and knowledge, and his use of correct medical terminology. In the companion epistle, to Philemon, Luke is again mentioned as "a fellow-worker." And in St. Paul's last Epistle, 2 Timothy (iv. 11), Luke appears as the only one of his friends who had remained faithful during the great apostle's second imprisonment: "only Luke is with me." From St. Luke's introduction to the Gospel (see notes, i. 1-4) it is gathered that he had not personally been a follower of Jesus Christ, but had received the faith from others, who had been eyewitnesses. Possibly St. Paul him-

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\* So called because they view our Lord's life from one common standpoint, dealing, unlike the fourth Gospel, almost exclusively with His ministry in Galilee, His Passion and Resurrection.

† This was the tradition of the school of Alexandria in the second century.

self had been the instrument of St. Luke's conversion, but this is not very probable. But both Scriptures and tradition shew him as the close friend and fellow-worker of St. Paul for many years.

In the record of St. Paul's travels in the Acts, it is gathered from certain passages where "we" is used instead of "they"; that he joined the apostle at Troas in the course of the second missionary journey (Acts xvi. 10); and again accompanied him to Jerusalem (Acts xx. 6-xxi. 18) and also to Rome, in his voyage and shipwreck and his final arrival (Acts xxvii.-xxviii. 16). The use of "we" on the second journey stops at Philippi, and is resumed from that place, on the journey to Jerusalem, from which it seems probable that St. Luke had been left in charge of the newly-founded Church of the Philippians, where he remained for some six years. He has been by many identified with the unnamed "brother whose praise in the Gospel is spread through all the churches" (2 Cor. viii. 18). Possibly also it is he whom St. Paul addresses as "true yokefellow" in writing to the Philippian Church (Phil. iv. 3). An early biography speaks of St. Luke as a native of Antioch; and tradition places his death in Bithynia, though whether he died as a martyr or not is uncertain. He seems from the Gospel to have had special acquaintance with the household of Herod; from which some have conjectured that he was a court physician. All that we can gather about St. Luke suggests a singularly gracious, tender, large-hearted personality; refined, cultivated, and scholarly. The Greek both of the Gospel and Acts is the most classical and literary in the N.T. The leading characteristics of St. Luke's mind and thought as disclosed in his Gospel are suggested below.

The third Gospel is definitely stated to be the work of St. Luke in the earliest list of canonical books of Scripture called the Muratorian Canon (A.D. 180): but there are quotations from it and allusions to it in Christian writings at an earlier date. The author of the Acts clearly alludes to the Gospel in his opening words: "The former treatise I made, O Theophilus, etc." The Gnostic heretic Marcion, while rejecting all the

other Gospels, retained St. Luke's with many omissions ; in the endeavour to support his theory that there was no connection between the New Covenant and the Old, and that they proceeded from two different Gods.

The date of the Gospel has been variously conjectured, but in all probability it was written before the fall of Jerusalem A.D. 70. It may have been written in the course of St. Luke's ministry at Philippi, or during one of the imprisonments of St. Paul, either at Cæsarea or Rome. The most likely date for its appearance is about A.D. 63.

The method of compilation resembles that of St. Matthew. Most modern scholars are agreed that St. Mark's Gospel was used as a common basis : both St. Matthew and St. Luke not only using the subject-matter of St. Mark, but reproducing often the exact words and order of his narrative. Again, both St. Matthew and St. Luke are believed to have made use of the same independent collection of our Lord's sayings and teachings, which is sometimes spoken of by modern scholars as "the Non-Markan document," and also as Q (i.e. *Quelle* = source). Both again had other private sources of information. A large part of St. Luke's Gospel is not found elsewhere (see the Synopsis). Particularly is this the case in the section ix. 51-xix. 28. Among the most remarkable of these additions of St. Luke to our knowledge of the life of Christ are the passage describing His birth and early life, the Christian hymns, Magnificat, Benedictus, and Nunc Dimittis, the parables of the latter part of the ministry, especially that of the Prodigal Son, and the appearance to two disciples after the Resurrection.

The outstanding difference between St. Luke's use of his materials and that of St. Matthew is that the former has endeavoured to write "in order," i.e. probably in order of *time* (cp. his chronological notes, ii. 1-2 ; iii. 1-2). While St. Matthew has grouped together our Lord's discourses, notably in the Sermon on the Mount, St. Luke has distributed them in various parts of his Gospel, and pointed out their connection with the immediate circumstances.

In some respects St. Luke's Gospel is a link between the two previous Gospels and that of St. John, e.g. by his allusions to the ministry of our Lord in Judæa: his mention of Martha and Mary, and of the two high priests, Annas and Caiaphas.

The Gospel of St. Luke is distinguished not merely by its literary beauty, but by its human feeling, making it for many readers the most attractive of the Gospels. St. Luke's artistic power is seen not in the accumulation of vivid details, like those of St. Mark, in which indeed he is somewhat deficient, but in his skill in presenting a picture in a few bold strokes, which take the reader captive and touch the heart. And it is this faculty of St. Luke which makes his Gospel unusually difficult for the verbal commentator. The charm cannot be analysed, or elucidated in notes.

Among the characteristics of St. Luke which have been noted by students, the following are the most evident. He is specially interested in the bearing of the Gospel on the Gentile world, e.g. he alone continues Isaiah's prediction of "the voice in the wilderness" so as to include the significant words, "all flesh shall see the salvation of God." In this naturally we see the affinity of St. Luke's mind with that of St. Paul, and the influence of their long friendship. Indeed St. Luke's is often spoken of as "the Pauline Gospel." When both St. Luke and St. Paul are recording the same event, the institution of the Eucharist, the similarities are very marked. And it is noteworthy that St. Paul's most warm and affectionate Epistle is addressed to an entirely Gentile Church, that of the Philippians, and the one which probably owed its early training to St. Luke.

Again, this Gospel shows the writer's care to preserve and make prominent every instance of our Lord's pity and tenderness towards erring and sinful men and women. Twice the hated Samaritan is singled out for special approval: the narrative of the woman that was "a sinner," the parable of the Prodigal Son, the prayer from the Cross, the affecting record of the penitence and pardon of the crucified robber, all

peculiar to St. Luke, are among the most dearly-treasured memorials of the Saviour.

St. Luke again seems to have had a deep sympathy for the poor and a horror of the selfishness and materialism which often wait on riches. He has recorded much more than the other evangelists of our Lord's teaching on this subject.

While St. Luke shews the tender side of our Lord's teaching, and himself sometimes omit what seems to bear hardly on the individual (e.g. the rebuke to St. Peter, and the oaths that accompanied his denials), he brings out on the other hand with unusual vividness the severity of the Gospel, as in the "Woes," the warnings to count the cost, the exacting conditions of discipleship, and, above all, the awe-inspiring picture of the rich man's doom.

St. Luke's is also especially the Gospel of Prayer. Our Lord's prayers, His parables and general teaching with regard to prayer are very fully recorded. And as might be expected from the historian of the Acts and the friend of St. Paul, he is careful from the Incarnation onward to make evident the work and power of the Holy Spirit.

Women have a peculiar prominence in this Gospel. It is especially the Gospel of the Mother of our Lord, a fact which perhaps led to the tradition that St. Luke was a painter, and to the ascription of certain ancient paintings of the Virgin to his brush.

Lastly, we can scarcely miss the atmosphere of joy and thanksgiving that pervades the Gospel, from "the good tidings of great joy" at Bethlehem to the joy with which the apostles return from the contemplation of the Ascension. Brightness and hope are everywhere; the sense of the mercy of God, and the new prospects opening before humanity.

## Palestine and its People

PALESTINE in the time of our Lord was in a very different condition from that described in the Books of Kings, or indeed in any part of the Old Testament. Instead of a division of territory among the twelve tribes, the country was divided into three large districts, Galilee in the north, Judæa in the south, and between them Samaria. Instead of having kings of their own reigning as independent sovereigns at Jerusalem and Samaria, over the two rival kingdoms of Judah and Israel, the people of the land had ever since the Captivity been under the rule of one or another foreign master. Persia, Greece, Egypt, Syria had in turn been their overlords. The nearest approach to national independence had been under the Hasmonæan or Maccabæan princes, the descendants of that priest Mattathias who with his heroic sons had headed the great and successful national revolt against Antiochus Epiphanes, a Greek King of Syria who had tried to suppress the Jewish religion and force Hellenism on the Jews. Simon the Maccabee (142-135) had practically ruled as an independent sovereign, though protected under treaty by Rome.

But as the Maccabæan dynasty grew weak, and the encroachments of Rome extended, another influence on the side of Rome began to make itself felt. Antipater, the Idumæan, got the ear of Rome and intrigued for power in Palestine. He brought about the siege and capture of Jerusalem by Pompey in 63 B.C. His son, Herod, obtained in 40 B.C. from the Roman Senate the title of "King of the Jews." Before he could transform this title into a reality he had to take Jerusalem by storm in 37. Here he reigned till 4 B.C., a powerful, crafty and cruel ruler. The Jews hated him notwithstanding his rebuilding of the Temple in marble and gold, both for his half-heathen descent from the Edomites, his allegiance to Rome, and his tolerance

Foreign  
domination.

Herod the  
Great.

of idolatry. Herod's dominion extended over the whole of Palestine, but he ruled by favour of Rome, and Roman power made itself felt, notably in the census to which St. Luke alludes (ii. 1), by which each provincial had to register his name and property and take an oath of allegiance to the Emperor.

Such was the political state of Palestine at the birth of our Lord. Nominally under one ruler, a "King of the Jews," it was only a vassal kingdom of the great Roman Empire. Augustus was the reigning Emperor, and his dominions were enjoying one of their brief moments of peace. The Temple of Janus was closed.

A change came on the death of Herod (4 B.C.). He divided his kingdom between his three sons, with the consent of Rome. They ruled under the title not of kings but of "tetrarchs"; Philip in the N.E. over the <sup>Judæa</sup> wild and mountainous country of Ituræa and <sup>a Roman</sup> Trachonitis; Herod Antipas over Galilee, not including the <sup>province.</sup> coast (see map, frontispiece); and Archelaus over Judæa, Samaria and Idumæa. The cruelties of Archelaus gave Rome her opportunity. Augustus deposed him in A.D. 6, and his dominion became the Roman province of Judæa. This was placed in that class of provinces which were governed directly by the Emperor, a method adopted in the newer and in the more turbulent districts. The imperial governor was called a "procurator," and had in his command a considerable military force. He resided as a rule at Cæsarea, but came to Jerusalem to enforce order at the great Jewish festivals.

During our Lord's public ministry (A.D. 27-29) Pontius Pilate was procurator, and Herod Antipas still ruled the region bequeathed him by his father. The Emperor was Tiberius, a gloomy and mysterious figure, suspicious and cruel, dreaded at home, but a good provincial administrator.

The people of Palestine were of very varied race and character. The country, with its remarkable position and

physical features, was both secluded and open. Its mountainous and difficult interior and its sea-board without harbours, were balanced by the easiness of the coast-road from Egypt into Syria and Asia Minor. Palestine lay in the highway of the nations, and its population was very mixed.

Long before the Captivity the northern tribes had been subject to the incursions of foreigners from Phœnicia, Syria and Assyria. Even in Isaiah's time the district **Galilee.** was spoken of as "Galilee of the nations." In the time of our Lord the Gentile population outnumbered the Jews. The larger towns, some of which had even Greek names, were largely populated by Syrian Greeks, and commerce was chiefly in their hands. But the minority of the Galilæans still consisted of Jews faithful to their religion, accustomed to attend at least the Passover festival at Jerusalem. Though they were despised by the Jews of the south for their supposed ignorance and lack of refinement and their rustic utterance, they were a vigorous race, strongly national in feeling, warm-hearted and religious, and it was to them that our Lord principally addressed His teaching, and from them most of His disciples were drawn. All the Twelve, except Judas Iscariot, were Galilæans.

**Samaria.** Samaria had a different history and stood in a very different category from Galilee. Nearly all its original inhabitants had been deported by Sennacherib to Mesopotamia, and in their place a number of heathen colonists had been planted by the Assyrians (2 Kings xvii.). They were worshippers of idols, but believing, with most of the peoples of antiquity, that each land had its own tutelary god, they petitioned the King of Assyria to send some one to teach them the worship of Jehovah, "the God of the land." A priest was sent them, and for a time they combined the worship of the God of Israel with that of their own idols. But by the time that the Jews of Judah and Benjamin returned from their captivity in Babylon, these Samaritans had abandoned their own original religions and

professed to be servants of Jehovah, and claimed brotherhood with the Jews. But their request to be allowed to join in the rebuilding of the Temple was peremptorily refused. From this time they became bitterly hostile to the Jews, and were despised and hated by the latter. The Jews had "no dealings with the Samaritans," with that "foolish people that dwell in Sichem" (Ecclus. i. 26), and in their turn the Samaritans hindered the passage of Jewish pilgrims to Jerusalem. They erected a rival temple on Mount Gerizim, claimed to be the true heirs of the patriarchs, kept a Passover of their own, and preserved with veneration the five books of Moses, rejecting the prophets and other Old Testament Scriptures. It is remarkable that they still survive to this day, preserving their traditions, their high priest and their Passover.

The attitude of our Lord towards the Samaritans was entirely different from that of the Jews. He took every opportunity of reproving Jewish censoriousness and dislike. He selected a Samaritan on more than one occasion for special praise. He Himself, as St. John records (iv.), spent two days with the Samaritans in their own country teaching them, and was hailed by them as the Messiah.

Judæa and Jerusalem were the real stronghold of Jewish religion in its most narrow and conservative form. Here there was little Gentile admixture, and for centuries Jewish exclusiveness had built barriers between Judæa. Israel and all other nations, and endeavoured to base the whole national life on the Law of Moses and the "tradition of the elders." At Jerusalem stood the Temple, the centre of the national worship, where alone sacrifice could be offered, and to which every Jew was expected to send the annual tribute of half a shekel. Here were the schools where the Rabbis lectured and disputed. Jerusalem to the Jew was both capital, cathedral city and university. It was the headquarters of the most characteristic post-captivity institution of the Jews—the profession or class of the "Scribes" (see p. 51). Elsewhere the only places of worship and instruction were the synagogues (p. 39).

But there was by no means unanimity in the religious life of Jewry. Party spirit and controversy were rife. Two great parties stand out prominently in the Gospels—the Pharisees, strong nationalists, and fanatically zealous of the Law, priding themselves on keeping both it and the traditions with punctilious exactness. There were among them many earnest and righteous men, but as a class they were marked by bigotry, vanity and hypocrisy, making much of externals, but blind to the real meaning of the Scriptures which they championed. Against them stand the Sadducees, who took a more easy-going and worldly view of the separateness of Israel. They were willing to acquiesce in the rule of Rome, were wealthy and prosperous, and in our Lord's time had gained possession of the high priesthood and most of the priestly influence. In theory they regarded righteousness as more important than ceremonial, but in practice they were as bad as the Pharisees. Their religious outlook was mean and unspiritual, they disparaged the prophets, denied the resurrection, and refused to believe in angels and spirits. Other parties were those of the Zealots and the Herodians. The former were frantic nationalists, ready to take up the sword against Rome. They originated from the rising headed by Judas of Galilee, who raised the standard of revolt against Rome, when Judæa became a Roman province, and a second census with a view to taxation was imposed. The Herodians were the exact opposite, and were definitely in favour of submission to Herod and to Roman lordship.

Over this mixed and turbulent population Rome had to rule, either indirectly through Herod, the vassal of Rome, or directly in Judæa by the imperial procurator. Rome had a genius for empire, and one of her secrets was to respect as much as possible the customs, sentiments and religions of the subject states. Consequently Jewish institutions were allowed to continue. The high priest still bore his ancient dignity, though by degrees the Romans got the office under their own control,

Jewish  
parties.

Roman  
religious  
policy.

and appointed their own supporters, even deposing those whom they did not trust. In our Lord's time they had deposed Annas (who was still however regarded by the stricter Jews as the true high priest), and appointed his son-in-law Joseph Caiaphas. Roman soldiers guarded the sacred robes of the high priest and brought them down from the tower of Antonia when required. Great consideration was shown to the Jewish hatred of idolatry. No attempt was made to introduce heathen cults or emperor-worship, though in Northern Palestine, where the Jews were in some places almost a negligible element, these were in possession. But in Jerusalem the legionaries were even ordered to remove the eagles from their standards lest they should offend Jewish prejudice.

The same policy was pursued in more secular matters. The Sanhedrin, the supreme council of the Jews, still sat and administered judgment, except in matters of life and death, which had to be referred to the procurator. This Council of seventy members, presided over by the high priest, was supposed to be the continuation of the seventy elders appointed by Moses in the wilderness, but in reality it was a post-captivity institution. Of lesser rank and powers than this assemblage were the local tribunals which the Romans allowed to be elected in every town or important village where Jews were in a majority. These consisted of "elders" or chief men of the place, of varying numbers. They met in the synagogue, and could inflict such punishments as fines, scourging and imprisonment.

The arrangements for taxation also were made somewhat easier than in other provinces. The system by which the taxation of a province was put up to auction at Rome, and sold to the highest bidder, who then proceeded to extort as much as he could from the unhappy provincials, was dispensed in the case of the Jews; and the *tributum capitis* and *tributum soli* (p. 30) were collected directly by the officials of the procurator, who might be less overbearing and rapacious. In the case of Galilee

Roman  
secular  
policy.

Taxation.

Herod probably had his own system of taxation, and there at any rate Jews would feel that they were not paying directly to Rome.

But in spite of these concessions, the Roman rule became more and more obnoxious to the Jews. The stricter sort felt

**Jewish hatred  
of Gentiles.**

that between the encroachment of Greek and Syrian on the one hand, and the despotism of Rome on the other, their position was intolerable. They were always on the verge of revolt, and their hatred of the Gentiles grew more bitter and intolerant. Contemporary literature shews that this hatred was to some extent reciprocated. The Jew was regarded by the rest of the world as an impossible person, an enemy of mankind. Nevertheless, the Jews were so widely spread about the Empire, their wealth, and industry and skill in commerce made them so useful, that they were tolerated as a rule by the emperors, and allowed religious privileges which were certainly not shared by the early Christians.

The animosity of the Jews against their masters and the Gentile world in general found vent in exaggerated and fantastic dreams of a coming Messianic age. The

**The Messianic  
kingdom.**

hope of the Messiah which had died down in the years after the Return, revived in the last century and a half before Christ, partly through the influence of the Book of Daniel, and also of other "Apocalyptic" books. Such were the *Jewish Sibylline Oracles*, written about 140 B.C., the *Psalter of Solomon*, 40-30 B.C., and the *Book of the Similitudes of Enoch* of about the same date or a little earlier. This last had a wide circulation; it speaks clearly of the Messiah as one pre-existing before he comes into the world and as the "Son of Man."

The older prophecies of the Old Testament with their splendid conceptions of the Messiah as King and Priest of humanity, as the One who would redeem Israel and the world through suffering, were distorted or neglected. A totally erroneous conception of the Messiah and His Kingdom had become prevalent in our Lord's time. When He spoke of

“the kingdom of heaven,” or “kingdom of God,” He was using a phrase which was already in everyone’s mouth, but His teaching concerning that kingdom was fundamentally different from that which was inspired by the seething passions of His contemporaries. They had drawn for themselves a picture of the Messiah and His kingdom something on these lines. In the midst of increasing darkness and distress for Israel, the prophet Elijah was to return from heaven, and after three days of bringing new order into the world, would anoint the Messiah. He would be a supernatural conqueror who would fight against and destroy miraculously the armies of Rome, and reduce the Gentile world to slavery. Then would begin the golden age of His kingdom. The lost tribes would be found again; the faithful departed of Israel would rise from the dead. By these wild imaginings, which the Jews imagined to be a fulfilling of the Scriptures, they flattered their own pride and hatred of the Gentiles. Anything more different in spirit from the pictures of Isaiah and the other prophets can scarcely be conceived. To them the restored Israel was to be the light of the Gentiles, a source of true religion, healing, and peace to a world sunk in darkness and idolatry.

The teaching of our Lord was built upon these old true foundations of prophecy; but even His own disciples long clung obstinately to the more popular ideas of earthly glory and triumph. Hence the difficulty which the disciples felt when He spoke to them of His Passion, and their despondent state before His Resurrection. “The offence of the Cross” was the greatest stumbling-block to the Jewish world, when the disciples, at last enlightened, went forth to preach the true Messiah.

This dark picture of national delusion, and degradation of the ideals of the Old Testament, has indeed another and brighter side. Without doubt there were some in Israel who had studied the prophets to better purpose, and were prepared in a humble and teachable spirit to accept our Lord’s teaching. Such were the Blessed Mother, Simeon and Anna,

besides many nameless ones who recognised in Jesus the hope of Israel and the world.

Nor must it be forgotten that the Judaism of Palestine was by no means in exclusive possession. There was a wider and more liberal Judaism among the Jews of the Dispersion, especially among the Hellenistic Jews, who residing in other countries, had come into contact with Greek thought, and while faithful to the Old Testament and the hopes of their race, were more liberal-minded, and dwelt more upon the great moral and spiritual truths of their religion than on ceremonial. They were ready to see good in the Gentile world; and it was from them that the Christian Church drew many of its most remarkable adherents, and through their influence, in part at least, that the Church realised her mission as Catholic rather than Jewish.

And though, as we have said, the strict Pharisaic Jew was hated and despised by the Gentile—the influence of this more liberal school was, at the time of our Lord, attracting many thoughtful heathen searchers after truth. The synagogues found worshippers among devout Gentiles who, whether they actually embraced Judaism or not, were impressed by the spirituality of the Jewish conception of God, and by the profound moral teaching of the Old Testament. It was among these “God-fearers,” as they were called, that St. Paul and other early teachers of Christ found sympathetic hearers, while they were anathematised by the narrow-minded products of Pharisaic bigotry and hypocrisy.

**Liberal  
Judaism.**

**Its attraction  
for the  
Gentiles.**

### Messianic Prophecies in St. Luke

*Quoted by our Lord Himself.*

- iv. 18-19. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me," etc. Isaiah lxi. 1-2.
- vii. 27. "Behold I send my messenger," etc. Malachi iii. 1.
- xiii. 35. "Blessed is he that cometh," etc. Psalm cxviii. 26.
- xx. 17. "The stone which the builders rejected," etc. Psalm cxviii. 22.
- xx. 42-43. "The Lord said unto my Lord," etc. Psalm cx. 1.
- xxii. 37. "And he was reckoned among the transgressors." Isaiah liii. 12.

*Quoted by the Evangelist.*

- iii. 4. "The voice of one crying in the wilderness," etc. Isaiah xl. 3.

### Synopsis of St. Luke's Gospel

Passages peculiar to St. Luke are printed in *italics*.

- I. Introduction to the Gospel.
- II. Birth and early Life of our Lord.

*The Birth of the Baptist foretold.*

*The Annunciation.*

*The Visitation.*

*The Birth of John the Baptist.*

*The Birth of Jesus Christ at Bethlehem.*

*The Presentation in the Temple.*

*The Visit of Jesus to the Temple.*

The Preaching of the Baptist (part peculiar to St. Luke).

The Baptism of Christ.

*The Genealogy of Jesus.*

The Temptation.

### III. The Ministry in Galilee and the North.

*Nazareth re-visited.*

A day of miracles at Capernaum.

The Call of St. Peter, St. James and St. John.

The cleansing of a Leper.

Forgiveness and healing of a paralytic.

The call of Levi.

Fasting, the old and the new.

Controversies respecting the Sabbath:

(a) Plucking the ears of corn.

(b) Healing on the Sabbath.

The choosing of the Twelve.

The great Sermon:

(a) Paradoxes of the Kingdom of God.

(b) The new law of Love.

(c) Warnings against insincerity.

Healing of a centurion's servant.

*A widow's son raised from the dead.*

The question of John the Baptist.

The witness of Christ to the Baptist.

*Christ and the penitent woman.*

The Parable of the Sower.

Christ's Mother and brethren.

The stilling of the storm.  
 The Gerasene demoniac.  
 Raising the dead and curing the incurable.  
 The Mission of the Twelve.  
 Herod's perplexity.  
 The feeding of the multitudes.  
 St. Peter's confession : the Passion foretold.  
 The Transfiguration.  
 The healing of a demoniac child.  
 Rebukes to ambition.

#### IV. The Way to the Passion.

*The rebuke of James and John.*  
 Candidates for discipleship.  
*The Mission of the Seventy.*  
 The joy of the Lord.  
*The Lawgiver's question : Parable of the Good Samaritan.*  
*Martha and Mary.*  
 Teaching on Prayer.  
 The casting out of devils.  
 The blessedness of our Lord's Mother.  
 The demand for a Sign.  
 Denunciation of Scribes and Pharisees.  
 Teaching on Sincerity and Courage.  
*Covetousness : Parable of the Rich Fool.*  
 Worldly cares and the Father's providence.  
 Faithful and unfaithful servants.  
*The effects of Christ's first coming.*  
 The signs of the times.  
*The lesson of calamities : the Parable of the barren fig tree*

*Healing on the Sabbath.*

Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Leaven.

*Who will be saved?*

*Answer to the warning against Herod.*

*Further controversy respecting the Sabbath.*

*The vanity of guests and hosts reproved.*

*The Parable of the great Supper.*

*Warning to count the cost.*

Parables of the Lost Sheep and *the Lost Coin.*

*Parable of the Prodigal Son.*

*Parable of the Unjust Steward.*

*Reproof of the Pharisees.*

*The Rich Man and Lazarus.*

Responsibility for others.

*Faith and Humility.*

*Healing of ten Lepers.*

The coming of the Kingdom of God.

Teaching on Prayer:

(a) *Parable of the importunate Widow.*

(b) *Parable of the Pharisee and Publican.*

Becoming as little children.

The rich Ruler's question.

The Passion more fully foretold.

The blind man at Jericho.

*The meeting with Zacchæus.*

*The Parable of the Pounds.*

## V. The Holy Week.

Triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

The Question of Authority.

The Parable of the Vineyard.

The Question of Tribute to Cæsar.

The Question of the Resurrection of the dead.

Christ's own Question.

Denunciation of the Scribes: the Widow's offering.

The great Prophecy of the End.

## VI. The Passion.

The Betrayal: Preparation for the Passover.

The Last Supper: the Eucharist.

*Warnings at the Last Supper:*

The Agony.

The Arrest.

First Jewish Trial: St. Peter's denials.

Second Jewish Trial.

Roman Trial.

*Trial before Herod.*

The Roman Trial resumed.

The Way to Calvary: *Women of Jerusalem.*

The Crucifixion.

The Burial.

## VII. The Resurrection.

Resurrection proclaimed by Angels.

*Appearance to two Disciples.*

Appearance to all the Disciples.

Commission to the Disciples.

*The Ascension.*

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE

## I. Introduction to the Gospel

(Chapter i. 1-4)

- i. 1 FORASMUCH as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been <sup>1</sup>fulfilled <sup>1</sup>Or, *fully* among us, even as they delivered them unto us, *established.*
- 

This introduction is unique in the New Testament and is of remarkable interest. It shews (1) the general purpose of the writer; (2) his own position with regard to the events which he records; (3) the type of reader to which he addresses himself. These points will be dealt with in the notes that follow. See also the Introduction, p. xii.

i. 1 **Forasmuch as many have taken in hand.** St. Luke begins with the interesting statement, very probable in itself, that many before him had attempted to collect and put together materials for a life of Christ on earth. The only one of which we know for a practical certainty that it preceded St. Luke, is the Gospel of St. Mark, which he almost undoubtedly made use of (see *Introd.*, p. xi). The others, not necessarily erroneous, but of inferior value, have all perished without trace. St. Luke can hardly be referring to any of the Apocryphal Gospels.\* It is remarkable how little outside the four canonical Gospels has survived of our Lord's sayings and doings.

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\* There are a considerable number of these Apocryphal Gospels, most of which are fragmentary, and of others only the names survive. Some were plainly the production of heretical sects, like *The Gospel of the Twelve Apostles*. Others are legendary, and contain accounts, clearly imaginary, of our Lord's early life, and His miracles in childhood, and of His parents—such is the *Protevangelium of James*, part of which may be as early as the second century. More important

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *words.* which from the beginning were eyewitnesses and  
<sup>2</sup> Or, *which thou wast taught by words of mouth.* ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, <sup>3</sup>  
 having traced the course of all things accurately from  
 the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent  
 Theophilus; that thou mightest know the certainty <sup>4</sup>  
 concerning the <sup>1</sup>things <sup>2</sup>wherein thou wast instructed.

**fulfilled among us.** St. Luke means, as will be seen from the course of his Gospel, the historical facts which have been fully and certainly accomplished before the eyes of disciples and believers in Christ—His birth, His public ministry, His Passion and Resurrection.

**2 even as they delivered them unto us, which,** etc. "They" is the antecedent to "which." The meaning in English would be clearer if the words were thus arranged: "even as they which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, etc., delivered them unto us." St. Luke does not claim to have been himself an eyewitness nor one of the first apostolic teachers of "the word," i.e. the Gospel of Christ. He places himself in the second class of Christian believers, those who had received their instruction from the Apostles after the Lord's Ascension.

**3 having traced the course.** Though not himself an eyewitness, St. Luke claims to have special qualifications for writing a Gospel, He has given pains to enquire into, and examine continuously, the whole course of the great events which he is about to describe. And it

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are *The Gospel of Nicodemus: The Gospel according to the Hebrews: The Gospel according to the Egyptians,* and *The Gospel according to Peter.* All these exist only in fragments or quotations in other writers, and are no doubt of later date than the canonical Gospels. But they may contain independent and possibly trustworthy traditions. *The Gospel of Nicodemus,* also called *The Acts of Pilate,* is confined to an account of our Lord's trial, His burial and descent into Hades and His Resurrection. *The Gospel according to the Hebrews* is frequently alluded to in the early Fathers as a work in Hebrew which was used by Christians of Jewish descent. It was sometimes confused with the original Hebrew Gospel of St. Matthew. A number of fragments are extant, some of which are of great interest, and it may have been a work of the first century and contemporary with the canonical Gospels. *The Gospel according to the Egyptians* is first mentioned by St. Clement of Alexandria, at the end of the second century, and only exists now in quotations. Of *The Gospel according to St. Peter* one fairly long fragment has been recently discovered, which deals with the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, and shews probably acquaintance with all the Four Gospels.

## II. Birth and Early Life of our Lord

### *The Birth of John the Baptist foretold (i. 5-25)*

5 **THERE** was in the days of Herod, king of Judæa, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abijah : and he had a 6 wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. And

is clear that he had peculiar opportunities for so doing (see Introd.) in his acquaintance with our Lord's mother, and with others who who were intimate with Him ; with the Court of Herod, and also with St. Paul and his circle.

**in order.** It is generally assumed from this word that St. Luke aimed at *chronological* order in his narrative, rather than the arranging of his material by *subject*, which seems to some extent to have been St. Matthew's method.

**most excellent Theophilus.** The title "most excellent" was that usually given to personages of high rank or office, as, e.g., to the Roman governors in Acts xxiii. and xxvi. Hence it is probable that Theophilus was a real personage, though otherwise unknown. Various conjectures have been made, as, e.g., the contemporary high-priest Theophilus : or the Sergius Paulus of Acts xiii. The name (meaning "lover of God") was a very common one, and may have been used to avoid mentioning the actual name. Or, as was suggested in early times, it may be a general title meaning any Christian reader. But the address "most excellent" does not harmonise with this.

4 **the things wherein thou wast instructed.** This again is a very important statement, as it shews the kind of reader to whom the Gospels (and indeed all the N.T. writings) were primarily addressed. These writings were not intended, in the first place, for the conversion of the heathen, but for the edification and further instruction of members of the Christian Church. The word "instructed" is that which was technically applied to the course of oral teaching given to candidates for Baptism. It means literally to instruct by the form of question and answer, and from it we derive our words "catechism" and "catechumen." Theophilus need not necessarily have been actually baptised, as yet, but he was a believer, and had received the usual Christian instruction. St. Luke is writing out of the store of his own carefully acquired knowledge, with the purpose of confirming the faith of Theophilus in the certainty of the great historical events on which the Christian religion is based.

It is really impossible to understand properly the N.T. unless this fact is grasped. Much that would have to be explained carefully from the beginning to an uninstructed person was already familiar to the

they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *advanced in their days.*  
<sup>2</sup> Or, *sanctuary.*

now <sup>1</sup>well stricken in years.

Now it came to pass, while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to enter into the <sup>2</sup>temple of the Lord and burn incense.

Christian readers of Epistles and Gospels, and is passed over with a mere allusion. The writers assume that they are addressing those who were both *instructed* to some extent at least, and also *sympathetic*,

**5 Herod, king of Judæa.** This Herod, commonly called "the great," was the founder of the Idumæan or Edomite dynasty of the Herods. He was the son of Antipater, ruler of Idumæa, who assisted the Romans and Pompey to take Jerusalem in 63 B.C. Herod was appointed king of Judæa by the Roman Senate in 40 B.C. In 37 B.C., assisted by Roman soldiers, he gained possession of Jerusalem. He reigned till 4 B.C., shortly after the birth of Christ.\* He was hated by the Jews, not only on account of his nationality, but also for his cruelty, and his compromise with heathen customs and worship. In other respects he was an able and beneficent ruler. He built the harbour of Cæsarea and established his own capital at Sebaste (Samaria). His greatest work was the rebuilding in magnificent style of the Temple at Jerusalem, which he began in 20 B.C. It was not even completed in our Lord's time (St. John ii. 20).

**the course of Abijah.** According to 1 Chron. xxiv. David arranged the priests, the descendants of Aaron, in twenty-four courses, called after the heads of their families. This one, "of Abijah," was the eighth. Only four of these families remained when the Jews returned from their Captivity in Babylon: but the twenty-four courses were re-established under the old names (Neh. vii. 39-42, and xiii. 30). Each of these courses remained a week at a time in office in the Temple.

**9 according to the custom of the priest's office.** The chief daily duty of the priests was to offer the morning and evening burnt-offering of a lamb on the brazen altar, and to burn incense upon the golden altar within the Holy place (Ex. xxx. 1-10). This latter was the highest and most coveted distinction of the priesthood. It was assigned each day

\* Our common chronology is wrong. Christ was born at least four years before the date usually assigned. The events in this section probably took place in the year 5 B.C.

10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying with-  
 11 out at the hour of incense. And there appeared unto him an  
 angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of  
 12 incense. And Zacharias was troubled when he saw *him*, and  
 13 fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not,  
 Zacharias: because thy supplication is heard, and thy wife  
 Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.  
 14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice  
 15 at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and he  
 shall drink no wine nor <sup>1</sup>strong drink; and he shall <sup>1</sup>Gr. *sikera*.  
 be filled with the <sup>2</sup>Holy Ghost, even from his mother's <sup>2</sup>Or, *Holy*  
 16 womb. And many of the children of Israel shall <sup>3</sup>*Spirit*: and  
 17 he turn unto the Lord their God. And he shall <sup>3</sup>so throughout  
 this book.  
<sup>3</sup>go before his face in the spirit and power of Elijah, <sup>3</sup>Some  
 to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and <sup>3</sup>ancient  
 authorities  
 the disobedient *to walk* in the wisdom of the just; <sup>3</sup>read *come*  
 to make ready for the Lord a people prepared *for his face*. <sup>3</sup>*nigh before*

by the casting of lots, and according to custom a priest could perform this office only once in his lifetime. There were at this time some twenty thousand priests in all. Fifty were on duty each day in the Temple.

13 John—the English form of the Greek Joannes and the Hebrew Johanan—"Jehovah is gracious."

15 he shall be great in the sight of the Lord. This true greatness is seen to consist (1) in John's unique office as the prophesied herald of the Messiah: (2) in his character, which was one of profound humility and self-effacement: (3) in his absolute devotion to truth, regardless of consequences.

he shall drink no wine nor strong drink, i.e. neither the fermented juice of the grape, nor of any other fruit, e.g. that of the palm-tree. The use of these drinks was almost universal in the ancient world; but there had existed from very early times among the Hebrews a religious custom of a man dedicating himself to God under the vow of a Nazirite (=one "separated"), by which he abstained from intoxicants, and allowed his hair to grow (Numb. vi. 1-5). Usually this vow was only for a limited time, at the end of which the Nazirite performed certain religious ceremonies and was released. There were, however, cases of a lifelong vow, as in those of Samson and Samuel.

filled with the Holy Ghost. The expression is common in the Q.T.

*him.* And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and I was sent to speak unto thee, and to

The Holy Ghost or Spirit (literally "breath") was conceived of as God's energising and life-giving power in nature and in man. Any exceptional personal gifts, religious, poetic, artistic, were attributed to a special inspiration of this "breath of God." In the N.T. the Holy Ghost is revealed as a distinct Person, within the unity of the Godhead.

16 shall he turn unto the Lord, i.e. as will be seen in subsequent chapters, by preaching *repentance*, a change of mind and attitude. See below, pp. 28-32.

17 And he shall go before his face, i.e. before the presence of Jehovah like a herald, or forerunner. The words are an allusion to the prophecy of Mal. iii. 1.

in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts, etc. See again Mal. iv. 5-6. On the strength of this prophecy, the Jews believed that the prophet Elijah would return from the heaven whither he had been miraculously borne (2 Kings ii.), to prepare for and anoint the Messiah. (See pp. xx-xxi.) The turning of the hearts of the fathers to the children seems to mean a restoration of the ancient religion of Israel, the present age returning to the piety of their forefathers, and the latter being conceived as thereby reconciled to their descendants.

to make ready for the Lord a people. The O.T. prophets foretold and hoped for some further manifestation of God in the future. Sometimes they spoke of this as if it would be an actual descent of Jehovah from heaven to earth; sometimes it was conceived as the advent of the Messiah, a Divinely "anointed" king. In any case, such an event required a religious preparation among the people of God. To effect this is here announced as the special work of the child of Zacharias and Elisabeth.

19 I am Gabriel. This name would be familiar to Zacharias from the book of Daniel (viii. and ix.). Literally it means "man of God," or "hero of God." The Jews believed this great angel to be specially sent by God on messages of mercy. The other archangel in Daniel, "Michael" ("who is like God!"), appears as the great champion of Israel against the assaults of the heathen world, and was thought to be the envoy of messages of wrath and judgment. Another archangel, Raphael, appears in Tobit xii., whose special offices were those of healing and guidance.

- 20 bring thee these good tidings. And behold, thou shalt be silent and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall come to pass, because thou believedst not my words, which shall
- 21 be fulfilled in their season. And the people were waiting for Zacharias, and they marvelled <sup>1</sup>while he tarried in
- 22 the <sup>2</sup>temple. And when he came out, he could not speak unto them : and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the <sup>2</sup>temple : and he continued
- 23 making signs unto them, and remained dumb. And it came to pass, when the days of his ministration were fulfilled, he departed unto his house.
- 24 And after these days Elisabeth his wife conceived ; and she
- 25 hid herself five months, saying, Thus hath the Lord done unto me in the days wherein he looked upon me, to take away my reproach among men.

*The Annunciation (i. 26-38)*

- 26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God
- 27 unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to

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that stand in the presence of God—like one of the highest officials in a royal court. Cp. Esth. i. 14. Tobit xii. 15.

22 he continued making signs. The priest could not pronounce the usual words of blessing to the congregation assembled in the court of the Temple. He could only gesticulate, and the people gathered, no doubt from his awestruck expression, that he had had some supernatural visitation.

25 to take away my reproach among men, i.e. the reproach of being childless, which was always felt with peculiar keenness by Jewish women. Children were not only regarded as a special blessing from God and the means of preserving the continuity of a family ; there was always the hope that a male child might prove to be the hoped-for Messiah.

26 the sixth month, i.e. after the appearance of the angel to Zacharias. The traditional date of the Annunciation is March 25, nine months before Christmas.

Galilee—the northern of the three divisions of Palestine in our Lord's time. See iii. 1. It was a district of somewhat mixed population. The towns were largely inhabited by heathen—Syrians, Phœnicians and

a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David ; and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came in unto her, and said, Hail, 28

thou that art <sup>1</sup>highly favoured, the Lord is with thee<sup>2</sup>.  
<sup>1</sup> Or, *endued with grace.* But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and cast 29  
<sup>2</sup> Many ancient authorities add *blessed art thou among women.* See in her mind what manner of salutation this might be.  
 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary : for thou 30  
 hast found <sup>3</sup>favour with God. And behold, thou shalt 31  
 conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and  
 shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall 32  
 be called the Son of the Most High : and the Lord God  
 shall give unto him the throne of his father David :

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Greeks. The people of the country districts were of a ruder and simpler sort than those of the south. But they were a vigorous race, strong in national feeling, and with considerable sincerity and enthusiasm in their religion.

**Nazareth.** A village on the mountain slopes, north of the great plain of Esdraelon. It had a bad name among the Jews (St. John i. 46) : perhaps partly caused by its situation at a meeting of roads and near the great trade route between Damascus and the sea, which exposed its inhabitants to considerable temptations. It was, apparently, the home of both Mary and Joseph, to which they returned after their flight to Egypt, described in St. Matt. ii.

**27 betrothed.** The betrothal usually took place about a year before marriage. It was regarded as a very binding engagement, being accompanied by a religious ceremony ; and only very grave cause could annul it.

**Joseph, of the house of David.** Although this man was in humble circumstances, and worked as a carpenter, he was descended from the ancient royal line, and St. Matthew's genealogy shews that he was really the heir to the throne of David and to the promises of the Messiah.

**Mary**—the same name as the O.T. Miriam. Apparently Mary, like Joseph, was descended from the line of David.

**28 Hail, thou that art highly favoured.** The translation of the margin is perhaps better. Cp. v. 30. The Vulgate is *gratia plena*, "full of grace." Mary beyond all others was enriched by the outpouring of God's loving favour. These words of the angel have been appropriated by the Christian Church as a memorial of the Incarnation : called from the first word in the Latin, the *Ave*, or "Hail,"

33 and he shall reign over the house of Jacob <sup>1</sup>for ever ; <sup>1</sup> Gr. *unto*  
 34 and of his kingdom there shall be no end. And Mary <sup>2</sup>the ages.  
 said unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know <sup>2</sup> Or, *the holy*  
 not a man ? And the angel answered and said unto <sup>3</sup>thing which  
 35 her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the <sup>3</sup> *is to be born*  
 power of the Most High shall overshadow thee : <sup>4</sup>shall be  
 wherefore also <sup>2</sup>that which <sup>3</sup>is to be born <sup>4</sup>shall be <sup>3</sup> Or, *is be-*  
 36 called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elisabeth <sup>4</sup>Some  
 thy kinswoman, she also hath conceived a son in her <sup>4</sup> *ancient*  
 old age : and this is the sixth month with her that <sup>4</sup> *authorities*  
 insert of *thee*.

**31 JESUS**—the Greek form of the O.T. Joshua, or Jehoshua = "salvation of Jehovah," or "Jehovah is Saviour" (see St. Matth. i. 21). It was a name with remarkable associations in history. It had been borne (1) by the great successor of Moses, Joshua, the conqueror of Palestine : (2) by the high priest who with Zerubbabel led back the exiles from the Captivity in Babylon, restored the worship at Jerusalem, and rebuilt the Temple : (3) by the great "wise man" of later Israel, Joshua, the son of Sirach, who in the third century B.C. wrote the book of Ecclesiasticus. The name thus combined the offices of the Messiah as foretold in prophecy—king, priest and teacher, or prophet.

**32 shall be called the Son.** This phrase to a Jew would mean not merely that such a title would be given to Mary's son, but that He really *was* what He was called. "The Son of the most High," means that Mary's son stands in a unique relationship to Jehovah. What that relationship is was more fully revealed by the course of events, and defined in the Creeds of the Christian Church. He who was to be called Jesus had existed from all eternity, before His earthly birth, as the Word (St. John i. 1) and only-begotten Son of God (16-18) equal to God and of the same substance and nature, the second Person in the Holy Trinity.

**the throne of his father David.** It had been foretold to David that the kingdom should continue in his line (2 Sam. vii.). And this prophecy was often repeated by the prophets (cp. Jer. xxxiii. 19-22 ; Ezek. xxxvii. 24, 25 ; Ps. lxxxix.). Since the Captivity no kings of the Davidic family had reigned ; but the Jews looked forward to the Messiah to fulfil the prophecy ; but only in a worldly sense. These words of the angel shew that the prophecy was indeed to be accomplished. But the kingdom of Mary's son would be of a higher and spiritual, and therefore eternal order.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *is*.            <sup>1</sup> was called barren. For no word from God shall be 37  
<sup>2</sup> Gr. *bond-*        void of power. And Mary said, Behold, the <sup>2</sup> hand- 38  
*maid*.            maid of the Lord ; be it unto me according to thy  
word. And the angel departed from her.

**33 the house of Jacob.** The house or family of Jacob, in its literal sense, was Israel, the Jewish nation. But this evidently, like David's throne, has, in the mouth of the angel, a higher and wider meaning. It is equivalent to "the people of God," and therefore transcends national limitations. Cp. St. Paul's contrast of "the Israel of God" (Gal. vi. 16) with "Israel after the flesh" (1 Cor. x. 18).

**35 The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee.** See note on *v.* 15 above. All *life* proceeds from the Spirit of God. In ordinary human birth it is transmitted through an earthly father. But in this birth which the Angel is announcing, it will be given *directly*, through a special act of the Holy Ghost. Hence the Church teaches that the Son of Mary was a new beginning of the human race, "the second Adam," born of a Virgin, without sin, and without the human tendency to sin.

**overshadow thee.** The figure seems to be derived from the cloud of Divine glory which overshadowed the mercy-seat in the Tabernacle, and filled Solomon's temple at the dedication. In the manner of Hebrew poetry this second phrase repeats, in a different form, the meaning of the first.

The Annunciation thus conveys the following truths about the child of Mary. He is in His Divine nature the (pre-existent) Son of God. Though born of a human mother, He is still the Son of God, being God and man in one Person. He is to be holy, the perfection of human nature ; and He is to inherit the promises of the O.T. and to be the everlasting King of the people of God.

**36 thy kinswoman.** The relationship between Mary and Elisabeth is not known : probably it was through marriage. Elisabeth being of "the daughters of Aaron" would belong to the tribe of Levi.

**38 Behold the handmaid of the Lord.** In these words of mingled humility and courage, Mary accepts her great vocation, and offers herself as the willing instrument of God's great purpose for humanity.

It can scarcely be doubted that the Evangelist derived this account from Mary herself. In any case it must have proceeded originally from her own lips.

*The Visitation* (i. 39-56)

39 And Mary arose in these days and went into the hill country  
 40 with haste, into a city of Judah; and entered into the house of  
 41 Zacharias and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, when  
 Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her  
 42 womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost; and  
 she lifted up her voice with a loud cry, and said, Blessed art thou  
 43 among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And  
 whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should  
 44 come unto me? For behold when the voice of thy salutation  
 came into mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.  
 45 And blessed is she that <sup>1</sup>believed; for there shall be  
 a fulfilment of the things which have been spoken to  
 46 her from the Lord. And Mary said, <sup>1</sup> Or, *believed*  
*that there*  
*shall be.*  
 My soul doth magnify the Lord.

39 **the hill country**—the mountainous ridge running north and south down the centre of Palestine, sloping gradually towards the west, and more precipitously towards the ravine of Jordan on the east. Its highest part was occupied anciently by the tribes of Ephraim, Benjamin and Judah.

**a city of Judah.** The name is unknown; but it has been conjectured to have been Jutta (Josh. xv. 55), a priestly city near Hebron.

43 **the mother of my Lord.** It is remarkable that Elisabeth, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, recognised that Mary's unborn child was Divine. She confesses her own unworthiness to receive one, who though younger than herself, was so honoured. "Whence is this to me?" i.e. "What claim have I to be visited by the mother of my Lord?"

45 **And blessed is she that believed.** Mary's blessedness lay not only in the Divine choice of her to be the mother of the Son of God, but in her *faith*, which answered to the call, and by which she won the fulfilment of God's promise.

46 **My soul doth magnify the Lord.** This song of Mary is usually called the *Magnificat*, from the first word of the Latin version; and has been used in the services of the Christian Church since the sixth century. Like the songs of Zacharias and Simeon, it is of the nature of "prophecy"—utterance of Divine truth, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Its form is that of Hebrew poetry, without rhyme or

	And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.	47
Gr. <i>bond-</i> <i>maiden.</i>	For he hath looked upon the low estate of his <sup>1</sup> hand- maiden :	48
	For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.	
	For he that is mighty hath done to me great things ;	49
	And holy is his name.	
	And his mercy is unto generations and generations	50
	On them that fear him.	
	He hath shewed strength with his arm ;	51
<sup>2</sup> Or, <i>by.</i>	He hath scattered the proud <sup>2</sup> in the imagination of their heart.	
	He hath put down princes from <i>their</i> thrones,	52
	And hath exalted them of low degree.	
	The hungry he hath filled with good things ;	53
	And the rich he hath sent empty away.	
	He hath holpen Israel his servant,	54

metre, but arranged in parallel verses like the Psalms. The language is almost entirely drawn from the O.T., which Mary had no doubt deeply studied. Her prophetic utterance naturally clothed itself in familiar words and phrases. It has often been compared to the Song of Hannah (1 Sam. ii.), though its spirit is gentler. The opening verses (46-49) dwell upon the amazing mercy which God has shown to Mary and to the world through her, in His choice of her humility to be the mother of His Son. Then the thought passes into a more general description of the ways of God, and the difference between them and human thoughts and judgments (*vv.* 50-53). Lastly (*vv.* 54, 55), this new revelation of God in the Incarnation is linked on to His ancient promises. There is continuity and purpose in all that God reveals.

**magnify**, literally "make great," or to say great things about; as applied to God, it means to express His greatness, and so to praise Him in the highest degree.

**49 And holy is his name.** God's "name" in Scripture always means that which He reveals about Himself to man to be known. "Holy" is the most characteristic description of God in the O.T. prophets. It implies (1) exaltation, transcendence above all the thoughts of man; (2) separateness, God is not to be confused with His creatures, as heathen idolatry did; (3) moral perfection.

**54 He hath holpen Israel.** The archaic form of "helped." More

- 55 That he might remember mercy  
 (As he spake unto our fathers)  
 Toward Abraham and his seed for ever.
- 56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned  
 unto her house.

*The Birth of John the Baptist (i. 57-80)*

- 57 Now Elisabeth's time was fulfilled that she should be delivered ;  
 58 and she brought forth a son. And her neighbours and her kins-  
 folk heard that the Lord had magnified his mercy towards her ;  
 59 and they rejoiced with her. And it came to pass on the eighth  
 day, that they came to circumcise the child ; and they would  
 60 have called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. And his  
 mother answered and said, Not so ; but he shall be called John.  
 61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called  
 62 by this name. And they made signs to his father, what he would  
 63 have him called. And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote,  
 64 saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all. And his  
 mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue *loosed*, and he  
 65 spake, blessing God. And fear came on all that dwelt round  
 about them : and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout

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literally it might be translated " taken hold of by the hand. Israel is the sacred nation, the people of God, called after their great ancestor Jacob, or Israel.

**That he might remember mercy.** An allusion to the gracious promises made to Abraham and the patriarchs, as in Gen. xii., xv., xvii., xxii. Cp. Micah vii. 20.

**59 the eighth day,** in accordance with the command given to Abraham (Gen. xvii. 9-14). This rite was the sign of the admission of the child into the covenant, as a member of the sacred nation. The name was usually given at the same time, as now in Christian Baptism, which has taken the place of circumcision.

**63 a writing tablet.** This was regularly used in ancient times, and was a wooden tablet covered with wax, on which the writing was traced with the point of the *stilus*, and afterwards obliterated with the blunt end. Sometimes, for more temporary writing, a tablet was simply covered with ashes, in which the words were written.

all the hill country of Judæa. And all that heard them laid them 66  
up in their heart, saying, What then shall this child be ? For  
the hand of the Lord was with him.

And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and 67  
prophesied, saying,

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel ; 68

For he hath visited and wrought redemption for his people,

And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us 69

In the house of his servant David

(As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets which have 70  
been since the world began),

66 the hand of the Lord was with him. From his infancy John shewed signs of special Divine help and favour : all felt that there was something supernatural about him.

68 **Blessed be the Lord**, etc. This hymn, the second of the Gospel canticles recorded by St. Luke alone, is usually called *Benedictus*. Like the previous one, it is full of phraseology derived from the O.T. ; and it also has resemblances to the eighteen " Benedictions " used in the services of the synagogue. Some of these were also said in the Temple before the daily incense was offered, and no doubt Zacharias had pondered over them, as well as the writings of the prophets, during these months of his seclusion and silence.

The hymn is really an epitome of the meaning of the O.T. The first part (vv. 68-75) speaks of God's promises and undying purpose for His people, now about to be consummated in the Incarnation. The second (vv. 76-79) deals with the special office of the son of Zacharias as the prophet and forerunner of this great event.

**he hath visited.** The God who revealed Himself to Israel in olden days, has now, as it were, drawn near to His people, and made a new revelation of Himself. This is further described as " redemption," a favourite word in prophecy. It was the constant Jewish hope that God would " redeem " His people. Without pressing too much the idea of " purchasing " which the word implies, it means some great deliverance of suffering and enslaved humanity.

69 **a horn of salvation.** Again a common metaphor from O.T. derived from the primitive agricultural life of ancient Israel, when the ox was the most important and useful animal. The " horn " was naturally spoken of as a symbol of strength. Hence " to lift up the horn " meant to gain increase of power. So " a horn of salvation " means, as the Prayer Book renders it, " a mighty salvation."

- 71 Salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all that  
hate us ;
- 72 To shew mercy towards our fathers,  
And to remember his holy covenant ;
- 73 The oath which he sware unto Abraham our father,
- 74 To grant unto us that we being delivered out of the hand of  
our enemies  
Should serve him without fear,  
75 In holiness and righteousness before him all our days.
- 76 Yea and thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Most  
High ;  
For thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to make ready  
his ways ;
- 77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people

**70 his holy prophets.** A prophet is one who " speaks forth " for God, i.e. one who has authority and inspiration from God to declare truth to men, to set forth God's will and purpose, to expound the laws of God's governance. Hence the prophets sometimes explained the lessons of past history, or gave practical guidance for the present, or foretold the future. Abraham is the first who is actually called " a prophet " (Gen. xx. 7), but Lamech (Gen. v. 29), and Noah (Gen. ix. 25-27) uttered prophecies. All the prophets, as Zacharias implies, had foretold the coming redemption of God's people.

**71 our enemies.** Not merely the outward enemies of the Israelites, such as Egypt, Edom, Assyria ; but in a wider sense all that hinders the setting free of humanity in its progress towards God.

**72 to shew mercy to our fathers ;** by fulfilling to their descendants the promises He had made in other days to them.

**his holy covenant**—that made with Abraham (Gen. xv.), and also the later one made with Israel at Sinai through Moses (Ex. xxiv.).

**73 The oath which he sware.** After the sacrifice of Isaac (Gen. xxii. 16, 17. Cp. Hebr. vi. 13, 14).

**76 thou, child,** i.e. John the Baptist, the son of Zacharias.

**To make ready his ways.** As foretold in Is. xl. 3 ; Mal. iii. 1, iv. 5.

**77 To give knowledge of salvation.** This salvation, or redemption, which the prophets had foretold, had been grievously misinterpreted by the later Jews, who thought of it only as a temporal triumph over the Romans, and the worldly glorification of Israel. It would be the

In the remission of their sins,

<sup>1</sup> Or, *heart of mercy.*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *Wherein.*

<sup>3</sup> Many ancient authorities read *hath visited us.*

Because of the <sup>1</sup>tender mercy of our God, 78

<sup>2</sup>Whereby the dayspring from on high <sup>3</sup>shall visit us,

To shine upon them that sit in darkness and the 79  
shadow of death ;

To guide our feet into the way of peace.

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, 80

and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing

unto Israel.

work of the son of Zacharias to declare its true meaning : the leading of Israel to repentance, and the great gift of " remission of sins."

**78 the dayspring from on high.** In these concluding verses Zacharias looks forward definitely to the birth of Jesus Christ, as the fulfilment of this prophesied hope of salvation. He compares it beautifully to the light of dawn. A new and better day is about to break upon the suffering world. Thus his words of God " visiting " His people, in *v.* 68, are taken up and explained in *v.* 78 : ". . . shall visit us."

**79 To shine upon them.** The words are derived from *Is.* ix. 2. Cp. also *Mal.* iv. 2. Originally they referred to the darkness of heathen oppression. In a wider sense, as Zacharias used them, they may well be explained as man's natural darkness through sin and ignorance of God, and that fear of death which has been man's age-long terror (*cp.* *Heb.* ii. 15).

**80 waxed strong in spirit,** i.e. he grew in power of spiritual vision, to see the things of God. " Spirit " probably means his human spirit, the highest part of our nature, illuminated by the Holy Spirit.

**in the deserts.** From his childhood John was a recluse, a solitary dweller in desert places, probably in the weird region called the Jeshimon, or the wilderness of Judæa. See note on *iii.* 2. In this he resembled his great predecessor Elijah : the early life of our Lord, on the other hand, was spent in the quiet of a home circle at Nazareth.

## CHAPTER I

*Questions*

1. What was St. Luke's purpose in writing his Gospel ?
2. What were his qualifications for doing so ?
3. Who was Herod, King of Judæa ?
4. Describe the ceremony of offering incense.
5. In what words did the angel announce the birth of John the Baptist ?
6. What angels are referred to by name in the Bible, and what do you know of them ?
7. What is the meaning of the name Jesus ?
8. What is to be learned from the words of the angel as to the nature and office of the Son of Mary ?
9. How would you describe (1) the form (2) the general meaning of the *Magnificat* ?
10. What prophecies and events in the Old Testament are alluded to in the *Benedictus* ?
11. Under what figures does Zacharias describe the Advent of Christ ?
12. What does he foretell as to the office and work of John ?

*Subjects for Study*

1. Traditions of acts and sayings of Christ outside the Four Gospels.

Hastings' Dictionary, *New Testament*.

*Apocryphal Gospels*.

*Agrapha*.

2. The purpose of the writers of the New Testament.

Westcott, *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*.

## 3. Messianic Prophecy.

Briggs, *Messianic Prophecy*.

Bruce, *Chief End of Revelation*.

Oesterley, *Evolution of the Messianic Idea*.

*Prophecy* in Hastings' and Murray's Bible Dictionaries.

Edghill, *Evidential Value of Prophecy*.

## 4. Jewish belief about Angels.

Fuller, *Apocrypha* in *Speaker's Commentary*.

*Angels* in Hastings' *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*.

## 5. Hebrew Poetry.

*Hebrew Poetry* in Hastings' Dictionary.

Kirkpatrick, *Psalms* in *Cambridge Bible*.

## 6. The Virgin-birth of our Lord.

Pollock, *The Virgin's Son*.

Box, *The Virgin-Birth*.

Knowling, *Our Lord's Virgin-Birth*.

*The Birth of Jesus Christ* (ii. 1-21)

Now it came to pass in those days, there went out a decree <sup>ii.</sup> from Cæsar Augustus, that all <sup>1</sup>the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrolment made when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *the inhabited earth*.

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ii. 1 **Cæsar Augustus.** The first emperor of Rome (27 B.C.—A.D. 14). **all the world**, i.e. the Roman empire; including apparently not only the actual provinces governed by officials sent from Rome, but the kingdoms of allied or subordinate sovereigns, such as Herod.

**enrolled**, i.e. a general census was to be taken, not necessarily with a view to taxation. Judæa, not yet a Roman province, would pay its taxes to Herod. In this enrolment, however, each provincial had to register his name and property, and take an oath of allegiance to the emperor.

2 **This was the first enrolment.** This statement has long been one of the stock difficulties in St. Luke. A well-known census was taken under Quirinius when Judæa became a Roman province in A.D. 6,

4 enrol themselves, every one to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because 5 he was of the house and family of David ; to enrol himself with 6 Mary, who was betrothed to him, being great with child. And it came to pass, while they were there, the days were fulfilled that 7 she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son ; and she wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

which caused the rebellion of Judas of Galilee (Acts v. 37) and the formation of the party of the Zealots. St. Luke is evidently intending to refer not to that one, but an earlier one, which he calls " the first." Of this earlier one there is no record, and St. Luke's statement has been thought erroneous, because Quirinius was not at that time governor of Syria, and also because Judæa was not yet a Roman province. But it seems likely that Quirinius was in office in Syria at a time earlier than his actual governorship. And considerable light has been thrown on the whole question by the discovery (in 1893) of Egyptian papyri proving that periodical censuses were taken not only of the provinces, but of the subject kingdoms as well. It seems probable now that St. Luke was right after all, that there *was* an earlier census than A.D. 6, and that Quirinius may have had some share in superintending it.

3 **every one to his own city.** This has again been considered a great difficulty in St. Luke's narrative ; for in the recorded Roman censuses—as, for example, in A.D. 6—no such journey to one's ancestral home was required, but the registration was simply conducted by officials from Rome. But as this census to which St. Luke refers was taken during the reign of Herod, it has been suggested, with great probability that Herod allowed the Jewish method to be adopted, by which each family registered its members in its " own city."

4 **Bethlehem**, literally " house of bread " ; in allusion to its fertility, which is also the meaning of its older name, Ephrath. It is a small town on a height, six miles south of Jerusalem. Here Rachel was buried, and it was the ancestral home of the family of David ; as we see from the book of Ruth, which relates the marriage of Ruth to Boaz, the great-grandfather of David.

7 **her firstborn son.** This does not mean that Mary had other sons afterwards (see note on 82). " First-born " was a technical expression among the Jews, because the first-born son had a special religious importance, being by the Law dedicated to God (see below, p. 22).

And there were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field, and keeping <sup>1</sup>watch by night over their flock. And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them : and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid ; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people : for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is <sup>2</sup>Christ the Lord. And this is the sign unto you ; Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,  
 Glory to God in the highest,

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**swaddling clothes**, i.e. the garments in which an infant was anciently wrapped, tied tightly about the limbs.

**no room for them in the inn.** Eastern inns were, and still are for the most part very simple ; not much more than a courtyard, with recesses round it. The traveller may rest free of cost, being only charged for water and food. Joseph and Mary had to take refuge in the stable, which was, as pointed out by Christian tradition, a cave in the limestone rock. It was in this cave, now covered by the Church of the Nativity, that St. Jerome, in the fifth century, lived for many years as a recluse, and where he made his great translation of the Scriptures into Latin, the Vulgate.

**9 the glory of the Lord**—an expression well known among the Jews, as describing the supernatural light which they believed to accompany the manifestations of Jehovah. It was called the *Shekinah*, the “resting” or “dwelling” of the Lord, and was identified with the fiery pillar of cloud of the Exodus, and was said to reside permanently within the Holy of Holies.

**11 Christ the Lord.** “Christ,” or “the Christ,” is an official title, “the anointed one.” Heb. *Mashiach*, or *Messiah*. Anointing was an ancient symbol of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, endowing one chosen by God for some great office. Kings, priests, and sometimes prophets, were anointed in the O.T. All these offices were to be combined in Him whom the Jews expected as their promised deliverer.

**14 Glory to God in the highest**, etc. It will be noticed that in accordance with the best MSS., and also with the Vulgate (*pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis*), the traditional form in English of the second part of this “Gloria,” has been altered in R.V. Peace is not proclaimed univers-

And on earth <sup>1</sup>peace among <sup>2</sup>men in whom he is <sup>1</sup> Many well pleased. <sup>ancient</sup>

15 And it came to pass, when the angels went away <sup>read</sup> from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to <sup>peace,</sup> another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and <sup>good pleasure</sup> see this <sup>among</sup> <sup>men.</sup> <sup>2</sup> Gr. men of <sup>good plea-</sup> <sup>sure.</sup> <sup>3</sup> Or, saying. <sup>4</sup> Or, things.

16 hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found both Mary and Joseph, and the

17 babe lying in the manger. And when they saw it, they made known concerning the saying which was spoken to them about

18 this child. And all that heard it wondered at the things which

19 were spoken unto them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all

20 these <sup>4</sup>sayings, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for

all the things that they had heard and seen, even as it was spoken unto them.

21 And when eight days were fulfilled for circumcising him, his name was called JESUS, which was so called by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

### *The Presentation in the Temple (ii. 22-40)*

22 And when the days of their purification according to the law of Moses were fulfilled, they brought him up to Jerusalem, to

ally on earth (cp. xii. 51). Rather it is the gift of God to those "in, whom He is well-pleased," i.e. men of faith and obedience, like the shepherds.

19 **But Mary kept all these sayings.** This, like the similar statement in v. 51, seems like a personal reminiscence of the Blessed Virgin herself, confided by her to the evangelist.

22 **their purification,** i.e. of the mother and the child; though, strictly speaking, it concerned the mother alone, the child being presented and "redeemed."

**the law of Moses,** i.e. Lev. xii., which prescribes either a lamb and a turtle-dove or pigeon, or in the case of the poor, two turtle-doves or pigeons only. These were the burnt-offering and the sin-offering for the purifying of the mother, forty days after the birth of a son.

present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 23 Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord), and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in 24 the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons. And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was 25 Simeon ; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel : and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it 26 had been revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came 27 in the Spirit into the temple : and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, that they might do concerning him after the custom of the law, then he received him into his arms, and blessed 28 God, and said,

<sup>1</sup> Gr. <i>bond-servant.</i>	Now lettest thou thy <sup>1</sup> servant depart, O <sup>2</sup> Lord,	29
	According to thy word, in peace ;	
<sup>2</sup> Gr. <i>Master.</i>	For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,	30

**to present him to the Lord.** A first-born male was by the ancient law of Israel consecrated to Jehovah. This law was given at the same time as that of the Passover (Ex. xiii.), as a memorial of the slaying of the first-born of Egypt and the preservation of the Israelites. It was also symbolical of the special consecration of the whole nation to Jehovah, the first-born being regarded as representing the whole family. This consecration of the first-born included animals as well as man. If the animal was not such as could be offered in sacrifice, it must either be "redeemed" or destroyed. First-born male children were "redeemed" by a money payment of five shekels (Num. xviii. 16). This is not mentioned in the account of our Lord's presentation, but doubtless it was paid by St. Joseph.

**25 the consolation of Israel.** This was a well-known phrase, signifying the coming of the Messiah ; perhaps derived from Is. xl. 1 "Comfort ye my people."

**29 Now lettest thou thy servant, etc.** This thanksgiving is the third of the sacred canticles preserved by St. Luke, and is usually called *Nunc Dimittis*, and has been long used in the evening services of the Church. In the ancient offices, it forms part of Compline, the last of the daily Hours of Prayer. In the Prayer Book it is said at Evensong, and appropriately follows the second lesson, from the N.T. The two features of the canticle are (1) its resemblance to the utterances of the Prophets, especially Isaiah (cp. Is. ix., xlii. 6, xlix. 6 and lx.). (2) its catholicity : all nations are included in its glowing outlook of hope.

- 31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all  
peoples ; <sup>1</sup> Or, *the unveiling of the Gentiles.*
- 32 A light for <sup>1</sup>revelation to the Gentiles,  
And the glory of thy people Israel.
- 33 And his father and his mother were marvelling at the things  
34 which were spoken concerning him ; and Simeon blessed them,  
and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this *child* is set for the  
falling and rising up of many in Israel ; and for a sign which is  
35 spoken against ; yea and a sword shall pierce through thine own  
36 soul ; that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed. And  
there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phannel, of the  
tribe of Asher (she was <sup>2</sup>of a great age, having lived <sup>2</sup>Gr. *advanced in*  
37 with a husband seven years from her virginity, and *many days.*  
she had been a widow even for fourscore and four

**lettest...depart.** The literal meaning seems to be that of unloosing, or setting free, like a ship from her moorings ; death is beautifully conceived as the entrance on a larger liberty.

**30 thy salvation.** A frequent Messianic phrase in O.T. Cp. Gen. xlix. 18, Ps. cxix. 81, 166, 174.

**33 his father.** St. Joseph though not His natural, was His legal father and protector.

**34 Behold, this child is set,** etc. The appearance of Christ was to produce two opposite effects upon Israel and upon mankind generally. Many would "fall," through unbelief, into spiritual ruin : many others would "rise up," by faith, into a new life.

**a sign which is spoken against.** The same contrast is carried on in this prediction. Christ is a "sign" from God to mankind of His own character and purpose (cp. Is. vii. 14) ; but a sign that will provoke bitter contradiction and opposition.

**35 yea and a sword.** This remarkable parenthesis addressed directly to the Blessed Virgin herself foretells her own share in the sorrow of Christ. Being nearest to Him of all the human race she will feel most bitterly the agony of His rejection and Crucifixion. The thought is expanded in the great mediæval hymn, *Stabat mater dolorosa*.

**that thoughts out of many hearts**—this phrase resumes the thought with which Simeon's prophecy began. The appearance of Christ will be the revelation of human character : it will be the great test for the separation of mankind into believers and unbelievers. The whole of

years), which departed not from the temple, worshipping with fastings and supplications night and day. And coming up <sup>38</sup> at that very hour she gave thanks unto God, and spake of him to all them that were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. And when they had accomplished all things that were according <sup>39</sup> to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *becoming full of wisdom.*

And the child grew, and waxed strong, <sup>1</sup>filled with <sup>40</sup> wisdom : and the grace of God was upon him.

### *The Visit to the Temple (ii. 41-52)*

And his parents went every year to Jerusalem at the feast of <sup>41</sup> the passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up <sup>42</sup>

this passage bears a remarkable resemblance to the leading ideas in St. John's Gospel.

**38 the tribe of Asher.** Though the ten tribes as a whole never returned from Captivity, individual members returned or remained, and the Jews still spoke of the "twelve tribes" (St. James i. 1).

**40 waxed strong, filled with wisdom.** Cp. Is. xi. 2. Our Lord's human nature, its faculties of soul and body, grew with a natural growth; sinless and perfect as man, in each stage of life. But it is only the Apocryphal Gospels that record miracles and marvels in His infancy and boyhood.

**41 the feast of the passover.** According to the strict letter of the Law, all males had to present themselves at Jerusalem three times in the year, at the feasts of the Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles (Ex. xxiii. 14-17; Deut. xvi. 16). But such frequent visits were not possible for all, and in practice it was the Passover which attracted the largest number of pilgrims. This was the greatest national festival, commemorating the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. It lasted eight days (14th to 21st of Nisan or Abib=March-April), during which unleavened bread was eaten, and each household killed and partook of the paschal lamb, which could only be eaten at Jerusalem (see p. 205). The Blessed Virgin accompanied her husband, though this was not of obligation.

**42 And when he was twelve years old.** This was the age at which the Jewish boy took up the full obligations of religion, becoming, as it was called, "a son of the law," and having the phylacteries bound upon his forehead and arms. These (literally "amulets" or protective

- 43 after the custom of the feast ; and when they had fulfilled the days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus tarried behind in  
 44 Jerusalem ; and his parents knew it not ; but supposing him to be in the company, they went a day's journey ; and they sought  
 45 him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance : and when they found  
 46 him not, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking for him. And it came to pass, after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the <sup>1</sup>doctors, both hearing them, <sup>1</sup> Or, *teachers.*  
 47 and asking them questions : and all that heard him  
 48 were amazed at his understanding and his answers. And when they saw him, they were astonished : and his mother said unto him, <sup>2</sup>Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us ? behold, <sup>2</sup> Gr. *Child.*  
 49 thy father and I sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me ? wist <sup>3</sup> Or, *about my Father's business.*  
 ye not that I must be <sup>3</sup>in my Father's house ? <sup>3</sup> Gr. *in the things of my Father.*  
 50 And they understood not the saying which he spake  
 51 unto them. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth ; and he was subject unto them : and his mother kept all *these* <sup>4</sup>sayings in her heart. <sup>4</sup> Or, *things.*  
 52 And Jesus advanced in wisdom and <sup>5</sup>stature, and in <sup>5</sup> Or, *age.*  
<sup>6</sup>favour with God and man. <sup>6</sup> Or, *grace.*

charms) were little boxes of leather, containing texts from the Law (Ex. xiii. 1-16 ; Deut. vi. 4-9 ; xi. 13-21) written on strips of parchment.

46 after three days, i.e. on the day after the day's journey (cp. v. 44). Jews and Romans counted both the day in which an action began and that on which it ended, as if they were full days.

46 in the midst of the doctors. The more eminent scribes and teachers of the Law were accustomed to give lectures and hold conferences in the Temple, especially at a time like the Passover. It was quite usual for their hearers to ask questions and propound difficulties to be answered.

49 in my Father's house. See margin. The exact meaning is a little uncertain. But it is clear that our Lord was conscious of His Divine birth and calling. His answer corrects His mother's words : " thy father."

51 came to Nazareth. Some eighteen years now elapse without any record. Without doubt our Lord lived the ordinary village life of the Jewish working-class. He learned and practised St. Joseph's trade of

## CHAPTER II

*Questions*

1. How did it come about that Jesus Christ was born at Bethlehem? What do you know of Bethlehem in history and prophecy?
2. Quote and explain the song of the angels at the birth of Christ.
3. What is the meaning of the presentation of Christ in the Temple?
4. By whom was Christ recognised on this occasion?
5. What prophecy was uttered as to the effect on the world of the appearing of Christ?
6. What do we learn from the Gospels as to the boyhood of Jesus Christ?

*Subjects for Study*

1. St. Luke's accuracy as to the circumstances and place of our Lord's birth.  
Ramsay, *Was Christ Born at Bethlehem?*  
*Chronology* in Bible Dictionaries.
2. The Gospel Canticles and O.T. prophecy.  
Liddon, *The Magnificat*.  
Study marginal reff. in R.V.
3. The life of our Lord at Nazareth.  
Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, ii.  
Delitzsch, *Jewish Artisan Life*.
4. The meaning of our Lord's increase in wisdom.  
Weston, *The One Christ*.  
Pullan, *Infallibility of Our Lord* in *Modern Oxford Tracts*.

carpenter. (All Jews indeed, whatever their station, had to learn a trade.) He would attend the synagogue services (p. 39) and be taught by the official of the synagogue to read, and be catechised in the Scriptures.

*The Preaching of the Forerunner* (iii. 1-14)

- iii. 1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judæa, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituræa and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, in the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into

iii. 1 **Now in the fifteenth year.** (probably A.D. 26). St. Luke takes elaborate care to give the historical setting to the events he is about to record. It was no legendary story of uncertain date, but a definite part of the history of the world.

The reign of Tiberius is apparently reckoned from the year A.D. 12., when he was associated with Augustus in imperial rule, becoming sole Emperor two years later. Pontius Pilate was *procurator*, i.e. a governor appointed directly by the Emperor. Judæa (including Samaria) had become a Roman province in A.D. 6, after the deposition of Archelaus. Pilate governed it from A.D. 26 to 36.

The **Herod** spoken of was Herod Antipas, a son of Herod the Great. A "tetrarch" was properly a ruler of the fourth part of a province, but the title was used vaguely for any subordinate ruler. Galilee (excluding the sea-coast) and Peræa beyond Jordan were ruled by this Herod (see map) from 4 B.C. to A.D. 39.

**Philip** was another son of Herod the Great who ruled over the wild and mountainous district in the north and north-east of Palestine. Ituræa was on the slopes of Mt. Hermon, and Trachonitis was the ancient region of Argob, the country of the giant king, "Og, the king of Bashan." Philip seems to have been the best of the Herod family. He must not be confused with another brother, also called Philip, whose wife Herodias Herod Antipas married.

**Lysanias** is an obscure personage: his country of Abilene lay N.W. of Damascus, called after its capital Abila.

2 **Annas** was the lawful high-priest, but the Romans had deposed him (A.D. 14) in favour of his son-in-law John Caiaphas. The Jews, however, continued to recognise him, as the high-priesthood was properly held for life.

**the word of God came.** This was the regular phrase from the O.T., implying the Divine inspiration of a prophet. John was the last of the line of O.T. prophets.

all the region round about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins ; as it is written in the book<sup>4</sup> of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

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**3 all the region round about Jordan.** The roads from the north to Jerusalem ran on each side of the Jordan ; and the pilgrims on their way to or from the Festivals would furnish abundance of hearers for the new prophet. The year 26-27, in which probably John's preaching began, was a Sabbatical year, occurring once in every seven years, when the fields lay fallow, and the people were more at liberty for religious observances and teaching (see Ex. xxiii. 10-11). The traditional place of the baptism of John was the Ford of Jordan, about five miles north of the Dead Sea, where the road to Jerusalem from Peræa crosses the river. For other personal details about John see St. Matthew iii. 4.

**the baptism of repentance.** Baptism literally means bathing or immersion. Ceremonial washings formed part of most ancient religions. Baptism was familiar to the Jews, because Gentiles who became proselytes, i.e. converts to Judaism, were baptised. John's baptism was a symbolical rite, signifying repentance, i.e. "a change of mind," a turning away from sin to God. It was accompanied by the public confession of sin (St. Matth. iii. 6). This repentance was a necessary preparation for the acceptance of the Messiah.

**unto remission of sins.** John's baptism, being a rite belonging to the O.T., could not actually convey the forgiveness of sins. It only pointed on to that full forgiveness which Christ would bestow on the penitent through the sacrament of Christian Baptism. This stands on an entirely different level from the baptism of John. Those who had received only the latter, had to be baptized again in the Christian sense in order to be received into the Church. See Acts xix. 1-7.

St. Matthew gives as part of the Baptist's message, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Christ also began His own ministry with the same words. The Jews would at once recognise the importance of this announcement, for the kingdom of heaven, or of God, was a familiar conception, and would rouse in the hearers a thrill of expectation and enthusiasm. They regarded this kingdom as the coming rule of the Messiah on earth, in which the Romans would be overthrown, the Jews exalted, and all the heathen reduced to servitude. It would be a reign of miraculous peace and prosperity, all scattered Jews would be restored, and the faithful dead raised to life. But the kingdom as announced by John and by our Lord meant something very different from this ideal of worldly conquest and grandeur. It meant first a spiritual change in the hearts of men, beginning with repentance, and issuing in the new

- The voice of one crying in the wilderness,  
 Make ye ready the way of the Lord,  
 Make his paths straight.
- 5 Every valley shall be filled,  
 And every mountain and hill shall be brought low ;  
 And the crooked shall become straight,  
 And the rough ways smooth ;
- 6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.
- 7 He said therefore to the multitudes that went out to be baptized  
 of him, Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the  
 8 wrath to come ? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy <sup>1</sup> Or, *your*  
 of <sup>1</sup>repentance, and begin not to say within your- *repentance.*

brotherhood of the Catholic Church, a kingdom of Christ in which all might have part, Jew and Gentile alike—a kingdom of spiritual freedom and righteousness.

**4 as it is written.** Is. xl. 3-5. This prophecy originally referred to the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon. The prophet speaks in poetical language of some angelic voice heard in the wilderness commanding a highway to be made, and all obstructions removed in order that Jehovah might lead His people back, and that all the world might acknowledge the miracle He had performed in restoring them. But the Jews also applied this prophecy to the coming of the Messiah, and the Evangelist speaks of the Baptist as being the herald in the wilderness. In this interpretation the mountains and valleys, the rough and crooked ways, are to be understood of all the perversities of men's hearts, which must be removed by repentance, before the advent of Christ can be welcomed.

**7 Ye offspring of vipers.** This severe rebuke was specially directed, as St. Matthew tells, to Pharisees and Sadducees who were coming to be baptised. Their repentance was not sincere. They wanted merely to follow the religious fashion of the moment, or to shew patronage to a new prophet. The viper was a proverbial type of something malicious or treacherous.

**the wrath to come.** The Baptist wishes to shew that his baptism was an intensely serious matter. The anger of God Himself (which they imagined was reserved for the Gentile world), was soon to be manifested against His unfaithful people. Repentance was not to be a mere fashion or form, but a whole-hearted effort to make peace with God.

**8 begin not to say within yourselves.** The Baptist here touches the

selves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And even now is the axe laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. And the multitudes asked him, saying, What then must we do? And he answered and said unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none: and he that hath food, let him do likewise. And there <sup>9</sup> <sup>10</sup> <sup>11</sup> <sup>12</sup> <sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See marginal note on Matt. v. 46. <sup>1</sup>publicans to be baptized, and they said unto him, <sup>2</sup>Master, what must we do? And he said unto them, Extort no more than that which is ap-

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most characteristic failure of Jewish religion. The Jews regarded themselves as specially privileged, being the descendants of Abraham. They imagined that this constituted some sort of claim upon God, irrespective of their own worthiness. The forcible expression which follows, "God is able of these stones, etc.," means that birth and its privileges rest entirely in the hands of God. He is able to take away what He gave, and bestow it on whom He will. Cp. the teaching of the older prophet; Amos ix. 7.

**11 And he answered and said unto them.** The Baptist's teaching is of the plainest and most practical character. Repentance must be proved by performing the moral duty that lies nearest. In the case of mankind at large, the most obvious duty is charity, and care for others. The Jews were thinking selfishly and ambitiously of their own share in the coming kingdom, and the profits which they would gain out of it. They are told rather to share clothing and food with the needy.

**12 And there came also publicans.** This name was given to those who bought from the Roman government the right to collect the taxes of a province. These taxes were chiefly the *tributum capitis*—a poll-tax of a *denarius* for every individual from the age of twelve in the case of women, and fourteen of males, until sixty-five: and the *tributum soli*—a tax on the produce of the soil. But the publicans of the Gospels were apparently subordinate officials, and, at any rate, in the case of the kingdom of Herod, they did not collect imperial taxes, but rather the various tolls and custom duties. But with publicans of all classes the temptation was naturally to extort more than the legal tax, and make as large a margin of profit for themselves as possible. They were intensely unpopular, both on this account and because they represented a government which was either alien like the Roman, or in alliance with it like that of Herod. The Baptist bids the publicans shew the sincerity of their repentance by mortifying their characteristic sin of extortion.

14 pointed you. And <sup>1</sup>soldiers also asked him, saying, <sup>1</sup>Gr. *soldiers on service.*  
 And we, what must we do? And he said unto them,  
 Do violence to no man, neither <sup>2</sup>exact *anything* wrong- <sup>2</sup>Or, *accuse*  
 fully; and be content with your wages. <sup>any one.</sup>

*The Baptism of Christ* (iii. 15-22)

15 And as the people were in expectation, and all men reasoned  
 in their hearts concerning John, whether haply he were the  
 16 Christ; John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize  
 you with water; but there cometh he that is mightier than I, the  
 latchet of whose shoes I am not <sup>3</sup>worthy to unloose: <sup>3</sup>Gr.  
 he shall baptize you <sup>4</sup>with the Holy Ghost and *with* <sup>sufficient.</sup>  
 17 fire: whose fan is in his hand, throughly to cleanse <sup>4</sup>Or, *in.*

**14 And soldiers also asked him.** These soldiers were probably not the Roman legionaries, who would scarcely have been attracted to the Baptist, but the provincial troops, of Jewish race. They may have been employed in enforcing the demands of the publicans. Their natural temptations would be to violence, abuse of their strength, and the enriching of themselves over and above their wages, by sharing in the spoil of the tax-gatherers.

It will be noticed that the Baptist does not bid either publicans or soldiers to abandon their callings, but to execute them with justice.

**15 in expectation.** The appearance of a prophet, after so long a period without prophecy, roused to great excitement the universal expectation of the Messiah. The people were ready to have acclaimed John himself as the coming Christ, had he given any sanction to such a belief.

**16 the latchet of whose shoes,** i.e. the thong which fastened the sandals. To unfasten this would be the task of one of the lowest servants in an ancient household. All John's utterances are marked by deep humility and self-suppression, the more remarkable in such an eager, fiery personality.

**with the Holy Ghost and with fire.** The work of Christ was to be of a different and higher order than that of the Baptist. It would be far more than a call to repentance, or the administration of a ceremony as a symbol of forgiveness to come. Human nature was to be brought into immediate touch with God. The effect of this is represented by the image of *fire*, which does not merely cleanse outwardly like water, but is searching, penetrating, and terrible. Fire not only purifies, but

his threshing-floor, and to gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *the gospel.* With many other exhortations therefore preached he <sup>18</sup> good tidings unto the people; but Herod the <sup>19</sup> tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias his brother's wife, and for all the evil things which Herod had done, added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison. 20

Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized, that, 21

warms and quickens. Hence it is often used as a figure of the operation of the Holy Ghost on the soul of man. Water is indeed the means of Christian Baptism, but it is water as the sacramental vehicle of the Holy Spirit. Cp. St. John iii. 5.

**17 whose fan is in his hand.** A metaphor drawn from the ancient methods of threshing corn. The corn was trodden out on the hard threshing-floor by the feet of oxen, and then tossed up with the "fan" (a large shovel), so that the wind might separate the chaff from the grain. St. John looks upon Christ as the Judge of humanity, who will test all the apparently righteous, and separate the real from the false; a very different conception of Messiah's work from that current among the Jews of the time.

**unquenchable fire.** This does not necessarily mean eternal or unending fire, but rather such a fire as cannot be prevented from accomplishing its work. It is no ordinary fire which may be either kindled or put out by man. There will be no evading it. Fire is often used in O.T. as a symbol of the holiness of God, which has a twofold effect according to the objects which come in contact with it. That which is good is tried and made better: that which is light and worthless is destroyed. Cp. also 1 Cor. iii. 12-15.

**19 Herod the tetrarch.** St. Luke introduces this event by anticipation. The imprisonment of the Baptist took place in the following year, some months after the events recorded in this chapter. The prison was the fortress of Machærus, a lonely place on the east of the Dead Sea. The circumstances, and the final martyrdom of the Baptist, are more fully recorded in St. Matt. xiv. and St. Mark vi.

**Herodias his brother's wife:** this brother was Philip, but not the tetrarch mentioned above. Herod divorced his own wife, the daughter of King Aretas, in order to marry Herodias.

**21 when all the people were baptized:** it seems to be implied that the baptism of Jesus occurred after the great multitude of John's converts had been baptised, and was perhaps of a more private nature.

Jesus also having been baptized, and praying, the heaven was  
 22 opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily form, as a  
 dove, upon him, and a voice came out of heaven, Thou art my  
 beloved Son ; in thee I am well pleased.

*The Genealogy of Jesus Christ* (iii. 23-38)

And Jesus himself, when he began to teach, was about thirty  
 23 years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son

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St. Luke does not allude to John's unwillingness (see St. Matt. iii. 14, 15) and our Lord's insistence.

**praying.** St. Luke frequently draws attention to the prayers of our Lord, and dwells much in his Gospel on the importance of prayer.

**22 as a dove.** This appearance would suggest to those who saw it (cp. St. John i. 32) the manifestation of the Divine gentleness, and the gift of peace. The Holy Spirit is described in Genesis i. 2 in language appropriate to a bird brooding over her nest ; and in Genesis viii. 8-12 the return of the dove to the Ark was the sign of the end of the Deluge, and the restoration of God's favour.

**Thou art my beloved Son.** This voice of the Father from heaven should probably be understood (1) as bearing witness to the Divine Sonship of Jesus ; (2) as marking with approval His perfect manhood. He was the Son of God both in His essential nature and as the new head of the human race—the second Adam (cp. iii. 38) ; and this descent of the Holy Spirit was His consecration as man for the work of man's salvation.

**23-38.** St. Luke must have introduced this genealogy of our Lord because it would be of interest and value to his readers. Jewish Christians would be interested in it as shewing the connection of Jesus with the past history of their race, and especially with the promises made to Abraham and David. Gentile Christians also were eager students of O.T. prophecy and would find in this record a confirmation of it.

St. Luke's genealogy, however, differs very considerably from that of St. Matthew i., and the discrepancies have been a matter of controversy since quite early days of the Church. The main differences are (1) The greater length of St. Luke's, due (a) to his carrying it back beyond Abraham to Adam, (b) to the larger number of links in the chain : St. Matthew has only twenty-four names from Zerubbabel to Joseph, St. Luke has forty. (2) The great discrepancy in the actual names ; from Abraham to David the two lists are practically identical, but from David to Joseph they are entirely different, with the exception of the two names of Shealtiel and Zerubbabel.

of Heli, the *son* of Matthat, the *son* of Levi, the *son* of Melchi, the 24  
*son* of Jannai, the *son* of Joseph, the *son* of Mattathias, the *son* of 25  
 Amos, the *son* of Nahum, the *son* of Esli, the *son* of Naggai, the  
*son* of Maath, the *son* of Mattathias, the *son* of Semein, the *son* of 26  
 Josech, the *son* of Joda, the *son* of Joanan, the *son* of Rhesa, the 27  
*son* of Zerubbabel, the *son* of <sup>1</sup>Shealtiel, the *son* of  
<sup>1</sup> Gr. *Sala-* Neri, the *son* of Melchi, the *son* of Addi, the *son* of 28  
*thiel.* Cosam, the *son* of Elmadam, the *son* of Er, the *son* of 29  
 Jesus, the *son* of Eliezer, the *son* of Jorim, the *son* of Matthat, the  
*son* of Levi, the *son* of Symeon, the *son* of Judas, the *son* of 30  
 Joseph, the *son* of Jonam, the *son* of Eliakim, the *son* of Melea, 31

Two explanations of these difficulties are current :

(1) That St. Matthew's is the genealogy of Joseph, and St. Luke's of Mary. This seems to do violence to the plain statement of v. 23, and is generally abandoned.

(2) That St. Matthew is tracing (in a somewhat condensed and artificial form, omitting several links) the *royal* descent of Jesus, as the Jews would recognise it. This would depend upon legal right of succession, rather than on actual descent in every case from father to son, e.g. Jechoniah (St. Matt. i. 12) had really no children, though he appears in St. Matthew as the father of Shealtiel. St. Luke, on the other hand, is tracing the actual human descent of our Lord. Not a Jew himself, nor writing, like St. Matthew, primarily for Jews, he was not so much concerned with shewing that our Lord was the lawful King of Israel, as that He was the "Son of man." So he traces our Lord's descent not merely through Zerubbabel, the restorer of the Jewish nation, and David its typical king, and "the stock of Abraham," but beyond the limits of the chosen race, right back to the very origin of humanity itself. St. Matthew's is a purely national and Jewish pedigree; St. Luke's, like the whole spirit of his Gospel, is Catholic.

**23 about thirty years of age**, i.e. in the year A.D. 26. Thirty was the age at which the Levites began their ministry, and David had begun his reign.

**as was supposed.** Joseph was not our Lord's natural father, as already shewn in chapter i., but this mystery was not generally known. In any case, however, Joseph being the husband of Mary, would be counted legally His father.

**27 Rhesa.** This name is apparently a mistake: Rhesa is a title—"prince"—applied to Zerubbabel, who was the leader of the first Jews who returned from Babylonia.

the *son* of Menna, the *son* of Mattatha, the *son*  
 32 of Nathan, the *son* of David, the *son* of Jesse, the  
*son* of Obed, the *son* of Boaz, the *son* of <sup>1</sup>Salmon, the  
 33 *son* of Nahshon, the *son* of Amminadab, <sup>2</sup>the *son* of  
<sup>3</sup>Arni, the *son* of Hezron, the *son* of Perez, the *son* of  
 34 Judah, the *son* of Jacob, the *son* of Isaac, the *son* of  
 35 Abraham, the *son* of Terah, the *son* of Nahor, the *son*  
 of Serug, the *son* of Reu, the *son* of Peleg, the *son* of  
 36 Eber, the *son* of Shelah, the *son* of Cainan, the *son* of  
 Arphaxad, the *son* of Shem, the *son* of Noah, the *son*  
 37 of Lamech, the *son* of Methuselah, the *son* of Enoch,  
 the *son* of Jared, the *son* of Mahalaleel, the *son* of  
 38 Cainan, the *son* of Enos, the *son* of Seth, the *son* of  
 Adam, the *son* of God.

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities write *Sala*.

<sup>2</sup> Many ancient authorities insert the *son* of *Admin* :

and one writes *Admin* for *Amminadab*.

<sup>3</sup> Some ancient authorities write *Aram*.

### CHAPTER III

#### *Questions*

1. What is meant by "the baptism of repentance" ?
2. Describe the teaching of the Baptist to the various classes of hearers.
3. What was the Baptist's description of Christ ?
4. Why was Jesus baptized by John ?
5. What are the chief differences in St. Luke's and St. Matthew's genealogy ? How can they be accounted for ?

#### *Subjects for Study*

1. The relation of the teaching of the Baptist to that of Christ.  
 Hort, *Judaistic Christianity*.  
 Edersheim, *Life and Times*, ii. and iii. 28.  
 Glover, *The Jesus of History*.

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38 **Adam, the son of God.** Man, created by God in "His own image," had the high prerogative of Divine sonship, though of course in a lower sense than that in which Christ, the Eternal Word, was the Son of God. That relationship was unique, and could not be shared by any created being.

2. The Messianic expectations of the Jews in our Lord's time.  
Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*,  
Book i., also Book ii. 5, and Appendix ix.  
Westcott, *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*.
3. Comparison of the two genealogies.  
*Genealogy of Jesus Christ* in Hastings' Dictionary.

*The Temptation* (iv. 1-13)

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from <sup>iv.</sup> 1  
<sup>1</sup> Or, *in*. the Jordan, and was led <sup>1</sup>by the spirit in the wilder- 2  
 ness during forty days, being tempted of the devil. And he did 2  
 eat nothing in those days : and when they were completed, he 2  
 hungered. And the devil said unto him, If thou art the Son of 3

iv. 1 **full of the Holy Spirit**, i.e. in His human nature. As God He was eternally united to the Holy Spirit. It is remarkable that the temptation which follows was encountered by our Lord at the leading of the Holy Spirit. To meet and conquer Satan was a necessary part of the work for which He had come into the world.

**the wilderness**, probably the wilderness of Judæa. The traditional spot is Mount Quarantana, near Jericho.

**2 forty days** ; so Moses had spent forty days on Mount Sinai on two occasions, and Elijah had taken forty days on his journey to the same sacred spot : and both had fasted during the period. Fasting, voluntary abstinence from food, is usually joined with prayer in Scripture as a means of rising for the time above this bodily life and its needs, and of entering into closer communion with God, and the spiritual world.

**the devil**, literally the Diabolos or Slanderer : he who speaks evil of God and of all that is good. He is usually identified with Satan, " the adversary " : and with the serpent who tempted Eve (Gen. iii. ; Rev. xii. 9).

**he hungered**. During the forty days, spiritual exaltation had prevented Jesus from feeling the need of food ; but as they approached completion, He experienced the pangs of hunger, thus showing the reality of His human nature.

**3 And the devil said unto him**. The temptations probably were continuous, in one form or another, throughout the forty days. But they culminated in three great typical temptations, in which apparently

God, command this stone that it become <sup>1</sup>bread. <sup>1</sup> Or, a loaf.  
 4 And Jesus answered unto him, It is written, Man  
 5 shall not live by bread alone. And he led him up, and shewed  
 him all the kingdoms of <sup>2</sup>the world in a moment of  
 6 time. And the devil said unto him, To thee will I <sup>2</sup> Gr. the in-  
 give all this authority, and the glory of them : for *habited earth.*

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the devil visibly appeared. The description of them must have been communicated by the Lord Himself to His disciples.

The three temptations correspond to the three elements of evil in the world (1 St. John ii. 16) : " the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes and the vainglory of life." Cp. also the description of the appeal of the first temptation in Gen. iii. 6. The principle of our Lord's incarnate life was self-sacrifice, and each temptation endeavours in some way to make Him false to that, by gratifying or asserting self.

**If thou art the Son of God :** obviously an allusion to the words spoken from heaven at our Lord's Baptism—Satan is trying to induce Him to make use of His Divine powers, or His high position, in order to gratify His bodily desires. Our Lord never worked miracles for Himself.

**4 It is written.** Our Lord, so far from presuming on His Divine privilege, answers the Tempter as man, using the words of Scripture which had been given for man's guidance. The quotation is from Deut. viii. 3. Man's nature is not merely animal. There is a higher need than bodily food. St. Matthew's account completes the verse—" but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

**5 And he led him up.** St. Matthew adds " unto an exceeding high mountain." He places this temptation third : St. Luke's order is probably historically correct.

**all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.** It is impossible to say how these were shown ; but it may have been by suggestion rather than actual vision.

**6 To thee will I give all this authority.** This was the temptation of world-power, which has so often dazzled the eyes of men. Satan's boastful words contain a half-truth. The motives to which Satan can appeal—ambition, covetousness, desire of fame, and the weapons which he can suggest—the sword, statecraft, lying, may for the moment win for an unscrupulous adventurer a large part of the kingdoms of the earth. But our Lord did not come to take possession of the world in this way, as an earthly conqueror, though most of the Jews expected the Messiah to do so. It was through the Crucifixion and the Resurrection that He was to win His kingdom,

it hath been delivered unto me ; and to whosoever I will I give it.  
 If thou therefore wilt worship before me, it shall all be thine. 7  
 And Jesus answered and said unto him, It is written, Thou shalt 8  
 worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. And 9

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *wing*. he led him to Jerusalem, and set him on the <sup>1</sup>pin-  
 nacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou art  
 the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence : for it is written, 10  
 He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, to guard  
 thee :

and,

11

On their hands they shall bear thee up,

Lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone.

And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not 12  
 tempt the Lord thy God.

8 **It is written.** Deut. vi. 13. God is supreme, and no empire can be obtained rightly by serving or worshipping any other being than Him, whether it be Satan, or oneself. In contrast to the pride of Satan, and the position of worldly pride which he offers, our Lord takes the attitude of humility. He accepts for Himself as man the position of a worshipper and a servant of God.

9 **The pinnacle of the temple:** probably some well-known spot on the parapet of the Temple roof, which commanded a view of the courts beneath. Others have supposed it to have been a height which looked down into the dizzy depths of the ravine of the Kidron, below the walls.

**cast thyself down.** This was a temptation to presume on the high position of being " Son of God," and to win glory and attract notoriety by performing a startling miracle ; drawing attention to Himself.

10 **for it is written.** Satan endeavours to turn our Lord's own weapons upon Himself, by quoting from Scripture (Psalm xci. 11, 12) a promise of protection by angels. But he characteristically misquotes it, by missing out the important words " in all thy ways." To rush presumptuously into danger, in order to glorify oneself, could never be part of " the ways " appointed for the servant of God.

12 **Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.** Once more our Lord takes up the attitude of humility, befitting to man, whose nature He has assumed. He quotes Deuteronomy vi. 16, a warning against presuming on God's mercy. To " tempt God " is to act in a vainglorious or self-asserting manner ; contrary to the reverence and submission

- 13 And when the devil had completed every temptation, he departed from him <sup>1</sup>for a season. <sup>1</sup> Or, *until*.

### III. The Ministry in Galilee

#### *Nazareth Re-visited* (iv. 14-30)

- 14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee : and a fame went out concerning him through all the region round  
15 about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

which are the right attitude of man towards God. The original reference is to two occasions in the history of the exodus, (1) when the Israelites tempted God by their self-willed murmurings, at Massa (Exod. xvii. 7) : (2) when Moses and Aaron tempted God by their irreverent words of anger and disdain in bringing water out of the rock at Meribah (Num. xx. 10-13).

**13 every temptation.** These three temptations were typical, and they exhausted, for the present, all that Satan could do. But the progress of our Lord's ministry provided further opportunities for the tempter. Our Lord recognised his attacks on later occasions. Cp. St. Matthew xvi. 23 ; St. Luke xxii. 53 ; St. John xiv. 30.

**III.** This section extends to ix. 50 ; in St. Matthew and St. Mark it covers the greater part of the recorded life of our Lord. The scene for the most part lies round the sea of Galilee : though some of the events in ix. belong to the journey in northern Galilee, which extended as far as the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and the town of Cæsarea Philippi. The time occupied was probably from March to October in A.D. 28.

There is a considerable amount of time unrecorded by St. Luke between the Temptation and this Galilæan ministry, the events of which are supplied by St. John i.-v. : the first call of some of the Twelve, the first miracle at Cana, the first Passover of the ministry (A.D. 27) kept at Jerusalem, a stay in Judæa, visits to Samaria and Galilee, and a second visit to Jerusalem for a festival, probably Purim, at which our Lord healed a paralytic on the Sabbath at the Pool of Bethesda, and incurred the anger of the Pharisees. His return to Galilee after this was apparently connected with the arrest and imprisonment of the Baptist by Herod (see iii. 19). He took up the work of proclaiming the kingdom of God, which the Baptist had now been compelled to relinquish.

**15 their synagogues.** These places of prayer and public meeting appear constantly in the N.T. as the scene of the first declaration of the

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up : 16  
and he entered, as his custom was, into the synagogue on the  
sabbath day, and stood up to read. And there was delivered 17

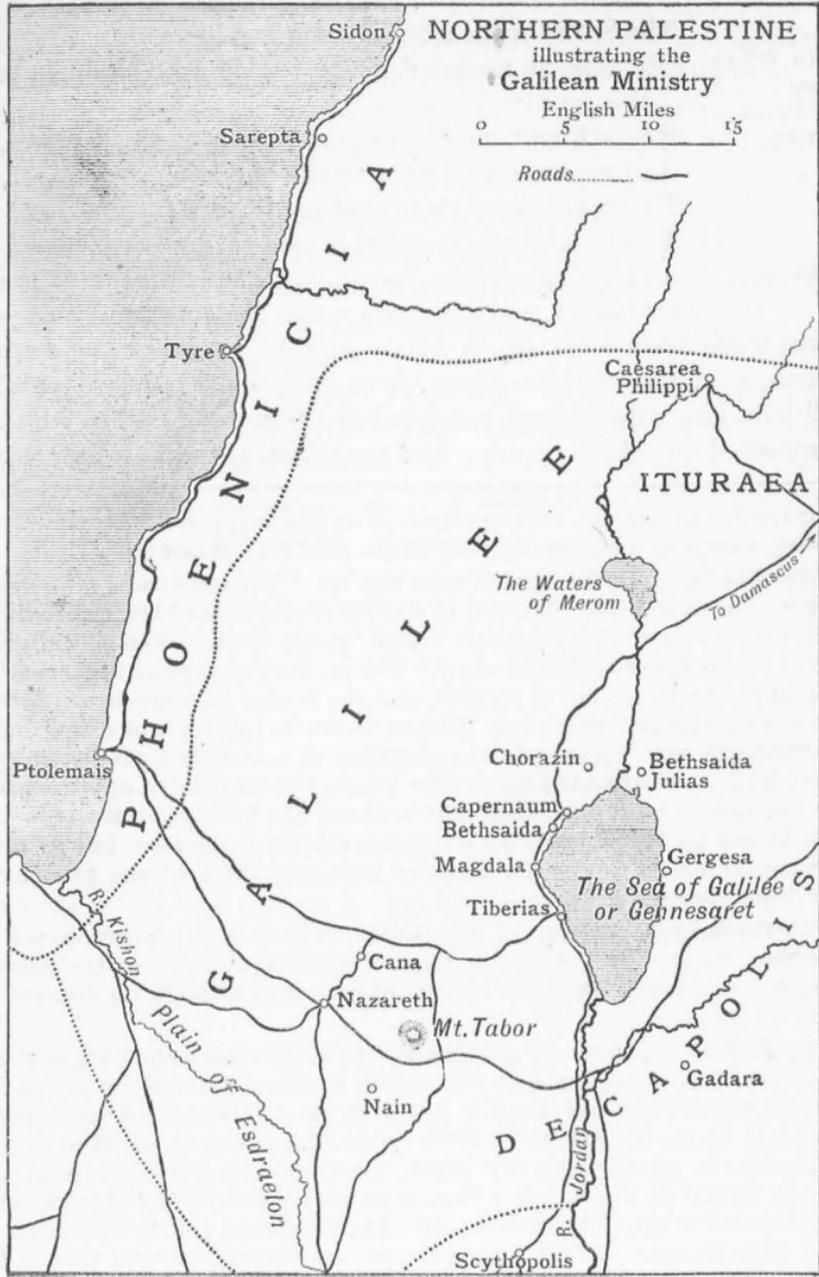
unto him <sup>1</sup>the book of the prophet Isaiah. And he  
<sup>1</sup> Or, *a roll*. opened the <sup>2</sup>book, and found the place where it was  
<sup>2</sup> Or, *roll*. written,

Gospel by Christ and His apostles. The synagogue was a universal Jewish institution dating from the Captivity in Babylon. Sacrifice could only be offered at the Temple in Jerusalem. The exiles in Babylon, being debarred from this, established meeting-places for prayer, reading, and preaching : which institution they transferred to Palestine on their return. The synagogue was the regular place in every town and village for (1) worship on the Sabbath and other fixed days, including Mondays and Thursdays in each week ; (2) the administration of justice by the local court of elders ; (3) the instruction of children. There was a head elder, called " the ruler of the synagogue," and also an official called the *Chazzan*, who took care of the building, and was responsible for teaching the children to read the Scriptures.

The synagogue was a plain rectangular building, containing as its chief furniture the " Holy Ark," a chest containing the rolls of the Scriptures, before which burned a perpetual lamp ; a " *bema* " or pulpit on which the reader or preacher stood ; and seats for the congregation. The sexes were divided ; the women being placed behind a lattice, either on one side of the building, or in a gallery. No special ordination was required for ministering in the service : the rulers of the synagogue chose the officiants, and it was customary to ask any distinguished stranger to preach (cp. Acts xiii. 15). The service followed a fixed liturgical order. It began with prayer and the recitation of the *Shema*, the Jewish Creed (Deut. vi. 4-9 ; xi. 13-21 ; Num. xv. 37-41). After this came the " Benedictions," interwoven with prayer. Then followed the most solemn part of the service, the reading of a lesson from the Law in the original Hebrew, which was then translated aloud into Aramaic, or paraphrased, by an interpreter. Last came a lesson from the Prophets and a sermon : the part of the service described in *vv.* 16-20.

**being glorified of all.** The appearance and teaching of our Lord were welcomed by the simple folk of Galilee, until their minds were perverted by the influence of the scribes and Pharisees, especially those sent from Jerusalem. The early popularity of our Lord quickly waned, and the latter part of His ministry was marked by growing opposition and bitterness.

17 **And he opened the book.** It is not certain whether the passage



The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, 18

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Wherefore.* <sup>1</sup> Because he anointed me to preach <sup>2</sup> good tidings to the poor :

<sup>2</sup> Or, *the gospel.*

He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,  
And recovering of sight to the blind,  
To set at liberty them that are bruised,  
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. 19<sup>\*</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Or, *roll.*

And he closed the <sup>3</sup> book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down : and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, To-day hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth : and they said, Is not this Joseph's

our Lord read (Isa. lxi. 1-2) was the regular lesson appointed for the day, or whether it was chosen by Him for its Messianic bearing.

18 **The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,** etc. The writer was probably not the historic Isaiah, but one of the great prophets of the Captivity, one of the school of the original Isaiah, whose work is included in the book that bears the master's name. The prophet was apparently speaking in the first instance of himself, and the Divine inspiration of which he was conscious, "anointing" him as a spiritual restorer of exiled and suffering Israel. But the Jews recognised in his words a prediction of the Messiah, or Anointed one. The passage is singularly appropriate to our Lord's office and work, and corrects the false popular views of the Messiah. He is described not as an earthly conqueror, but as the evangelist of the poor, the deliverer and comforter of the prisoner, the blind and the suffering.

19 **the acceptable year of the Lord.** The primary allusion was, perhaps, to the year of jubilee (Lev. xxv. 8-10), a type of the great epoch in which God would be reconciled with man through the Incarnation of His Son.

21 **And he began to say unto them.** St. Luke records nothing of the discourse but its opening words, which evidently stated its subject. Quite deliberately our Lord claimed to be the Anointed one, the Messiah, whom the prophet had foretold. Those who heard Him were compelled to acknowledge the "grace," i.e. the charm and attractiveness of the Speaker's words. But they were prejudiced by the thought of His humble origin. The secret of His virgin-birth had not been disclosed, and they thought of Him but as the village carpenter's son, who had certainly done no miracles during the years they had known Him.

23 son ? And he said unto them, Doubtless ye will say unto me  
 this parable, Physician, heal thyself : whatsoever we have heard  
 24 done at Capernaum, do also here in thine own country. And he  
 said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is acceptable in his own  
 25 country. But of a truth I say unto you, There were many  
 widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut  
 up three years and six months, when there came a great famine  
 26 over all the land ; and unto none of them was Elijah sent, but  
 only to <sup>1</sup>Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, unto a <sup>1</sup>Gr. *Sarepta*,  
 27 woman that was a widow. And there were many  
 lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet ; and none  
 28 of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian. And  
 they were all filled with wrath in the synagogue, as they

**23 Physician, heal thyself.** A popular proverb, like " Charity begins at home," which takes its colour from the context. Our Lord was reading the thoughts of His hearers, and knew that they disbelieved the report of miracles done at Capernaum, and were contemptuously thinking, " Why cannot He do them here ? Because we know Him too well ! "

**23 at Capernaum,** Neither Capernaum nor its miracles have been previously mentioned. The Gospels are not intended to be complete histories. Here St. Luke's allusion shews that he was aware of previous works of our Lord at Capernaum : cp. St. John ii. 12.

**24 No prophet is acceptable in his own country.** Familiarity and social prejudice were allowed to overpower conscience. Pride resented the idea that one who was so well-known could be greater than they were willing to admit. Even our Lord's " brethren " did not believe in Him. St. John (iv. 44) quotes this saying with a different reference—not to Nazareth, but to Judæa, our Lord's own country in another sense.

**25 There were many widows in Israel, etc.** Our Lord here quotes two examples (from 1 Kings xvii. and 2 Kings v.) of miracles done for the benefit of those who were outside the sacred nation of Israel. The widow of Zarephath and Naaman both shewed more faith than those who had higher knowledge of God and more religious privileges. It is implied that miracles will not be done for the people of Nazareth, as a display of power, or to convince them against their will ; but they will be done for others, and especially for the Gentiles.

**28 And they were all filled with wrath.** They understood the rebuke,

heard these things ; and they rose up, and cast him forth out of 29  
the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city  
was built, that they might throw him down headlong. But he 30  
passing through the midst of them went his way.

*A Day of Miracles at Capernaum (iv. 31-44)*

And he came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And he 31  
was teaching them on the sabbath day : and they were astonished 32  
at his teaching ; for his word was with authority. And in the 33  
synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean

but it only hardened their hearts. Especially the allusion to the hated  
Gentiles and the implication that they might be preferred to Israel,  
roused them to furious anger, just as at a later time St. Paul's mention  
of the mission to the Gentiles infuriated the mob at Jerusalem (Acts  
xxii. 21-22).

**29 the brow of the hill.** Nazareth stands not on the crest but on the  
slope of a hill, a thousand feet above the level of the plain to the south.  
Tradition points out a precipice two miles south of Nazareth as the  
place alluded to. But Dean Stanley considers it much more likely that  
it was one of the limestone crags which overhang the town.

**30 But he passing through the midst of them.** Similar instances of  
supernatural escapes are seen in St. John viii. 59 and x. 39. Not till  
our Lord's " hour " was come did He voluntarily surrender Himself to  
His enemies.

**31 Capernaum.** This was evidently a place of some importance, and  
it was so often the scene of our Lord's miracles and teachings that  
St. Matthew (ix. 1) calls it " his own city." But it has entirely perished  
and even the site is disputed. The usual opinion is that it is to be  
identified with Tel-Hum on the north-western shore of the sea of  
Galilee, where there are ruins of a synagogue, though of later date than  
our Lord's time.

**32 his word was with authority.** This characteristic of our Lord's  
teaching is often alluded to. It produced a profound impression on His  
hearers, as being so altogether different from the narrow and conven-  
tional teaching given by the scribes (p. 51), who merely interpreted  
the Law and the traditions. Cp. St. Matthew vii. 29, and especially the  
attitude of Christ towards the O.T. revelation as described in  
St. Matthew v.

**33 a spirit of an unclean devil.** It was believed to be possible for an  
evil spirit to gain possession of a human being, and to make the

- 34 <sup>1</sup>devil; and he cried out with a loud voice, <sup>2</sup>Ah! <sup>1</sup>Gr. *demon.*  
 what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Naza- <sup>2</sup>Or, *Let*  
 reth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee *alone.*
- 35 who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him,  
 saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the  
<sup>1</sup>devil had thrown him down in the midst, he came out of him,
- 36 having done him no hurt. And amazement came upon all, and  
 they spake together, one with another, saying What <sup>3</sup>Or, *this*  
 is <sup>3</sup>this word? for with authority and power he *word, that*  
 commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out. *with au-*  
*thority . . .*
- 37 And there went forth a rumour concerning him into *come out?*  
 every place of the region round about.
- 38 And he rose up from the synagogue, and entered into the  
 house of Simon. And Simon's wife's mother was holden with a

"possessed" speak and act at its prompting. Our Lord seems fully to sanction this belief and to act accordingly.

It has, of course, been often suggested that these cases of "possession" were only what we should call lunacy or epilepsy, and that our Lord was adopting the current views of His own age. But such an explanation is quite inadequate; it fails to do justice to the facts recorded. And recent researches into obscure psychical phenomena have tended to bring back belief in the possibility of unseen personal powers of evil seizing and dominating human personality. Probably there are cases of madness which are better explained on this hypothesis; and the experiences of missionaries, among heathen and degraded races, bear out in remarkable ways the statements of the Gospels.

The Christian Church from the first accepted the belief in the possibility of such possession, and practised exorcism in the Name of Christ, to cast out the evil spirits.

**and he cried out with a loud voice.** The vividness of this description should be noticed. The words though apparently spoken by the sufferer were really those of the demon. The evil spirit speaks in the plural "us"; as one of that mysterious host of spiritual beings who are permitted at present to tempt and oppress mankind, but are continually in apprehension of their final destruction. In the Gospels these evil beings recognise more clearly than men the Divine nature of Jesus. See v. 41 below, and Acts xvi. 16-18; St. James ii. 19. But their testimony is refused by Him and rebuked.

**38 the house of Simon.** This house was apparently at Capernaum, though St. John (i. 44) states that Bethsaida was the home of Simon.

great fever ; and they besought him for her. And he stood over 39 her, and rebuked the fever ; and it left her : and immediately she rose up and ministered unto them.

And when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with 40 divers diseases brought them unto him ; and he laid his hands on  
<sup>1</sup> Gr. *demons*, every one of them, and healed them. And <sup>1</sup>devils 41 also came out from many, crying out, and saying, Thou art the Son of God. And rebuking them, he suffered them not to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

And when it was day, he came out and went into a desert place : 42 and the multitudes sought after him, and came unto him, and would have stayed him, that he should not go from them. But 43  
<sup>2</sup> Or, *gospel*. he said unto them, I must preach the <sup>2</sup>good tidings  
<sup>3</sup> Very many of the kingdom of God to the other cities also : for  
 ancient authorities therefore was I sent.  
 read *Judæa*. And he was preaching in the synagogues of <sup>44</sup>  
<sup>3</sup>Galilee.

Probably the two places were close together. The wife of Simon is alluded to by St. Paul (1 Cor. ix. 5). This miracle is the first work of healing described by St. Luke. He calls the disease a great fever—a technical expression, for physicians classified fevers into “ great ” and “ little.”

39 and rebuked the fever. A peculiar expression, implying perhaps that diseases are the enemies of human nature, and part of that dominion of evil which Satan has established over mankind. The swiftness and completeness of the cure are remarkable. The sufferer was able to rise at once from her sick-bed, and entertain her guests.

40 And when the sun was setting. As it was the Sabbath (*v.* 31), Jewish scruples would not permit of the labour entailed in carrying about the sick, until the sunset brought the end of the Sabbath.

42 a desert place. Our Lord often retired into such regions for rest and prayer (*cp.* St. Mark i. 35) ; but He was frequently sought for and interrupted both by His disciples and the crowds.

44 the synagogues of Galilee. See the margin. The MS. evidence for reading “ *Judæa* ” is very strong : Alford and Westcott and Hort adopt it. There could be little hesitation about doing so, were it not that the context seems to be concerned with Galilee. But if *Judæa* is correct, the statement is very interesting as throwing some light on the ministry in *Judæa* which St. John’s Gospel makes prominent, though

## CHAPTER IV

*Questions*

1. Describe the three temptations. What motive lay behind them? In what attitude did our Lord meet them?
2. Describe the worship of the synagogues.
3. What prophecy did our Lord read at Nazareth, and with what purpose?
4. Why were the people of Nazareth incredulous and angry?
5. Describe the casting out of the unclean spirit at Capernaum.
6. What other miracles were performed on the same day?

*Subjects for Study*

1. The Temptation of Christ, its reality, and its bearing on human life.

Seeley, *Ecce Homo*.

Latham, *Pastor Pastorum*.

Weston, *The One Christ*.

Hutchings, *Mystery of the Temptation*.

2. The "Servant of the Lord" in Isaiah.

Skinner, *Isaiah in Cambridge Bible*, Appendix to vol. ii.

3. Demoniac possession.

James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*.

Trench, *Notes on the Miracles*.

4. Our Lord's miracles.

Trench, *Notes on the Miracles*.

Illingworth, *Divine Immanence*.

„ *The Gospel Miracles*.

Bruce, *Miraculous Element in the Gospels*.

Williams, *Miracles in Modern Oxford Tracts*.

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it is omitted by the Synoptists. St. Luke shews more coincidences with St. John than the two other Gospels.

*The Call of St. Peter and St. James and St. John (v. 1-11)*

Now it came to pass, while the multitude pressed upon him v. 1  
 and heard the word of God, that he was standing by the lake of  
 Gennesaret; and he saw two boats standing by the lake: but 2  
 the fishermen had gone out of them, and were washing their nets.  
 And he entered into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and 3  
 asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and  
 taught the multitudes out of the boat. And when he had left 4  
 speaking, he said unto Simon, Put out into the deep, and let down  
 your nets for a draught. And Simon answered and said, Master, 5  
 we toiled all night, and took nothing: but at thy word I will let  
 down the nets. And when they had this done, they inclosed a 6  
 great multitude of fishes; and their nets were breaking; and 7  
 they beckoned unto their partners in the other boat, that they

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v. 1 **the lake of Gennesaret.** A large and beautiful sheet of water, twelve miles by five, through which the Jordan flows. It is surrounded by hills, and though much wider resembles Lake Windermere. It is also called the Sea of Galilee, or Tiberias, and in the O.T. Chinneroth. In our Lord's time the fisheries were extensive and valuable, and the lake was full of shipping. But now all the busy towns on the shore have disappeared. There are scarcely any vessels, and no fishing is done.

3 **one of the boats, which was Simon's.** It is clear both from this passage, and from the previous account of the doings at Capernaum that our Lord was already acquainted with Simon. Further information is given in St. John i. Immediately after His Temptation, some months before this time, He had met and called Andrew, and through him his brother Simon, on whom He bestowed the name of Cephas or Peter. Several others of the Twelve had received the first call at the same time; but, apparently, after some little time spent in companionship with our Lord and His mother, they had returned to their old occupation. St. Peter and others are now definitely called to make a break with their old life, and to follow Jesus.

6 **a great multitude of fishes.** With this miracle should be compared the later one, after the Resurrection, in St. John xxi. Our Lord shows His supernatural knowledge of nature; but no doubt the miracle was also intended to be a "sign." It suggested the fruitlessness of human endeavour without Christ, and the success that would follow the Apostolic preaching in days to come.

should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the 8 boats, so that they began to sink. But Simon Peter, when he saw it, fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me ; for I am 9 a sinful man, O Lord. For he was amazed, and all that were with 10 him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken ; and so were also James and John, sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not ; from hence- 11 forth thou shalt <sup>1</sup>catch men. And when they had brought their boats to land, they left all, and followed <sup>1</sup> Gr. *take* *alive.* him.

*The Cleansing of a Leper (v. 12-16)*

12 And it came to pass, while he was in one of the cities, behold, a man full of leprosy : and when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me 13 clean. And he stretched forth his hand, and touched him, saying

**8 Depart from me.** The immediate effect of this miracle on St. Peter is noteworthy. Conviction of sin is the first result of a sincere soul feeling itself brought into the presence of God. Cp. Isaiah vi.

**10 James and John.** These two brothers were probably first cousins of our Lord, being the children of Salome, the sister of the Blessed Virgin (see below, p. 59). St. John had perhaps already become a hearer of our Lord. He may have been one of the two directed to Him by the Baptist St. John i. 35, etc.

**thou shalt catch men,** literally, "take men alive"; i.e. not catch them for death like the fish, but for a fuller life.

**12 a man full of leprosy.** The description again has in it a touch of St. Luke's medical knowledge. Leprosy was regarded with peculiar horror by the Jews. It was considered incurable, and whether contagious or not, the leper had to undergo a lifelong separation from his fellow men. He might indeed enter a synagogue in a village, but was even there separated from the congregation. The Law ordered (Lev. xiii. 45) that he should have his face partly veiled, and should warn off any from approaching him by the cry "Unclean, unclean." It seems clear that leprosy was so treated, not only because of its dreadful character, but as a type of sin, infecting incurably the whole nature, and being a sort of living death.

**13 touched him.** Here our Lord shewed Himself superior to the requirements of the Law. To touch a leper meant ceremonial defilement. But the Lord's touch illustrates the mystery of the Incarnation ;

I will ; be thou made clean. And straightway the leprosy departed from him. And he charged him to tell no man : but <sup>14</sup> go thy way, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. But so much the more went abroad the report concerning <sup>15</sup> him : and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed of their infirmities. But he withdrew himself in the <sup>16</sup> deserts, and prayed.

*Forgiveness and Healing* (v. 17-26)

And it came to pass on one of those days, that he was teaching ; <sup>17</sup> and there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which

it conferred new life on ruined human nature, through manhood united to Divinity.

**14 And he charged him to tell no man.** This command was frequently given and generally disobeyed. No doubt in most cases it was better for the soul of the person cured that instead of talking about what had happened and making a show of his cure to sightseers, he should reflect quietly on what it meant, and be led to what was more important than bodily healing, full belief in Christ and repentance.

But the command also throws light on our Lord's own attitude towards His miracles. They were not His chief works, nor did He wish to have them placed in the forefront. They were rather " signs," addressed to faith, and intended to illustrate the real meaning of His coming into the world, to bear witness to His Godhead, to His sympathy with suffering humanity, to His power to pardon sin and restore the soul.

**shew thyself to the priest.** The priest could not heal the leper ; but he was empowered by the Law (Lev. xiv.) to pronounce whether a man was suffering from real leprosy or not. In the case of a man who was afflicted only with some other form of skin disease, the priest might pronounce him " clean " after watching and examination, and perform the ceremonies of purification.

**offer for thy cleansing.** See Leviticus xiv. Two birds were offered on the first day : one to be killed over running water, the other sprinkled with its blood and set free. On the eighth day were offered two lambs for sin-offering and burnt offering, with their usual accompaniments of flour and oil. A poor man might substitute two pigeons for the lamb for the burnt offering.

**17 Pharisees and doctors of the law.** Pharisees—literally " the

were come out of every village of Galilee and Judæa and Jerusalem : and the power of the Lord was with him <sup>to</sup> <sup>1</sup> *Gr. that he should heal.*  
 18 heal. And behold, men bring on a bed a man that <sup>was</sup> <sup>palsied</sup> : and they sought to bring him in, and <sup>Many</sup> <sup>ancient</sup> <sup>authorities</sup> <sup>read that he should heal them.</sup>  
 19 lay him before him. And not finding by what *way* they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went up to the housetop, and let him down through the tiles with his couch into the midst before

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separated ones"—were the successors of the earlier party of the *Chasidim* (=holy ones), who in the second century B.C. had opposed the attempts of the Greek kings of Antioch to Hellenise the Jewish nation. The Pharisees were the nationalist party, marked by their strict observance of the Law and of all the traditions which the scribes had added to it. The party contained many righteous men, but as a whole they were intolerant and prejudiced, and many were hypocrites who made external observances a cloak for sin. The Pharisees were more severely dealt with by our Lord than any other class of men.

The "doctors of the law" were members of the profession of the "scribes," which became prominent about the close of the Captivity. Their great name was that of Ezra, who with his assistants compiled the Pentateuch, and perhaps other O.T. books, in the permanent form which we now possess. The period of Jewish history from the Return onwards was dominated by the influence of the scribes, who largely occupied in men's esteem the position of the earlier "prophets." The scribes not only copied the Scriptures, but acted as their official interpreters and exponents.

The place of this gathering was Capernaum, and evidently our Lord's fame had spread by this time over all Palestine. The leading representatives of Jewish religion were assembled, partly from interest in a new religious teacher, but chiefly in a spirit of suspicion and fault-finding.

**the power of the Lord was with him to heal.** A remarkable expression, implying perhaps that there were other occasions, as at Nazareth, when human unbelief, as it were, fettered our Lord's healing power. The margin "to heal them" may refer to those in the company who were afflicted with bodily diseases, or it may be interpreted even to mean the possibility of healing the souls of His adversaries and critics by bringing them to repentance.

18 a man that was palsied, i.e. suffering from paralysis, a disease which, like leprosy, was recognised as a type of sin. The sufferer was rendered helpless, unable to move hand or foot.

Jesus. And seeing their faith, he said, Man, thy sins are forgiven 20 thee. And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, 21 Who is this that speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone? But Jesus perceiving their reasonings, answered 22 and said unto them, <sup>1</sup>What reason ye in your hearts? <sup>1</sup> Or, *Why*. Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee; 23 or to say, Arise and walk? But that ye may know that the Son 24

**19 they went up to the housetop.** The roofs of Eastern houses were flat, and often used as places of rest and recreation. They were protected from the sun by coverings of reeds and branches, and approached by an outside staircase. These bearers of the paralysed must have removed some of the flat tiles or stones that formed the roof, and let down the mattress with ropes.

**20 seeing their faith.** An interesting touch, implying that the faith of others may be accepted on behalf of a sufferer. It throws light on the value of *intercessory* prayer; i.e. prayers for others than oneself; and on the practice of infant Baptism, in which the Church believes that the faith of those that bring the child is accepted for him.

**thy sins are forgiven thee.** Our Lord saw, evidently, that this sufferer had a greater need than that of bodily healing. His conscience was burdened with a sinful past; he was penitent, and needed the assurance of pardon.

**21 blasphemies,** i.e. in their mind He was arrogating to Himself the power which belonged only to God, of fully forgiving human sin.

**23 Whether is easier,** etc. It is difficult to grasp the subtle meaning of this question. On the one hand it is certainly "easier" to say "Thy sins are forgiven" than to say "Arise, etc."; for in the latter case the authority of the speaker can be tested at once by the success or otherwise of the cure. But on the other hand (as it has well been said by Cornelius a Lapide), even for God Himself to forgive sins is more difficult than to create heaven and earth.

But however we interpret the meaning of the Lord's question, it seems clear that He claims already to have accomplished the greater miracle of forgiveness, and as a proof of it to those who were accusing Him of blasphemy, He proceeds to perform the lesser miracle of making a paralysed man walk.

**24 But that ye may know,** etc. The emphatic words are "Son of man" and "on earth." They are the answer to the charge of blasphemy. A new power has been manifested in human life; a new era has begun in the relations between God and man. Sins could not be forgiven on earth under the Old Covenant. The sin-offerings of the

of man hath <sup>1</sup>power on earth to forgive sins (he said <sup>1</sup>Or, unto him that was palsied), I say unto thee, Arise, *authority.*  
 25 and take up thy couch, and go unto thy house. And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he  
 26 lay, and departed to his house, glorifying God. And amazement took hold on all, and they glorified God; and they were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to-day.

*The Call of Levi (v. 27-32)*

27 And after these things he went forth, and beheld a publican, named Levi, sitting at the place of toll, and said unto him, Follow

Law could only be accepted for sins of ignorance, or for sins of fraud between man and man, after confession and restitution (Lev. iv.-vi.). But for grave and wilful breaches of the Commandments there was no absolution on earth; only a special revelation through an inspired prophet could bring pardon; as David was absolved by Nathan after he had confessed his sin (2 Sam. xii. 13). It is true that the prophetic books abound in gracious promises of pardon, but these express rather a hope for the future than a present fact. It was under a "new covenant" in days to come that Jeremiah, in a remarkable passage (xxx. 31-4), foretold the full forgiveness of sins.

Our Lord here speaks of Himself as "the Son of man"—His favourite title for Himself, and used only by Him. It has been thought that He intended by it only to emphasise the humility of His Incarnation. But much more probably He assumed it deliberately in allusion to the prophecy in Daniel vii. 13, where "a son of man" appears in the councils of heaven, and receives from God an everlasting kingdom over the world, a passage which the later Jews understood to refer to the personal Messiah.

He is therefore here claiming as the Messiah to have authority to declare full forgiveness to the penitent here and now. And this authority He delivered to His Church to exercise on earth after His Ascension. Cp. St. John xx. 23; St. Luke xxiv. 47; Acts xiii. 38, 39.

25 that whereon he lay. The ordinary bed used by the Jews was not a heavy piece of furniture, but only a rug or mattress which could be rolled up and carried easily.

27 Levi—called in St. Mark "the son of Alphæus," and in St. Matthew "Matthew." He is usually identified with the Matthew in the lists of the Twelve; and tradition makes him the author of the first Gospel. (See introduction to *St. Matthew* in this series.) It has been

me. And he forsook all, and rose up and followed him. And Levi 28 made him a great feast in his house : and there was a great multi- 29 tude of publicans and of others that were sitting at meat with them. And <sup>1</sup>the Pharisees and their scribes mur- 30 mured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with the publicans and sinners? And 31 Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole have no need of a physician ; but they that are sick. I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. 32

<sup>1</sup> Or, the Pharisees and the scribes among them.

*Fasting : the Old and the New (v. 33-39)*

And they said unto him, The disciples of John fast often, and 33 make supplications ; likewise also the *disciples* of the Pharisees ; but thine eat and drink. And Jesus said unto them, Can ye make 34

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thought that his original name was Levi, and that he assumed the name of Matthew when he became a follower of Christ : the name means " gift of God." Levi evidently was a collector of toll and custom-duties from the ships that plied on the Lake of Galilee. He was probably well-to-do, but he " forsook all." It is a matter of conjecture how far he may have been acquainted with our Lord before this call came to him. For " publicans," see above, p. 30.

30 **Why do ye eat and drink, etc.?** Pharisaic righteousness shrank from any contact either with notorious sinners, or with the Gentiles, or with any who, like the publicans, seemed to be instruments of the hated domination of Rome. Our Lord, on the contrary, neither despised nor despaired of any human soul, however degraded. He made a special appeal to " sinners," as being in most need of Himself.

32 **I am not come to call the righteous, etc.** This is probably to be understood as solemn irony ; the " righteous " meaning the self-righteous.

33 **The disciples of John.** No doubt these endeavoured to emulate the austerity of their master by frequent fastings combined with many prayers. Our Lord had apparently imposed no rules of fasting on His followers, and both He and they frequently attended social festivities. It was probably their presence with Him at the feast in Levi's house that occasioned this protest. " The disciples of the Pharisees " would observe the usual Pharisaic fasts of Monday and Thursday in each week, See xviii, 12.

the sons of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with  
 35 them? But the days will come; and when the bridegroom shall  
 36 be taken away from them, then will they fast in those days. And  
 he spake also a parable unto them; No man rendeth a piece from

**34 the sons of the bridechamber** An allusion to the ordinary Jewish ceremonies of marriage. When the year of betrothal was expired, the bridegroom, accompanied by friends, went in the evening by torchlight to the house of the bride to receive her from her parents. Thence they conducted her in joyous procession to her new home. These friends were called "sons of the bride-chamber." They feasted with the bridal pair and conducted them to their chamber. Cp. the Baptist's words (St. John iii.). Our Lord's reply seems to mean that joy and feasting are more appropriate to His coming on earth than fasting and sorrow. (See a similar answer in Zech. viii. 19.) The Incarnation is elsewhere spoken of as the marriage between Christ and His Church: the permanent union of God and man. See Revelation xix., xxi.-xxii.

**35 But the days will come.** It is hinted here, however, that there is another side to the joy of Christ's coming. He looks on to His Passion and Death, and after that to His removal in bodily presence from the world, and the sufferings of His Church. Fasting, He says, will be practised fittingly *then*. Probably the primary meaning is the persecutions and privations which faithful disciples will then have to endure; but no doubt the literal meaning of fasting as a voluntary abstinence from food for religious purposes is included. As a matter of fact, the Church from the earliest times practised fasting at solemn seasons (Acts xiii. 2-3, etc.); and stated days and times of fasting have usually been observed by Christians, e.g. Lent, Fridays, etc.

**36 And he spake also a parable.** "Parable" is used here in the more general sense of a similitude, not in the more special and characteristic sense which we associate with our Lord's later teaching by parables. See p. 78.

These two "parables" seem to have the same general meaning. They are a warning against supposing that the teaching of Christ is merely an attempt to patch up and improve Judaism. It is a new thing in the world. The outworn robe of Judaism must be discarded and the new garment put on. Similarly the old wine-skins of Pharisaic tradition will not hold the new, still fermenting wine of the Gospel. Our Lord is, of course, not speaking of the great principles of O.T. religion which are the same under the Gospel. Rather, He is alluding to the whole temper and attitude of the scribes and Pharisees, with its legalistic narrowness, such as was suggested by the question

a new garment and putteth it upon an old garment ; else he will rend the new, and also the piece from the new will not agree with the old. And no man putteth new wine into old <sup>1</sup>wine- 37 skins ; else the new wine will burst the skins, and itself will be spilled, and the skins will perish. But <sup>38</sup> new wine must be put into fresh wine-skins. And no <sup>39</sup> man having drunk old *wine* desireth new ; for he saith, The old is <sup>2</sup>good.

<sup>1</sup> That is, skins used as bottles.

<sup>2</sup> Many ancient authorities read *better*.

## CHAPTER V

### Questions

1. Describe the circumstances of the call of Simon Peter. On what previous occasion had our Lord met him ?
2. Describe and shew the significance of the cleansing of the leper.
3. Why was the leper directed to shew himself to the priest ?
4. What new teaching about the forgiveness of sins is connected with the cure of the palsy ?
5. Describe the call of Levi the publican. What else is known of him ?
6. What did our Lord teach about fasting ?
7. Explain the meaning of the parables of the patched garment and the wine-skins.

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about fasting. In that sense contemporary Jewish religion needed not a mere improvement, but a revolution.

**39 And no man having drunk old wine,** etc. This saying, peculiar to St. Luke, seems to express a wise sympathy with those who found it difficult, as so many even sincere Jews did, to alter fundamentally their old habits and associations. They had drunk of the old wine of Judaism and were satisfied with it. They shrank from even attempting a change. To become a Christian was a venture of faith, and meant a real break with the past.

The R. V., reading " the old is good," is to be preferred to that of A. V., " the old is better." Men will not even try the new : they feel satisfied with the excellence, as they think, of the old.

*Subjects for Study*

## 1. Fasting.

*Fasting* in Hastings' Dictionary and *The Prayer Book Dictionary*.

## 2. The relation of the Gospel to Judaism.

Bruce, *Apologetics*, Book ii.

Gore, *Sermon on the Mount*.

*Controversies respecting the Sabbath*(a) *Plucking the Ears of Corn* (vi. 1-5)

- vi. 1 Now it came to pass on a <sup>1</sup>sabbath, that he was going through the cornfields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them <sup>2</sup>in their hands. But certain of the Pharisees said, Why do ye that which it is not lawful to do on the <sup>3</sup>sabbath day? And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities insert *second-first*.

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vi. 1 **a sabbath.** The mysterious epithet, "second-first," (margin) has considerable M.S. authority; and perhaps it may be genuine, having been omitted by copyists on account of its difficulty. No one has satisfactorily explained what the expression means. There is no trace of it in Jewish writings. Those who are curious may consult larger commentaries, but the discussion is unprofitable. The ripe corn points to some sabbath in spring or early summer. The Feast of Pentecost was the time when the first ripe wheat was offered in the Temple.

**rubbing them in their hands.** To pluck the ears as one walked through the cornfields was sanctioned by the Law (Deut. xxiii. 25), which while forbidding theft, did not allow a narrow and grasping spirit in small things, and inculcated generosity. But Pharisaic scrupulosity regarded the act of rubbing the corn in the hand as of the nature of threshing a harvest, and therefore a labour which profaned the Sabbath. Even in this the Pharisees were going contrary to the spirit of the Law, which distinguished clearly between plucking a few ears and putting a sickle to the corn. The Pharisees were doubtless on the lookout for some pretext; because already our Lord had offended in their eyes at Jerusalem (St. John v.) by healing and telling a man to carry his bed on the Sabbath.

read even this, what David did, when he was an hungred, he, and they that were with him ; how he entered into the house of God, 4 and did take and eat the shewbread, and gave also to them that were with him ; which it is not lawful to eat save for the priests alone ? And he said unto them, The Son of man is lord of the 5 sabbath.

(b) *Healing on the Sabbath* (vi. 6-11)

And it came to pass on another sabbath, that he entered into 6 the synagogue and taught : and there was a man there, and his right hand was withered. And the scribes and the Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath ; that they might find how to accuse him. But he knew their thoughts ; and 8 he said to the man that had his hand withered, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. And 9 Jesus said unto them, I ask you, Is it lawful on the sabbath to do good, or to do harm ? to save a life, or to destroy it ? And he 10

3 **what David did** (1 Sam. xxi.). The Pharisees are convicted out of the very Scriptures for which they were zealous. The narrative of David's need, and his eating, apparently without condemnation, of the sacred shewbread, shewed that human necessity may override the strict letter of the ceremonial law.

4 **the shewbread** (Exodus xxv. 30; Lev. xxiv. 5-9). Literally "bread of the Face," or Presence of God—twelve loaves of unleavened bread which week by week were set out on the golden table in the Holy Place, apparently as a memorial of the twelve tribes of Israel before God. It was probably a very ancient custom which the Law of Moses took up and re-enacted. The loaves when removed were one of the perquisites of the priesthood and might only be eaten by the priests.

5 **The Son of man is lord of the sabbath**—not only in His Divine nature as the Creator of the Sabbath, but also in His human nature as Son of man. He is the head of the human race, for the benefit of which the Sabbath was given. Cp. St. Mark ii. 27.

9 **Is it lawful on the sabbath to do good**, etc. This next development of the Sabbath controversy is dealt with by our Lord with the greatest boldness and dignity. His challenge was unanswerable (cp. xiii. 11-17). Even the Pharisees did not dare to say that a good work was unlawful on the Sabbath.

- looked round about on them all, and said unto him, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so : and his hand was restored.
- 11 But they were filled with <sup>1</sup>madness ; and communed <sup>1</sup>Or, foolishness. one with another what they might do to Jesus.

*The Choosing of the Twelve* (vi. 12-19)

- 12 And it came to pass in these days, that he went out into the mountain to pray ; and he continued all night in prayer to God.
- 13 And when it was day, he called his disciples : and he chose from
- 14 them twelve, whom also he named apostles ; Simon, whom he also named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John,

or to do harm, i.e. by declining to perform a work of mercy for which an opportunity presented itself on the Sabbath.

11 they were filled with madness. The word (see margin) is very expressive. It describes the unreasoning fury which possessed the Pharisees, at seeing their pet prejudices set aside, and feeling themselves unable to answer our Lord's challenge.

12 he continued all night in prayer. St. Luke's Gospel specially emphasises both our Lord's teaching on prayer and His own practice of it. Here this solemn and lonely vigil of prayer marks a turning-point in His ministry. In setting apart the Twelve He was definitely making provision for the future. Rejected Himself, as He knew He would be, He was preparing the organisation which would govern His Church, and carry the Gospel over the field of the world. The office of the Twelve was to be perpetuated in the Apostolic ministry, the bishops, priests and deacons of His Church.

13 apostles, i.e. those officially "sent forth." The word had already a technical meaning ; it was applied to envoys sent on any foreign mission, e.g. to those whom the Jewish rulers sent to collect the Temple-tribute, or to execute any important religious commission.

There are four lists of the apostles—in the three Synoptist Gospels and in Acts i. (also written by St. Luke). They are in the same general order, and most of the names are arranged in pairs that do not vary. St. Peter invariably comes first, and Judas Iscariot last.

14 James and John, two brothers, sons of Zebedee and Salome, and probably first cousins of our Lord, surnamed by Him "Boanerges" = sons of thunder, apparently in allusion to their impetuous and forcible characters. James proved the first martyr of the Twelve (Acts xii. 2). He is sometimes called "St. James the Great" to distinguish him

and Philip and Bartholomew, and Matthew and Thomas, and 15 James *the son of Alphæus*, and Simon which was called the Zealot, and Judas *the 1son of James*, and Judas Iscariot, 16  
<sup>1</sup> Or, *brother*. which was the traitor ; and he came down with them, 17  
 See Jude 1. and stood on a level place, and a great multitude of

from James the Less, the son of Alphæus. There is a third James, "the Lord's brother," (p. 82) who appears prominently in the Acts, and as the author of an epistle, though not himself one of the Twelve. John is usually believed to be the author of the fourth Gospel, in which he alludes to himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved," of the three Epistles of John, and of the Revelation.

**Philip.** See St. John i. He must be distinguished from the Philip of Acts vi., one of the Seven.

**Bartholomew.** Probably the same as Nathanael of St. John's Gospel.

**15 Thomas.** Also with the surname Didymus=twin, perhaps the twin-brother of Matthew (or Levi), as the two are always coupled together in the lists.

**James the son of Alphæus.** Perhaps the brother of Matthew.

**Simon which was called the Zealot,** i.e. he had formerly belonged to the party of extreme nationalists, called Zealots, which sprang into being under Judas of Galilee (Acts v. 37), in rebellion against the Roman taxation. He is called by St. Matthew and St. Mark "the Cananæan," an Aramaic word which is identical in meaning with the Greek "Zealot."

**16 Judas the son of James,** in St. Matthew and St. Mark called Thaddæus (in some MSS. of St. Matthew also Lebbæus). He has sometimes been identified, wrongly, with the "brother" of our Lord and with the author of the Epistle of St. Jude. He is alluded to in St. John xiv. 22.

**Judas Iscariot,** the only non-Galilæan of the Twelve. Iscariot simply means "man of Kerioth," in Judæa. In his place Matthias was afterwards elected by the other apostles.

The number twelve was no doubt chosen by our Lord because it was the number of the tribes of Israel, and was regarded by the Jews, who attached meanings to numbers, as the number of perfection. Its value, therefore, lay in its symbolism, rather than in its mere numerical content. Hence the name "apostle" is used more widely in the later part of the N.T. St. Paul claimed to be an apostle, on an equality with the Twelve, and the name is applied to others, such as St. James of Jerusalem and St. Barnabas.

his disciples, and a great number of the people from all Judæa and Jerusalem, and the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases ; and they that were troubled with unclean spirits were healed. And all the multitude sought to touch him : for power came forth from him, and healed them all.

### *The Great Sermon*

#### *(a) Paradoxes of the Kingdom of God (vi. 20-26)*

20 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed are  
21 ye poor : for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that

17 a level place. As the discourse which follows is evidently St. Luke's version of the Sermon on the Mount, we need not assume that by this "level place" is meant the plain or sea-border. Probably it was some grassy plateau among the mountains to the north-west of the Sea of Galilee. The traditional spot is Mount Koroun Hattin, west of Capernaum, a height with two peaks, between which is a green "level place," which sufficiently suits the narrative. Hither our Lord descended after His night of prayer on one of the neighbouring heights.

This discourse, which occupies the rest of chapter vi., corresponds to the larger one, called usually the Sermon on the Mount in St. Matthew v.-vii. Its comparative shortness is due probably to two causes. St. Matthew has collected together a number of discourses of Christ which were apparently delivered on different occasions : for parts of his Sermon on the Mount occur in St. Luke in other connections (see xi. 9-13 ; 33-36 : xii. 22-31 ; xiii. 25-7).

Again it is noticeable that St. Luke has omitted altogether the teaching of our Lord on the permanent value of the O.T. and the contrasts between the Pharisaic ideals of prayer, fasting and almsgiving, and those of the kingdom of God. St. Luke's condensation is therefore due partly to his attempt to keep chronological order, and partly to his purpose to write for Gentile Christians rather than for Jews.

In this first section there are only four Beatitudes, whereas St. Matthew has eight, and St. Luke's are somewhat different. St. Matthew's describe the conditions of heart and character which are suitable for members of the kingdom ; St. Luke's rather deal with conditions of human life, poverty, hunger, sorrow, unpopularity. It is possible that St. Luke is recording a different set of sayings from St. Matthew ; but another explanation is that St. Matthew has slightly expanded these Beatitudes to bring out their inward meaning, as suggested in the

hunger now : for ye shall be filled. Blessed *are* ye that weep now : for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and 22

following notes. But the four which St. Luke omits altogether—the blessings on the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, and the peace-makers—are so characteristic that they must be original sayings of Christ which St. Matthew alone has preserved.

**20 Blessed are ye poor.** This and all the Beatitudes are challenges to the world's ordinary ways of thought. They are paradoxes, to startle and set men thinking. So great is the contrast between the world and the kingdom of God, that just those conditions which are most disliked and avoided naturally, are those which fit men for the blessings of the kingdom of God. Poverty, the absence of worldly goods, is the condition in which a man recognises his helplessness and is thrown back upon God. Hence in St. Matthew it is the poor "in spirit" that are declared blessed, those whose poverty is not merely literal and material, but such as makes the soul humble and dependent on God. It is possible to be literally poor and yet to be proud, dishonest, grasping; possible also to be rich and yet have the inward poverty of spirit.

While we are compelled to understand by "poverty" something more than mere lack of pence, we must not overlook the literal meaning. Actual poverty is a less dangerous condition than that of riches. St. Luke's Gospel, in particular, shews our Lord's constant and solemn warnings against the danger of riches and the love of money.

**21 Blessed are ye that hunger now.** As before, the literal meaning must not be altogether merged in the metaphorical. Literal hunger is in itself a claim on the compassion of God, and our Lord always shewed Himself moved by its appeal. But as man does not live by bread alone, and the "bread of life" is of more importance than the "bread that perisheth" (St. John vi.), so hunger to be truly blessed must be of the soul and not merely of the body. Hence St. Matthew's addition, "hunger and thirst after righteousness," is in accordance with the general teaching of Christ.

**Blessed are ye that weep now.** The same considerations apply to this as to the two previous Beatitudes. There is a sorrow which has no claim in itself to Divine comfort, "the sorrow of the world, which worketh death"—the sorrow of personal resentment at one's condition, or the sorrow of self-pity or despair. St. Matthew's version, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted," though not without its difficulty, seems to express a different and higher type of sorrow, sorrow for sin, or for the miseries of others—a sorrow which is not with-

when they shall separate you *from their company*, and reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.  
 23 Rejoice in that day, and leap *for joy*; for behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the same manner did their fathers unto  
 24 the prophets. But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have  
 25 received your consolation. Woe unto you, ye that are full now! for ye shall hunger. Woe *unto you*, ye that laugh now! for ye  
 26 shall mourn and weep. Woe *unto you*, when all men shall speak well of you! for in the same manner did their fathers to the false prophets.

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out *hope*, and which like true poverty or hunger, turns a man away from self and towards God.

22 **Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you.** In this fourth Beatitude the spiritual meaning is more clearly brought out by the words "for the Son of man's sake." Not unpopularity in itself, or persecution and reproach, have the promise of the great reward in heaven, but such suffering as is incurred for what Christ and His teaching stand for, truth and righteousness.

23 **for in the same manner did their fathers**, etc. The history of the true prophets of God in the O.T. is a record of persecution and rejection. For example, Elijah was pursued for his life by Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kings xviii., xix.). Michaiah was hated and imprisoned by Ahab (1 Kings xxii.). Zechariah was stoned by order of Joash (2 Chron. xxiv.). Jeremiah's ministry was one succession of insults and outrages: the men of Anathoth, his native place, tried to kill him; the high priest put him in the stocks; the princes threw him into a noisome pit of mire; finally he was stoned to death by his own countrymen in Egypt.

24 **But woe unto you.** In contrast to the blessings, four "woes" are pronounced upon those conditions of life which the world thinks most desirable. But it is evident, from the explanation given to the first "woe" that riches, pleasures, and popularity are not denounced *in themselves*, but in as far as men are satisfied with them, find in them their life, and look no further. Cp. St. Luke xvi. 25.

26 **the false prophets.** Examples of this may be seen in the honour paid by Jezebel to the prophets of Baal and the Asherim (1 Kings xviii.), by Ahab to the lying and flattering prophets of Jehovah (1 Kings xxii.), and in the popularity of the opponents of Jeremiah (Jer. xxviii., xxix.). Cp. also Jeremiah v. 31.

(b) *The New Law of Love* (vi. 27-38)

But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to 27  
 them that hate you, bless them that curse you, pray for them 28  
 that despitefully use you. To him that smiteth thee on the *one* 29  
 cheek offer also the other ; and from him that taketh away thy  
 cloke withhold not thy coat also. Give to every one that asketh 30  
 thee ; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.  
 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them 31  
 likewise. And if ye love them that love you, what thank have ye ? 32  
 for even sinners love those that love them. And if ye do good to 33

27 **But I say**, etc. There is some abruptness in the opening of this section of the discourse, suggesting that St. Luke has purposely omitted the Jewish setting in which this teaching appears in St. Matthew v. There the great Christian law of forgiveness is laid down in contrast with the Jewish spirit of retaliation and personal hatred, which was based on false interpretations of the O.T. As a matter of fact, our Lord's teaching, emphatic and startling as it is, is really in accordance with the highest teaching of the O.T. Cp. Exodus xxiii. 4 ; Proverbs xxv. 21.

29 **To him that smiteth thee**, etc. This has always been recognised as a difficult precept. That it is not in every case to be acted upon literally may be concluded from our Lord's own attitude at His trial before the high priest (St. John xviii. 22, 23). Both this and the commands that follow are probably best understood as an intentionally vivid and startling way of forbidding the spirit of personal resentment and revenge. It is better to submit to evil and injustice ; even, as it were, to go to meet it, than to retaliate out of personal anger. To do so is to put oneself on the moral level of the offender. To return evil for evil is to involve oneself in the same sin. Two wrongs can never make a right.

**thy cloke**, i.e. the *himation* or outer garment which was worn loosely over the " coat," or *chiton*, a tunic with sleeves.

30 **Give to every one that asketh thee**. St. Augustine's comment is very much to the point ; we are to give to every one, but not necessarily everything he asks : only what we can give justly and honourably. To give indiscriminately what every suppliant asked would in most cases be neither good for him nor for society. It is a heedless and selfish disregard of the needs of another that is here condemned.

32 **for even sinners**. The threefold repetition is very striking.

them that do good to you, what thank have ye ? for even sinners  
 34 do the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive,  
 what thank have ye ? even sinners lend to sinners, to receive  
 35 again as much. But love your enemies, and do *them* good, and  
 lend, <sup>1</sup>never despairing ; and your reward shall be  
 great, and ye shall be sons of the Most High : for he <sup>1</sup>Some  
 36 is kind toward the unthankful and evil. Be ye <sup>ancient</sup>  
 merciful, even as your Father is merciful. And <sup>authorities</sup>  
 37 judge not, and ye shall not be judged : and condemn <sup>read *despair-*</sup>  
 not, and ye shall not be condemned : release, and <sup>*ing of no*</sup>  
 38 ye shall be released : give, and it shall be given unto you ; good <sup>*man.*</sup>

Christian charity is to be on a higher level than the charity which is found in the unconverted world. It must be ready for *self-sacrifice* ; loving the unlovable, benefiting those who make no return, lending even when it is probable that the loan will never be repaid.

**35 never despairing.** See margin. What is meant is surely much more than that we are to lend, when there is no human hope of being recompensed. The precept embodies one of the deepest principles of Christ's own attitude towards men. No one, however sinful and degraded, is to be dismissed as hopeless. The Pharisees held aloof from "publicans and sinners" : the Lord welcomed them, discerning in them still the possibility of goodness and recovery. Cp. the parables in chapter xv.

**ye shall be sons of the Most High.** This is the motive for such exalted and unselfish conduct. The Christian must aim at the highest standard, the imitation of God Himself. See the additional words in St. Matt. v. 45.

**for he is kind.** This does not mean that God never punishes, or that He passes over sins with easy indifference, or regards the righteous and sinners as equal. Rather, it means that He is not a mere dispenser of justice ; but looks upon all men as a Father, bearing patiently with them, and desiring their return to Him. God is eternally just, but His is the justice of One whose character is love.

**37 And judge not.** As in the Lord's Prayer, our own forgiveness is made conditional on our forgiveness of others. The standard by which we shall be judged is that which we ourselves set. Notice the stress laid on human responsibility and conscience. Christ did not merely lay down laws of conduct ; He treated men as rational and responsible beings, who have their salvation in their own hands.

**38 good measure, etc.** A metaphor from the giving out of corn or

measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom. For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again.

(c) *Warnings against Insincerity* (vi. 39-49)

And he spake also a parable unto them, Can the blind guide <sup>39</sup>  
the blind? shall they not both fall into a pit? The disciple is <sup>40</sup>  
<sup>1</sup> Or, *teacher*. not above his <sup>1</sup>master: but every one when he is  
perfected shall be as his <sup>1</sup>master. And why beholdest <sup>41</sup>  
thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not  
the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how canst thou say to thy <sup>42</sup>  
brother, Brother, let me cast out the mote that is in thine eye,  
when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own

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other food—not seeing how little you can give: but how much you can cram into the measure.

**shall they give.** It is not quite clear who the givers are, whether our fellowmen whom we benefit, or the angels of judgment, probably the latter.

**into your bosom:** a metaphor from the clothing of the ancients. Money or gifts would be carried in a fold of the garment, not in a purse or pocket.

**For with what measure ye mete.** A rebuke to the Pharisaic attitude which asked "How much need I give, or do?" To the Christian charity must be open-handed, without limitations, and the reward will be in accordance with this.

**39 a parable.** See note above, p. 55. The three similitudes that follow are all warnings against false guides and teachers: against the insincerity and self-deceit which marked the current religion of Israel, as seen in its leading exponents, the scribes and Pharisees.

**40 The disciple is not above his master.** A saying which occurs in quite a different connection in St. Matthew x. 24. There it is an encouragement to the disciples of Christ: they must not expect to be better treated than their Master. Here it is a stinging satire on the results of the teaching of the scribes. Blind and ignorant themselves, they cannot produce any better results in those whom they instruct. Their pupils having passed through the whole course of instruction, and become "perfected," will only be on an equality with their teachers.

**41 the mote.** Literally a small splinter of wood or straw, very tiny in contrast with the "beam," a great block of wood.

eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote that is in  
 43 thy brother's eye. For there is no good tree that bringeth forth  
 corrupt fruit; nor again a corrupt tree that bringeth forth good  
 44 fruit. For each tree is known by its own fruit. For of thorns men  
 45 do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes. The  
 good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that  
 which is good; and the evil *man* out of the evil *treasure* bringeth  
 forth that which is evil: for out of the abundance of the heart his  
 mouth speaketh.

46 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which  
 47 I say? Every one that cometh unto me, and heareth my words,  
 48 and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: he is like  
 a man building a house, who digged and went deep, and

**42 Thou hypocrite.** Literally one who "answers" on the stage, and so an actor, one playing a part. Our Lord uses the word of any unreal, insincere person, whether their insincerity is deliberate, or the result of their own self-deceit. The latter is a more dangerous spiritual state than the former. The deliberate hypocrite at least knows that he is lying, or acting a part; the unconscious hypocrite has blinded himself to the truth, by refusing to admit it.

**44 For each tree is known by its own fruit.** The sincerity of a teacher is tested, not by his eagerness to cast out "motes" from other people's eyes, but by the moral fruits of his own life; and especially by his habitual conversation (*v.* 45). Cp. St. Matthew xii. 33-37. These moral fruits cannot in the long run be counterfeited; they cannot be produced from false and corrupt principles.

**46 And why call ye me Lord, Lord.** The outward expressions of religious devotion, so-called religious emotions and religious phrases, are of no value except as the mark of a sincere obedience.

**47 Every one that cometh unto me.** This elaborate similitude is practically the same as that which closes St. Matthew's Sermon on the Mount. The aim of discipleship is the building up of the house of life on a sure foundation. The rock is obedience to Christ and His teaching. On this alone can religion and the religious character be securely built. (Cp. I Cor. iii. 11.) It is possible for the hypocrite, the insincere disciple or teacher, to build up something which for the moment looks exactly like reality. But the storm of temptation, trial, or persecution, will soon test what is founded on sincere obedience and what is not.

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read for it had been founded upon the rock: as in Matt. vii. 25.

laid a foundation upon the rock: and when a flood arose, the stream brake against that house, and could not shake it: <sup>1</sup>because it had been well builded. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man <sup>49</sup> that built a house upon the earth without a foundation; against which the stream brake, and straight-way it fell in; and the ruin of that house was great.

## CHAPTER VI

### Questions

1. What fault did the Pharisees find with our Lord respecting the Sabbath?
2. What was the shewbread?
3. Why did our Lord choose the Twelve?
4. Which of the Twelve appears under more than one name?
5. Compare the contents of the sermon in this chapter with St. Matthew's Sermon on the Mount.
6. What conditions of life are declared "Blessed" and why?
7. What did our Lord teach as to conduct toward enemies and oppressors?
8. What is meant by a "hypocrite"? Illustrate from this chapter.
9. What is the test of a sincere teacher or disciple?

### Subjects for Study

1. The Jewish observance of the Sabbath.  
Edersheim, *Life and Times*, Book i. and Appendix xvii.
2. The calling of the Twelve.  
St. Matthew x.  
Latham, *Pastor Pastorum*.  
Bruce, *Training of the Twelve*.

*Healing of a Centurion's Servant* (vii. 1-10)

- vii. 1 After he had ended all his sayings in the ears of the people, he entered into Capernaum.
- 2 And a certain centurion's <sup>1</sup>servant, who was <sup>2</sup>dear <sup>1</sup>Gr. *bond-servant.*
- 3 unto him, was sick and at the point of death. And <sup>2</sup>Or, *precious to him.*
- when he heard concerning Jesus, he sent unto him <sup>3</sup>Or, *honourable with him.*
- 4 and save his <sup>1</sup>servant. And they, when they came to Jesus, besought him earnestly, saying, He is worthy
- 5 that thou shouldest do this for him : for he loveth our nation, and
- 6 himself built us our synagogue. And Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself : for I am not <sup>3</sup>worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof :
- 7 wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come <sup>3</sup>Gr. *sufficient.*
- unto thee : but <sup>4</sup>say the word, and my <sup>5</sup>servant shall <sup>4</sup>Gr. *say with a word.*
- 8 be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, <sup>5</sup>Or, *boy.*
- having under myself soldiers : and I say to this one,

vii. 2 **centurion** : an officer in the Roman army ; or more probably in this case in the army of Herod, which would be organized in the Roman manner. The centurion was literally the officer in command of a hundred (*centum*) soldiers, and thus would correspond in authority, though not in rank or duties, to our captain. The centurions of the N.T. are uniformly well spoken of ; no doubt they were the picked men of the army. This particular one had evidently been attracted towards the Jewish religion, and must have been a man of some wealth to have built a synagogue (*v.* 5). His behaviour shews affection, faith, and humility.

**was sick.** St. Matthew (viii. 6) says the disease was palsy or paralysis.

**6 I am not worthy.** The humility of the centurion and his deep reverence are displayed in his sending ambassadors and friends to plead for him, and his shrinking from receiving so holy a teacher under his Gentile roof. His faith was shewn in his confidence that Jesus could work a miracle at a distance and with a word alone.

**8 For I also am a man set under authority.** The centurion means that he himself, though in a subordinate rank, has full and unquestioned authority over his own soldiers and servants : how much more then

Go, and he goeth ; and to another, Come, and he cometh ; and to my <sup>1</sup>servant, Do this, and he doeth it. And when <sup>9</sup> Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned and said unto the multitude that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And they that were sent, returning to the house, found <sup>10</sup> the <sup>1</sup>servant whole.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bond-servant*.

*The Widow's son raised from the Dead (vii. 11-17)*

And it came to pass <sup>2</sup>soon afterwards, that he went <sup>11</sup> to a city called Nain ; and his disciples went with him, and a great multitude. Now when he drew <sup>12</sup> near to the gate of the city, behold, there was carried out one that was dead, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow : and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said <sup>13</sup> unto her, Weep not. And he came nigh and touched the bier : <sup>14</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Many ancient authorities read *on the next day*.

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can Jesus, who, he implies, is in *supreme* authority, command his own servants, the angels, with but a word, to carry out his will !

**9 he marvelled at him**—a statement which illustrates the genuine humanity of our Lord. His human soul felt the natural human emotions of surprise, joy, sorrow, etc.

**I have not found so great faith.** The full unhesitating faith of this Gentile contrasts favourably with the narrowness and the unwillingness to believe of the members of the sacred and Divinely trained nation of Israel. See the striking addition which St. Matthew makes to this narrative (viii. 11-13).

**11 Nain.** A place which may still be identified, on the northern slope of a range of hills, looking towards Mount Tabor. It is about twenty-five miles from Capernaum, approached by a narrow rocky path, on which our Lord must have encountered the funeral procession, carrying the dead for burial outside the walls, in accordance with Jewish custom. There are still tombs visible, hewn in the rocks on the hillside.

**12 the only son of his mother, etc.** In this phrase, and indeed in the whole narrative, is to be noted the touch of simple pathos, and of sympathy with the tragedies of human life, characteristic of St. Luke, and indeed of our Lord Himself.

**14 touched the bier.** This act would be a ceremonial pollution, like

and the bearers stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he gave him to his mother. And fear took hold on all : and they glorified God, saying, A great prophet is arisen among us : and God hath visited his people. And this report went forth concerning him in the whole of Judæa, and all the region round about.

*The Question of St. John the Baptist (vii. 18-23)*

And the disciples of John told him of all these things. And John calling unto him <sup>1</sup>two of his disciples sent them to the Lord, saying, Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another ? And when the men were come unto him, they said, John the Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another ? In that hour

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *certain two.*

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touching the leper. The Law-giver is superior to His own laws, and by breaking its formal enactments, He reveals a higher truth. Death is conquered by life.

**I say unto thee, Arise.** In all the three instances of our Lord raising the dead, it is remarkable with what apparent ease, and calm dignity He accomplishes the miracle ; in each case by a word addressed personally to the dead. It is in sharp contrast with the agonies of prayer that accompanied similar miracles done by Elijah and Elisha in O.T.

**16 A great prophet.** Perhaps they were thinking of the prophet promised in Deuteronomy xviii. 15. After the long period of four centuries, during which the Jews believed no prophet had appeared in Israel, they now recognised the advent of a Divine messenger.

**17 the whole of Judæa :** another link with St. John's Gospel, shewing that our Lord's ministry and influence were not, as might be supposed from the two first Gospels, confined to Galilee.

**19 Art thou he that cometh ?** This was one of the recognised Jewish titles of the Messiah. John, though now in prison at Machærus, evidently was not strictly isolated, but permitted to receive visits from his disciples. It has often been discussed with what purpose he sent this enquiry to Jesus. It may be that in his solitude he had fallen into depression, and needed the strengthening of his own faith. Or he may have wished to urge our Lord to declare Himself more openly. Or again, the question may have been asked for the sake of John's disciples, that they might now attach themselves to Jesus. This would be in harmony

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *scourges*. he cured many of diseases and <sup>1</sup>plagues and evil spirits : and on many that were blind he bestowed sight. And he answered and said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard ; the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have <sup>2</sup>good tidings preached to them. And blessed <sup>23</sup> is he, whosoever shall find none occasion of stumbling in me.

*The Witness of Christ to the Baptist (vii. 24-35)*

And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to <sup>24</sup> say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into

with the humility and self-devotion of John's character, as seen in St. John iii. Some of his disciples had already followed Jesus. Others seem to have maintained a separate organisation long after the Baptist's death (Acts xix. 1-7).

**22 what things ye have seen and heard.** These miracles were recognised as the signs which would accompany the age of the Messiah, as foretold in Isaiah xxxv. and lxi. It is significant that as the climax of these mighty works of Christ, comes the declaration of the Gospel to the poor. To teach the poor the way of eternal life is even a higher thing than to heal their diseases, or restore them to the life of this world.

**23 And blessed is he, etc.** It is implied that to believe in Jesus as the promised Messiah will not be without its difficulties. It will need an effort of faith.

**occasion of stumbling.** This word, literally "scandal," translated "offence" in A.V., frequently occurs in different forms and connections in the Gospels. Its literal meaning is a trap or snare in which one who is caught, trips up and falls. So to be "scandalised," or made to stumble at Christ, is to be hindered by some secret unbelief, or misunderstanding, or temptation of Satan, from acknowledging and believing in Him to the full.

**24 he began to say unto the multitudes.** The words which follow are a vindication of the greatness and the sincerity of John the Baptist, perhaps in answer to some feeling of disappointment among the multitudes at the question which he had sent to ask.

25 the wilderness to behold? a reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously appavelled, and live delicately, are in  
 26 kings' courts. But what went ye out to see? a prophet? Yea,  
 27 I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written,

Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,

Who shall prepare thy way before thee.

28 I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there is none greater than John: yet he that is <sup>1</sup>but little  
 29 in the kingdom of God is greater than he. And <sup>1</sup>Gr. *lesser*.  
 all the people when they heard, and the publicans, justified God, <sup>2</sup>being baptized with the baptism of John. <sup>2</sup>Or, *having been*.  
 30 But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God, <sup>3</sup>being not baptized  
 31 of him. Whereunto then shall I liken the men of <sup>3</sup>Or, *not having been*.

**a reed shaken with the wind?** John was no weak character, moved by the wind of either popularity or adversity. Neither was he a man of luxurious life or outward splendour.

**26 more than a prophet.** There had been many true prophets in Israel, but the Baptist was greater than any of them. He not only was the bearer, like them, of a Divine message, but he stood in a unique relation to Christ as His immediate herald, and one who himself had been the subject of prophecy.

**27 Behold, I send my messenger,** etc. Malachi iii. i. There is a significant alteration in this quotation. The original reads "my face." Jehovah Himself is represented as speaking about His own coming, and the herald He will send. Our Lord alters "my" into "thy": thus, evidently, claiming Himself to be the Jehovah who was to come. He is the Son, before whose face the Father sends the messenger to prepare His way.

**28 he that is but little in the kingdom of God.** Great though the Baptist was, both in character and office, he belonged to the old Covenant. The kingdom of God was a new thing, and on a higher plane. Even the humblest member of that kingdom is by Baptism admitted to a higher position and privilege than the Baptist. He is in union with God and a partaker of the Holy Spirit.

**29 justified God,** i.e. they declared God to be just; the attitude of obedience and faith.

this generation, and to what are they like? They are like unto 32  
 children that sit in the marketplace, and call one to another; 33  
 which say, We piped unto you, and ye did not dance; we wailed,  
 and ye did not weep. For John the Baptist is come eating no 33  
 bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a  
<sup>1</sup> Gr. *demon*. <sup>1</sup>devil. The Son of man is come eating and drinking; 34  
 and ye say, Behold, a gluttonous man, and a wine-  
 bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! And wisdom 35  
<sup>2</sup> Or, *was*. <sup>2</sup>is justified of all her children.

*Christ and the Penitent Woman* (vii. 36–viii. 3)

And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with 36  
 him. And he entered into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to  
 meat. And behold, a woman which was in the city, a sinner; and 37

**31 to what are they like?** Our Lord here likens His contemporaries to children who play first at a wedding, with its accompaniment of music and dancing, and then at a funeral, with its mournful wailing, and are cross with other children because they will not join in either of the games. So the Jews found fault both with Christ and the Baptist on contrary pretexts. With childish perversity they blamed the Baptist for his asceticism, calling him mad and possessed, while they blamed Christ for His sympathy with human life, and His readiness to join in man's festivities, calling Him self-indulgent and a lover of bad company. But the fault lay in the critics themselves, who did not want to be taught.

**35 And wisdom is justified.** The "wisdom" spoken of is that of God in the various methods of revelation which He uses. Those whose will is in harmony with God's will, instead of criticising either the Baptist or Christ, will recognise in each the Divine wisdom, and "justify" it, declare it just. They will not be offended by the strictness of the one or the liberty of the other. Thus they shew themselves to be "children of wisdom." The same truth is taught in St. John viii. 47; xviii. 37.

**36 sat down to meat.** The Jews had adopted the table customs of the Greeks and Romans, and reclined on couches or benches round tables which formed three sides of a square. The feet of the guests, from which the sandals had been removed, would be on the outside of the couches, away from the table and near the wall. This explains the position and action of the woman as described in the following verses.

**37 a woman . . . a sinner.** Christian tradition and art have identified

when she knew that he was sitting at meat in the house, she brought <sup>1</sup>an alabaster cruse of ointment, and standing behind at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head, and <sup>2</sup>kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were <sup>3</sup>a prophet, would have perceived who and what manner of woman this is which toucheth him, that she is a sinner. And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, <sup>4</sup>Master, say on. A certain lender had two debtors: the one owed five hundred <sup>5</sup>pence, and the other fifty. When they had not *wherewith* to pay, he forgave them both. Which of them therefore will love him most? Simon answered and said, He, I suppose, to

<sup>1</sup> Or, a flask.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *kissed much*.

<sup>3</sup> Some ancient authorities read *the prophet*. See John i. 21, 25.

<sup>4</sup> Or, *Teacher*.

<sup>5</sup> See marginal note on Matt. xviii. 28.

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this unnamed woman with St. Mary Magdalene (who is first mentioned immediately afterwards—(viii. 2). A less likely tradition, usually followed in the Roman Church, also identifies the Magdalene with Mary of Bethany, of whom a similar act of anointing our Lord's feet is recorded.

**37 an alabaster cruse.** Literally a vase made of the precious and delicate marble of Alabastron in Egypt; but the name had become generally applied to a flask or phial made of any material (see margin).

**39 This man, if he were a prophet, etc.** This contemptuous judgment illustrates well the Pharisaic attitude towards sinners, and the gulf that separated it from our Lord's thoughts concerning them. Sinners, to the Pharisee, were only outcasts to be judged and scrupulously avoided. To our Lord they were souls, in whom the first stirring of penitence was welcomed.

**41 A certain lender had two debtors.** This parable approaches more nearly than those already mentioned to the style of our Lord's later parabolic teaching. It is in the form of a little incident which might easily have occurred in ordinary life. But it is specially framed to meet the Pharisee's type of mind, with its somewhat commercial ideas of gratitude, whether to man or God, measured strictly according to benefits received. Simon had assumed that the woman was a very much greater sinner than himself, and the parable suggests that (on his

whom he forgave the most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. And turning to the woman, he said unto Simon, 44 Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath wetted my feet with her tears, and wiped them with her hair. Thou gavest me no 45 kiss: but she, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to  
<sup>1</sup>kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not 46  
<sup>1</sup>Gr. *kiss much.* anoint: but she hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are 47 many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins 48 are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him began to say 49  
<sup>2</sup>Or, *among.* <sup>2</sup>within themselves, Who is this that even forgiveth sins? And he said unto the woman, Thy faith hath 50 saved thee; go in peace.

own principles of reckoning) he need not be scandalised if she shews very much more gratitude. This contrast is brought out vividly in *vv.* 44-46.

43 **Thou hast rightly judged.** Our Lord is probably not sanctioning Simon's way of estimating the limits of love and gratitude. The words are more likely those of quiet irony, with a touch of humour. Simon has judged "correctly" (as the word precisely means), in accordance with Pharisaic principles.

44 **I entered into thine house.** Our Lord in language of singular beauty, almost of poetry (note the parallelisms), contrasts the treatment He had received at the hands of Simon with the honour the woman had paid Him. Simon had not offered even the ordinary courtesies paid to an honoured guest. Evidently he had received the Lord in a grudging and suspicious manner. He had shewn little love, because he had little sense of sin or of the need of forgiveness.

47 **for she loved much.** The reasoning may be a little difficult to follow, for it is the logic of the heart rather than the head: but our Lord is evidently pointing to the love the woman has shewn as both the reason of her forgiveness and also the proof of it.

48 **Thy sins are forgiven.** This is the authoritative statement of a gift which has already been conferred. The tense is perfect. She has already won her pardon by love; her conduct shews how deeply she feels both her sin and her forgiveness.

50 **Thy faith hath saved thee.** There is no contradiction between

## CHAPTER VII

*Questions*

1. What remarkable features are to be noticed in the miracle of healing the centurion's servant ?
2. On what occasions did our Lord raise the dead ? Compare with these miracles any similar events in the O.T.
3. What question did the Baptist send to ask and why ?
4. What did our Lord say about the greatness and the limitations of the Baptist ?
5. How did our Lord describe the perversity of the men of His generation ?
6. What was the parable of the two debtors, and with what purpose was it spoken ?

*Subjects for Study*

1. Jewish ideas of righteousness and sin.  
Hastings, *Bible Dictionary*.  
Bruce, *Apologetics*.
2. The position of Women in St. Luke's Gospel.  
Study Elisabeth, St. Mary, Anna, "the woman that was a sinner," the women of Galilee (viii. 2, xxiii.), etc.

(viii. 1-3)

- viii. 1 And it came to pass soon afterwards, that he went about through cities and villages, preaching and bringing <sup>1</sup> Or, *gospel*. the <sup>1</sup>good tidings of the kingdom of God, and  
2 with him the twelve, and certain women which had been healed

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this statement and the previous one, that *love* had gained her forgiveness. Faith and love are two aspects of the same attitude of the soul. It is not bare faith that justifies, but "faith that worketh by love" (Gal. v. 6).

of the evil spirits and infirmities, Mary that was called Magdalene,  
<sup>1</sup> Gr. *demons*, from whom seven <sup>1</sup> devils had gone out, and Joanna <sup>3</sup>  
<sup>2</sup> Many the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and  
 ancient many others, which ministered unto <sup>2</sup> them of their  
 authorities read *him*. substance.

*The Parable of the Sower, etc.* (viii. 4-18)

And when a great multitude came together, and they of every <sup>4</sup>  
 city resorted unto him, he spake by a parable : The sower went <sup>5</sup>

viii. 2 **Mary, that was called Magdalene**, i.e. of Magdala, a place on the coast of the Sea of Galilee. She stood afterwards by the Cross and was the first witness of the Resurrection (St. John xix., xx.).

3 **Joanna**. St. Luke shews a special acquaintance with the court of Herod: perhaps he had ministered there as a physician. Chuza, probably now dead, must have been a high official, the ruler of the royal household. Joanna was one of the women who visited the Holy Sepulchre on the morning of the Resurrection.

**Susanna**, nothing further is known of her. It is characteristic again of St. Luke to shew special knowledge of and interest in the *women*, who were among the most faithful of Christ's disciples and helpers of His Church.

4 **he spake by a parable**. St. Luke introduces the parabolic teaching of our Lord more abruptly than the other Synoptists. The latter shew the connection of this new style of teaching with the circumstances of the moment. They connect it with the outrageous charge brought by the Pharisees of casting out devils by the help of Beelzebub, which in St. Luke's narrative comes later (xi. 14, etc.). Hitherto our Lord had given His teaching broadcast, and for the most part directly, without clothing it in parables. But henceforth He addresses such direct teaching to a more limited circle who were prepared to hear Him. To the multitude He speaks in parables, which were designed, not to simplify the teaching, but as a stimulus to thought and as a test to find out the hearers who were well-disposed and willing to learn (see note on v. 10). Teaching by parables, i.e. by stories, or expanded similitudes drawn from nature or the ways of men, for the purpose of illustrating Divine truth, was not unknown in O.T. and is a natural method of Oriental teachers. But our Lord's parables are unique, and form one of His most characteristic styles of teaching. They are unlike "fables," for nothing in them is unnatural, or unlike what may happen or does happen constantly. They are extraordinarily faithful to nature:

- forth to sow his seed ; and as he sowed, some fell by the way side ; and it was trodden under foot, and the birds of the heaven devoured it. And other fell on the rock ; and as soon as it grew, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And other fell amidst the thorns ; and the thorns grew with it, and choked it. And other fell into the good ground, and grew, and brought forth fruit a hundredfold. As he said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.
- And his disciples asked him what this parable might be. And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God : but to the rest in parables ; that seeing they may

vivid and convincing. There is not a word too much or too little in them and their seriousness is not without touches of humour. The question has often been raised whether we are justified in trying to find a definite meaning intentionally hidden in every detail of the parable, or whether these details may be only artistic. Probably there is truth in both views. The general meaning of the parable as a whole is the most important matter for the interpreter ; but the details will often be found on close examination to contain much that is suggestive.

**5 The sower went forth.** Very likely this spectacle might be seen from the shore where our Lord was speaking. One Jewish method of sowing was to put the seed in a bag with holes, on the back of an animal. As this was driven backwards and forwards the seed would fall rather indiscriminately, as described in the parable, on both good and bad ground. All the four sorts of ground may be noticed close together in the neighbourhood of the Sea of Galilee ; and the result of sowing is in each case exactly true to nature.

**8 He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.** The parable is a challenge to men's powers of apprehension. Those who are spiritually deaf will be untouched by it. But those who have the power to understand are exhorted to lay it to heart.

**10 the mysteries of the kingdom of God.** The word "mystery" literally means something spoken of in a whisper, like the Greek letter  $\mu$  (mü) pronounced with the lips almost closed. Thence it came to mean a solemn religious rite, or doctrine, revealed only to the initiated, and by them to be kept secret, like the Greek "mysteries of Eleusis." In N.T. the word is applied to any deep, fundamental truth of the Gospel, revealed to the Church, and only to be understood by those who submit themselves to the Holy Spirit's teaching ; but unknown or incomprehensible to the world and to man's natural understanding.

not see, and hearing they may not understand. Now the parable 11 is this : The seed is the word of God. And those by the way 12 side are they that have heard ; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word from their heart, that they may not believe and be saved. And those on the rock *are* they which, when they have 13 heard, receive the word with joy ; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And 14 that which fell among the thorns, these are they that have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with cares and

**that seeing they may not see.** As the parable is intended to convey Divine truth to the receptive hearer, so it is intended to hide it from those who are spiritually blind and deaf. This is the working out of God's judgment, for it is the fault of the hearer himself if he is blind and deaf. He begins by hardening his own heart and shutting his eyes, for truth is unpalatable ; and he is punished by the natural consequences of his own action. He becomes less and less capable of hearing and understanding. Spiritual faculties disused, or done violence to, become dead. St. Matthew quotes here more fully the famous prophecy of Isaiah vi., of the judgment of blindness and deafness to the voice of God which is to fall upon impenitent Israel.

**11 Now the parable is this.** Three truths, or "mysteries of the kingdom," are implicit in this explanation : (1) The kingdom of God will not be, as the Jews imagined, an empire of this world in which all who conform to an external law will be as a matter of right included. The kingdom will be conditioned by a man's own inward attitude towards the Word of God. Only those who prepare their hearts to receive it will be real members of the kingdom. Cp. St. Luke xvii. 21 and St. John iii. 3-5. (2) No surprise need be felt if the preaching of the kingdom seems largely to be a failure : only one kind of ground out of four is fruitful. (3) There are certain obstacles, rooted in human nature itself as we know it, which stand in the way of hearing the word ; i.e. (a) insensibility to religious truth, of which Satan takes advantage (=the hardened ground of the wayside) ; (b) shallowness, impulsiveness, sentimentalism (=the stony ground) ; (c) the encroachments of the world, the desire of riches and pleasures (=the weeds and thorns). The parable makes no attempt to explain these problems of human nature, but simply states the indisputable facts, which all experience verifies. Nor does it suggest means of improving the different sorts of ground, though this might be considered by the thoughtful student of the parable, e.g. ploughing up the hard ground, removing stones, clearing out the weeds before they grow too much.

- riches and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to perfection.
- 15 And that in the good ground, these are such as in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, hold it fast, and bring forth fruit with patience.
- 16 And no man, when he hath lighted a lamp, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed ; but putteth it on a stand, that
- 17 they which enter in may see the light. For nothing is hid, that shall not be made manifest ; nor *anything* secret, that shall not
- 18 be known and come to light. Take heed therefore how ye hear : for whosoever hath, to him shall be given ; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away <sup>1 Or, seemeth to have.</sup> even that which he <sup>1</sup>thinketh he hath.

15 **that in the good ground.** The "honest and good heart" provides the contrast with the hardened and unreceptive character of the first soil ; "holding it fast," with the quick and fruitless growth in the shallow soil in which the seed takes no real root ; "with patience" is the opposite of the soil which is allowed to become encumbered with weeds.

16 **And no man, when he hath lighted a lamp.** This similitude occurs in quite a different connection in the Sermon on the Mount (St. Matt. v. 16 ; also again in St. Luke xi. 33). Here perhaps the idea of a fruitful hearing of the word suggests the importance of using this hearing not merely for oneself, but to influence as wide a circle as possible. The imagery is drawn from the simple furniture of a working-class home ; which consisted merely of a few stools and rugs, a hand-mill, an oil-lamp, a bushel-measure for holding the corn, and sometimes a table and a couch. The lamp, our Lord says, with quiet humour, is not concealed under the measure, or the couch : it is put on the lamp-stand, a slab or bracket fastened in the wall.

17 **For nothing is hid, etc.** This saying again occurs in a different context in St. Matthew x. 26 : but with apparently much the same meaning. Truth, though hidden in parables, or breathed secretly into the ear of the receptive disciple, must inevitably come to light, and spread its influence abroad.

18 **Take heed therefore how ye hear.** Thus is summed up the general importance of the parable. The "seed" is the same in all cases : but its effect is conditioned by the attitude of the hearer. "Whosoever hath," i.e. the right preliminary disposition—of "an honest and good heart," will improve what he receives. But when this is lacking, however suitable the hearer may seem to be, either in general repute, or in

*Christ's Mother and Brethren* (viii. 19-21)

And there came to him his mother and brethren, and they 19 could not come at him for the crowd. And it was told him, Thy 20 mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee. But 21 he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

*The Stilling of the Storm* (viii. 22-25)

Now it came to pass on one of those days, that he entered into <sup>22</sup> a boat, himself and his disciples ; and he said unto them, Let us

his own estimation (like the Pharisees), so far from bearing any fruit, he will only become more worthless.

**19 brethren.** The names of these are given by St. Matthew and St. Mark ; James, Joses (or Joseph), Simon and Judas. The ancient and universal tradition of the Christian Church, which has a claim to be heard even as a matter of historical evidence—asserts that these were *not* the children of St. Mary, who remained ever-Virgin and had no other children but her "first-born" Jesus. Two other explanations of the relationship have been current in the Church (see Lightfoot, *Galatians—Dissertation*, ii.)

(1) They were our Lord's cousins (often called "brothers" in ancient usage), being the children of Alphæus and a sister of St. Mary. This is St. Jerome's theory, and was generally followed in the Western Church after his time.

(2) They were our Lord's step-brothers, being the sons of St. Joseph by a former wife. This is the earlier theory and the more probable.

At this time our Lord's brethren, whatever their relationship, did not believe in Him (St. John vii. 5) ; though afterwards one at least of them, James, was a witness of the Resurrection and became prominent in the Church as the head of the Church of Jerusalem. This visit may have been for the purpose of hindering our Lord's ministry. (See St. Mark iii. 21.) Such, however, could not have been His mother's intention. Perhaps in her sympathy she wished to save Him from the obviously growing hostility of the Pharisees.

**21 My mother and my brethren.** Earthly relationships must not stand in the way of Christ's work. Besides, He is inaugurating a new brotherhood which will transcend all natural ties ; it is founded upon a right attitude to God and His revelation, hearing His word and doing it.

23 go over the other side of the lake : and they launched forth. But as they sailed he fell asleep : and there came down a storm of wind on the lake ; and they were filling *with water*, and were in jeopardy,  
24 And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. And he awoke, and rebuked the wind and the raging  
25 of the water : and they ceased, and there was a calm. And he said unto them, Where is your faith ? And being afraid they marvelled, saying one to another, Why then is this, that he commandeth even the winds and the water, and they obey him ?

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**23 a storm of wind.** The Sea of Galilee, like other large lakes surrounded by mountains, is very liable to sudden storms, that sweep down through the valleys and stir the water into violent turmoil. The word for " storm " is a strong one = hurricane. St. Matthew describes it as a *seismos*, literally " earthquake."

**24 rebuked the wind,** etc. This is one of our Lord's most remarkable miracles, shewing His power over what we commonly call " the forces of Nature." Some have found special difficulties in such a miracle, as if it were easier to conceive one worked upon a human personality, where there is a response of faith and will, than one that controls inanimate things like the wind and the water. But the narrative leaves no room for supposing that this stilling of the storm was merely a coincidence. Our Lord is represented as deliberately exercising His power, as the lord of nature. To those who believe that nature is not ruled merely by blind forces, but by the personal will of the Creator, who is beyond and above all laws, the story will present no real difficulty. If Jesus is Divine, it must be as easy (or indeed easier) for Him to work a " nature-miracle " as to cure miraculously a human body or soul. In the latter cases indeed, human unbelief seemed to present an obstacle, and some of our Lord's miracles of healing were evidently performed with some difficulty. But in this case He stills the commotion of nature with a quiet and dignified word.

**25 Where is your faith ?** This gentle reproof seems to imply that it was not necessary for the disciples to have awakened Him. He was indeed ready to work a miracle in answer to their cries of peril. But it would have been more in accordance with His mind if they had shewn enough faith and courage to bear the danger by themselves, believing that they were safe so long as He was with them, even though asleep.

*The Gerasene Demoniac* (viii. 26-39)

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *Gergesenes*; others, *Gadarenes*: and so in ver. 37.  
<sup>2</sup> Gr. *demons*.

And they arrived at the country of the <sup>1</sup>Gerasenes, 26 which is over against Galilee. And when he was 27 come forth upon the land, there met him a certain man out of the city, who had <sup>2</sup>devils; and for a long time he had worn no clothes, and abode not in *any* house, but in the tombs. And when he saw Jesus, he <sup>28</sup> cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God? I beseech thee, torment me not. For he com- <sup>29</sup> manded the unclean spirit to come out from the man. For <sup>30</sup>oftentimes it had seized him: and he was kept under guard, and bound with chains and fetters; and breaking the bands asunder, he was driven of <sup>30</sup> the <sup>4</sup>devil into the deserts. And Jesus asked him, <sup>30</sup> What is thy name? And he said, Legion; for many <sup>31</sup> devils were entered into him. And they intreated him that 31

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**26 Gerasenes**—inhabitants of Gerasa; evidently a place on the eastern side of the lake. The exact locality is uncertain, and all the three Gospels give a different form of the name. Colonel Conder (*Murray's Bible Dictionary*) considers that it is to be identified with Qersa (pronounced by the Arabs "Gersa"), a ruin on the shore of the lake opposite to Tiberias.

**27 A certain man . . . who had devils.** St. Matthew speaks of two demoniacs, but all the narratives concentrate the attention upon one only. For demoniac "possession" see notes on iv. 33-36. This was an exceptionally violent case of such possession. The phenomenon of a "double personality" is clearly to be noticed. The sufferer speaks now in his own person, and now in that of the demon; and even in v. 30 in the plural, as being the prey of many malefic intruders into the house of life.

**30 And he said, Legion.** A Latin word, the name of a division of the Roman army, consisting of five or six thousand infantry of the line. The sufferer must have been familiar with the armies of Rome; and in his frenzied imagination, the hosts of evil beings that had seized upon him seemed to resemble them. It was like a madman to call himself by such a name, and is one of the points of the narrative which seem peculiarly authentic.

32 he would not command them to depart into the abyss. Now there was there a herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they intreated him that he would give them leave  
 33 to enter into them. And he gave them leave. And <sup>1</sup> Gr. *demons*. the <sup>1</sup>devils came out from the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd rushed down the steep into the lake, and  
 34 were choked. And when they that fed them saw what had come  
 35 to pass, they fled, and told it in the city and in the country. And they went out to see what had come to pass; and they came to Jesus, and found the man, from whom the <sup>1</sup>devils were gone out, sitting, clothed and in his right mind, at the feet of Jesus: and  
 36 they were afraid. And they that saw it told them how he that  
 37 was possessed with <sup>1</sup>devils was <sup>2</sup>made whole. And <sup>2</sup> Or, *saved*. all the people of the country of the Gerasenes round about asked him to depart from them; for they were holden with

31 **the abyss**, a bottomless, formless gulf—a weird and awful conception, like that of chaos itself, the natural abode of the spirits in rebellion against God and the moral order of creation.

33 **entered into the swine**. These swine were probably kept by some contractor for provisions for the Roman army, which was largely fed on pork. If the owners were Jews, they were, indirectly, at least sinning against the Law of Moses, in keeping "unclean" animals; but more probably they were heathen, as were most of the inhabitants of this district of Decapolis. It is not well to assume, as has often been done, that our Lord was punishing the swine-keepers by allowing the demons to destroy their property. The whole narrative presents great difficulties. Animals indeed are sometimes more susceptible than human beings to the approach of unseen spiritual powers, whether good or evil. (Cp. Num. xxii. 23.) Assuming the reality of the demons, it is easy to understand the panic that seized the herd. Our Lord may have permitted their destruction either to shew how terrible are the powers of evil that hate God and His creation, or to emphasise the value of a human soul. Better that many swine should perish, if only a soul could be delivered from the tyranny of the devil!

37 **asked him to depart from them**. This suggests that the people were not Jews but heathen. It was the natural attitude of a heathen mind to look upon what had happened as the work of some great wizard, whose supernatural powers might be used to do harm. They were terrified, and anxious both to propitiate and get rid of such a visitor. The characteristic heathen idea of Divine power is of that which is

great fear : and he entered into a boat, and returned. But the  
 1 Gr. *demons.* man from whom the <sup>1</sup>devils were gone out prayed  
 him that he might be with him : but he sent him  
 away, saying, Return to thy house, and declare how great things  
 God hath done for thee. And he went his way, publishing  
 throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done  
 for him.

*Raising the Dead and Curing the Incurable (viii. 40-56)*

And as Jesus returned, the multitude welcomed him ; for they 40  
 were all waiting for him. And behold, there came a man named 41  
 Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue : and he fell down at  
 Jesus' feet, and besought him to come into his house ; for he had 42  
 an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying.  
 But as he went the multitudes thronged him.

<sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *had spent all her living upon physicians, and.*  
 And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, 43  
 which <sup>2</sup>had spent all her living upon physicians, and 44  
 could not be healed of any, came behind him, and  
 touched the border of his garment : and immediately  
 the issue of her blood stanch'd. And Jesus said, Who 45  
 is it that touched me ? And when all denied, Peter

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dangerous or malignant, and must be averted by prayer or sacrifice or incantation.

39 **declare how great things God hath done for thee.** This command is in contrast with our Lord's usual instructions to those whom He healed. But He "knew all men" and adapted His commands to the needs and character of the individual. And in this case a heathen population needed instruction, which might be better given by the man himself who had been cured, than by anyone else. The incident is significant both of the wisdom and the mercy of our Lord.

41 **a ruler of the synagogue.** One of the body of elders who were in charge of the Synagogue and arranged the conduct of its services. See note on iv. 15.

42 **the border of his garment.** This was the fringe or tassel, interwoven with blue, which was worn as a sacred emblem, in accordance with Numbers xv. 38 and Deuteronomy xxii. 12. The woman tried to touch this secretly, because her disease rendered her ceremonially

said, <sup>1</sup>and they that were with him, Master, the <sup>1</sup>Some  
 46 multitudes press thee and crush thee. But Jesus <sup>ancient</sup>  
 said, Some one did touch me : for I perceived that <sup>authorities</sup>  
 47 power had gone forth from me. And when the woman <sup>omit and</sup>  
 saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and <sup>they that were</sup>  
 falling down before him declared in the presence of all the <sup>with him.</sup>  
 people for what cause she touched him, and how she was healed  
 48 immediately. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy  
 faith hath <sup>2</sup>made thee whole ; go in peace. <sup>2</sup> Or, *saved*  
 49 While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler <sup>thee.</sup>  
 of the synagogue's *house*, saying, Thy daughter is  
 50 dead ; trouble not the <sup>3</sup>Master. But Jesus hearing it, <sup>3</sup> Or, *Teacher.*  
 answered him, Fear not : only believe, and she shall  
 51 be <sup>4</sup>made whole. And when he came to the house, he <sup>4</sup> Or, *saved.*  
 suffered not any man to enter in with him, save Peter,  
 and John, and James, and the father of the maiden and her  
 52 mother. And all were weeping, and bewailing her : but he said,  
 53 Weep not ; for she is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed

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“ unclean,” and everything she touched unclean also. This no doubt also accounts for the fear she displayed on discovery (*v.* 47).

46 **I perceived**, etc. There was a vast difference, which Peter and the others did not grasp, between the mere physical pressure of the crowd, and the touch of faith. Our Lord's Body was the Sacrament of His Divinity ; the Divine power flowed from it, not mechanically, but in answer to faith, and He Himself was aware of the appeal which had thus silently been made to Him.

51 **Peter, and John, and James** : as at the Transfiguration, and in Gethsemane.

52 **all were weeping and bewailing her**, not merely her relatives, but the hired mourners and flute-players, whose presence was considered an indispensable tribute to the dead. Funeral customs differ widely in different ages and countries. Quietness and hushed voices seem to us to be fitting to the house of mourning ; but in the East it is considered only decent that crowds should assemble, that shrieks **and** howlings should be raised, and **mournful** music played.

**not dead, but sleepeth.** The maiden was really dead (*v.* 55). Cp. St. John xi. 11-13. Sleep became with Christians the usual way of speaking of death : it suggested hope, not the eternal farewells of the heathen. Cp. Acts vii. 60.

him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. But he, taking her by <sup>54</sup> the hand, called, saying, Maiden, arise. And her spirit returned, <sup>55</sup> and she rose up immediately : and he commanded that *something* be given her to eat. And her parents were amazed : but he <sup>56</sup> charged them to tell no man what had been done

## CHAPTER VIII

### *Questions*

1. Why did our Lord begin to teach in parables ?
2. What are the hindrances our Lord speaks of in hearing the word ?
3. Who were our Lord's brethren ?
4. Describe the stilling of the storm. How does it differ from the previous miracles ?
5. Why did the Gergasenes desire our Lord to go away ?
6. Contrast His words to the man He had healed at Gergesa, with those to others whom He cured.
7. Describe the scene in the house of Jairus.

### *Subjects for Study*

1. The teaching by Parables.  
Trench, *Notes on the Parables*.  
Lang, *The Parables of Jesus*.
2. Our Lord's Brethren.  
See authorities on Virgin-birth, c. I.  
Lightfoot, *Galatians*, Dissertation ii.  
Mayor, *Epistle of St. James*.

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<sup>54</sup> Maiden, arise. St. Mark has preserved the exact Aramaic phrase our Lord used : Talitha cumi.

*The Mission of the Twelve* (ix. 1-6)

ix. 1 And he called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all <sup>1</sup>devils, and to cure <sup>2</sup>Gr. *demons*.  
 2 diseases. And he sent them forth to preach the king-  
 3 dom of God, and to heal <sup>2</sup>the sick. And he said unto <sup>2</sup>Some  
 them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staff, <sup>ancient</sup>  
 nor wallet, nor bread, nor money; neither have two <sup>authorities</sup>  
 4 coats. And into whatsoever house ye enter, there <sup>omit the sick</sup>.  
 5 abide, and thence depart. And as many as receive you not, when  
 ye depart from that city, shake off the dust from your feet for a  
 6 testimony against them. And they departed, and went through-  
 out the villages, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere.

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ix. 2 **And he sent them forth.** With this account should be compared the parallels in St. Matthew x. 5-15 and St. Mark vi. 7-13. This mission of the Twelve was preparatory and temporary only. It was directed not to Samaritans and Gentiles, but Israelites alone, who had the privilege of first hearing the Gospel, for which their Divine call and education ought to have prepared them. St. Luke, however, with his mind full of those larger aims which belonged to the time after our Lord's Ascension, makes no mention of these limitations.

**the kingdom of God.** See notes, p. 169. and Introduction, p. xxi.

3 **Take nothing for your journey.** Cp. xxii. 35-36. Simplicity, poverty and detachment are the marks of this mission. The Twelve are not to take with them even the usual simple preparations of a traveller. The mission is sacred and unworldly, and they must trust to hospitality for their needs.

4 **And into whatsoever house ye enter.** They are to avoid the excitement and unrest of wandering about from one house to another. Whatever house they are first received in, is to be the centre of their quiet teaching and healing.

5 **shake off the dust.** This was a well-known piece of symbolism. By it the faithful Jew was accustomed to shew that he separated himself from the dwellings of the heathen and the wicked. But here the reason was a higher one. Unbelief, refusal to listen to a Divine message, rather than questions of race and reputation, were to be the standards of rejection. (Cp. Acts xiii. 51.)

**for a testimony against them,** i.e. as a solemn act of witness, to shew that those who were so treated, had had this great opportunity and refused it.

*Herod's Perplexity (ix. 7-9)*

Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done : and he <sup>7</sup>  
 was much perplexed, because that it was said by some, that John  
 was risen from the dead ; and by some, that Elijah had appeared ; <sup>8</sup>  
 and by others, that one of the old prophets was risen again. And <sup>9</sup>  
 Herod said, John I beheaded : but who is this, about whom I  
 hear such things ? And he sought to see him.

*The Feeding of the Multitudes (ix. 10-17)*

And the apostles, when they were returned, declared unto him <sup>10</sup>  
 what things they had done. And he took them, and withdrew  
 apart to a city called Bethsaida. But the multitudes perceiving <sup>11</sup>  
 it followed him : and he welcomed them, and spake to them of  
 the kingdom of God, and them that had need of healing he healed.

**7 Herod the tetrarch**, i.e. Herod Antipas. See p. 27.

**it was said by some.** It is evident that the idea of the great ones of the past returning from the dead was familiar to the Jews. Elijah especially was expected to return, in order to anoint the Messiah. (See Mal. iv. 5.)

**9 John I beheaded.** St. Luke does not narrate the martyrdom of the Baptist (St. Matt. xiv., St. Mark vi.), which was already well known to his readers. The other two Synoptists describe Herod as being himself of opinion that Jesus was the Baptist risen from the dead. The tetrarch was probably a Sadducee, but his guilty conscience was too much for his scepticism as to the possibility of a resurrection.

**And he sought to see him.** Cp. xxiii. 8-11.

**10 And he took them.** He desired retirement and rest for them after their strenuous and exciting labours in their mission. See St. Mark vi. 31.

**Bethsaida.** This is usually supposed to be Bethsaida Julias on the north of the Sea of Galilee, and a different place from the Bethsaida near Capernaum. But it is a very vexed question as to whether there were two places of that name or only one.

**11 the multitudes.** St. John vi. states that the time was near the Passover, and this would account for unusual numbers of people being on pilgrimage. Those from the north usually travelled east of Jordan to Jerusalem, to avoid Samaria.

12 And the day began to wear away ; and the twelve came, and said  
unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the  
villages and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals :  
13 for we are here in a desert place. But he said unto them, Give ye  
them to eat. And they said, We have no more than five loaves  
and two fishes ; except we should go and buy food for all this  
14 people. For they were about five thousand men. And he said  
unto his disciples, Make them <sup>1</sup>sit down in companies, <sup>1</sup> Gr. *recline*.  
15 about fifty each. And they did so, and made them all  
16 <sup>1</sup>sit down. And he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and  
looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake ; and gave to  
17 the disciples to set before the multitude. And they did eat, and  
were all filled : and there was taken up that which remained over  
to them of broken pieces, twelve baskets.

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**13 five loaves and two fishes.** The common food of the working-classes. The loaves would be flat crisp cakes of barley-bread : the fishes either the product of the lake, or the dried and salted fish from the coast of Tyre which was carried inland by hawkers (Neh. xiii. 16), and largely eaten by the poor.

**14 about five thousand men.** Other accounts shew that there were women and children also, in addition to these "men": so the course must have been exceedingly large.

**17 And they did eat, and were filled.** This is the only miracle recorded by all the four Evangelists (St. Matt. xiv., St. Mark vi., St. John vi.), and it is interesting to compare the details given by each. There is no attempt to explain *how* the miracle was performed. The whole narrative is marked by simplicity and reserve. But there was clearly a real physical increase of the amount of food, as the fragments left were evidently more than the original quantity. The explanation that the miracle was due to "suggestion," each person being satisfied with a tiny fragment of food, is quite inadequate ; but whether the multiplication of food took place in the hands of the Saviour or of those of His disciples cannot be decided.

There is nothing unworthy of our Lord in such a miracle. He always shewed a peculiar sympathy with the natural needs of men, and especially with hunger. He would not use His power to satisfy Himself by turning stones into bread, but He pitied the starving multitude and fed them. Nor is the miracle out of harmony with the works of God. It is His power which makes the corn grow and multiply, and enables man to use his skill to turn the corn into bread. God may surely multiply.

*St. Peter's Confession : The Passion Foretold (ix. 18-27)*

And it came to pass, as he was praying alone, the disciples 18 were with him : and he asked them, saying, Who do the multitudes say that I am ? And they answering said, John the Baptist ; 19 but others say, Elijah ; and others, that one of the old prophets is risen again. And he said unto them, But who say ye that I am ? 20 And Peter answering said, The Christ of God. But he charged 21 them, and commanded *them* to tell this to no man ; saying, The 22

if He wills, the finished product of human labour, just as well as the natural fruits of the earth.

**18 And it came to pass.** St. Luke gives no note of time or place for this most important event, but we learn from the other two Synoptists that it occurred in the vicinity of Cæsarea Philippi, a town under Mount Hermon, anciently called Paneas, but rebuilt by Herod Philip and renamed in honour of the Emperor and of himself. The great ministry of our Lord round the Sea of Galilee was followed by a journey to the north, in which he reached the district of Tyre and Sidon, and afterwards turned eastward. Cæsarea Philippi lay on the very frontier of Palestine between Jewish and heathen territory. This journey to the north was marked by few events, and was apparently undertaken by our Lord for the sake of privacy, and for the instruction and training of the Twelve. It was apparently to test their progress in a right understanding of Himself that He now propounded this momentous question.

**20 But who say ye that I am?** This question marks the most significant feature in our Lord's teaching. That teaching led up to and centred in Himself. A merely human prophet or teacher, however great, would, in proportion to his sincerity, try to sink himself in his message. In the case of our Lord the message was Himself, the Divine Saviour.

**The Christ of God.** See note on ii. 11. St. Peter confesses Jesus to be the one whom all the history of Israel and the O.T. revelation had prepared for and pointed to, the anointed King, Priest and Prophet who would be the great Deliverer of mankind. St. Matthew's account (xvi.) is much fuller and points to some independent source of information. It adds a personal blessing and promise given to St. Peter himself, and the first mention of "the Church."

**21 tell this to no man.** The time had not yet come for the public proclamation of the Messiahship. He Himself would do so by the symbolic action of riding into Jerusalem ; but it was not till after His Ascension that the apostles were to declare it to the world.

Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up. And he said unto all, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever would save his <sup>1</sup>life shall lose it ; <sup>1</sup> Or, *soul*. but whosoever shall lose his <sup>1</sup>life for my sake, the same

**22 The Son of man must suffer many things.** That this confession of St. Peter marked a great climax in the teaching of our Lord is shewn by the fact that now for the first time He spoke to the disciples of His coming Passion. This would be the greatest trial of their faith, and He refrained from speaking of it, until they had learned definitely to recognise Him as the Messiah and the Son of God (see St. Matthew xvi. 16). But from this time onwards He speaks with increasing clearness of His sufferings and death, though the words fell upon unwilling ears.

**23 And he said unto all.** Apparently others were present besides the Twelve. Although He does not speak to them with the same definiteness of His own coming death, He yet prepares their minds for something very different from the current ideas of the glory of the Messianic kingdom, and the rewards of its members.

**let him deny himself.** The words imply far more than what is ordinarily meant by "self-denial": it is a complete renunciation of self, of one's own will, and the ordinary human aims and ambitions, that is required from Christ's followers.

**take up his cross daily.** A plain allusion to the punishment of Crucifixion—a Roman, not a Jewish mode of execution. It was regarded by the Jews as the bitterest and most humiliating form of death. To take up the cross was a reference to the fact that the condemned criminal had to carry his own cross to the place of execution. So the follower of Christ must be prepared to "die daily"—to accept voluntarily for Christ's sake the worst that can happen to him in this world.

**24 For whosoever would save his life.** One of the deepest sayings of our Lord. To "save one's life" evidently means to put one's own worldly interests in the first place, to endeavour to do the best for oneself as the leading motive of life. Our Lord requires the reversal of such an attitude. His disciples must put Him first and be ready to sacrifice life for Him. The saying has a wide application. Even in matters of this world, the man whose ideal is to "save his life" is commonly a failure. Those who have achieved most, won the highest glory, and conferred the most lasting benefits on mankind have been those who sacrificed themselves for a cause or a principle.

shall save it. For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole 25 world, and lose or forfeit his own self? For whosoever shall be 26 ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in his own glory, and *the glory* of the Father, and of the holy angels. But I tell you of a truth, There be 27 some of them that stand here, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.

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**25 For what is a man profited.** Again, a profound and memorable saying. No amount of wealth or glory can be put in comparison with one's own self. And this implies that there is a life to come, in which the all-important matter will be whether our human personality (what elsewhere is called a man's "soul") will be saved or lost.

**lose or forfeit.** These words might of course be understood to mean that the result of a life lived for self will be complete annihilation hereafter—the complete destruction or taking away by God of a man's personality, his "self." On the other hand, it has been commonly believed by the Christian Church that the soul is immortal and will never be wholly destroyed. In any case the penalty of a selfish life will be the complete loss of all that makes the individual life worth having.

**26 For whosoever shall be ashamed of me.** This is incidentally a claim on the part of our Lord to Divinity. Not only does He speak of His "own glory" (cp. St. John xvii. 5), but He presents Himself as the one object of human allegiance, and the final Judge.

**27 But I tell you of a truth.** A difficult saying. It might be thought from the preceding words that our Lord meant that some of His hearers would survive till the Second Advent. But this cannot have been His meaning, not only because history shows otherwise, but because He elsewhere speaks of the impossibility of knowing that day and hour. The early Christians misunderstood our Lord in their current belief that the Second Advent was near. (For His teaching on this subject see notes on c. xxi.)

Other interpretations are (1) that He is referring to the Transfiguration now close at hand. But this is obviously inadequate. His words imply some lapse of time, and the death of some of His hearers; (2) that He is thinking of the Fall of Jerusalem, A.D. 70. This is the best explanation. That great event was in a sense a coming of God's kingdom, for the old dispensation was judged and passed away, and the Church was clearly established.

**28 about eight days.** St. Matthew and St. Mark say six days, but probably St. Luke is reckoning *inclusively* in the Roman manner.

*The Transfiguration* (ix. 28-36)

28 And it came to pass about eight days after these sayings, he  
took with him Peter and John and James, and went up into the  
29 mountain to pray. And as he was praying, the fashion of his  
countenance was altered, and his raiment *became white and*  
30 *dazzling*. And behold, there talked with him two men, which  
31 were Moses and Elijah; who appeared in glory, and spake of

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**the mountain.** Tradition says this was Mount Tabor; but it is hardly probable, for at that time there was a fortress on the summit. More likely the scene took place further north, on one of the secluded heights of Mount Hermon.

**29 the fashion of his countenance was altered.** The alteration was that of added brightness and beauty. St. Matthew says "his face did shine as the sun." Probably the Transfiguration took place at night (cp. v. 32). No explanation of its meaning is given, but it seems closely connected with St. Peter's confession, and with our Lord's prediction of His Passion. The Transfiguration was the visible manifestation of His Divinity, shining through and glorifying His humanity. And this would be an assurance and encouragement to the disciples in the great trial to faith which was approaching, the Lord's suffering and death.

**his raiment became white and dazzling.** All the accounts lay stress on this. Not only His human body, but the clothing that covered it, was illuminated with His glory. The Incarnation touches all created things, including those works of man's skill and wisdom which he has learned under God's guidance. Thus we may believe that in "the new heavens and the new earth," not only will man be made perfect but all human achievements will share in that perfection—art as well as nature will be perfected.

**30 Moses and Elijah.** The two great representatives of the earlier revelation. Moses was the lawgiver and the founder of the national life; Elijah the typical prophet. Their appearance was a witness to the Messiahship of Jesus. They bore witness to Him whom they had foretold and prepared for.

We cannot suppose that these figures were mere phantoms. They were the actual souls of the two great Israelites who were permitted for a moment to return from Paradise. It will be remembered also that there was something unusual about the deaths of both of them, as if in preparation for this remarkable event. Moses had died alone on the

<sup>1</sup> Or, *departure*. his <sup>1</sup>decease which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and they that were with him <sup>32</sup> were heavy with sleep : but <sup>2</sup>when they were fully awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. And it came to pass, as they were parting <sup>33</sup> from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here : and let us make three <sup>3</sup>tabernacles ; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah ; not knowing what he said. And while he said <sup>34</sup> these things, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them :

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mountain and been buried in some unknown spot by the hand of God. Elijah had been carried away into heaven by a whirlwind. The Transfiguration incidentally throws light on the continued existence and consciousness of the dead, the possibility of their knowing what is happening on earth, and of their being recognised by others. None of the disciples had seen Moses or Elijah in the flesh ; but they knew them intuitively.

**31 in glory.** They too appeared to be clad in supernatural brightness, whether reflected from the Person of Christ, or brought with them from their heavenly dwelling-place.

**spake of his decease.** This remarkable fact is recorded only by St. Luke. The word literally means "exodus," His going forth from this world. Our Lord's previous words about His coming Passion were thus confirmed in the ears of the three disciples. They were being reminded of what the Jews of their day ignored, that prophecy had foretold a *suffering* Messiah.

**33 three tabernacles,** i.e. little huts or booths such as the Jews made for the Feast of Tabernacles, which was probably near at hand. St. Peter, with his usual eagerness, desires to retain this vision of glory, and fix it, as it were, in some earthly dwelling-place.

**not knowing what he said.** He was only just awake, and was bewildered and dazzled with the extraordinary vision. His words are like those of a child, or a dreamer.

**34 a cloud.** St. Matthew says "a bright cloud"—like that visible manifestation of God's presence and glory which appeared in the O.T., in the pillar of cloud and fire at the Exodus, and the smoke which filled Solomon's Temple at the Dedication. This brightness was believed by the Jews to reside permanently within the Holy of holies, and was spoken of as the *Shekinah*.

- 35 and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And <sup>1</sup>Many  
 a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is <sup>1</sup>my <sup>ancient</sup>  
 36 Son, my chosen : hear ye him. And when the voice <sup>authorities</sup>  
<sup>2</sup>came, Jesus was found alone. And they held their <sup>read my</sup>  
 peace, and told no man in those days any of the <sup>beloved Son.</sup>  
 things which they had seen. <sup>See Matt.</sup>  
<sup>xvii. 5 ;</sup>  
<sup>Mark ix. 7.</sup>  
<sup>2 Or, was past.</sup>

*The Healing of a Demoniac Child (ix. 37-45)*

- 37 And it came to pass, on the next day, when they were come  
 38 down from the mountain, a great multitude met him. And behold,  
 a man from the multitude cried, saying, <sup>3</sup>Master, I <sup>3 Or, Teacher.</sup>  
 beseech thee to look upon my son ; for he is mine <sup>4 Or, con-</sup>  
 39 only child : and behold, a spirit taketh him, and he <sup>vulseth.</sup>  
 suddenly cried out ; and it <sup>4</sup>teareth him that he  
 foameth, and it hardly departeth from him, bruising him sorely.

35 **my Son, my chosen.** The Father's voice bears witness to His only-begotten Son, and in words familiar to those who heard them, from the prophecies of the Messiah, such as Psalms ii. 7 and Isaiah xlii. 1.

36 **Jesus was found alone.** St. Peter had seemed to wish to put the three on an equality, with his "three tabernacles." But Moses and Elijah disappeared ; like the stars fading at the rising of the sun. Their work and witness were only a human preparation for something greater and Divine. Henceforth Jesus was all-sufficient.

**they held their peace.** St. Matthew and St. Mark state that this silence was expressly commanded by our Lord, until after His Resurrection. What they had seen was for the present for their own private encouragement and strengthening in faith.

39 **and behold, a spirit taketh him.** This was an unusually dreadful case of "possession," with symptoms like those of epilepsy ; falling down in convulsions and foaming at the mouth. Raphael's masterpiece, "The Transfiguration" (in the Vatican galleries), vividly portrays the scene at the base of the picture, in wonderful contrast with the supernatural light and beauty in which the three figures of our Lord, Moses and Elijah, are floating. The artist himself designed the whole ; but the scene with the demoniac was painted by his pupils after the master's death.

**hardly**, i.e. with difficulty—only after a struggle.

And I besought thy disciples to cast it out ; and they could not. <sup>40</sup>  
 And Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, <sup>41</sup>  
 how long shall I be with you, and bear with you ? bring hither

thy son. And as he was yet a coming, the <sup>1</sup>devil <sup>42</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Or, *rent him.* <sup>2</sup>dashed him down, and <sup>3</sup>tare *him* grievously. But

<sup>3</sup> Or, *convulsed.* Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the boy,  
 and gave him back to his father. And they were all <sup>43</sup>

astonished at the majesty of God.

But while all were marvelling at all the things which he did, he  
 said unto his disciples, Let these words sink into your ears : for <sup>44</sup>  
 the Son of man shall be delivered up into the hands of men. But <sup>45</sup>  
 they understood not this saying, and it was concealed from them,  
 that they should not perceive it : and they were afraid to ask him  
 about this saying.

**40 And I besought thy disciples.** The nine disciples had been left behind at the base of the mountain, and we gather from St. Mark's account, which is the most circumstantial, that the Scribes had seized the opportunity of trying to discredit them with the multitudes.

**41 how long shall I be with you?** These remarkable and unusual words were addressed not to the disciples, but to the unbelieving multitudes, who were looking upon the expected miracle as a sort of show. Our Lord's words are not mere human impatience, but one of the rare revelations of His inner suffering, when in contact with unbelief and ignorance, and His longing to return to the Father.

**43 the majesty of God,** displayed as much in this triumph over the power of evil as in the glories of the Transfiguration.

**44 Let these words sink into your ears.** Our Lord's own thoughts turn more and more towards His Passion, and He is anxious in every way to prepare His disciples for that supreme trial of faith. So He exhorts them to lay deeply to heart all the evidence which comes before them of His Divine powers, in order that they may still believe in Him, even when He is betrayed and crucified.

**45 that they should not perceive it**—the words seem to imply that there was something intentional in this. God's mercy did not allow them to take in fully the dreadful prospect, lest they should not be able to bear it.

*Rebukes to Ambition and Party-spirit (ix. 46-50)*

- 46 And there arose a reasoning among them, which of them  
 47 should be <sup>1</sup>greatest. But when Jesus saw the reason- <sup>1</sup> Gr. *greater*.  
 ing of their heart, he took a little child, and set him  
 48 by his side, and said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this  
 little child in my name receiveth me : and whosoever shall receive  
 me receiveth him that sent me : for he that is <sup>2</sup>least <sup>2</sup> Gr. *lessor*.  
 among you all, the same is great.
- 49 And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out  
<sup>3</sup>devils in thy name ; and we forbade him, because <sup>3</sup> Gr. *demons*.  
 50 he followeth not with us. But Jesus said unto  
 him, Forbid *him* not : for he that is not against you is for you.

46 **which of them should be greatest.** This sort of controversy occurred more than once among the Twelve, perhaps partly through the influence of Judas Iscariot. They were not able to rise beyond the current Messianic ideas of their time, and expected a visible kingdom, with themselves in the chief places of honour. Perhaps some jealousy had been excited by the choice of three of them to ascend the Mount of the Transfiguration.

47 **a little child.** Our Lord's love of children is noticeable. He saw in their innocence, reverence, and lack of self-seeking, the character which He desired in the members of the kingdom of God.

48 **Whosoever shall receive,** i.e. shall accept the child, and the child-like character, as the fitting representative of Christ Himself, and therefore to be imitated by His followers. The child is the revelation of Christ, as Christ is of the Father.

49 **And John answered.** This strong rebuke of the ambitious and self-seeking spirit seems to have touched the conscience of John. He remembered their conduct on another occasion, which at the time had seemed right, but now begins to appear in another light.

**we forbade him.** This forbidding seems to have arisen from jealousy and party-spirit, like the conduct of the Pharisees. For to cast out devils was a good work, and this was not an impudent imitation of Christ like that described in Acts xix. 13-16, but seems to have been successful and done by faith in Christ, even if with imperfect knowledge. It merited a different attitude from that which the disciples had shown.

50 **he that is not against you.** A man who had sufficient faith in Christ to do a good work in His name could not be counted as an enemy,

#### IV. The Way to the Passion

##### *The Rebuke of James and John* (ix. 51-56)

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *were being fulfilled.* And it came to pass, when the days <sup>1</sup>were well-nigh <sup>51</sup>come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set

but rather as one on the side of righteousness. Cp. the entirely different case in xi. 23, where the opposite conclusion is stated.

**51 when the days were well-nigh come.** This note of time constitutes one of the difficulties of St. Luke's narrative as compared with the two previous Gospels. St. Luke appears to begin our Lord's journey to Jerusalem some months before His Passion, whereas St. Matthew (xx. 17) and St. Mark (x. 32) only describe it as the journey from Peræa, through Jericho to Jerusalem, immediately before the Holy Week. St. Luke apparently regards it as in effect commencing after the return from the north of Galilee, where St. Peter's confession and the Transfiguration had taken place. As a matter of fact two visits to Jerusalem, to the Feast of Tabernacles and the Feast of the Dedication (St. John vii.-x.), intervened before the final going up to the Passion.

**that he should be received up,** literally "the days of His assumption." The meaning is probably our Lord's Ascension, the great climax to which all events were tending. St. Luke ends the Gospel with the Ascension, and begins the Acts by again describing it.

**52 a village of the Samaritans.** The Samaritans occupied the middle district between Galilee and Judæa. They were the descendants of the mixed races imported from Babylonia by the Assyrian conquerors to fill the place of the exiled ten tribes (2 Kings xvii.). At first they had worshipped their own various tribal gods, adding to them Jehovah as the local divinity of their new country. But at some time before the Return of the Jews from Babylon they seem to have abandoned idolatry and become the worshippers of Jehovah only. They wished to take part in the rebuilding of the Temple, but their request was refused (Ezra iv.). At a later date they erected a temple of their own on Mount Gerizim, and maintained a separate priesthood and worship. They venerated the five books of Moses, but recognised no other part of the O.T. A small remnant of these Samaritans still remain at Mount Gerizim, where they have their high-priest and celebrate their Passover. (See *Treasury*, vol. i., for article on "Samaritan Passover.") The Jews of our Lord's time regarded the Samaritans with aversion and contempt, which they in turn reciprocated. The Samaritans objected, as in the

- 52 his face to go to Jerusalem, and sent messengers<sup>1</sup> Many  
 before his face: and they went, and entered into <sup>ancient</sup>  
 a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. <sup>authorities</sup>  
 53 And they did not receive him, because his face <sup>add even as</sup> *Elijah did.*  
 54 was as though he were going to Jerusalem. And<sup>2</sup> Some  
 when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they <sup>ancient</sup>  
 said, Lord, wilt thou that we bid fire to come down <sup>authorities</sup>  
 55 from heaven, and consume them<sup>1</sup>? But he turned, <sup>add and said,</sup> *Ye know not*  
 56 and rebuked them<sup>2</sup>. And they went to another <sup>what manner</sup>  
 village. <sup>of spirit ye</sup>  
<sup>are of. Some,</sup>  
<sup>but fewer, add</sup>  
<sup>also For the</sup>  
<sup>Son of man</sup>  
<sup>came not to</sup>  
<sup>destroy men's</sup>  
<sup>lives, but to</sup>  
<sup>save them.</sup>

*Candidates for Discipleship (ix. 57-62)*

- 57 And as they went in the way, a certain man said <sup>destroy men's</sup>  
 unto him, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. <sup>lives, but to</sup>  
<sup>save them.</sup>

present instance, to pilgrims to Jerusalem passing through their country: and the usual route, in consequence, was on the east of Jordan. Our Lord, as is shewn in the Gospels of St. Luke and St. John, took an entirely different attitude towards the Samaritans. He held them up on two occasions as examples to the Jews (St. Luke x. 33, etc.; xvii. 16, etc.): and Himself stayed two days in the Samaritan country, and was hailed by them as the Messiah (St. John iv.).

**54 James and John.** The two brothers were of a zealous and impulsive nature, and our Lord had already bestowed on them the name of Boanerges, "sons of thunder." See the previous rebuke to St. John, *vv.* 49-50.

**Lord, wilt thou that we bid fire, etc.** They were evidently alluding to the act of Elijah, described in 2 Kings i. The words omitted (see margin) may very well have been inserted by a copyist as an explanatory gloss.

**55 rebuked them.** The words here omitted in R.V. (see margin) are interesting. The first sentence, "Ye know not, etc.," may certainly have been words of Christ, though perhaps spoken on some other occasion. The Divine severity, and temporal judgments on sin are prominent marks of the O.T. revelation. These still have their place in the teaching of Christ, but its leading feature (as brought out especially in St. Luke) is different. The tender call to repentance, the effort to bring out what is good in man, forbearance and pity, are more characteristic of the "spirit" of the Gospel, than such a vengeance as St. James and John desired. The second omission, "For the Son of

And Jesus said unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of 58  
 the heaven *have* <sup>1</sup> nests; but the Son of man hath  
<sup>1</sup> Gr. *lodging-* not where to lay his head. And he said unto 59  
*places.* another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me  
 first to go and bury my father. But he said unto him, Leave the 60  
 dead to bury their own dead; but go thou and publish abroad  
 the kingdom of God. And another also said, I will follow thee, 61  
 Lord; but first suffer me to bid farewell to them that are at my  
 house. But Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand 62  
 to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

man, etc.," has less MS. authority, but it also expresses well the attitude of our Lord towards sinful and erring men. It may be a genuine saying, or it may be an adaptation of some such words as those in St. John iii. 17, xii. 47. Cp. also the omitted verse, St. Matthew xviii. 11.

**57 a certain man.** St. Matthew (viii. 19) says he was a scribe. Our Lord never sought to attract large numbers of followers. He warned those who were ambitious of being disciples, of the difficulties in front of them. Not many or learned followers He desired, but those of depth and sincerity, who had counted the cost. So here, this aspirant is warned of poverty and the absence of earthly comforts. Whether he persevered or not, is unrecorded.

**58 nests.** See margin. Birds do not live in their nests, which are used only for breeding; but in any chance shelter of tree or rock or building. Even such a lodging as this is not assured for him who would follow Christ.

**59 Follow me.** Our Lord, with His supernatural insight into character and His attention to each individual, adopts a different attitude to this man. He sweeps away his excuse, and bids him follow: his vocation was clearer to the Master than to the man himself.

**bury my father**—probably a common expression for waiting till a father's death.

**60 Leave the dead, etc.** This again may have been a proverbial expression. Probably our Lord meant—"let those who are still spiritually dead, and have not obeyed the call to the kingdom of God, occupy themselves with such tasks: *thou* art called to a higher work."

**61 but first suffer me to bid farewell.** Cp. the call of Elisha (1 Kings xix.). In the prophet's case the request was granted, though the farewell was apparently brief and final. Here, the insistence of the kingdom of God brooks no turning away—even for an hour.

## CHAPTER IX

*Questions*

1. What directions were given to the Twelve for their mission ?
2. Describe the miracle of feeding the five thousand. Compare St. Luke's account with that of the other three.
3. What was St. Peter's confession, and what is its peculiar importance ?
4. What is meant by " taking up the cross " ?
5. Describe the Transfiguration. What truths are implied in the narrative ?
6. Why did our Lord so frequently speak of His coming sufferings ?
7. How did our Lord rebuke (1) ambition, (2) intolerance, (3) the desire for vengeance ?
8. Who were the Samaritans ?
9. How did our Lord treat the different aspirants after discipleship ?

*Subjects for Study*

1. The mission of the Twelve as described by the three Synoptists.

Edersheim, *Life and Times*, iii. 27.

Latham, *Pastor Pastorum*.

2. The Transfiguration.

*Transfiguration* in Murray's Dictionary.

Isaac William, *Devotional Commentary on the Gospel Narrative*.

**62 looking back.** The ploughman must keep his eyes straight in front of him, or his furrow will be crooked and faulty.

**fit for the kingdom of God.** A better rendering would be " fitted," or " suitable," i.e. for the task of preaching or furthering the kingdom of God.

## 3. The predictions of the Passion.

Dale, *The Atonement*.Liddon, *Passion-tide Sermons*.

## 4. The Lord's treatment of individuals.

Trench, *Studies in the Gospels*.*The Mission of the Seventy (x. 1-20)*

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities add *and two*; every city and place, whither he himself was about and so in verse 17.

Now after these things the Lord appointed seventy<sup>1</sup> x. 1  
others, and sent them two and two before his face into  
every city and place, whither he himself was about  
to come. And he said unto them, The harvest is 2  
plenteous, but the labourers are few : pray ye there-

x. 1 **the Lord appointed seventy others.** This incident is peculiar to St. Luke and presents some difficulties. Had St. Luke not recorded the mission of the Twelve, it might have been thought that this narrative is only another form of that event; especially as the instructions are very similar, and include some of those given by St. Matthew, in the case of the Twelve. But St. Luke records both missions and evidently regards them as quite distinct. It has been thought that the sending of the Seventy was intended by our Lord to be symbolical of the future preaching to the Gentiles, while that of the Twelve was confined to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Seventy, like twelve, was a number with sacred associations, being that of the elders appointed by Moses in the wilderness (Numbers xi.) and of the great Jewish Council, or Sanhedrin. It was also the traditional number of the Alexandrine translators of the O.T. into the Greek version, or Septuagint. The variant reading, seventy-two, was perhaps due to the apparent addition of two names, Eldad and Medad, in Numbers xi., to the seventy.

2 **The harvest is plenteous.** Cp. St. Matthew ix. 37, where the words precede the mission of the Twelve; and St. John iv. 35, where the spectacle of the Samaritans called forth similar words from the Lord as to the harvest of souls ready to be reaped.

**pray ye therefore,** etc. These words would impress on the hearers a larger outlook upon their work than they might otherwise have taken. It was no mere question of preaching to a few villages, nor of a work which they themselves might hope to accomplish. The whole world and all time to come were the field of the Gospel.

fore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth labourers into his  
 3 harvest. Go your ways : behold, I send you forth as lambs in the  
 4 midst of wolves. Carry no purse, no wallet, no shoes : and salute  
 5 no man on the way. And into whatsoever house ye shall  
 6 enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if a  
 son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon <sup>2</sup>him : <sup>1</sup> Or, enter  
 7 but if not, it shall turn to you again. And in that <sup>2</sup> Or, it.  
 same house remain, eating and drinking such things  
 as they give : for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not  
 8 from house to house. And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they  
 9 receive you, eat such things as are set before you : and heal the  
 sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is  
 10 come nigh unto you. But into whatsoever city ye shall enter, and  
 they receive you not, go out into the streets thereof and say,  
 11 Even the dust from your city, that cleaveth to our feet, we do  
 wipe off against you : howbeit know this, that the kingdom of  
 12 God is come nigh. I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable in  
 13 that day for Sodom, than for that city. Woe unto thee, Chorazin !

**4 and salute no man on the way.** Like messengers of a king, their business required speed and despatch. They must waste no time in conversations on the way.

**6 And if a son of peace be there.** This is a Hebraism, meaning a man worthy of peace, or disposed towards peace, i.e. peace with God : one who would welcome the messengers in a teachable spirit.

**it shall turn to you again.** The messengers will have performed their task, whether it be received or not. They will in any case win a blessing for themselves.

**7 the labourer is worthy of his hire.** No doubt a proverbial expression. St. Paul comments on it (1 Cor. ix.) as shewing that those who give their time and energy to the preaching of the Gospel have a right to receive maintenance, whether they claim it or not.

**11 Even the dust from your city.** See notes above (p. 89) on the mission of the Twelve.

**12 Sodom**—the typical example in the O.T. of wickedness, and of God's judgment (Genesis xix.). But in the day of final award, the people of Sodom will be more leniently treated than Israelites who obstinately refuse to hear the Gospel. Cp. the similar prediction of Ezekiel xvi. 46-57. It should be noted that our Lord's words imply

<sup>1</sup> *Gr. powers.* woe unto thee, Bethsaida ! for if the <sup>1</sup>mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which were done in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. Howbeit it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in 14 the judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, shalt thou 15 be exalted unto heaven ? thou shalt be brought down unto Hades. He that heareth you heareth me ; and he that rejecteth you 16 rejecteth me ; and he that rejecteth me rejecteth him that sent me.

the continued existence of the souls of the dead, and that their final judgment is not yet given, whatever temporal punishments may have fallen upon them in this world.

**13 Chorazin.** Even the site of this town was long unknown, and it is not mentioned elsewhere. Its ruins have now been identified two miles inland from Tel Hum, the supposed site of Capernaum. Bethsaida has been mentioned before (ix. 10). Tyre and Sidon were types of the great world-powers whose ideal was material prosperity. Ezekiel had foretold their destruction (xxvi.—xxviii.). His prediction (xxvi. 14) has been fulfilled to the letter.

**15 shalt thou be exalted unto heaven?** The meaning is not quite certain. It may be a description of the pride and ambition of the prosperous Capernaum, which was to have such a terrible fall (cp. Isa. xiv. 13). Or it may be an allusion to the spiritual privileges which Capernaum enjoyed (in vain) of hearing and seeing so much of Christ.

**thou shalt be brought down unto Hades.** Hades="the unseen," is the equivalent of the Hebrew "*Sheol*," the grave, or the gloomy unknown region of death. Our Lord is predicting the temporal calamities which were to fall upon Capernaum. This was fulfilled a generation later in the terrible vengeance which the Roman armies wreaked upon the towns of Galilee (Josephus, B. J. iii. 10).

**16 He that heareth you heareth me, etc.** These words anticipate the fuller gift of authority which was to be given after the Resurrection. They illustrate the Divine plan of perpetuating the kingdom of Christ. Our Lord appointed men to carry on His work, by His authority, and in the power of His Spirit. This is the foundation principle of the ministry of the Christian Church. The ministers of the Church are not appointed from below, by the will of their fellow-Christians, but from above, by direct delegation of authority from Christ Himself, through the laying on of hands in Ordination.

17 And the seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the  
 18 <sup>1</sup>devils are subject unto us in thy name. And he <sup>1</sup>Gr. *demons*.  
 said unto them, I beheld Satan fallen as lightning  
 19 from heaven. Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon  
 serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy : and  
 20 nothing shall in any wise hurt you. Howbeit in this rejoice not,  
 that the spirits are subject unto you ; but rejoice that your names  
 are written in heaven.

*The Joy of the Lord* (x. 21-24)

21 In that same hour he rejoiced <sup>2</sup>in the Holy Spirit,  
 and said, I <sup>3</sup>thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and <sup>3</sup>Or, *by*.  
 earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise <sup>3</sup>Or, *praise*.

17 **even the devils are subject unto us.** There had been apparently no mention in their commission of the casting out of devils (as in the mission of the Twelve) : and they are overjoyed at this unlooked-for power in their ministry.

18 **I beheld Satan fallen.** Satan=adversary ; the chief of the evil spirits, as the Jews believed. Our Lord's saying is mysterious ; but it seems to refer to the overthrow of evil which was the result of the Incarnation (cp. Rev. xii.) and the Passion. Our Lord prophetically speaks of it as already accomplished, as if with the rapidity of a thunder-bolt.

The Christian fathers think that He was also indirectly warning the Seventy against *pride* in their spiritual powers.

19 **serpents and scorpions,** natural metaphors for the forces of evil, with their treachery and malice. Cp. Psalm xci. 13. A similar promise is recorded after the Resurrection, to all believers (St. Mark xvi. 18).

20 **Howbeit in this rejoice not.** It is not meant that conquest of evil is not a subject for rejoicing ; but by a common Biblical form of speech, that it is little in comparison with something greater. Cp. "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," i.e. mercy is greater than sacrifice.

**your names are written in heaven.** To be entered on the roll of citizens was a coveted privilege ; and in several places in Scripture the book of life, the book of the citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, the final and perfect consummation of the Church, is alluded to. Cp. Isaiah iv. 3 ; Phil. iv. 3 ; Revelation iii. 5, xx. 12.

21 **he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit.** In His human soul, illuminated

and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes : yea,  
 1 Or, *that*. Father ; <sup>4</sup>for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight.  
 All things have been delivered unto me of my Father : 22  
 and no one knoweth who the Son is, save the Father ; and who  
 the Father is, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son  
 willeth to reveal *him*. And turning to the disciples, he said 23  
 privately, Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things that ye see :  
 for I say unto you, that many prophets and kings desired to see 24  
 the things which ye see, and saw them not ; and to hear the things  
 which ye hear, and heard them not.

fully by the Holy Spirit, our Lord rejoiced, or more exactly "exulted," at the manner in which the Father reveals the truth. Not to the worldly-minded and vain Pharisee and scribe, with their conceit of knowledge : nor to the wealthy and prosperous towns of Galilee, which have just been mentioned, but to the humble and child-like, who are ready to be taught, the mysteries of God are made clear. Cp. 1 Cor. i. 18-ii.

**22 All things have been delivered unto me.** This remarkable passage, which is found also in St. Matthew xi., is similar in style and thought to the discourses in St. John's Gospel, which are often said to be inconsistent with the style of teaching in the Synoptists. But it is clear that our Lord had more than one way of speaking ; such a passage as this is sufficient to shew that the differences in St. John and the Synoptists may be due to the difference in audience and circumstances. And it is noteworthy that these words evidently are derived from the non-Marcan document (p. xi.), which no doubt was a very early collection of our Lord's discourses.

Our Lord here speaks of Himself as in unique relationship with the Father. He alone is "the Son," and therefore truly God. His nature is fully known only to the Father : and He alone can both know the Father and reveal that knowledge to man. It is a claim both to Divinity and to the supreme and only authority for communicating to man the truth about God.

**24 many prophets and kings,** primarily those of the O.T., but no doubt the words also include all the aspirations and longings of the best spirits among the heathen world. Our Lord here claims that His works and words are the answer to the highest desires of humanity ; to see and hear with faith is the secret of true human blessedness.

*The Lawyer's Question : Parable of the Good Samaritan (x. 25-37)*

25 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tempted <sup>1</sup> Or, *Teacher*.  
 him, saying, "Master, what shall I do to inherit  
 26 eternal life? And he said unto him, What is written in the law?  
 27 how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the  
 Lord thy God <sup>2</sup>with all thy heart, and with all thy <sup>2</sup> Gr. *from*.  
 soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy  
 28 mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him,  
 29 Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. But he,  
 desiring to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neigh-  
 30 bour? Jesus made answer and said, A certain man was going

25 a certain lawyer, i.e. a scribe, one learned in the Law of Moses, whose profession it was to study and expound it.

**tempted him.** The word "tempt" means "to put thoroughly to the test." The context alone can shew whether the "tempting" has an evil motive, or is inspired by a genuine desire to get to the truth of things. Here, as our Lord answered in a direct way, we may assume that the lawyer really desired to be instructed, although his question and attitude (see v. 29) had the usual narrow Jewish limitations. To the Jew salvation always appeared to be something obtained from God as a due reward for performing prescribed and definite acts of righteousness. It is uncertain whether this is the same incident which is recorded in St. Matthew xxii. as occurring in the Holy Week at Jerusalem. There the same answer is given by our Lord Himself in reply to a rather different question. It is quite possible that more than once "the two great Commandments" may have been referred to in our Lord's teaching and conversations.

26 **And he answering said.** As our Lord's reply shews, the lawyer had selected the really fundamental precepts of the Law (Deut. vi. 5, Lev. xix. 18): a right attitude of the soul towards God and one's fellow-man. But he was still far off from realising how deep and wide these commandments were.

29 **desiring to justify himself.** He may have been conscious of some implied rebuke in our Lord's words or manner: or he wanted to have his duties exactly defined in the Pharisaic style.

**And who is my neighbour?** The Law, especially in Deuteronomy, commanded that kindness and sympathy should be shewn to foreigners and strangers as well as to brother-Israelites. But the later Jews had fallen away from this larger-hearted attitude, and hated Samaritans

down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he fell among robbers, which both stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance a certain priest was going down that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And in like manner a Levite also, when he came to the place, and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion, and came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on *them* oil and wine; and he set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said, Take care of him; and whatever thou spendest more, I, when I come back again, will repay thee. Which of these three, thinkest thou, proved neighbour unto him that fell among the robbers?

<sup>1</sup> See marginal note on Matt. xviii. 28.

and Gentiles. Their exclusiveness became a byword among other nations. See Juvenal xiv. 103-4.

**30 from Jerusalem to Jericho.** About twenty-one miles of steep descent. Jerusalem is 2500 feet *above* sea-level, Jericho 900 *below* it. The road is rocky, narrow, and passes between walls of cliffs. It was constantly infested by robbers, and the incident as recorded in the parable was one very likely to have actually happened.

**31 by chance**—the word is not that ordinarily used in Greek for "chance" (for which there is no place in the ways of God): but simply means by coincidence, or concurrence of events.

**a certain priest**; one perhaps who in his turn of service had been to visit Jerusalem and offer the incense in the Temple. The Levites were members of the priestly tribe of Levi, but did not belong to the family of Aaron who alone exercised the priestly functions. The Levites assisted in a subordinate capacity in the Temple, preparing the sacrifices, guarding the doors, and singing in the choir.

**33 a certain Samaritan.** A designed rebuke to the Jewish intolerance of Samaritans. Our Lord looked at men as they *are*, and not according to local or racial prejudices.

**34 oil and wine**; both commonly used for wounds, and not without medical fitness: oil is a natural healer, and wine an antiseptic.

**36 Which of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour, etc.** The lawyer's question is not answered directly. The parable compels him to regard the matter from an opposite point of view—not "who is my

37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. And Jesus said unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

*Martha and Mary* (x. 38-42)

38 Now as they went on their way, he entered into a certain village : and a certain woman named Martha  
 39 received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at the Lord's feet, and  
 40 heard his word. But Martha was <sup>1</sup>cumbered about much serving ; and she came up to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister did leave me, to serve alone ? bid her therefore that she help me.  
 41 But the Lord answered and said unto her, <sup>2</sup>Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many  
 42 things : <sup>3</sup>but one thing is needful : for Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *dis-tructed*.

<sup>2</sup> A few ancient authorities read *Martha, Martha, thou art troubled : Mary hath chosen, etc.*

<sup>3</sup> Many ancient authorities read *but few things are needful, or one.*

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neighbour ? " but " to whom ought I to do a neighbour's part ? " The implied answer is—to *all* who are in need, and whom I have the opportunity of helping. In other words, instead of trying to limit the force of the commandment one must take it in its *positive* sense and interpret it as widely as possible.

Other meanings have been thought to be latent in this parable. The wounded man may be a type of the Gentile world, which neither priest nor Levite desired to help. The Samaritan, despised by the Jews, is Christ Himself: the oil and the wine the different operations of grace ; the inn the Church, where until Christ's second coming, wounded humanity is cared for and healed ; and the two pence, the authority and gifts (e.g. the Sacraments) which Christ has entrusted to His ministers for that purpose.

38 **a certain village**—known from St. John xi. to be Bethany, on the east of the Mount of Olives. This incident is one of the links of connection between St. Luke and St. John. The two sisters appear prominently in the latter Gospel in connection with the raising from the dead of their brother Lazarus. See also St. John xii. 1-8. St. Luke, in a few words, has given a lifelike picture of two different characters : the same features appear in St. John's account : the eager, outspoken, busy Martha, and the quieter and contemplative Mary.

40 **cumbered**. See margin. The word literally means " dragged all

## CHAPTER X

*Questions*

1. What instructions were given to the Seventy ?
2. Compare the mission of the Seventy with that of the Twelve.
3. What did our Lord mean by " the wise and understanding " and by " babes " ?
4. What words in the Synoptists correspond most closely with the style of teaching in St. John's Gospel ?
5. Explain the point of the Parable of the Good Samaritan.
6. Who were " priests," " Levites," " Samaritans " ?
7. What do you know of Martha and Mary from this Gospel and elsewhere ?

*Subjects for Study*

1. The type of character fitted for receiving Divine Knowledge.  
Church, *Discipline of the Christian Character.*
2. The relation between the teaching of Christ about Himself in the Synoptists and in St. John.

ways.\* Martha was anxious to do special honour to her Guest, who was no doubt accompanied by disciples. It seemed to her that a great preparation was necessary.

41 **Martha, Martha,** She was not rebuked for her household zeal and eagerness to show hospitality, but for her blame of her sister, and for tending to put the needs of the body in the first place in her thoughts. The rebuke is full of tender sympathy.

42 **but one thing is needful,** i.e. the word of God, the teaching of His kingdom,

**the good part,** i.e. share, or inheritance. What Martha was so anxious about passes away with the using. The devotion of Mary would win her an eternal possession.

The margin means that the necessities of life are fewer and simpler than Martha thought, and indeed not necessary at all *in comparison* with what Mary sought for.

Maurice Jones, *New Testament in the Twentieth Century*.  
 Westcott, *Gospel of St. John*.  
 Streeter, *Foundations*.

### 3. Christian as compared with Jewish ethics.

Strong, *Christian Ethics*.  
 Ottley, Essay in *Lux Mundi*.

#### *Teaching on Prayer* (xi. 1-13)

- 1 And it came to pass, as he was praying in a certain place, that when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, even as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, <sup>1</sup>Father, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come.<sup>2</sup> Give us day by day <sup>3</sup>our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we ourselves also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And bring us not into temptation<sup>4</sup>.
- 5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine is come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him: and he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and
- <sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *Our Father, which art in heaven*. See Matt. vi. 9.  
<sup>2</sup> Many ancient authorities add *Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth*. See Matt. vi. 10.  
<sup>3</sup> Gr. *our bread for the coming day*.  
<sup>4</sup> Many ancient authorities

**2 When ye pray, say.** The Lord's Prayer in the form familiar to Christian usage is given in the Sermon on the Mount (St. Matt. vi.). In this shortened form in St. Luke's account, which modern textual criticism has preferred, nearly all the characteristic features of the longer form are preserved. It is much easier to account for the additions in the margin having been made by copyists who were familiar with the larger form, than for these clauses having been omitted, had they originally stood in St. Luke's text. But we can scarcely imagine that the additional words in St. Matthew were not spoken by Christ. It is quite possible that our Lord may have given the Prayer on two distinct occasions, one more condensed than the other.

The Prayer naturally falls into two divisions. The order is significant. The first two petitions (three in St. Matthew) have God and our brethren as their direct subjects, ourselves only indirectly. God's name and

add but  
*deliver us*  
*from the evil*  
*one (or, from*  
*evil. See*  
 Matt. vi. 13.  
<sup>1</sup> Or, *whatso-*  
*ever things.*  
<sup>2</sup> Some  
 ancient  
 authorities  
 omit a *loaf,*  
*and he give*  
*him a stone?*  
 or.

my children are with me in bed ; I cannot rise and give thee ? I say unto you, Though he will not rise <sup>8</sup> and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will arise and give him <sup>1</sup>as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall <sup>9</sup> be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that <sup>10</sup> asketh receiveth ; and he that seeketh findeth ; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. And of <sup>11</sup> which of you that is a father shall his son ask a <sup>2</sup>loaf, and he give him a stone ? or a fish, and he for a fish

kingdom are to be the first thoughts in prayer, and these imply (1) a right attitude of reverence and love towards God as the necessary condition of prayer ; (2) an attitude of love towards and intercession on behalf of mankind. The three later petitions (four in St. Matthew) are more directly for ourselves, but of a very simple and humble character.

The Lord's Prayer has been well described as the prayer of the Christian family. Some of its petitions were already familiar in Jewish use, but the arrangement and spirit of the prayer are strikingly original and characteristic. The petitions in the first division are concerned with those things which the child naturally owes to a parent, recognition, respect and love ; those in the second with the things which the child rightly hopes to receive—maintenance, forbearance, sympathy.

**Father.** The first word strikes the keynote of the whole prayer. The Fatherhood of God was one of the primary features of Christ's teaching. Although both Jews and heathen had, before His time, spoken of God as " father," it was rather with the thought of one who rules than of one who loves. All intellectual difficulties as to the propriety of prayer and the possibility of its being answered, are removed by a right conception of the Divine Fatherhood. The universe is not a mere mechanical chain of cause and effect ; beyond all so-called " laws of nature " is Love.

The word " our " in St. Matthew's version emphasises the corporate nature of the Christian family and of Christian prayer. Although omitted here, the same idea is contained in the plural " us," " our," " we," in the later petitions. It guards against any selfishness or self-centredness in prayer. Thus the Lord's Prayer is essentially one of *intercession.*

**Hallowed be thy name.** God's " name " in scriptural use signifies all that God has revealed about Himself to man, His character, His ways,

12 give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he give him  
13 a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good

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His purposes. The Bible, the Church, human conscience, even what may be gathered from nature about God, are all included in this "name," which is to be "hallowed"—treated as holy. An attitude of belief and reverence is the first requisite for an acceptable prayer. This is further emphasised by St. Matthew's addition, "which art in heaven."

**Thy kingdom come.** The kingdom of God was the great subject of Christ's teaching. It is that new and transformed state of human life, in which God is recognised as King and obeyed by all. The kingdom begins from within in a converted heart (see xvii. 21); but it is manifested outwardly also in the Church. It begins in this world and is perfected in the world to come. This petition would include such aims as the conversion of the heathen world to Christ, and the progress and happiness of the blessed dead.

The next petition in St. Matthew, "Thy will be done," may be regarded as implicitly contained in the prayer for the coming of the kingdom.

**3 our daily bread.** Both in the etymology and the exact meaning of the word rendered "daily" are uncertain. Probably no one explanation exhausts the meaning. The word is here found for the first time in Greek literature, and was perhaps devised by the evangelists to express some new word used by our Lord Himself. The surface meaning of the petition is that our request for the needs of this life is to be limited each day to what is necessary for that day. But it has generally been felt by interpreters that the idea of the life eternal, of the soul's bread, as well as that for the body, is contained in the prayer. Cp. our Lord's answer to the first temptation, and His teaching as to "the true bread" in St. John vi. St. Augustine explains the petition as a prayer (1) for our bodily needs; (2) for the Word of God; (3) for the Holy Communion. So the Church catechism paraphrases it "all things that be needful both for our souls and bodies."

**4 And forgive us our sins.** The word for "sins" literally means a swerving aside from the mark, like a badly aimed arrow; and so a failure in the purpose of life. Another thought is implied in the word "indebted" (St. Matthew also substitutes "debts" for "sins"); our human debt to God is all that we might have done or been, as His children, and have failed in.

**And bring us not into temptation.** To understand this difficult petition, it must be remembered: (1) that Jewish thought always traced all that happens to God Himself directly, and spoke of Him as actually doing what He may only permit to be done; (2) temptation in Scrip-

gifts unto your children, how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him ?

ture has more than one meaning ; it may mean (a) the malicious tempting to evil by the devil or wicked men, in which sense God could not directly bring us into it (St. James i.), though He may permit it ; in this sense the petition might mean " keep us from temptation altogether," or " keep us from falling when we are so tempted " ; (b) any kind of trial, inward or outward, that tests our faith and courage (cp. Gen. xxii. and St. Matt. xxvi. 41). In this case the petition simply means " bring us safely through such trials." The catechism rightly paraphrases, " that it may please Him to save and defend us in all dangers ghostly and bodily," an interpretation which covers both (a) and (b).

The final petition in St. Matthew, " deliver us from evil," or " from the Evil One," is really implied in the preceding. Temptation includes evil both physical and moral ; whereas the prayer to be delivered from evil applies exclusively to the latter.

**5 Which of you shall have a friend.** This homely parable (peculiar to St. Luke) from ordinary life, which is not without a touch of humour, illustrates the importance of being in earnest, of persistence in asking. The ways of human life—which is God's creation—are a guide to the ways of God Himself. There is a designed analogy between the two. We may rightly argue from the creature to the Creator.

**8 his importunity,** literally " his shamelessness." Cp. the similar teaching of the parable of the Importunate Widow, p. 173.

**10 For every one that asketh receiveth,** etc. The emphasis lies on the verbs, " asketh," " seeketh," " knocketh." In ordinary human life the people who get things are those that persist in trying to get them.

**11 And of which of you that is a father,** etc. Not only the ordinary attitude of one man to another, but the natural instincts of the family life help to illustrate the ways of God. Parents do not mock their children by cruelly giving them what they cannot eat ; or by giving them harmful things when they ask for what is good.

**13 If ye then, being evil,** etc. Human nature is depraved, our Lord teaches ; nevertheless it has good feelings which bear witness to the character of God, our Creator. Human fatherhood, with its care for children, is a justification for expecting even better things from the heavenly Father, in answer to prayer.

**the Holy Spirit.** This is a remarkable variation from the parallel in St. Matthew vii. 11 : " good things." The Holy Spirit, proceeding from Himself, is the highest gift the Father can give to man, and the only one that can really satisfy man's need. Man being made in the image

*The Casting out of Devils* (xi. 14-26)

- 14 And he was casting out a <sup>1</sup>devil *which was dumb*. <sup>1</sup> Gr. *demon*.  
 And it came to pass, when the <sup>1</sup>devil was gone out,  
 15 the dumb man spake ; and the multitudes marvelled. But some  
 of them said, <sup>2</sup>By Beelzebub the prince of the <sup>3</sup>devils  
 16 casteth he out <sup>3</sup>devils. And others, tempting *him*, <sup>2</sup> Or, *In*.  
<sup>3</sup> Gr. *demons*.  
 17 sought of him a sign from heaven. But he, knowing  
 their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against

of God, can only be satisfied with God Himself, the communication of His Divine Life. The prayer of faith may not always receive precisely what it asks for, but it will receive something much better.

14 **And he was casting out a devil which was dumb**, i.e. the sufferer himself was deprived of speech through the possession by the demon; St. Matthew (xii. 22) adds that he was also blind. The miracle seems to have made an unusual impression on the multitude and specially provoked the anger of the Pharisees.

The incident and the discourse that followed come in quite a different connection in St. Matthew (cp. also St. Mark iii.). They marked a turning-point in controversy with the Pharisees, and a change in the style of our Lord's teaching. Henceforth He spoke to the multitude in parables, and only to His own disciples directly.

15 **By Beelzebub**. A title current among the Jews for the leader of the hosts of evil spirits, and equivalent to Satan. The name was derived from the god of the Philistines of Ekron (2 Kings i.), and is supposed to mean "lord of flies," perhaps because he was believed to be able, if propitiated, to protect from insect-plagues.

16 **a sign from heaven**. This was a frequent demand. It meant some startling visible proof of Messiahship and authority, like Elijah's fire from heaven, or Joshua's bidding sun and moon to stand still. Such signs our Lord invariably refused. It was not His purpose to *compel* men to believe ; and the very demand shewed the spirit of unbelief. Miracles were not performed for unbelievers, but only in answer to faith.

17 **Every kingdom divided against itself**. The first answer to this profane charge of being in league with Beelzebub is based on common sense, and on the ordinary facts of human life. All admitted that the sufferer's sad condition had been the work of Satan. How then can Satan undo his own evil work, and become a doer of good ? Such inconsistency in a kingdom or in a family means dissension and ruin. (The marginal translation is more difficult ; "house falleth upon

<sup>1</sup> Or, *and house falleth upon house.* itself is brought to desolation; <sup>1</sup>and a house *divided* against a house falleth. And if Satan also is divided <sup>18</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *demons.* against himself, how shall his kingdom stand?

<sup>2</sup> Or, *in.* because ye say that I cast out <sup>2</sup>devils <sup>3</sup>by Beelzebub.

And if I <sup>3</sup>by Beelzebub cast out <sup>2</sup>devils, by whom do <sup>19</sup> your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges.

But if I by the finger of God cast out <sup>2</sup>devils, then is the kingdom <sup>20</sup> of God come upon you. When the strong man fully armed <sup>21</sup>

guardeth his own court, his goods are in peace: but when a <sup>22</sup> stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him his whole armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. He that is not with me is against me; and <sup>23</sup>

house" may be a graphic way of describing the ruin of a city; but as in the parallel "house" is used in the sense of "family," the text is probably the right translation.)

**19 by whom do your sons cast them out?** A further argument based on the well-known Jewish practice of exorcism. The Pharisees allowed and approved the attempt to cast out demons by prayer in the name of God. Their "sons," i.e. those who followed their teaching, attempted it, and were believed to be successful. Why then, our Lord asks, are not these exorcists equally charged with co-operation with Beelzebub? The malice of His accusers had made them inconsistent with themselves.

**20 the finger of God.** Perhaps an allusion to the words of the magicians of Egypt (Exod. viii. 19). St. Matthew has "the spirit of God."

**then is the kingdom of God come upon you.** These miracles, so far from being a sign of diabolic agency, are proof that the powers of the kingdom of God are close at hand and at work. A new force for good has entered into human life, unperceived by the self-blinded Pharisee.

**21 When the strong man fully armed.** In this vivid little parable, the "strong man" is Satan; his "goods," the human souls and bodies which he has got into his possession: the "stronger than he" is Christ. Our Lord means that He Himself, so far from being allied with Satan, has already conquered Him and is setting his captives free.

**23 He that is not with me is against me.** This is spoken from quite a different point of view from St. Luke ix. 50, where the man who must not be forbidden was actively on the side of God, though not a follower with the disciples. Here our Lord is speaking of the supreme battle

24 he that gathereth not with me scattereth. The unclean spirit when <sup>1</sup>he is gone out of the man, passeth through <sup>1</sup> Or, *it*. waterless places, seeking rest; and finding none, <sup>1</sup>he  
 25 saith, I will turn back unto my house whence I came out. And  
 26 when <sup>1</sup>he is come, <sup>1</sup>he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth <sup>1</sup>he, and taketh to *him* seven other spirits <sup>2</sup> Or, *itself*. more evil than <sup>2</sup>himself; and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man becometh worse than the first.

*The Blessedness of Our Lord's Mother* (xi. 27-28)

27 And it came to pass, as he said these things, a certain woman out of the multitude lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bear thee, and the breasts which thou didst suck.

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with the powers of evil, in which a man must be either on the one side or the other. There can be no neutrality in that case. If we are not with Christ, we are against Him. If we are not assisting to gather in His harvest, we are helping to waste and scatter it.

24-26 **The unclean spirit when he is gone out.** This weird picture of the returning demon is coloured with the current Jewish ideas. Waterless places, deserts, were thought to be haunted; as the Arabs of to-day still think they are by "*djinns*." The evil spirit was thought to be always trying to get into more comfortable surroundings by entering into some human soul. Our Lord uses these superstitions to enforce a profound moral truth. Evil can only be driven out effectually by positive efforts after good. There is always the danger, otherwise, of a worse relapse into evil. The unguarded mind, like the empty house, may have been cleansed, but it is easily entered again. What is true of individuals is also true of nations. The Jews had given up their old idolatries, but had made no effort to practise the positive virtues commanded by the Law and the prophets. Consequently, the old demon had returned in another form, bringing worse ones with him, pride, intolerance, insincerity, covetousness, as was illustrated by those mean and blasphemous charges which were brought against our Lord.

27 **a certain woman.** This ejaculation of an unnamed woman was perhaps called out by the actual appearance on the scene of our Lord's mother, with His "brethren" (see in this connection St. Matt. xii. 46, St. Mark iii. 31).

But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

*The Demand for a Sign* (xi. 29-36)

And when the multitudes were gathered together unto him,<sup>29</sup> he began to say, This generation is an evil generation : it seeketh after a sign ; and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of Jonah. For even as Jonah became a sign unto the Ninevites, so<sup>30</sup> shall also the Son of man be to this generation. The queen of<sup>31</sup> the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and shall condemn them : for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon ; and behold,<sup>1a</sup> a greater than Solomon is here. The men<sup>32</sup> of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it : for they repented at the preaching of Jonah ; and behold, <sup>1a</sup> a greater than Jonah is here.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *more than.*

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**28 Yea rather.** The words imply, not that our Lord was denying the blessedness of His mother, but rather that He was pointing out the real secret of her blessedness. It lay not so much in the personal relationship with Him, as in her inward attitude of soul ; and therefore others may share in it in proportion to their obedience and faithfulness to the word of God. The Blessed Virgin is of course the highest example of those who hear the word of God and keep it. Cp. i. 38 ii. 19, 51.

**29 it seeketh after a sign.** In this discourse the demand already alluded to (*v.* 16) is answered. Unbelief clamoured for some conclusive and compelling miracle, while it was shewing itself blind to the signs that were already there.

**the sign of Jonah.** By this is meant not merely the fact that Jonah preached repentance to the Ninevites, but that his marvellous deliverance from death was a sign to convince them of the authority of his message. Our Lord was hinting at His own Resurrection, as is brought out more clearly in St. Matthew xii. 40.

**30 The queen of the south,** i.e. the queen of Sheba in South Arabia, whose visit to Solomon is described in 1 Kings x. Though a Gentile, she showed an open mind, and a willingness to confess the wisdom and greatness of Solomon. It is clearly implied that both she and the men of Nineveh are still living and in the Day of Judgement will bear

33 No man, when he hath lighted a lamp, putteth it in a cellar,  
 neither under the bushel, but on the stand, that they which enter  
 34 in may see the light. The lamp of thy body is thine eye : when  
 thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light ; but when  
 35 it is evil, thy body also is full of darkness. Look therefore whether  
 36 the light that is in thee be not darkness. If therefore thy whole  
 body be full of light, having no part dark, it shall be wholly full of

witness by their sincerity and obedience against the Jews who rejected our Lord,

31-32 **a greater than Solomon . . . than Jonah.** This is a startling claim, and would be clearly inconsistent with modesty and humility if the speaker were a mere man. It shows our Lord's clear consciousness of His Divinity.

33 **No man, when he hath lighted a lamp.** This metaphor of the lamp has occurred before (viii. 16), but in a different connection. In the earlier passage, it seemed to refer to the importance of making use of one's gift of knowledge : here it is a warning against the blinding of one's conscience to truth.

34 **The lamp of thy body is thine eye.** By the " body " here apparently is meant the whole man, with all his activities and powers. The blind man is like one in a dark room ; he is hindered and comparatively helpless. This fact of nature suggests the further truth that man has a power of spiritual vision, and if this is darkened it spoils his whole being.

**when thine eye is single.** A " single eye " and an " evil eye " seem to have been common expressions : meaning respectively a single-hearted, generous disposition, and a grudging, mean, distorted temper, which shews itself sometimes in envy of others (St. Matt. xx. 15) or in covetousness (*ib.* vi. 22), or here, in refusal to acknowledge truth. In either case it is this outlook which governs the whole life and character of a man. The " single eye " makes him sincere and open in all his ways : the " evil eye " makes him false and deluded. The light of Christ was shining for all alike, but the evil eye could not see it, or saw it wrong ; so the light never penetrated into the " body."

35 **the light that is in thee**—conscience, the faculty of perceiving truth. Unbelief is warned that the fault lies in itself, not in the evidence presented to it. See note on *v.* 29.

36 **If therefore thy whole body be full of light,** etc. This verse seems further to emphasise the wonderful effect of a " single eye." The whole character, and all the thoughts and actions of a man become

light, as when the lamp with its bright shining doth give thee light.

*Denunciation of Scribes and Pharisees (xi. 37-54)*

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *break-fast*. Now as he spake, a Pharisee asketh him to <sup>1</sup>dine 37 with him : and he went in, and sat down to meat.

And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he 38 had not first washed before <sup>1</sup>dinner. And the Lord said unto him, 39 Now do ye Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and of the platter ; but your inward part is full of extortion and wickedness. Ye foolish ones, did not he that made the outside make the inside 40 also ? Howbeit give for alms those things which <sup>2</sup>are 41 <sup>2</sup> Or, *ye can*. within ; and behold, all things are clean unto you.

illuminated. He has clear guidance himself from the inward Divine light, and so may be also a light to others. The similarity of this teaching to that recorded by St. John should again be noticed. Cp. St. John viii. 12 ; xii. 46. Also 1 St. John i. 5 ; ii. 8-11.

**38 he marvelled that he had not first washed.** The Jews, as Mark explains (vii. 3-4), were most punctilious about washing before meals, and the cleansing of everything connected with food. A practice excellent and sanitary in itself had been elaborated by Pharisaic subtlety into a burden of minute rules, especially with the idea of avoiding any ceremonial pollution through touching a person or a thing that was "unclean." Not only had the practice become superstitious, but it carried other evil consequences with it: a censorious attitude towards those who seemed less strict, and an hypocrisy which made these outward washings of more importance than inward purity.

In this particular incident, the Pharisee had only invited our Lord to a slight refecton (see margin), at which the mere ceremonial washing might well have been dispensed with.

The denunciation that follows is very similar to that recorded at greater length by St. Matthew (xxiii.) as having been spoken in the Temple courts in the course of the Holy Week.

**41 Howbeit give for alms, etc.** This is a difficult and much-disputed verse. The special sin of the Pharisees just mentioned was "extortion," unscrupulous efforts to enrich themselves at the expense of the poor and helpless. No outward cleansings will atone for that. The contrast to it is almsgiving, charity, which is the true cleansing. The man who is charitable, who *loves*, need not fear pollution from outward things. So far the general meaning is clear. But what is the meaning

- 42 But woe unto you Pharisees ! for ye tithe mint and rue and every herb, and pass over judgement and the love of God : but these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.
- 43 Woe unto you Pharisees ! for ye love the chief seats in the synagogues, and the salutations in the marketplaces. Woe unto you !
- 44 for ye are as the tombs which appear not, and the men that walk over *them* know it not.
- 45 And one of the lawyers answering saith unto him, <sup>1</sup> Or, *Teacher*.
- 46 *Master*, in saying this thou reproachest us also. And

of " those things which are within " ? Perhaps in contrast to the ostentatious almsgiving of the Pharisees, which was only a cloak for their rapacity, our Lord is inculcating the true charity which springs from a loving, generous heart. The marginal translation is much easier.

42 **ye tithe mint and rue**, etc. Tithe, a tenth part of income, was ordered by the Law to be paid to the priests and Levites (Num. xviii. 21) and to the poor (Deut. xiv. 28, 29). The Pharisees were so scrupulous as to give a tithe even of the small garden herbs. The Law only spoke of corn, wine, and oil, and the firstlings of flock and herd.

**judgement**, i.e. justice between man and man. The perversion of justice for bribery or favour was one of the standing evils of Eastern society and often denounced in O.T.

**and not to leave the other undone**. The Pharisees are not condemned for their scrupulosity. It is right to be conscientious in small things as well as great. But the Pharisee gave his whole attention to details of this sort, and ignored the great moral duties of the Law.

43 **the chief seats**, i.e. the seats facing the congregation, in front of the " ark," which contained the Scriptures (see p. 40).

**salutations**—reverential greetings, with the title " Rabbi "—" great one."

44 **ye are as the tombs which appear not**. An allusion to the ceremonial pollution which was caused by touching a dead body or a tomb. The Jews were so careful on this point that they whitewashed all tombs every year, that they might be conspicuous and so be avoided (cp. St. Matt. xxiii. 27). With terrible satire our Lord calls the Pharisees the true sources of pollution ; their outward appearance was so good, that people could not recognise them for what they were.

45 **one of the lawyers**. The lawyers, i.e. those skilled in the Law, were apparently the same as the scribes. Our Lord's strictures about the tithe perhaps especially annoyed the scribes, who were responsible

he said, Woe unto you lawyers also ! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers. Woe unto you ! for ye build the tombs of the 47 prophets, and your fathers killed them. So ye are witnesses and 48 consent unto the works of your fathers : for they killed them, and ye build *their tombs*. Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will 49 send unto them prophets and apostles ; and *some* of them they shall kill and persecute ; that the blood of all the prophets, which was 50 shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation ; from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zachariah, 51

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for this sort of refinement on the Law. And to reproach *them*, seemed to their pride and self-sufficiency an even greater offence than to attack the Pharisees.

**46 ye yourselves touch not the burdens.** The scribes made no effort to relieve men in these ceremonial restrictions which made religion a weariness ; they rather rejoiced in piling them on ; and at the same time invented subtle ways of evading the Law themselves.

**47 ye build the tombs of the prophets,** etc. The Jews of our Lord's day pretended to deplore the sins of their ancestors in killing the prophets, and thought they could make amends by giving these martyrs splendid tombs.

**48 So ye are witnesses and consent,** etc. Our Lord is speaking ironically. In building the tombs they were only carrying a stage further the wickedness of their fathers. They were the sons of their fathers, not only by natural descent, but in a moral sense also ; they were animated by the same spirit.

**49 Therefore also said the wisdom of God.** The exact force of the words is uncertain. Some have supposed that our Lord's words are a quotation from some lost book. More probably they are only a summary of O.T. warnings. Cp. Jeremiah xxv. 4. " Wisdom " is a common name in the later books of the O.T. for God's manifestation to men of His ways and purposes : in Proverbs viii " wisdom " is so graphically personified that it was recognised by Christians as a prophecy of the Christ ; and " Wisdom " has become one of the Church's titles of our Lord.

**51 from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zachariah.** See Genesis iv. and 2 Chronicles xxiv. 20-21. Zachariah was the son of the high priest Jehoiada, and was stoned to death in the Temple court by the command of King Joash for his outspoken protest against idolatry. In the Jewish arrangement of the Scriptures, the Chronicles come at

who perished between the altar and the <sup>1</sup>sanctuary : <sup>1</sup> Gr. *house*.  
 yea, I say unto you, it shall be required of this  
 52 generation. Woe unto you lawyers ! for ye took away the key of  
 knowledge : ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were  
 entering in ye hindered.  
 53 And when he was come out from thence, the scribes <sup>2</sup> Or, *set*  
 and the Pharisees began to <sup>2</sup>press upon him vehe- *themselves*  
 mently, and to provoke him to speak of <sup>3</sup>many things ; *vehemently*  
 54 laying wait for him, to catch something out of his *against him.*  
 mouth. <sup>3</sup> Or, *more.*

## CHAPTER XI

*Questions*

1. How is the Lord's Prayer arranged ? What is its leading idea ?
2. Compare the form of the Lord's Prayer in St. Matthew and St. Luke and comment on the differences.
3. What parable did our Lord speak in this connection to teach the need of persistence in prayer ?
4. What did our Lord teach about prayer from the attitude of parents to children ?
5. How did our Lord reply to the charge of casting out devils through Beelzebub ?

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the end : so these two names are the first and last of the recorded line of martyrs.

**it shall be required of this generation.** An awful prediction which was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans and the scattering of the Jews, 70 A.D. Many of the " generation " who listened to and rejected Christ must have lived to see it.

**52 ye took away the key of knowledge.** Perhaps an allusion to the fact that the key was a recognised symbol of the office of the scribe. It was his function to unlock the Scriptures, that men might enter into its treasure-house of Divine knowledge. But the scribes disregarded the Scriptures themselves and hindered learners by their perversions and false interpretations.

6. What was meant by the demand for a sign, and how did our Lord reply to it ?
7. What is meant by a "single eye" and an "evil eye" ?
8. What charges did our Lord bring against the Pharisees ?
9. Explain what is meant by "the blood of Abel" and "the blood of Zachariah."
10. What is meant by "the key of knowledge" ?
11. What was the effect of our Lord's denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees ?

*Subjects for Study*

1. The Lord's Prayer.

Gore, *Prayer and the Lord's Prayer*.

Worledge, *Prayer in Oxford Library of Theology*.

Chase, *The Lord's Prayer in the Early Church*.

2. The religious failure of the Pharisees.

Bruce, *Apologetics*.

Mozley, *Pharisees in University Sermons*.

*Teaching on Sincerity and Courage (xii. 1-12)*

<sup>4</sup> Gr. *the myriads of*.

In the mean time, when <sup>1</sup>the many thousands of the <sup>xii. 1</sup>multitude were gathered together, insomuch that they

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xii. 1 in the mean time, etc. St. Luke introduces this discourse with a definite note of time. It was while the attack on Jesus was going on in the Pharisee's house, as recorded in the last verses of the preceding chapter, that these vast and excited crowds gathered together. The discourse is in the main addressed not to the crowd, but to His disciples : and the contents appear in the other Gospels in quite different connections ; especially *vv.* 2-9, 11-12, form part of the charge to the Twelve. St. Matthew x. 26-33 ; 19-20. It is impossible to say what processes of rearrangement of our Lord's sayings may have taken place in the compilation of the several Gospels : but it should not be forgotten that quite possibly our Lord may have used the same figures, or given the same warning, on more than one occasion.

trode one upon another, he began to <sup>1</sup>say unto his <sup>1</sup>Or, *say unto*  
 disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the <sup>his disciples,</sup>  
<sup>2</sup>Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. But there is nothing <sup>First of all</sup>  
 covered up, that shall not be revealed : and hid, that <sup>beware ye.</sup>  
<sup>3</sup>shall not be known. Wherefore whatsoever ye have said in the  
 darkness shall be heard in the light ; and what ye have spoken in  
 the ear in the inner chambers shall be proclaimed upon the house-  
<sup>4</sup>tops. And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them  
 which kill the body, and after that have no more than they can  
<sup>5</sup>do. But I will warn you whom ye shall fear : Fear him, which

**his disciples first of all.** Following the method He had adopted when the opposition of the Pharisees led Him to begin to teach by parables, He does not here address the eager multitudes, but prefers to speak to those who were more receptive, His own disciples (not necessarily the Twelve only).

**the leaven of the Pharisees.** "Leaven" or yeast, is spoken of in Scripture as a symbol of any secret influence, which permeates the whole of what it is placed in, and changes its character. In the parable of the Leaven the influence is good ; but in all other places where the figure is used, it is evil. Here the Pharisaic spirit which was infecting all the religion of Israel is described as "hypocrisy," treason to the sovereign claim of *truth*. The Pharisees were not truth-seekers or truth-lovers ; their leading motives were vanity and party-spirit.

**2 But there is nothing covered up, etc.** Hypocrisy is really useless, for truth will in the end always come to light. The underlying reason for this is that truth is of the nature of God Himself, and all human attempts to smother it up will be defeated.

**3 Wherefore whatsoever ye have said in the darkness.** The same saying occurs with a different application in St. Matthew x. 27. There it is an incentive to outspoken courage ; here, a warning against thinking that our attempts at secrecy will escape notice in the Day of Judgment.

**4 And I say unto you my friends.** Hypocrisy prevented our Lord's enemies from acknowledging and speaking the truth. His friends might be kept from it by the fear of men. God, who has the only real power over life and death and the hereafter, is the only right object of fear, and fear of Him should be an over-mastering motive for truth and sincerity.

**5 power to cast into hell**—margin "Gehenna," the only place in St. Luke where this word is used. There are two words which the A.V.

<sup>1</sup> Or, after he hath killed hath <sup>1</sup>power to cast into <sup>2</sup>hell ;  
*authority.* yea, I say unto you, **Fear him.** Are not five sparrows 6  
<sup>2</sup> Gr. sold for two farthings ? and not one of them is  
*Gehenna.* forgotten in the sight of God. But the very hairs of 7  
 your head are all numbered. **Fear not :** ye are of more value 8  
 than many sparrows. And I say unto you, Every one who shall 8  
 confess <sup>3</sup>me before men, <sup>4</sup>him shall the Son of man 8  
<sup>3</sup> Gr. *in me.* also confess before the angels of God : but he that 9  
<sup>4</sup> Gr. *in him.* denieth me in the presence of men shall be denied in 9  
 the presence of the angels of God. And every one who shall speak 10  
 a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him : but unto

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has translated "hell" : Hades, simply the grave or the "unseen" region of departed souls (=Hebrew *Sheol*) ; Gehenna, the place of final destruction. The name was derived from "the valley of Hinnom," south-west of Jerusalem, a place which had awful associations with the human sacrifices offered by the idolatrous kings of Judah, and said to have been afterwards the place where refuse was burnt, including the dead bodies of criminals. The later Jews certainly used the word to mean the place of eternal punishment for the impenitent wicked. (See notes on ix. 43 in St. Mark in this series.)

**7 Fear not.** Another motive to courage in the proclamation of truth is the unfailing and all-embracing providence of God. The smallest matters are of value to Him, even the one sparrow that was thrown in, when two farthings-worth were bought (see St. Matt. x. 29).

**8 Every one who shall confess me before men.** The futility of hypocrisy ; the fear of God's judgements ; the certainty of God's care, have all been brought forward as motives for sincerity and courage. The final motive is the dread alternative of acceptance or rejection by Christ Himself. The implicit claim to Divinity in these words should be noticed. Christ Himself is the final arbiter of human destiny.

**10 And every one who shall speak a word,** etc. This difficult saying goes back to the controversy with the Pharisees. The awful nature of their rejection of truth is set out in the severest warning ever given by our Lord. He distinguishes, however, between the mere attack upon Himself, "the Son of man," and the more awful "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit." The former may be due to ignorance and misunderstanding, even from good though mistaken motives (as in the case of Saul of Tarsus) ; and it may be forgiven on repentance. But the sin against the Holy Ghost, as far as can be gathered from the context here and in the parallels (see especially St. Mark iii. 29, 30), means the

him that blasphemeth against the Holy Spirit it shall not be forgiven. And when they bring you before the synagogues, and the rulers, and the authorities, be not anxious how or what ye shall answer, or what ye shall say : for the Holy Spirit shall teach you in that very hour what ye ought to say.

*Covetousness. Parable of the Rich Fool* (xii. 13-21)

13 And one out of the multitude said unto him,<sup>1</sup> Master, <sup>1</sup> Or, *Teacher*.  
14 bid my brother divide the inheritance with me. But

he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you ? And he said unto them, Take heed, and keep yourselves

deliberate refusal to see the truth. It is treason against conscience, and so implies the complete moral perversion of a man's nature. The promises of forgiveness to the penitent elsewhere in Scripture are so absolute, that it must be assumed that this sin cannot be forgiven, because by committing it a man renders himself incapable of repentance. This warning against the one unpardonable sin has naturally been often discussed ; and many have imagined themselves to have committed it, who were far from doing so, as their very anxiety proved (cp. *Lavengro*, lxxiii.-vii.). Certainly no hasty words of irreverence or blasphemy could come under this category.

11 the **synagogues**, i.e. the local Jewish tribunals, composed of " elders " who held courts and inflicted punishments in the synagogues : the " rulers and authorities " would include the higher powers, whether Jewish or Gentile, the Sanhedrin, the Roman governors, the Emperor.

**be not anxious**—a final motive is added for courage in confessing Christ. His disciples need not be anxious beforehand as to how they shall defend themselves ; there is a power in them greater than themselves, the witness of the Holy Spirit, which will prove more forcible than any human eloquence. Cp. Acts iv. 13 ; v. 29-32.

14 **Man, who made me a judge**, etc. This incident, with the parable that follows, is peculiar to St. Luke, whose Gospel is rich in examples of our Lord's warnings against covetousness. Our Lord declines to be a judge of details (for which there were already appointed tribunals) : His work was rather to teach men the great principles of human life, which, if they were sincerely laid to heart, would remove the occasion of such personal controversies altogether.

15 **Take heed**, etc. Our Lord refused to adjudicate upon this claim, be it just or unjust ; because it sprang from the spirit which was

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *for not in a man's abundance consisteth his life, from the things which he possesseth.* from all covetousness : <sup>1</sup>for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, <sup>16</sup> The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully : and he reasoned within himself, saying, <sup>17</sup> What shall I do, because I have not where to bestow my fruits ? And he said, This will I do : I will <sup>18</sup> pull down my barns, and build greater ; and there will I bestow all my corn and my goods. And I will say to my <sup>19</sup> <sup>2</sup>soul, <sup>2</sup>Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years ; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry. But God said unto him, Thou foolish one, this night <sup>20</sup> <sup>3</sup>is thy <sup>2</sup>soul required of thee ; and the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be ? So is he <sup>21</sup> that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

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entirely opposite to His teaching. The man who complained of his brother, evidently gave the *first* place in his thoughts to an earthly inheritance. His aim in life was wrong.

for a man's life, etc., i.e. his true life, his real self, which is higher than all possessions, and independent of them. Covetousness, the selfish desire of gain, obscures this truth ; it tends to make man think more of what he *has* than what he *is*.

**19 And I will say to my soul.** This parable is marked by an extraordinary vividness of irony. The folly of a self-centred selfish life has never been so briefly and graphically described as in this unforgettable sketch. (Cp. Tennyson's *Palace of Art*, and Liddon, "The True Life of Man," in *Passion-tide Sermons*.)

**20 this night is thy soul required of thee.** The meaning is plain—he must die, and leave all his possessions—but the details are left in awful obscurity. "They" (in margin) may refer to the angels of judgment, or to thieves ready to break in and murder him.

**21 rich toward God.** It seems clear from other passages of Scripture that this refers to charity and good works : to the use of money and possessions not in a mere selfish spirit, but as a trust from God for the good of others.

*Worldly Cares and the Father's Providence* (xii. 22-34)

22 And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say <sup>1</sup> Or, *soul*.  
 unto you, Be not anxious for *your* <sup>1</sup>life, what ye shall  
 23 eat ; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. For the <sup>1</sup>life is  
 24 more than the food, and the body than the raiment. Consider the  
 ravens, that they sow not, neither reap ; which have no store-  
 chamber nor barn ; and God feedeth them : of how much more  
 25 value are ye than the birds ! And which of you by being anxious  
 26 can add a cubit unto his <sup>2</sup>stature ? If then ye are <sup>2</sup> Or, *age*.  
 not able to do even that which is least, why are  
 27 ye anxious concerning the rest ? Consider the lilies, how they

**22 And he said unto his disciples, etc.** This passage, down to *v.* 31, occurs almost identically in the Sermon on the Mount (St. Matt. vi. 25-33). It follows so naturally here on the preceding incident, that it seems probable that this was the actual historical occasion, and that St. Matthew has gathered together a number of our Lord's sayings which were spoken at different times.

**Be not anxious.** The warning throughout is not so much against a due and reasonable care for the future as against the anxious worry which tends to make men absorbed in the cares of this life, to blind them to the more important things, and distract them from God.

**23 For the life is more than the food.** The word for "life" (see margin) does not mean the mere earthly temporal life, but that which a man really *is*, his undying personality. Clearly *that* is more important than the bodily food which nourishes it in this life. But why is "the body" also spoken of in the same way ? Perhaps because *that* also has a future, an immortal existence. The underlying thought seems to be in both cases that God who has created both soul and body can be trusted to provide the necessary things for their sustenance.

**25 And which of you by being anxious.** Not only does the spirit of anxious care shew misunderstanding and mistrust of the Father's providence : it is in itself futile and silly. We cannot alter things which are in God's hands by our worrying.

**27 Consider the lilies.** This remarkable saying about the flowers illustrates our Lord's deep appreciation of natural beauty. The flowers of Palestine are singularly splendid : these "lilies" may have been the scarlet anemone. All beauty is a witness to God, and cannot be explained on any materialistic view of the world.

grow : they toil not, neither do they spin ; yet I say unto you, Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God doth so clothe the grass in the field, which to-day is <sup>28</sup> and to-morrow is cast into the oven ; how much more *shall he clothe* you, O ye of little faith ? And seek not ye what ye shall <sup>29</sup> eat, and what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For <sup>30</sup> all these things do the nations of the world seek after : but your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. Howbeit <sup>31</sup> seek ye <sup>1</sup>his kingdom, and these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock ; for it is <sup>32</sup> your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell that ye have, and give alms ; make for yourselves <sup>33</sup> purses which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *the kingdom of God.*

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**28 the oven**, i.e. the earthen vessel, wider at the bottom than the top, which is used in the East for cooking. It is made hot by burning inside it any rough fuel that can be collected, such as the withered plants here spoken of.

**29 neither be ye of doubtful mind.** A remarkable word, peculiar to St. Luke. Literally it means to be tossed to and fro in the air or in the water, a vivid metaphor for the anxious restlessness of those who are always distressing themselves about their temporal concerns.

**30 the nations of the world.** Man, as he is by nature, uninstructed by revelation, and unconverted in soul, is naturally absorbed in the things of this world, eager and ambitious for what concerns the life of the body.

**31 Howbeit seek ye his kingdom.** Man's life has been turned aside towards wrong aims : he has failed to realise the greatness of his destiny, and so has reversed the true order and proportion of things. Christ's teaching bids him put the first things first. Not wealth or comfort are the true objects of life, but a new attitude towards God. The kingdom of God includes everything else, and if a man is whole-heartedly seeking *that*, he can trust God to provide for temporal needs.

**32 Fear not, little flock.** This discourse was addressed to the disciples, rather than the multitude : to those who had already shewn by their attitude to Christ's teaching that they were fitting subjects of the kingdom of God. The kingdom is spoken of here as a *gift* ; like the privilege of Roman citizenship.

**33 Sell that ye have, and give alms.** The early Church at first obeyed this command literally (Acts ii.). But it is clear that our Lord did not

that faileth not, where no thief draweth near, neither moth destroyeth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

*Faithful and Unfaithful Servants* (xii. 35-48)

35 Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning; and be  
 36 ye yourselves like unto men looking for their lord, when he shall  
 return from the marriage feast; that, when he cometh and  
 37 knocketh, they may straightway open unto him. Blessed are  
 those <sup>1</sup>servants, whom the lord when he cometh  
 shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he <sup>1</sup>Gr. *bond-*  
 shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, *servants.*

lay this obligation upon all His followers, though His warnings against the danger of riches and of being absorbed in worldly business are certainly very severe. So different is His teaching from the ordinary standards of human society that some have imagined that He was speaking with reference to an immediate end of the world, and laying down rules only for the very brief intervening time of preparation—"interim-ethics." But whatever the early Christians may have believed as to the nearness of the end, there is little evidence from the Gospels that our Lord contemplated it as close at hand (see p. 204). It was near to Him only because He saw things in a different perspective from that of mankind. The supreme claim of God, the certainty of judgement were to Him so all-important that they dwarfed everything else, and made it seem utter folly to spend one's life and energies on earthly "treasure." And this He laid down as the right attitude for His followers, however long the world may last.

35 **Let your loins be girded about,** etc. This passage develops the positive side of this new attitude towards God and one's own life. Instead of being absorbed and distracted in the cares of the world and the amassing of riches, Christ's followers are to regard themselves as those who have a solemn charge and responsibility. They are to be like waiting and watching servants; a favourite similitude of His. To have one's loins girded means to be ready for work and unencumbered. The flowing garments of the East require to be tucked up and held in place by a girdle, if the wearer is to do active work.

36 **when he shall return from the marriage feast.** The "lord" is the bridegroom who has gone away, according to Eastern custom, to fetch his bride by night, after partaking of the wedding feast at her father's house. He expects on his return to find his own servants

and shall come and serve them. And if he shall come in the <sup>38</sup> second watch, and if in the third, and find *them* so, blessed are those *servants*. <sup>1</sup>But know this, that if the master <sup>39</sup> of the house had known in what hour the thief was coming, he would have watched, and not have left his house to be <sup>2</sup>broken through. Be ye also <sup>40</sup> ready: for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh.

And Peter said, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or <sup>41</sup> even unto all? And the Lord said, Who then is <sup>3</sup>the <sup>42</sup> faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall set over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? Blessed is that <sup>4</sup>servant, whom his <sup>43</sup> lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth <sup>44</sup> I say unto you, that he will set him over all that he

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ready, with their lamps lighted. In v. 40 the "lord" is explained as the "Son of man," with evident allusion to the Second Advent.

**37 Blessed are those servants.** The parable here passes into a description scarcely appropriate to the ordinary relation of master and servants (contrast xvii. 7-10). Some new relationship of love and condescension between Christ and His servants is hinted at, which will be revealed at His Second Coming.

**he shall gird himself.** Cp. our Lord's own act at the Last Supper, as recorded in St. John xiii. 4, 5. See also St. John xxi. 9-13.

**38 in the third**—apparently the reference is to the ancient Jewish division of the night into three watches. The Romans had four watches.

**39 But know this.** The similitude here changes suddenly, with the same application—the necessity of a constant watch, in order to avoid dangers that threaten, as well as to discharge responsibilities.

**41 And Peter said.** The question means, is this applicable to all who seek to follow Christ, or to those who had been specially set apart by Himself, as the Twelve had already been? It really raises the further question as to whether our Lord definitely appointed or contemplated an official ministry in His Church, as distinct from the general body of believers.

**42 Who then is the faithful and wise steward?** The answer is difficult and indirect. Evidently the application of the parable is not to be limited to a few; the warning and promise are intended for all who find themselves in a position of responsibility. But indirectly the whole

45 hath. But if that <sup>1</sup>servant shall say in his heart, My <sup>1</sup>Gr. *bond-*  
 lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat *servant.*  
 the menservants and the maidservants, and to eat and drink,  
 46 and to be drunken; the lord of that <sup>1</sup>servant shall come in a  
 day when he expecteth not, and in an hour when he knoweth  
 not, and shall <sup>2</sup>cut him asunder, and appoint his  
 47 portion with the unfaithful. And that <sup>1</sup>servant, <sup>2</sup>Or, *severely*  
 which knew his lord's will, and made not ready, nor *scourge him.*  
 48 did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*; but  
 he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be  
 beaten with few *stripes*. And to whomsoever much is given,  
 of him shall much be required: and to whom they commit much,  
 of him will they ask the more.

*The Effects of Christ's First Coming* (xii. 49-53)

49 I came to cast fire upon the earth; and what will I, if it is  
 50 already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with;

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tone of the answer implies that there will be those in the Church who in a special sense are entrusted with spiritual oversight. Obviously all the servants cannot be "stewards," with the office of feeding the household. It seems that our Lord definitely intended the appointment of rulers for His Church, who would minister the word and sacraments. Cp. Acts xx. 28; 1 Cor. iv. 1.

47, 48 **with many stripes . . . with few stripes.** A gradation of punishment according to knowledge, or lack of knowledge, seems here to be clearly taught. With this passage should be compared the parables of the Talents and the Pounds (St. Matt. xxv.; St. Luke xix.), in which a similar gradation of rewards is implied. In the case of the servant who "knew not," the ignorance must be relative, not absolute; for as God is just, no punishment could be awarded where there was *no* knowledge at all. The mere fact of the man being a servant shows that he must have known something, however little.

49 **I came to cast fire upon the earth.** A difficult saying. The Baptist had spoken of our Lord's baptising men with fire. Fire has a twofold effect. It may destroy, or it may only warm and purify. Both meanings are probably included. The effect of God's revelation in Christ upon the world is both to judge the impenitent sinner, and to purify and kindle to life those who accept it. In any case the effect is

and how am I straitened till it be accomplished ! Think ye that 51  
I am come to give peace in the earth ? I tell you, Nay ; but  
rather division : for there shall be from henceforth five in one 52  
house divided, three against two, and two against three. They 53  
shall be divided, father against son, and son against father ;  
mother against daughter, and daughter against her mother ;  
mother in law against her daughter in law, and daughter in law  
against her mother in law.

*The Signs of the Times* (xii. 54-59)

And he said to the multitudes also, When ye see a cloud rising 54  
in the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower ; and so

powerful, and the world can never be the same again, as if the fire had  
not visited it.

**what will I**, etc. The meaning is somewhat obscure ; but probably  
it is an expression of eager longing for the consummation of His work.

50 **I have a baptism**, a metaphorical way of describing intense  
suffering, which, as it were, completely envelopes and changes the  
sufferer (cp. St. Mark x. 38, 39). Our Lord is clearly speaking of His  
coming Passion, through which His human nature would pass to its  
"glory."

**straitened**, i.e. hampered, restrained, held in fetters. Our Lord feels  
that the full power of His redeeming work for the world will not be  
exercised until He has passed through the appointed suffering to which  
He is hastening.

51 **Think ye that I am come to give peace in the earth?** In this  
startling saying our Lord foretells the inevitable consequences of the  
preaching of the Gospel of peace. In the face of Christ's absolute  
claim to authority, men will be compelled to range themselves either  
on His side or against Him. Truth always produces a conflict. The  
angels at Bethlehem had proclaimed the message of "peace on earth,"  
but it was peace to those "in whom God is well-pleased," i.e. the  
obedient, who will have peace with God, with themselves, and with one  
another. The history of the persecution of the Church, both by Jews  
and Gentiles, furnishes the proof of our Lord's prediction.

54 **And he said to the multitudes also.** The passage, with its strik-  
ing appeal to men's common knowledge of the signs of different sorts of  
weather, seems to return to that demand for a "sign from heaven,"  
already alluded to (xi. 16).

55 it cometh to pass. And when *ye see* a south wind blowing, *ye say*,  
 There will be a <sup>1</sup>scorching heat; and it cometh to  
 56 pass. Ye hypocrites, ye know how to <sup>2</sup>interpret the <sup>1</sup>Or, *hot*  
 face of the earth and the heaven; but how is it that <sup>2</sup>Gr. *prove*.  
 57 ye know not how to <sup>2</sup>interpret this time? And why  
 58 even of yourselves judge ye not what is right? For as thou art  
 going with thine adversary before the magistrate, on the way  
 give diligence to be quit of him; lest haply he hale thee unto the  
 judge, and the judge shall deliver thee to the <sup>3</sup>officer, <sup>3</sup>Gr. *exactor*.  
 59 and the <sup>3</sup>officer shall cast thee into prison. I say  
 unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou have  
 paid the very last mite.

a cloud rising in the west, i.e. over the Mediterranean. Cp. Elijah's little cloud "like a man's hand" (1 Kings xviii.).

56 but how is it that ye know not. Thoughtful and sincere observers, it is implied, would have already gathered from the Scriptures and the course of events that the Messianic age had come. The appearance of the Baptist, the fulfilment of Daniel's prophecies of the four kingdoms (Daniel ii., vii.), the teaching and miracles of Christ, were all signs to those who had eyes to see. By calling His hearers "hypocrites," He implies that the reason of their blindness was not so much ignorance, as insincerity.

57 And why even of yourselves. This is one of the clearest instances of our Lord's appeal to human *conscience*. Man has within himself a witness to Divine truth, if only he will be sincere and recognise its teaching.

58 For as thou art going, etc. This remarkable image occurs in a different connection in the Sermon on the Mount (St. Matt. v. 25, 26). There it is a warning not to prolong a quarrel with a brother. Here it signifies the urgency of the present crisis. Israel was in a position of grave danger, being hurried to the bar of Divine judgment. It was all-important that men should understand the signs of the time, and make their peace with God, before it was too late. It is not altogether easy, nor perhaps desirable to fix definite meanings to the details of the warning. The "magistrate" and "judge" both seem to mean God: the "officer" is either the angel of judgement, or the earthly agents of God's punishments, e.g. the Roman armies that destroyed Jerusalem. But who is the "adversary"? It has been variously interpreted as the devil, or the Law of God, or a bad conscience.

59 till thou have paid the very last mite. Probably this is to be

## CHAPTER XII

*Questions*

1. Explain "the leaven of the Pharisees."
2. What motives for courage does our Lord lay down for His disciples?
3. What is the sin which shall not be forgiven?
4. What is our Lord's teaching as to (1) covetousness, (2) worldly anxieties?
5. What does our Lord mean by the "faithful and wise steward"?
6. What did our Lord teach as to the effect of His coming on earth?

*Subject for Study*

Our Lord's purpose to provide an official ministry for His Church.

Gore, *The Church and the Ministry*.

Whitham, *Holy Orders in Oxford Library of Practical Theology*.

*The Lesson of Calamities: the Barren Fig Tree* (xiii. 1-9)

Now there were some present at that very season which told <sup>xiii. 1</sup> him of the Galilæans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their

interpreted as a forcible way of stating the terrible and searching nature of God's judgement which was threatening the Jews. Other interpretations would refer it to purgatory, or to the unending punishment of sin, according as the payment of "the very last mite" is regarded as a possibility or not.

xiii. 1 **the Galilæans.** Pilate had massacred these Galilæans while they were actually engaged in offering sacrifice at the brazen altar in the Temple, or in eating of their sacrificial banquet. Josephus records more than one occasion when Pilate perpetrated such murderous acts, as, for example, when he sent disguised soldiers, armed with daggers, amidst the crowd. Perhaps it was this outrage on the Galilæans that caused the enmity between Pilate and Herod (xxiii, 12).

- 2 sacrifices. And he answered and said unto them, Think ye that  
 these Galilæans were sinners above all the Galilæans, because they  
 3 have suffered these things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye  
 4 repent, ye shall all in like manner perish. Or those eighteen, upon  
 whom the tower in Siloam fell, and killed them, think ye that  
 they were <sup>1</sup>offenders above all the men that dwell in, *Gr. debtors.*  
 5 Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent,  
 ye shall all likewise perish.  
 6 And he spake this parable; A certain man had a fig tree

2 **Think ye that these Galilæans were sinners, etc.** It seems from our Lord's reply that those who reported this massacre to him, were thinking in the usual Pharisaic spirit, that these victims were specially guilty before God, and so had incurred this punishment. They were secretly, no doubt, also congratulating themselves on their own supposed righteousness, which had, as they imagined, preserved them. Perhaps the messengers were Jews from Jerusalem who felt a special satisfaction in reporting a calamity which had happened to the despised Galilæans. That temporal evils were always the direct result of individual sin was an idea engrained in the Jewish mind. It is reproved in the Book of Job. Cp. also St. John ix. 1-3.

3 **ye shall all in like manner perish.** This twice-repeated warning no doubt had an immediate reference to the coming destruction of Jerusalem, but it had also a wider meaning. Calamities like these, for which no immediate moral cause can be seen, are types and warning of a universal Divine judgement on sinners, in the next world, if not here.

**Or those eighteen.** This incident is unrecorded elsewhere. The "Pool of Siloam" was at the south-east corner of Jerusalem, and anciently outside the walls at the junction of the Kidron and Tyropæon valley. It consisted of two artificial reservoirs, fed by an aqueduct which Hezekiah had built from the spring of Gihon. The tower alluded to may have been part of the city wall near the Pool; or it may, as conjectured by some, have been part of the additional aqueducts built by Pilate. He had previously offended the Jews, by appropriating the Temple treasures for this purpose.

6 **A certain man had a fig tree.** The application of the parable is apparently to the nation of Israel, though it may also be applied to individuals. The nation is frequently spoken of under the figure of a vineyard: though the fig tree seems sometimes to bear the same meaning, as in the cursing of the barren tree (St. Matt. xxi. 9). The nation was morally unfruitful. God who planted it could find no fruit in it answerable to the care He had bestowed on its training.

planted in his vineyard ; and he came seeking fruit thereon, and found none. And he said unto the vinedresser, Behold, these 7 three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none : cut it down ; why doth it also cumber the ground ? And he 8 answering saith unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it : and if it bear fruit thenceforth, 9 *well* ; but if not, thou shalt cut it down.

### *Healing on the Sabbath (xiii. 10-17)*

And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath 10 day. And behold, a woman which had a spirit of infirmity 11 eighteen years ; and she was bowed together, and could in no wise lift herself up. And when Jesus saw her, he called her, and 12 said to her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. And 13 he laid his hands upon her : and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. And the ruler of the synagogue, 14 being moved with indignation because Jesus had healed on the

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7 **Behold, these three years.** Some have seen in this expression an allusion to the duration of our Lord's ministry.

**why doth it also cumber the ground?** Not only was the fruitless fig tree useless in itself ; it was occupying ground and drawing nutriment from it—ground which might be more profitably employed for planting better trees.

8 **And he answering saith unto him.** The vine-dresser seems to represent our Lord Himself, in His patience, and His labour and intercession for Israel. But the time is at hand when even these must end, and judgement be executed.

11 **a spirit of infirmity.** A curious expression, implying that this spinal curvature from which the woman was suffering was the work of an evil spirit. The Lord apparently sanctions this belief by His words "whom Satan had bound" (v. 16). He *may* have been only accommodating His words to popular ideas ; but we know too little of the ultimate causes of things to justify us in assuming this. Diseases and infirmity which are due primarily to physical causes may have behind them the work of Satan, who is permitted for some purpose to afflict mankind (see Job. i.-ii.).

14 **being moved with indignation.** The words imply a personal resentment against Christ ; not daring, apparently, to attack Him

sabbath, answered and said to the multitude, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be  
 15 healed, and not on the day of the sabbath. But the Lord answered him, and said, Ye hypocrites, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the <sup>1</sup>stall, and lead  
 16 him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan had bound, lo, *Gr. manger.*  
*these* eighteen years, to have been loosed from this bond on  
 17 the day of the sabbath? And as he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame: and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

*Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Leaven (xiii. 18-21)*

18 He said therefore, Unto what is the kingdom of God like?  
 19 and whereunto shall I liken it? It is like unto a grain of mustard

directly, the ruler abuses the people. His reference to the fourth commandment is ridiculous. To be healed by a word and a touch could not possibly be twisted into doing *work* on the Sabbath.

15 **Ye hypocrites.** The man was only a type of the Pharisee class. Our Lord here refutes them by an appeal to common sense and common practice. Humanity to animals, or care for their own profit, made them quite ready to break technically the Sabbath rules by taking their beasts to water. Much more then ought one who was no mere ox or ass, but had the high privilege, as they deemed it, of descent from Abraham, and who had been for so many years a sufferer, to be relieved at the first opportunity, even though it did occur on a Sabbath.

18 **He said therefore.** These two parables occur in a different connection in St. Matthew xiii., where, apparently, several parables bearing on the kingdom of God have been collected together. The word "therefore" suggests, however, some special connection with what has just gone before (v. 17). The joy of the multitude, in contrast with the spite and narrowness of the Pharisees and rulers, shewed that our Lord's teaching was beginning to influence the simple and open-minded. The two parables shew under their respective imagery that the teaching of the kingdom was destined to grow from small and almost unnoticed beginnings into a vast movement. They are an instance of "optimism," which must be balanced against the many gloomy sayings of our Lord about the future.

19 **It is like unto a grain of mustard seed.** From one of the smallest

seed, which a man took, and cast into his own garden; and it grew, and became a tree; and the birds of the heaven lodged in the branches thereof. And again he said, Whereunto shall <sup>20</sup>

I liken the kingdom of God? It is like unto leaven, <sup>21</sup> which a woman took and hid in three <sup>1</sup>measures of meal, till it was all leavened.

<sup>1</sup> See marginal note on Matt. xiii. 33.

*Who will be Saved? (xiii. 22-30)*

And he went on his way through cities and villages, teaching, <sup>22</sup> and journeying on unto Jerusalem. And one said unto him, Lord, <sup>23</sup> are they few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to <sup>24</sup>

of seeds, the mustard grows in the East into a huge plant "as tall as a horse and its rider." So the Church beginning at Jerusalem with a little company of one hundred and twenty (Acts i.) spread with great rapidity, and became world-wide.

**the birds of heaven.** As in Daniel iv. 12, 21, this is probably only a pictorial addition, to add vividness to the image, and is not to be pressed into any particular application.

**21 It is like unto leaven.** See note on p. 127. Leaven is something which pervades the whole, and changes its character. So the kingdom of God is an influence in the hearts of men which almost imperceptibly effects great and lasting changes. The leaven of the Church's teaching has worked moral and social reformations, not by violent attacks on society, but by gradually influencing it for good. For example, the institution of slavery is never forbidden in Scripture, but it disappeared by degrees as Christians realised the true value of the individual soul, whatever its race or station.

**22 through cities and villages.** This was probably for the most part in Perca, the region beyond Jordan, where our Lord retired after the Feast of the Dedication at Jerusalem in December (St. John x.). St. Luke seems to regard this as the final stage of His journey to Jerusalem to His Passion, which in a sense began in ix. 51.

**23 Lord, are they few that be saved?** This momentous question probably did not refer directly to final salvation. The participle used is present—"being saved." The enquirer was perhaps startled at the signs of a growing opposition to Jesus, and the open hostility of the ruling classes. He asks whether there are only few real subjects of the kingdom of God. But our Lord's answer certainly looks on to the ultimate issues of His teaching, and the great Day of final salvation or rejection.

enter in by the narrow door : for many, I say unto you, shall seek  
 25 to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the  
 master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the  
 door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at  
 the door, saying, Lord, open to us ; and he shall answer and say  
 26 to you, I know you not whence ye are ; then shall ye begin to say,  
 We did eat and drink in thy presence, and thou didst teach in our  
 27 streets ; and he shall say, I tell you, I know not whence ye are ;  
 28 depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be the  
 weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and  
 Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God,

**24 Strive to enter in.** The reply, as so often in the teaching of Christ, does not answer the question directly, but enforces the really important matter. It throws the enquirer back on himself. The individual, instead of asking about others, needs first to make sure of his own salvation. It will be no easy matter : the word "strive" literally means to "struggle in a contest," to "agonize." "The narrow door" is contrasted in St. Matthew vii, 13 with the "broad way," where the many walk to destruction. The "many," it should be noticed, do not "strive," but only "seek."

**25 When once the master of the house is risen up.** The same image is expanded in St. Matthew's parable (xxv.) of the Ten Virgins.

**26 We did eat and drink in thy presence.** There is a somewhat similar and even more awful warning in St. Matthew vii. 22. There those rejected are the hypocritical and self-deceiving Christian teachers who have done miracles in the name of Christ, but denied Him in their works. Here it is the careless hearers and lookers-on, who trust merely to their privileges of close acquaintance with Christ. They are described as "workers of iniquity," because their lives have never been changed by their knowledge of Christ. They have never repented, nor tried to obey His teaching.

**28 the weeping and gnashing of teeth.** The definite article seems to point to this being a current phrase for the final terror and discomfiture of the lost. Perhaps it was a Jewish way of describing the misery of their enemies when conquered by the Messiah. Here it is turned upon themselves. The great ancestors of Israel, from whom the Jews were proud to think themselves descended, the prophets whom they had persecuted and slain, will be seen among the saved in the kingdom of God, for their lives were in accordance with their faith : but Israel as a whole will be rejected.

and yourselves cast forth without. And they shall come from <sup>29</sup> the east and west, and from the north and south, and <sup>1</sup> Gr. *recline*. shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And behold, <sup>30</sup> there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

*Answer to the Warning against Herod (xiii. 31-35)*

In that very hour there came certain Pharisees, saying to him, <sup>31</sup> Get thee out, and go hence : for Herod would fain kill thee. And <sup>32</sup> he said unto them, Go and say to that fox, Behold, I cast out <sup>2</sup> Gr. *demons*. devils and perform cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third *day* I am perfected. Howbeit I must <sup>33</sup> go on my way to-day and to-morrow and the *day* following : for

**29 And they shall come.** From the solemn warning of the casting out of Israel, our Lord passes to predict definitely the calling and acceptance of the Gentiles from all the quarters of the world. The image used is that of a great banquet, where the accepted guests will be sitting or "reclining" (see margin) with their host, and the imposters turned out.

**31 there came certain Pharisees, etc.** This warning was doubtless insincere. There is no other evidence that Herod was actively hostile to Christ. Cp. xxiii. 8. The Pharisees wanted to get our Lord out of Peræa, which was in Herod's territory, and where He was probably more secure from their plots than in Judæa (cp. St. John xi. 7-8). The words "in that very hour" probably shew that the Pharisees were especially angry at His words just uttered about the calling of the Gentiles.

**32 Go and say to that fox.** A remarkable expression ; not indeed unsuited to the mean craftiness and cruelty of Herod, but quite as appropriate to the Pharisees, for whom perhaps it was really intended.

**to-day and to-morrow :** a common phrase, meaning "a short time longer."

**I am perfected**—this means more than "my work will be finished." Our Lord's work was bound up with His own personality. His death would be the glorifying, the making perfect of His humanity. For the thought cp. Hebrews v. 9 ; vii. 28.

**33 to-morrow and the day following.** The words are used with a slightly different shade of meaning from the similar phrase in the previous verse. Although the time was short, only "to-day and to-morrow," still during that allotted time our Lord knew that He was

34 it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her own brood under her wings, 35 and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you *desolate*: and I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

## CHAPTER XIII

*Questions*

1. What did the Jews think was the explanation of sudden calamities? What did our Lord say on that subject?

2. How did our Lord answer the ruler of the synagogue about healing on the Sabbath?

safe from Herod or any enemy, and must continue His progress to Jerusalem.

**for it cannot be that a prophet perish**, etc. There is a sad irony in these words. Jerusalem, which ought to be the centre of religion, the place where, above all others, a prophet ought to be listened to and honoured, has the monopoly, as it were, of putting prophets to death. Isaiah, Urijah (Jer. xxvi.), Zechariah the son of Jehoiada, had all suffered at Jerusalem. Jeremiah had there been insulted and ill-treated, and it was the men of Jerusalem who had carried him to Egypt and there put him to death (Jer. xliii.).

34 **O Jerusalem**. This most pathetic appeal occurs in a different connection in St. Matthew xxiii. 37. It may have been uttered in substance more than once.

**how often would I have gathered**. These remarkable words must refer either (1) to the previous visits made by our Lord to Jerusalem, recorded by St. John only; or (2) to our Lord's work for Israel before His Incarnation: He is, in that case, identifying Himself with the Jehovah of the O.T., who through the centuries had striven to instruct and convert His rebellious people. Cp. Deuteronomy xxxii. 11, where the same imagery of a bird and her nestlings is used.

35 **until ye shall say, Blessed**, etc. A quotation from Psalm cxviii., which the Jews interpreted as referring to the Messiah, so that the words of our Lord mean that He will be hidden from the Jews until they come to recognise and confess Him as the Messiah.

3. What is the meaning of the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven ?
4. How did our Lord answer the question as to the number of the saved ?
5. What did our Lord predict as to the calling of the Gentiles ?
6. What was our Lord's answer, and its meaning, to the warning to flee from Herod ?

*Subject for Study*

1. The problem of the Saved.

Church, Sermon on St. Luke xiii. 23 in *Human life and its Conditions*.

2. Our Lord's teaching as to the Gentiles.

Study St. Matthew ii. viii. 11, 12, xxiv. 14, xxv. 31-46, xxviii. 19-20.

St. Mark xii. 9, xiii. 10, xvi. 15-16.

St. Luke xi. 31-32, xiii. 29.

St. John x. 16, xii. 20-32.

Acts i. 8.

*Further Controversy about the Sabbath (xiv. 1-6)*

And it came to pass, when he went into the house of one of the xiv. 1<sup>1</sup>  
rulers of the Pharisees on a sabbath to eat bread, that they were  
watching him. And behold, there was before him a certain man 2

xiv. 1 **one of the rulers of the Pharisees.** The Pharisees had, strictly speaking, no "rulers," but probably the phrase means one of eminence or influence—a "leader."

**on a sabbath day to eat bread.** To "eat bread" was a common phrase for a meal of any sort. It might even mean a royal banquet (2 Sam. ix. 7, 10). This was evidently a great occasion, as is seen from our Lord's comments on the behaviour of the guests. It was quite customary to give grand entertainments on the Sabbath, though cooking was unlawful, and had to be done on the previous day.

2 **And, behold, there was before him.** The words taken in connection

3 which had the dropsy. And Jesus answering spake unto the  
 4 lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath,  
 4 or not? But they held their peace. And he took him, and healed  
 5 him, and let him go. And he said unto them, Which  
 5 of you shall have <sup>1</sup>an ass or an ox fallen into a well, and will not straightway draw him up on a  
 6 sabbath day? And they could not answer again  
 6 unto these things.

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *a son*. See ch. xiii. 15.

*The Vanity of Guests and Hosts Reproved (xiv. 7-14)*

7 And he spake a parable unto those which were bidden, when  
 he marked how they chose out the chief seats; saying unto  
 8 them, When thou art bidden of any man to a marriage feast,  
 "sit not down in the chief seat; lest haply a more  
 9 honourable man than thou be bidden of him, and  
 he that bade thee and him shall come and say to

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *recline not*.

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with the statement that "they were watching him," suggest that this was a designed plot. A man with dropsy would scarcely have been there in the ordinary course of things as a guest. And his disease would make him so conspicuous that they thought it could not fail to attract our Lord's notice.

3 **But they held their peace.** They were not expecting such an embarrassing question as this. As on a later occasion, when questioned about the authority of John's Baptism (p. 190), they dare not reply either "yes" or "no." The former answer would spoil their plot: the latter would make them unpopular with the multitude.

5 **Which of you,** etc. This question is somewhat similar to that propounded on the previous occasion (p. 141). There our Lord had appealed to the argument of obvious necessity: here to that of common humanity, whether to a human being (see margin) or an animal. It was an accident that might frequently happen, as water was commonly collected in pits or cisterns, and these were often unprotected.

7 **And he spake a parable.** "Parable" is here evidently used in a wide sense. Perhaps the word is used to show that our Lord's teaching has a further application than the mere taking of places at a feast.

**the chief seats.** These would be the seats in the centre of each couch. The couches were arranged like the Roman *triclinium*, round three sides

thee, Give this man place ; and then thou shalt begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest place ; that when he that hath bidden thee cometh, he may say to thee, Friend, go up higher : then shalt thou have glory in the presence of all that sit at meat with thee. For every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled ; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

And he said to him also that had bidden him, When thou 12 makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen, nor rich neighbours ; lest haply they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou 13 makest a feast, bid the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind : and thou shalt be blessed ; because they have not *wherewith* to 14 recompense thee : for thou shalt be recompensed in the resurrection of the just.

of a table—each couch accommodating three guests. The most honourable place would be next to the host himself.

10 **Friend, go up higher.** This is an obvious allusion to Proverbs xxv. 6-7, which contains a similar lesson in humility.

**then shalt thou have glory.** This is, of course, not put forward as the *motive* for taking the lowest place, which would only mean a more subtle form of vanity ; but as the *result* of such self-suppression. The "glory" will not be what a man claims for himself, but what his fellow-guests see that he is really worth in the eyes of his host.

11 **For every one that exalteth himself,** etc. This was one of our Lord's frequent sayings. In this context it evidently refers to the conditions of this present life, in which arrogance and ambition often defeat themselves. But it undoubtedly has a wider meaning, and implies that in the counsels of God there will be a great reversal in the day of final judgement, when the proud will be abased and the humble exalted.

12 **call not thy friends.** This need not be understood as forbidding hospitality to one's family, but like "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," and other similar scriptural uses of the negative, it means that to shew hospitality to those who can make no return is *preferable* in God's sight to the ordinary sort of social entertainment. It is a rebuke of social vanity and worldly ostentation.

14 **in the resurrection of the just.** The Pharisees, and indeed all Jews except the Sadducees, professed to believe in this. Cp. Daniel xii. 2-3.

*The Parable of the Great Supper (xiv. 15-24)*

15 And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the  
 16 kingdom of God. But he said unto him, A certain man made a  
 17 great supper ; and he bade many : and he sent forth  
 his <sup>1</sup>servant at supper time to say to them that were <sup>1</sup> Gr. *bond-*  
*servant.*  
 18 bidden, Come ; for *all* things are now ready. And they  
 all with one *consent* began to make excuse. The first said unto  
 him, I have bought a field, and I must needs go out and see it :  
 19 I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought  
 five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them : I pray thee have me  
 20 excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore  
 21 I cannot come. And the <sup>1</sup>servant came, and told his lord these  
 things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his  
<sup>1</sup>servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and

15 **Blessed is he**, etc. This pious remark was no doubt suggested by our Lord's words about the resurrection, which the Jews associated with the Messianic kingdom. But it would seem from the parable that follows to have been uttered in a self-complacent and Pharisaic spirit. Our Lord goes on to teach that those who thought themselves most sure of the heavenly banquet might find that they had actually refused it, and that their places would be taken by others whom they despised.

16 **A certain man made a great supper ; and he bade many.** This is a description primarily of the Divine calling of Israel. They had been "bidden," i.e. invited in advance, by their spiritual privileges, the training they had received through the Law and the prophets. This was the preparation for some greater blessing of God. The time now had come, and the final call had gone forth, through John the Baptist and others, but they were refusing it.

18 **And they all with one consent began to make excuse.** They did not apparently wish to forfeit their invitation altogether, but they found the time inconvenient. They were unwilling to make any sacrifice of their gain, their occupations or their pleasures, out of respect to their host. So the Jews were unwilling to hear the call to Christ, through their covetousness, their selfishness, their ambitions.

21 **Go out quickly into the streets and lanes.** The call is extended from the educated and religious classes in Israel, to those who were spiritually poor, etc.—"the publicans and sinners"—and they turn a ready ear (see xv. 1).

bring in hither the poor and maimed and blind and lame. And <sup>22</sup> the <sup>1</sup>servant said, Lord, what thou didst command is done, and yet there is room. And the lord said <sup>23</sup> unto the <sup>1</sup>servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and constrain *them* to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, that none of those men which were <sup>24</sup> bidden shall taste of my supper.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bond-servant*.

*Warning to Count the Cost of Discipleship* (xiv. 25-35)

Now there went with him great multitudes : and he turned, <sup>25</sup> and said unto them, If any man cometh unto me, and hateth not <sup>26</sup> his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren,

**23 Go out into the highways and hedges.** A further extension of the call, this time outside the limits of Israel altogether, to the Gentiles—the wayfarers and outcasts of the world, as the Jews considered them.

There is a similar parable to this, recorded by St. Matthew (xxii.) to have been spoken during the Holy Week. It is couched in an even severer strain, and has features of its own—probably an independent parable.

**25 Now there went with him great multitudes.** One of the most striking characteristics of our Lord's ministry comes out in this passage. He mistrusted crowds, and never tried, as He might easily have done, to make Himself a popular leader. And at this moment, when the opposition of Pharisees and rulers was growing more bitter, it would have been a tempting and natural impulse for a merely human teacher to put himself at the head of those who shewed themselves for the moment so eager to hear and follow Him. But He spoke the truth as unswervingly to the common people as to the rulers, warning them that discipleship was no mere matter of feeling and enthusiasm, but demanded entire self-sacrifice. Throughout Christ valued depth rather than mere numbers, a few who were in earnest more than a multitude who were moved with excitement.

**26 and hateth not,** etc. These relationships, however close and binding, must not be allowed to come into competition with the serving of Himself. The word "hate" cannot, of course, be interpreted literally, but it must not be evacuated of its meaning. We cannot suppose that our Lord used such expressions out of mere rhetoric. A strong word with Him has a strong meaning. Family ties, if they stand in the way of discipleship, must be rejected.

and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. 27 Whosoever doth not bear his own cross, and come after me, 28 cannot be my disciple. For which of you, desiring to build a tower, doth not first sit down and count the cost, whether he have 29 *wherewith* to complete it? Lest haply, when he hath laid a foundation, and is not able to finish, all that behold begin to mock 30 him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. 31 Or what king, as he goeth to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and take counsel whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty 32 thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he 33 sendeth an ambassage, and asketh conditions of peace. So therefore whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he 34 hath, he cannot be my disciple. Salt therefore is good: but if

**yea, and his own life also.** It is possible for a man to renounce his relationships for mere ambition or selfishness. To prevent any such misunderstanding our Lord adds that one's own life also must be "hated," i.e. one's own temporal good and self-realisation, if it hinders discipleship.

27 **Whosoever doth not bear his own cross.** See notes on the similar saying in ix. 23. Discipleship means the voluntary treading of the path to death.

28 **For which of you, desiring to build a tower.** These two examples, which are peculiar to St. Luke, may have been suggested by contemporary events. It was an age of builders; the Herods in particular were noted for their magnificent buildings. And some unfinished tower in the vicinity, the work of one whose vanity outran his means, may have given point to the illustration. Similarly, a war was at that time being waged between Herod and Hareth or Aretas of Arabia, his father-in-law. But the lesson is a general one. Worldly prudence, as our Lord on more than one occasion suggested, has its warning to the would-be disciple. He should count the cost before he begins—the complete break with his past, and the daily dying.

33 **renounceth not all that he hath:** the word translated "renounce" usually means to bid farewell to. Not necessarily the literal denuding oneself of all one's possessions is demanded, but the shaking of oneself free from them; so that to keep them or lose them matters not in comparison with following Christ.

**he cannot be my disciple.** The repetition of this phrase is noteworthy: it seems to emphasise the fact that these sacrifices which are demanded are not for the purpose of winning reward, or the joys of heaven: they

even the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned ?  
 It is fit neither for the land nor for the dunghill : *men* cast it out. <sup>35</sup>  
 He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

## CHAPTER XIV

### *Questions*

1. What faults did our Lord blame in those who attended feasts and in those who gave them ?
2. What lessons are taught in the parable of the great Supper ?
3. What did our Lord say was necessary for those who desired to be His disciples ?
4. In what different ways did our Lord use the image of " salt " ?

### *Subjects for Study*

1. Comparison of the parable of the great Supper with that of the Marriage Feast.

Trench, *Notes on the Parables*.

2. Our Lord's attitude towards popular enthusiasm

Study in addition to the teaching of this chapter such passages as St. Luke xix. 11-27, St. John vi. 15, and His injunctions of silence upon those who were healed.

are the condition of *discipleship*—the personal relationship with Christ as the Supreme Teacher ; and this in itself is the highest good, for which everything else is well lost.

**34 Salt therefore is good.** Salt is very highly valued in the East. It was believed to lose its efficacy if exposed to the air too much. On three apparently distinct occasions our Lord used this image, and with different shades of meaning. In St. Matthew v. 13 it means the influence which Christians ought to exert on the world around them ; in St. Mark ix. 50, it seems to mean the inward spirit of self-discipline which preserves the Christian from being the slave of the flesh ; here it probably refers to the enthusiasm which spurs on the disciple to make the great surrender of self, and take up the cross. If this enthusiasm is only of emotion and feeling, it will quickly cool, and the discipleship will be worthless, and only win the scorn of the world.

*Parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin (xv. 1-10)*

- xv. 1 Now all the publicans and sinners were drawing near unto him  
 2 for to hear him. And both the Pharisees and the scribes mur-  
 3 mured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.  
 4 And he spake unto them this parable, saying, What man of you,  
 5 having a hundred sheep, and having lost one of them, doth not  
 6 leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that  
 7 which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he  
 layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home,  
 he calleth together his friends and his neighbours, saying unto  
 them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost.  
 I say unto you, that even so there shall be joy in heaven over one

xv. 1 **Now all the publicans and sinners were drawing near.** For "publicans," see note on p. 30. The Pharisees associated them with "sinners," i.e. with those who were living in notorious sin. Their calling gave them special opportunities for extortion and fraud; and the bad repute in which they were held no doubt tended to make many of them as bad as they were considered.

2 **This man receiveth sinners, etc.** The Pharisees regarded "publicans and sinners" as outside the pale of recognition. They treated them with contempt and loathing. The contrast between this and our Lord's attitude was fundamental. Without palliating sin or ignoring the necessity of repentance, He nevertheless profoundly believed in the possibility of restoration of the human soul. His aim was not to cast out sinners, but to convert them. This is brought out particularly in St. Luke's Gospel, and the three parables that follow, two of which are peculiar to him; all express the same truth in different ways, viz. that God's mercy yearns to restore the individual sinner.

4 **What man of you having a hundred sheep.** This parable is also found in rather a shorter form in St. Matthew xviii. 12, 13. The lost sheep is a type of the effect of sins of ignorance; the sheep has wandered away, not knowing where it was going. The parable may be variously explained, as e.g. of the heathen, or of those who have wandered from the Church into various forms of error. It has also been thought to refer to this world visited and redeemed by the Son of God, being the one among all the worlds created by God, which by sin had gone away from Him.

7 **joy in heaven.** See note on v. 10.

sinner that repenteth, *more* than over ninety and nine righteous persons, which need no repentance.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *drachma*, a coin worth about eight pence.

Or what woman having ten <sup>1</sup>pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a lamp, and sweep the house, and seek diligently until she find it? And when she hath found it, she calleth together her friends and neighbours, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I had lost. Even so, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

**which need no repentance.** This may have been said ironically of the Pharisees, who imagined that they were in no need of repentance. Or if the last explanation of the lost sheep given above be adopted, the ninety and nine are the angels who inhabit other worlds than this, and who have never fallen into sin.

**8 Or what woman having ten pieces of silver.** The same general lesson is inculcated as in the previous parable: but there is perhaps a different shade of meaning, as the coin has been lost through no fault or act of its own. The silver drachma though lost and temporarily useless, still, however, retains its intrinsic value and the stamp of the king's image. Man, though lost in sin, is still in "the image of God," and of value to his Master. Some have seen in the woman a figure of the Church and her efforts to recover the lost, and in the lamp a figure of the Holy Spirit.

**10 joy in the presence of the angels of God.** It seems here to be taught that the angels watch, and are deeply interested in the Divine mercy searching for lost souls; and that they feel an increase of happiness in the success of that work. Cp. the remarkable words of Ephesians iii. 10.

**over one sinner that repenteth.** It is important to note this recurring phrase. There can be no restoration without repentance. In these two parables indeed both sheep and coin make no effort of themselves: but no doubt the purpose of both parables is simply to emphasise the activity and spontaneity of the Divine mercy: the *first* movement towards the recovery of the lost comes from God Himself and not from them. Nevertheless there must also be the response of penitence from the sinner; and this side is brought out fully in the third parable,

*Parable of the Prodigal Son (xv. 11-32)*

11 And he said, A certain man had two sons : and the younger  
 12 of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of <sup>1</sup>thy  
 substance that falleth to me. And he divided unto <sup>1</sup>Gr. *the*  
 13 them his living. And not many days after the  
 younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a  
 far country ; and there he wasted his substance with riotous  
 14 living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine  
 15 in that country ; and he began to be in want. And he went and  
 joined himself to one of the citizens of that country ; and he  
 16 sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have  
 been filled with <sup>2</sup>the husks that the swine did eat :  
 17 and no man gave unto him. But when he came to <sup>2</sup>Gr. *the pods*  
 himself he said, How many hired servants of my *of the carob*  
 tree.

**11 A certain man had two sons.** This parable is peculiar to St. Luke and is the special glory of his Gospel, and most characteristic of its tone and purpose. There is another but quite different parable of two sons in St. Matthew xxi., which, however, seems to refer to the same two classes as this present one ; the penitent sinner and the self-righteous (or to the heathen and the Jew). But this one stands out among all our Lord's utterances both for its profound teaching as to the attitude of God to men, and for its vivid and pictorial beauty.

**12 the portion of thy substance.** The firstborn inherited a double portion (Deut. xxi. 17). So the younger son would be entitled to a third of his father's property, but only after the death of the latter. It was an act of grace to give it during his lifetime.

**15 to feed swine.** This is a touch in the narrative which would to a Jew deepen indescribably the picture of the fall and degradation of the man. To feed swine and to share the swine's food was the lowest depth.

**16 the husks.** These, as the margin points out, were the pods of the carob tree : also called St. John's Bread, from a mistaken idea that they were the " locusts " which the Baptist ate. Both the pod and the pulp it contains are eaten by the poor.

**no man gave unto him.** So little had he gained by his lavish spending on riotous companions, that no one would even give him a share of the swine's food.

**17 when he came to himself.** A profound truth is suggested in this

father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say <sup>18</sup> unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me <sup>19</sup> as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his <sup>20</sup> father. But while he was yet afar off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *kissed him much.* <sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities add *make me as one of thy hired servants.* See ver. 19. <sup>3</sup> Gr. *bond-servants.* <sup>1</sup>kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, <sup>21</sup> I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son<sup>2</sup>. But the <sup>22</sup> father said to his <sup>3</sup>servants, Bring forth quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring the fatted <sup>23</sup> calf, *and* kill it, and let us eat, and make merry: <sup>24</sup> for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew <sup>25</sup> nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he <sup>26</sup> called to him one of the <sup>3</sup>servants, and inquired what these

phrase. Sin is not one's true self: any more than to do what one likes is true liberty. Man was made for religion, i.e. for a right and filial relationship with God, and when he comes to his true self, his right mind, he recognises it.

18 **I have sinned against heaven.** "Heaven" was a common substitute for "God" in the language of the later Jews. The prodigal, like all true penitents, recognises that his sin against his father is primarily a sin against God (cp. Ps. li. 4).

22 **But the father said.** Not only does the father hasten with pity and affection to welcome the returning sinner, he cuts short his confession; and the son instead of asking to be as one of the servants finds himself recognised again as a son, with all the insignia of sonship, the robe and the ring which no servant could wear. Here is the central lesson of the parable, that the sinner is still a son, and still has value in the eyes of God, instead of being despised and cast out, as the Pharisees treated "sinners" and Gentiles.

25 **his elder son.** The Pharisee may be meant, or the Jew in relation to the Gentile; or anyone who fails to realise the Divine Fatherhood. This portrait is sketched with great gentleness. The elder son's ex-

27 things might be. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come ;  
 and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath  
 28 received him safe and sound. But he was angry, and would not  
 go in : and his father came out, and intreated him. But he  
 29 answered and said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve  
 thee, and I never transgressed a commandment of thine, and  
 yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with  
 30 my friends : but when this thy son came, which hath devoured  
 31 thy living with harlots, thou killedst for him the fatted calf. And  
 he said unto him, 'Son, thou art ever with me, and <sup>1 Gr. Child.</sup>  
 32 all that is mine is thine. But it was meet to make  
 merry and be glad : for this thy brother was dead, and is alive  
*again* ; and *was* lost, and is found.

## CHAPTER XV

### Questions

1. Describe the difference in the attitude of our Lord from that of the Pharisees towards " publicans and sinners."
2. What parables did our Lord speak to shew the desire of God for the lost ?
3. What is meant by " joy in heaven " ?

postulation was only natural, and appeared on the surface to have some justice in it; but he had not risen to the greatness of his father's heart, or the value of his brother's soul.

**31 Son, thou art ever with me.** This is a remarkable answer. The father shews the same tenderness and consideration to the grudging elder brother as to the younger. He does not deny the service and obedience of the former ; he is taking nothing from him which is his due ; he only gently corrects the man's narrowness of soul.

**all that is mine is thine.** The younger son has had *his* share of the temporal goods of his father, and spent it. He will have no more. All that is left will belong to the elder brother. Implicit in this perhaps is the important truth that though there is joy over the returning sinner, he can never be altogether in the same position as if he had never sinned. There is a peculiar and greater blessing for those who have never so strayed away.

4. What is the meaning of the younger and the elder son in the parable of the Prodigal ?
5. What is the one condition of forgiveness as shewn in this parable ?
6. State and explain the reply to the elder son.

*Subject for Study*

Our Lord's teaching on sin and repentance.

Eck, *Sin in Oxford Library of Practical Theology*.

Moberly, *Atonement and Personality*.

Gore, *The Christian Doctrine of Sin in Lux Mundi*.

Pusey, *Lenten Sermons*.

*Parable of the Steward : the Right use of Riches (xvi. 1-13)*

And he said also unto the disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward ; and the same was accused unto him that he was wasting his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, What is this that I hear of thee ? render the account of thy stewardship ; for thou canst be no longer steward. And the steward said within himself, What shall I do, seeing that my lord taketh away the stewardship from me ? I have not strength to dig ; to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when

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xvi. 1 **There was a certain rich man, which had a steward.** This is often considered the most difficult of our Lord's parables ; perhaps because He uses an illustration from the practices of a clever rogue. But this in no way implies the approval of such conduct ; nor need the details of the parable be pressed. Our Lord was a keen observer of human nature, and He did not scruple to draw His illustrations from all sides of it. Cp. His parables of the importunate friend (p. 113), of the unjust judge (p. 173), of the master's thanklessness to his servant (p. 167).

4 **I am resolved what to do.** The only hope of a living which the threatened steward could contemplate was so to ingratiate himself with his master's debtors or tenants that he might be able to live on their charity after losing his place. With this end in view he decides to forgo his own share in the profits. This is the most probable explanation of

I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their  
 5 houses. And calling to him each one of his lord's <sup>1</sup> Gr. *baths*,  
 debtors, he said to the first, How much owest thou <sup>the bath be-</sup>  
 6 unto my lord? And he said, A hundred <sup>1</sup>measures of <sup>ing a Hebrew</sup>  
 oil. And he said unto him, Take thy <sup>2</sup>bond, and sit <sup>measure. See</sup>  
 7 down quickly and write fifty. Then said he to another, <sup>Ezek. xlv.</sup>  
 And how much owest thou? And he said, A hundred <sup>10, 11, 14.</sup>  
<sup>2</sup> Gr. *writ-*  
<sup>3</sup>measures of wheat. He saith unto him, Take thy <sup>ings.</sup>  
 8 <sup>3</sup>bond, and write fourscore. And his lord commended <sup>3</sup> Gr. *cors*,  
<sup>4</sup>the unrighteous steward because he had done wisely; <sup>the cor being</sup>  
 for the sons of this <sup>5</sup>world are for their own generation <sup>a Hebrew</sup>  
 9 wiser than the sons of the light. And I say unto you, <sup>measure. See</sup>  
 Make to yourselves friends <sup>6</sup>by means of the mammon <sup>Ezek. xlv. 14.</sup>  
 of unrighteousness; that, when it shall fail, they may <sup>4</sup> Gr. *the*  
<sup>5</sup> Or, *age.* <sup>6</sup> Gr. *out of.*

his conduct. An Oriental steward or official even to this day does not receive a fixed salary, but is allowed to make his own profit out of each transaction. Thus the steward surrenders his hundred per cent profit on the oil, and his twenty-five per cent on the wheat.

**8 And his lord commended.** Clever knavery appeals to an Oriental. The master could not help praising the astuteness of the steward in his own interests. Perhaps he now thought he had better retain in his service one who was so clever.

**the sons of this world**, i.e. those who have no thought except for the riches and successes of this life, and their own interests, in contrast with "the sons of the light" (a parallel with St. John's Gospel, see xii. 36), those who have had their eyes opened to the light of Christ's teaching and to things eternal. The former are more keen on their own welfare, as they imagine it, than the latter: "for their own generation," means as far as regards their own limited aims—well-doing and success in this present life.

**9 make to yourselves friends**, i.e. use your money to benefit other men, with open-handed generosity, instead of selfishness.

**the mammon of unrighteousness.** "Mammon" is a Syrian word for riches, probably the Evangelists have preserved the exact word our Lord used. It has sometimes, without foundation, been thought to be the name of some heathen god, and Milton has used it in this sense. Wealth is connected with "unrighteousness," not because it is evil in itself, or because it cannot be used for good, but because it is so often acquired in evil ways, tempts men to fraud and covetousness, and is often used for evil and selfish ends.

receive you into the eternal tabernacles. He that is faithful in 10  
 a very little is faithful also in much ; and he that is unrighteous  
 in a very little is unrighteous also in much. If therefore ye have 11  
 not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit  
 to your trust the true riches ? And if ye have not been faithful 12  
 in that which is another's, who will give you that  
 which is <sup>1</sup>your own ? No <sup>2</sup>servant can serve two 13  
 authorities : for either he will hate the one, and love the  
 other ; or else he will hold to one, and despise the  
<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read *our own*.  
<sup>2</sup> Gr. *household-servant*. other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

*Reproof of the Pharisees (xvi. 14-18)*

And the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these 14  
 things ; and they scoffed at him. And he said unto them, Ye 15

**they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles.** " They " is sometimes interpreted of the angels, but the most natural sense is that the poor who have been benefited by us on earth will be ready to welcome us in the world to come, when earthly riches have failed.

**10 He that is faithful,** etc. These words suggest another aspect of wealth, viz. that it is a trust from God, whether we have much or little ; a poor man may be as " unrighteous " in his use of money as a rich man.

**11 the true riches?**—there are " genuine " riches laid up in heaven, not uncertain and transitory like earthly wealth ; which will be the reward of those who have been faithful stewards of God in this world. Cp. the parables of the Pounds and the Talents.

**12 who will give you that which is your own ?** The thought is profoundly suggestive. Earthly riches are not our own ; they are neither born with us, nor go with us ; they are a temporary trust, belonging to God and not to ourselves. But the heavenly riches will be a gift which will be permanently our own, not something merely external to us, or transitory : for as St. Ambrose says, " Christ is the life of man, and He will be ours."

**13 No servant can serve two masters.** This saying also occurs in the Sermon on the Mount (St. Matt. vi. 24). It is a plain statement of fact. The soul of man is a unity, and *cannot* be devoted to two inconsistent masters. One must come first. God may be served through a right use of mammon, but not by those who put mammon *first*.

**14 And the Pharisees, who were lovers of money.** The Pharisees

are they that justify yourselves in the sight of men ; but God knoweth your hearts : for that which is exalted among men is an  
 16 abomination in the sight of God. The law and the prophets *were*  
 until John : from that time the gospel of the kingdom of God is  
 17 preached, and every man entereth violently into it. But it is  
 easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one tittle of the

had persuaded themselves that riches and prosperity were necessary rewards of piety, just as they thought calamity was a mark of God's special displeasure. They traded on their own religious reputation in order to amass money. Cp. St. Mark xii. 40 and St. Luke xi. 39. Our Lord's warning against the service of mammon touched them to the quick, and they took refuge in scorning and openly flouting what He said.

15 **that which is exalted among men.** The allusion is clearly to wealth amassed for its own sake, for worldly display and vanity. These things may dazzle the eyes of men, and be thought the greatest things in life, but to God they are an "abomination," a very strong word, something shuddered at as disgusting and profane.

16 **The law and the prophets,** etc. This and the following two verses seem to come in rather abruptly. Possibly the Pharisees were charging our Lord with teaching contrary to the Law, which had promised temporal wealth and prosperity as rewards for obedience. In answer to this He seems to be laying down two complementary truths : (1) A new era has begun with the Gospel ; a new spirit is working and new ideals are set before men ; (2) the fundamental principles of the O.T. are eternal, and these the Pharisees ignore.

**until John,** i.e. John the Baptist's teaching was the closing prophetic word of the old covenant. He ended one epoch and introduced another.

**every man entereth violently into it.** This difficult saying appears in another form in St. Matthew xi. 12. The door of the kingdom of God is now set open, but it needs a violent effort to enter it, especially for men like the Pharisees who were fast-bound by prejudice and tradition, and set obstinately in their own groove.

17 **But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass.** Cp. St. Matthew v. 18. The strongest possible language is used to emphasise the eternal character of the teaching of the Old Testament. The word translated "tittle," a very small thing, literally means a "horn," i.e. the small projection which marks the distinction between certain similar letters in the Hebrew alphabet, e.g.  $\gamma = d$ ,  $\gamma = v$ . Clearly our Lord's words must be understood in their general meaning, rather than literally,

law to fall. Every one that putteth away his wife, and marrieth <sup>18</sup> another, committeth adultery : and he that marrieth one that is put away from a husband committeth adultery.

*The Rich Man and Lazarus (xvi. 19-31)*

<sup>1</sup> Or, *living in mirth and splendour every day.* Now there was a certain rich man, and he was <sup>19</sup> clothed in purple and fine linen, <sup>20</sup> *faring sumptuously every day* : and a certain beggar named Lazarus was <sup>20</sup>

otherwise we should be tied not merely to the verbal inspiration of the O.T. but even to the sanctity of every letter. This is clearly impossible, for the actual text of the O.T. varied considerably in different copies and versions. The Septuagint, the Greek version which was practically the Bible of the early Christian Church, shews marked differences from the present Hebrew. In the Hebrew texts again there are well known variations : certain words were by tradition read in a different way from that in which they were written (called the *Q'ri read*, and the *K'thib written*). And the modern Hebrew text does not represent the original exactly, for (1) the vowel points were all added at a date subsequent to our Lord's time ; (2) the present text is only one out of many : the late Rabbis are said to have selected one text as the authorised standard, and ordered all the others to be destroyed. Our Lord, therefore, is referring to the great moral and religious principles of the O.T. and not to the mere letter.

**18 Every one that putteth away his wife.** This is the only passage in which St. Luke records our Lord's uncompromising teaching on the indissolubility of marriage. Cp. St. Matthew v. 32 ; xix. 3-9 ; St. Mark x. 2-12. The apparent exception allowed in St. Matthew does not appear at all in St. Mark and St. Luke. The saying is apparently introduced here in this connection, because the Pharisees, the pretended champions of the O.T., conveniently ignored its teaching on marriage, both in Genesis ii. 23, 24 and in Malachi ii. 14-16, and interpreted the solitary concession of Moses, Deuteronomy xxiv. 1-2 (given, as our Lord said, only "for the hardness of men's hearts"), as justifying divorce for the most trivial reasons.

The Christian Church, following our Lord's teaching, has always considered marriage as indissoluble except by death, and has forbidden divorce ; or more exactly, while allowing in some cases separation of husband and wife, has forbidden the re-marriage of either during the lifetime of the other.

**19 Now there was a certain rich man.** This terrible and moving picture of the life after death, and the retribution which there awaits

21 laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the  
*crumbs* that fell from the rich man's table; yea, even the  
 22 dogs came and licked his sores.... And it came to pass, that the  
 beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into  
 Abraham's bosom: and the rich man also died, and was buried.  
 23 And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth  
 24 Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and  
 said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus,  
 that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my  
 25 tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame. But Abraham said,

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the selfish, is peculiar to St. Luke. It can scarcely be described as a parable; it is more like a description of actual events disclosed by One who *knew*. The story is clothed in characteristic Jewish imagery, and we probably are not justified in pressing a literal interpretation of the details. Nevertheless, the continuity of this life and the next, retribution and reward, the recognition of each other by the dead, and their remembrance of the past, seem all to be clearly taught.

**purple and fine linen:** the most expensive and ostentatious garb; purple was the colour of royalty, obtained from the *murex* of Tyre; the fine linen was the *byssus* of Egypt, which was extraordinarily costly.

**20 a certain beggar named Lazarus.** This is the only place in our Lord's word-pictures where a proper name is given, which again distinguishes the story from a parable. The name may be given here, in contrast with the unnamed rich man, to shew the different standard of values with God. Everybody would know the rich man's name; the beggar would be unnoticed on earth. But it should also be noted that Lazarus (=Eliezer) means "helped by God," and the symbolism of names in Scripture would suggest that the beggar was a man of piety. Our Lord never taught that rich men are condemned for their riches alone, nor that poor men are saved merely because of their poverty.

**22 Abraham's bosom.** A metaphorical expression current among the Jews, signifying the state of the blessed in Paradise. Lazarus is portrayed as reclining at a banquet, next to the patriarch; that is, in the place of highest honour. This position at the table is similarly described in St. John xiii. 23, 25.

**23 in Hades.** The more indefinite word for the after-death is used: in itself meaning only the "unseen" place, and taking its colour from the context. The soul of the rich man is suffering torment, but whether this is the final state (called elsewhere Gehenna), or an intermediate or purgatorial condition, is left undecided.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *Child*. <sup>1</sup> Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things: but now here he is comforted, and thou art in anguish. And <sup>26</sup>  
<sup>2</sup> Or, *in all these things*. <sup>2</sup> beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, that they which would pass from hence to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from thence to us. And he said, I pray thee therefore, father, <sup>27</sup>  
 that thou wouldest send him to my father's house; for I have <sup>28</sup>  
 five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. But Abraham saith, They have <sup>29</sup>  
 Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, <sup>30</sup>  
 father Abraham: but if one go to them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the <sup>31</sup>  
 prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead.

**25 thy good things.** There is a solemn irony in the words. The rich man had received the things which *he* considered to be good, and beyond which he had no desires.

**27 I pray thee therefore, father.** It has been urged that a totally lost soul could hardly be represented as praying for others or desiring their repentance. And though Abraham denies his request, he still addresses him as "child." On the other hand, the stern language about the great and impassable "gulf" seems the denial of hope. The final destiny of the rich man is left in awful obscurity.

**31 If they hear not Moses and the prophets.** Unbelief in God's revelation was the secret of the sin of the rich man and his brethren. And this revelation, as given in the O.T., was sufficient, if they had listened to it, to shew them the wickedness of a life lived for self, and in disregard of the poor. It is not the *amount* of evidence, nor its startling character, that convinces the sinner. The failure lies in himself.

**if one rise from the dead.** The wording is remarkable. The rich man had asked that a spirit might return from the dead and bear witness. Neither that nor even the greater miracle of a "resurrection" would convince those who turned a deaf ear to Moses and the prophets. There may be an allusion to the raising of Lazarus of Bethany from the dead (St. John xi.), which only hardened and embittered the opposition of the Pharisees. But we can scarcely miss the further allusion to our Lord's own Resurrection, which would fail to convince those who would not be convinced.

## CHAPTER XVI

*Questions*

1. What was the device adopted by the unjust steward ?
2. What do you think is the lesson of the parable ?
3. What is the teaching of our Lord as to the right use of riches ?
4. What did our Lord teach (1) as to the permanent value of the Old Testament, (2) as to divorce ?
5. What may be gathered from the story of the rich man and Lazarus as to the life after death ?
6. What was the nature of the rich man's sin ?

*Subjects for Study*

1. Our Lord's teaching on Riches.  
Study the passages in St. Luke,  
Gore, *Sermon on the Mount*.
2. Our Lord's teaching on Divorce.  
*Divorce* in Murray's Bible Dictionary.  
Watkins, *Holy Matrimony*.
3. Punishment after death.  
Pusey, *What is of Faith as to Everlasting Punishment ?*  
Gore, *The Religion of the Church*.  
Streeter, *Immortality*.  
Edersheim, *Life and Times*, Appendix xix.

*Teaching on Responsibility for Others (xvii. 1-4)*

And he said unto his disciples, It is impossible but that occasions <sup>xvii. 1</sup> of stumbling should come : but woe unto him, through whom they come ! It were well for him if a millstone were hanged about <sup>2</sup> his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, rather than that he should cause one of these little ones to stumble. Take heed to <sup>3</sup> yourselves : if thy brother sin, rebuke him ; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he sin against thee seven times in the day, <sup>4</sup> and seven times turn again to thee, saying, I repent ; thou shalt forgive him.

xvii. 1 **It is impossible.** Our Lord does not deal with philosophical problems as to the origin or nature of evil, or explain *why* "it is impossible." He only deals with the plain facts of life as He finds them—the impossibility in this present world of preventing temptations to sin being presented by one man to another. He only warns in the most solemn manner against having any share in this ourselves.

**occasions of stumbling,** literally "scandals," i.e. snares or stumbling-blocks ; words or actions which tend to make a brother sin.

2 **one of these little ones :** both children and innocent, childlike persons are included in this description. So great is our Lord's horror of the perversion of innocence that He says that not merely is death preferable to doing this, but a death of the most ignominious character.

3 **Take heed to yourselves.** It is remarkable that this personal warning is closely joined with the warning of our responsibility for others. The religion of Christ is essentially *social* ; we are not taking care of our own souls, if we ignore the sins or the penitence of our brethren.

**rebuke him.** This is often the way to check "occasions of stumbling." Forgiveness is no light or indiscriminate thing, as if sin could be ignored. The sin must be brought home to the sinner, in the hope of his repenting ; and repentance is the condition of pardon.

4 **And if he sin against thee seven times in the day.** Seven is, of course, only a general expression for a large number. The Jewish teachers limited forgiveness to three offences. With this verse cp. St. Matthew xviii. 21-35. St. Peter asks there whether he is to forgive "until seven times." Assuming that that was a later occasion, it seems as if St. Peter were referring to our Lord's previous teaching in this passage, under the impression that the "seven" was to be interpreted literally.

*Teaching On Faith and Humility* (xvii. 5-10)

5 And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith. And  
 6 the Lord said, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye would  
 say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou rooted up, and be thou  
 7 planted in the sea; and it would have obeyed you. But who is  
 there of you, having a <sup>1</sup>servant plowing or keeping  
 sheep, that will say unto him, when he is come in <sup>1</sup> Gr. *bond-*  
 8 from the field, Come straightway and sit down to *servant.*  
 meat; and will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I

5 **Increase our faith.** The connection with the previous passage is somewhat obscure. It may be that the apostles had been deeply impressed by the teaching in chapter xvi. They felt that to sacrifice this world and its pleasures was a task that needed strong faith in the unseen. But the most remarkable thing is the request itself. It is one that naturally could only be addressed to God. Even if the apostles had not as yet formulated a definite belief in our Lord's Divinity, they had reached the point of recognising Him as the giver of spiritual powers and the Lord of the soul of man.

6 **If ye have faith,** etc. The answer to the request is a lesson in humility. They had spoken as if they already had faith and only desired its increase. They are told in effect that they are barely as yet at the beginning. Even the very smallest amount of real faith is enough to work miracles.

**ye would say unto this sycamine tree**—an illustration evidently drawn from objects close at hand (the "sycamine" is the mulberry). It is a pictorial way of describing the accomplishment of some work which would be impossible by nature. Faith has access to a higher power, the power of the Creator and Ruler of nature. No miracle is impossible to faith, except what is contrary to the will of God. Cp. St. Matthew xxi. 21, 22.

7 **But who is there of you?** The connection of this passage, somewhat obscure at first sight, seems to be that miracles wrought by faith must not be allowed to stir up pride or self-conceit in the human worker. He is but the servant of a higher power, and "unprofitable" at that. The illustration from the ordinary attitude of men towards their servants, taking their service as a matter of course, must not be understood as a full or exact statement of God's attitude to His servants, but as one of our Lord's frequent illustrations from human nature and its ways, just to enforce some one particular lesson.

may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterwards thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he<sup>9</sup> thank the <sup>1</sup>servant because he did the things that were commanded? Even so ye also, when ye shall<sup>10</sup> have done all the things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable <sup>2</sup>servants; we have done that which it was our duty to do.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bond-servant*.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *bond-servants*.

### *The Ten Lepers (xvii. 11-19)*

<sup>3</sup> Or, *as he was*. And it came to pass, <sup>3</sup>as they were on the way<sup>11</sup> to Jerusalem, that he was passing <sup>4</sup>through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a<sup>12</sup> certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: and they lifted up their voices, saying, Jesus,<sup>13</sup> Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto<sup>14</sup> them, Go and shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when<sup>15</sup> he saw that he was healed, turned back, with a loud voice glorify-

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**10 We are unprofitable servants.** A rebuke to the constant Jewish idea that the performance of duty in detail constituted some sort of claim on God. Beyond all commandments is the Divine ideal of perfection, which is ever above us.

**11 through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.** This journey was probably the last visit of our Lord to the country west of Jordan until He went to Jerusalem for the final Passover. It is difficult to fit it into the other records, but apparently He was avoiding Samaria, owing to the inhospitality of its inhabitants, and was moving eastward between the two countries down to the fords of the Jordan near Beth-shean, intending to travel through Peræa.

**12 which stood afar off.** The lepers were observing the Law (Lev. xiii. 45, 46). See notes on v. 12.

**14 Go and shew yourselves unto the priests.** This was a strong demand on their faith; for they knew it would be useless for them to appear before the priests as they were. The priest could not cure leprosy, but only pronounce a supposed leper to be healed, and offer the required sacrifices for his restoration to society.

**15 with a loud voice.** This in itself was a sign that the leprosy had

16 ing God; and he fell upon his face at his feet, giving him  
 17 thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus  
 answering said, Were not the ten cleansed? but <sup>1</sup>Or, *There*  
 18 where are the nine? <sup>1</sup>Were there none found that *were none*  
 returned to give glory to God, save this <sup>2</sup>stranger? *found...save*  
 19 And he said unto him, Arise, and go thy way: thy *this stranger.*  
 faith hath <sup>3</sup>made thee whole. <sup>2</sup>Or, *alien.*  
*Or, saved*  
*thee.*

*The Coming of the Kingdom of God (xvii. 20-37)*

20 And being asked by the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God  
 cometh, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh  
 21 not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo,  
 here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is <sup>4</sup>Or, *in the*  
<sup>4</sup>within you. *midst of you.*

left him. The leper's voice is faint and indistinct. The ten had to make an effort to be heard (v. 12) before they were cleansed.

**17 where are the nine?** Probably our Lord recognised in this ingratitude a type of the Jewish nation. The despised Samaritan, the "stranger," was, on the other hand, prophetic of the future obedience and gratitude of the Gentile world. St. Luke alone records the incident, which was one that would specially appeal to him.

**19 thy faith hath made thee whole.** Evidently some further gift is implied than mere bodily cleansing. All had some faith, and all had been healed; but this grateful Samaritan no doubt received forgiveness and blessing which the others missed. Cp. our Lord's words to the paralytic (v. 20-24) to the "woman which was a sinner" (vii. 50): and to the woman with an issue of blood (viii. 48).

**20 not with observation.** The exact force of the word is uncertain. Its literal meaning is "careful or anxious watching," from which it may pass into the sense of outward display which strikes the eye, and draws out such exclamations as Lo, here! etc. (v. 21). Whatever the exact shade of meaning, the general sense is quite clear. The Pharisees were looking for visible signs, great and startling miracles, which they thought would herald the coming of the kingdom. This error is corrected in the next verse.

**21 the kingdom of God is within you.** If this translation is adopted, our Lord means that the kingdom will not flash upon men's eyes with strange and sudden portents: it has already begun within men themselves, in the unseen chambers of the soul. It begins in penitence, and

And he said unto the disciples, The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. And they shall say to you, Lo, there! Lo, here! go not away, nor follow after them: for as the lightning, when it lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall the Son of man

be in his day. But first must he suffer many things and be rejected of this generation. And as it came to pass in the days of Noah, even so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit in his day.

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a new attitude towards God. If the marginal version is adopted, the Pharisees are being told that the kingdom is not some great national or world-movement not yet revealed, but already exists in the company of believers, the disciples of Christ, the "little flock," the hidden beginnings of the Church.

**22 And he said unto the disciples.** This is a mysterious and difficult saying. Our Lord seems to be warning His disciples that they themselves, or their successors, will in time to come be perplexed at the delay of His coming. Like the Pharisees, they will be asking "when?" and their questionings will appear to be unanswered. Hence they will be tempted to follow false teachers and false reports. It is difficult to understand the exact force of the words "one of the days"—the singular "day"—as in *v. 24*, is the usual expression both in O.T. and N.T. It may be that our Lord is hinting at the truth that this prediction of His "coming" will have more than one fulfilment in Christian history (cp. *v. 26*).

**24 for as the lightning.** When the Son of man *does* "come," whether it be in the fall of Jerusalem, or in any great cataclysm of history, or finally at the end of the world, there will be no mistaking it. His coming will be as evident, as all-illuminating, as terrible, as the lightning. Therefore His disciples need not, any more than the Pharisees of *v. 20*, look for signs and portents. If they hold fast in faith, they will recognise His coming with no possibility of mistake.

**25 But first must he suffer many things.** It is quite clear from this that our Lord is speaking of a further coming of Himself after the time of His Passion and humiliation. He cannot merely be referring to His Resurrection. The whole passage implies lapse of time, hope deferred, the unbelief of the world, and at last a startling manifestation clear to all.

day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and  
 28 destroyed them all. Likewise even as it came to pass in the days  
 of Lot; they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they  
 29 planted, they builded; but in the day that Lot went out from  
 Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed  
 30 them all: after the same manner shall it be in the day that the  
 31 Son of man is revealed. In that day, he which  
 shall be on the housetop, and his goods in the house,  
 let him not go down to take them away: and let  
 him that is in the field likewise not return back.  
 32 Remember Lot's wife. Whosoever shall seek to gain  
 his <sup>1</sup>life shall lose it: but whosoever shall lose his <sup>2</sup>life  
 34 shall <sup>2</sup>preserve it. I say unto you, In that night there  
 shall be two men on one bed; the one shall be taken,  
 35 and the other shall be left. There shall be two women  
 grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the  
 37 other shall be left.<sup>3</sup> And they answering say unto

<sup>1</sup> Or, *soul.*

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *save it alive.*

<sup>3</sup> Some ancient authorities add ver. 36: *There shall be two men in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.*

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26 **And as it came to pass**, etc. The rest of this discourse (vv. 26-37) is found in a different connection in St. Matthew xxiv., where it forms part of the great eschatological discourse on the Mount of Olives. Two signal instances from the O.T. of men overtaken unawares in the midst of their ordinary pursuits, by some overwhelming catastrophe, are used as illustrations of what will happen in "the days of the Son of man."

31 **In that day, he which shall be on the housetop.** These warnings would seem more directly applicable to some great temporal calamity, like the fall of Jerusalem, than to the end of the world. The instructions not to wait to gather up one's possessions in the house would be directly applicable to those who were fleeing from hostile armies.

Probably here, as plainly in St. Matthew xxiv., the two predictions are interwoven, the one being a type and anticipation of the other.

32 **Remember Lot's wife.** See Genesis xix. 26; Wisdom x. 7. Those who are escaping for their life must not stay even for a last look back upon what they are compelled to leave. Life is more precious than either goods or sentiment.

33 **Whosoever shall seek to gain his life.** At first sight this verse seems a direct contradiction of the preceding warnings. The disciples have just been told to save their lives at all costs. Evidently there must be some wider and spiritual meaning behind the words. They apply to something greater than the escape of Christians from the city

him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Where the body is,  
<sup>1</sup> Or, *vultures*. thither will the eagles also be gathered together.

## CHAPTER XVII

### Questions

1. What is the meaning of "occasions of stumbling"?
2. What did our Lord teach with regard to them?
3. Why did the apostles ask to have their faith increased?
4. What was our Lord's answer?

of Jerusalem, when the Roman armies were approaching—some trial in which a man can only save his real life by his willingness to sacrifice his bodily life. It will be a crisis in which not swiftness and skill to utilise ways of escape, but *character*, will save a man. This is further hinted at in the mysterious words that follow, as to the separation of individuals.

**34 In that night.** The allusion to night adds a mysterious awfulness to this picture of swift and inevitable division. The day of the Son of man, while it will be universal in its effect on the world, will not affect all alike. Some will be prepared for it and others not. At present both classes live and work side by side (the omitted *v.* 36 comes from St. Matt. xxiv. 40); but when Christ comes they will at once be separated. And *v.* 33 implies that the standard of separation will be the life lived for self, or the life sacrificed.

**37 Where, Lord?** The Pharisees had asked "when?" The awestruck disciples ask "where?" No direct answer is given; indeed our Lord's reply is one of the most enigmatic of His utterances. It may mean that just as by instinct the vultures can wing their way to the carrion they feed on, so the intuition of the Christian faithful will discover, in the last days, when and where Christ is at hand. Another meaning often assigned is, that the eagles\* of destruction (perhaps there is an allusion to the eagle-standards of Rome) are always ready to fall upon a nation or a church that is corrupt and lifeless. And such great catastrophes of history may be recognised as in some sense "days of the Son of man," when Christ is manifested in judgment.

\* The word may mean either vultures or eagles according to the context.

5. Describe the healing of the ten lepers.

6. What blessing was given to the thankful Samaritan? Quote other similar instances.

7. What was our Lord's reply to the Pharisees about the coming of the kingdom of God?

8. What instances from the O.T. did our Lord quote with reference to the condition of mankind at His coming?

9. Shew that our Lord's teaching about His coming must have a further reference than to the fall of Jerusalem.

### *Subjects for Study*

1. Our Lord's use of illustrations from the ordinary ways of human life and society.

Collect and compare instances from the Gospels.

2. Our Lord's eschatological teaching.

Streeter, *The Historic Christ in Foundations*.

M. Jones, *The New Testament in the Twentieth Century*, vi. *Eschatology* in Hastings' Dictionary.

*Teaching on Prayer* : (1) *the Parable of the Importunate Widow*  
(xviii. 1-8)

xviii. 1 And he spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought  
2 always to pray, and not to faint; saying, There was in a city a  
3 judge, which feared not God, and regarded not man: and there  
was a widow in that city; and she came oft unto him, saying,

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xviii. 1 **that they ought always to pray.** This parable, as seen from *vv. 7-8*, is connected with the teaching of the previous chapter. The apparent delay of Christ's coming, and of the manifestation of God's justice will be a trial of faith to Christians. There will be all the more need for persistent prayer.

**not to faint**, i.e. not to turn coward, and fail in the labour of prayer, even though it long seem unanswered.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Do me justice of:* and so in ver. 5, 7, 8. <sup>1</sup> Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for <sup>4</sup> a while: but afterwards he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because <sup>5</sup> this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest she <sup>6</sup> wear me out by her continual coming. And the Lord <sup>6</sup> said, Hear what <sup>3</sup> the unrighteous judge saith. And <sup>7</sup> shall not God avenge his elect, which cry to him day and night, and he is longsuffering over them? I say <sup>8</sup> unto you, that he will avenge them speedily. Howbeit when the Son of man cometh, shall he find <sup>4</sup> faith on the earth?

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *bruise.*  
<sup>3</sup> Gr. *the judge of unrighteousness.*  
<sup>4</sup> Or, *the faith.*

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**6 Hear what the unrighteous judge saith.** Another illustration from ordinary human dealings. Our Lord draws His lessons even from the ways of bad men. If even a hard-hearted and unjust judge is compelled to do justice by the mere persisting of a suppliant, how much more will the righteous judge of all mankind answer the persevering prayer of His Church for justice!

**7 And shall not God avenge his elect?** God's "elect" or chosen ones are the men of faith, whom He has chosen out of the world and called into His Church, and who justify their "election" by persevering in prayer. He will "avenge" them, not so much in the sense of wreaking vengeance upon their enemies, as by the clear manifestation of the triumph of righteousness in the world, rewarding goodness and destroying evil. The dead as well as the living are represented in Revelation vi. 9-11, as joining in this perpetual cry for justice to God.

**and he is longsuffering over them.** "Longsuffering" in the sense of a pitiful patience with the errors and impatience of men is more naturally thought of as exercised towards sinners than the "elect." But the "elect," too, may be impatient and in need of God's longsuffering.

**8 he will avenge them speedily.** What seems long to men may be very "speedy" in the sight of God.

**shall he find faith on the earth?** A mysterious question to which no answer is given, though a negative seems implied. As the words stand, it would seem as if our Lord were anticipating some great eclipse of the Church's faith before His coming. And this is predicted in other parts of Scripture (St. Matt. xxiv. 12; 2 Thess. ii. 3; Rev. xiii. 7, 8). The margin reads "the faith." This can scarcely be understood in the later N.T. sense of the body of Christian truth, as summarised in the Creeds. Another interpretation is "faith in this," i.e. in the triumph of God's righteousness in the second coming of Christ.

(2) *The Parable of the Pharisee and Publican* (xviii. 9-14)

9 And he spake also this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and set <sup>1</sup>all <sup>1</sup>Gr. *the rest*.  
 10 others at nought : Two men went up into the temple  
 11 to pray ; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The  
 Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee,  
 that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers,  
 12 or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week ; I give tithes  
 13 of all that I get. But the publican, standing afar off, would not  
 lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote his breast,  
 14 saying, God, <sup>2</sup>be merciful to me <sup>3</sup>a sinner. I say <sup>2</sup>Or, *be pro-*  
 unto you, This man went down to his house justified <sup>2</sup>*pitiated.*  
 rather than the other : for every one that exalteth <sup>3</sup>Or, *the*  
 himself shall be humbled : but he that humbleth <sup>3</sup>*sinner.*  
 himself shall be exalted.

11 **The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself.** The phrase suggests the self-centredness of the religion of the Pharisee. His prayer was lacking in all the characteristics of true prayer. He neither confessed sin nor asked for grace, nor shewed a charitable spirit to his neighbour. It is a vivid picture of the perfectly satisfied attitude, which takes pleasure in its own scrupulosity, and its supposed superiority to other men ; which has no reverence for the holiness of God, nor humility about oneself. The Pharisee puts himself on a pedestal and assumes that all other men are beneath him.

12 **I fast twice in the week.** It was a Pharisaic tradition to fast on Mondays and Thursdays. The Law had commanded only one fast in the year, the Day of Atonement, though others had gradually been added (cp. Zech. viii. 19). Similarly the Law only prescribed tithes of corn, wine, oil, and cattle. The Pharisees extended it to every sort of income, even the small produce of the garden.

13 **God, be merciful to me a sinner.** As in the margin " the sinner." The Pharisee had thought of himself as righteous before God beyond all others : the Publican thinks of himself as the chief of sinners.

14 **justified**, i.e. " just " in the sight of God—perhaps the nearest equivalent word is " forgiven." Penitence and God's forgiveness are the first and absolute necessities in religion. The Pharisee never thought of either.

*Becoming as Little Children* (xviii. 15-17)

And they brought unto him also their babes, that he should touch them : but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, saying, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not : for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein.

*The Rich Ruler's Question* (xviii. 18-30)

And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good <sup>18</sup>  
<sup>1</sup> Or, *Teacher*. <sup>1</sup> Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life ? And <sup>19</sup>

**15 And they brought unto him also their babes.** The position of this incident in St. Matthew and St. Mark shews that our Lord was at this time teaching in Peræa, the district east of Jordan. St. Luke apparently records more of this period than the other evangelists, though it is somewhat difficult to allot the events. The bringing of these infants to Jesus came opportunely for clenching the lessons He had just been giving : of perseverance in prayer, childlike trust in the Father, and humility.

**they rebuked them.** Apparently the pride of the disciples revolted against the idea of their Master's time and attention being called to those who were unconscious, and in their eyes insignificant.

**16 for of such is the kingdom of God.** The childlike character marks the true member of the kingdom of God. The simplicity, the dependence on parents, the humble acceptance of teaching, which are features of childhood, stand out in strong contrast to the impatience, the pride, the self-righteousness which have been shewn up in the preceding parables. With our Lord's teaching here cp. St. John iii. 3.

The parallels in St. Matthew xix. and St. Mark x. furnish some further interesting details. The incident is appealed to by the Church in the Baptismal office as the great justification of infant Baptism. Some have also seen in our Lord's laying His hands on the children an anticipation of the ordinance of Confirmation.

**18 And a certain ruler.** This remarkable incident is recorded with some notable variations of detail by all the three Synoptists. The parallels (St. Matthew xix. ; St. Mark x.) should be compared. The man was probably one of the "rulers of the synagogue" (p. 40).

Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good ? none is good, 20 save one, *even* God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false 21 witness, Honour thy father and mother. And he said, All these 22 things have I observed from my youth up. And when Jesus heard it, he said unto him, One thing thou lackest yet : sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure 23 in heaven : and come, follow me. But when he heard these things, 24 he became exceeding sorrowful ; for he was very rich. And Jesus

St. Matthew tells us he was young. His question was evidently sincere, but framed with the usual Jewish narrowness and self-centredness. He thought eternal life could be won by certain specified acts, and that such obedience would constitute a sort of claim on God. He was anxious to hear from the new Teacher what acts of righteousness would most certainly produce this result.

**19 Why callest thou me good?** There is no emphasis in the original on the word "me," as is often erroneously given by the English reader. Our Lord is neither denying His own goodness, nor His Divinity. He is trying to make the questioner *think*. The latter had used "good" as a mere compliment. St. Matthew states the question and our Lord's answer somewhat differently. "What good thing shall I do, etc." . . . "Why askest thou me concerning that which is good?" But in each case the questioner is being thrown back on first principles. To the ordinary Jew, the first place in his thoughts was occupied by himself and his own righteousness. Christ puts God and God's goodness first.

**20 Thou knowest the commandments.** There is a tacit rebuke to the questioner in this. He had asked about "doing" things—and is referred to the clear commandments of God in the O.T. What more does he want than these ?

**22 One thing thou lackest.** Our Lord does not criticise the ruler's reply, as He might have done. The real question is not what we do, but what we *are*. Commandments are only helps to the formation of character ; to that fixed attitude of soul which sets God and one's neighbour before self, one's own righteousness, even one's own salvation. Has this keeping of commandments from his youth enabled the questioner to reach this? Our Lord applies a crucial test. Is he ready to surrender everything in this life for God and his fellowmen? The command to sell everything and distribute to the poor was not laid by our Lord upon all His followers ; but it was the right thing for this

seeing him said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to enter in <sup>25</sup> through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they that heard it said, Then who can be <sup>26</sup> saved? But he said, The things which are impossible with men <sup>27</sup> are possible with God. And Peter said, Lo, we have left <sup>28</sup> <sup>1</sup>our own, and followed thee. And he said unto them, <sup>29</sup> <sup>1</sup>Or, *our own* homes. Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or wife, or brethren, or parents, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive mani- <sup>30</sup> <sup>2</sup>fold more in this time, and in the <sup>2</sup>world to come eternal life.

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particular case, and the underlying principle is the same for every one. All who desire eternal life must be ready to surrender all to God.

**24 How hardly**, i.e. how difficult they will find it! The word implies "distaste," "repugnance," as of some one who turns away from food that is unpalatable.

**25 For it is easier for a camel**, etc. This was no doubt a proverbial expression for anything of very great difficulty. A camel naturally represents something big, clumsy, and difficult to manage. Some prosaic interpreters have imagined that the "needle's-eye" refers to some small gate in the walls of Jerusalem, or that a "camel" means a thick rope. But there is no need of such explanations.

**26 Then who can be saved?** It was a constant Jewish idea that riches were a sign of God's special favour; and also perhaps it seemed easier to them for a rich man, who had so many opportunities of charity, to be saved than a poor man.

But in our Lord's mind, riches which tend more than anything else to make a man satisfied with himself and this present scheme of things, are one of the greatest obstacles to that complete self-surrender to God which He desired.

**29 Verily I say unto you.** Rewards are promised to all who make the great surrender: "in this time," the new and better relationships which are given in the brotherhood of the Catholic Church (see the parallels in St. Matthew and St. Mark); and hereafter, the possession of eternal life, which transcends all that worldly wealth or prosperity can give.

*The Passion more fully foretold* (xviii. 31-34)

31 And he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold,  
 we go up to Jerusalem, and all the things that are written  
 by the prophets shall be accomplished unto the Son,<sup>1</sup> Or, *through*,  
 32 of man. For he shall be delivered up unto the  
 Gentiles, and shall be mocked and shamefully entreated, and spit  
 33 upon: and they shall scourge and kill him: and the third day he  
 34 shall rise again. And they understood none of these things;  
 and this saying was hid from them, and they perceived not the  
 things that were said.

*The Blind Man of Jericho* (xviii. 35-43)

35 And it came to pass, as he drew nigh unto Jericho, a certain  
 36 blind man sat by the way side begging: and hearing a multitude  
 37 going by, he inquired what this meant. And they told him, that  
 38 Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou

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31 **Behold, we go up to Jerusalem.** This is the final stage in the great journey of the Passion, which in St. Luke's mind began after the ministry in Galilee (ix. 51). Leaving Peræa, our Lord crosses the Jordan and travels through Jericho to Jerusalem. But first He describes His coming Passion more circumstantially than before.

**all the things that are written**, as e.g. in Isaiah liii.; Psalms xxii., lxix.

32 **the Gentiles**, i.e. Pilate and the Romans; this is a new feature in the predictions of the Passion. Hitherto He had only spoken of being put to death by the Jewish rulers.

34 **this saying was hid from them.** They were so possessed with the current ideas of the Messianic kingdom that even such plain statements as these made no impression on them. They were themselves the cause of their own blindness.

35 **a certain blind man.** St. Mark gives his name as Bartimæus; St. Matthew says there were two, and both Evangelists place the miracle at our Lord's exit from Jericho, not his entrance. Such discrepancies might easily be reconciled if we knew all the facts, and in any case they point to the independent sources of the materials which the Evangelists collected. Even if they used each other's writings to some extent, they were not mere copyists.

son of David, have mercy on me. And they that went before <sup>39</sup> rebuked him, that he should hold his peace : but he cried out the more a great deal, Thou son of David, have mercy on me. And <sup>40</sup> Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him : and when he was come near, he asked him, What wilt thou that I <sup>41</sup> should do unto thee ? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight : thy <sup>42</sup> <sup>1</sup> Or, *saved thee.* faith hath <sup>43</sup> <sup>1</sup>made thee whole. And immediately he <sup>43</sup> received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God : and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### Questions

1. What parable did our Lord speak to shew the value of persistency in prayer ?
2. What special application to the future does this parable appear to have ?
3. What were the faults of the Pharisee's prayer, and what the excellence of the Publican's ?
4. What was our Lord's attitude towards children ?
5. Explain carefully " Why callest thou me good ? "
6. Explain the meaning of the command given to the rich ruler.
7. Why are riches a difficulty in entering the kingdom of God ?
8. Describe the miracle performed at Jericho.

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**38 thou son of David.** This was a remarkable confession of belief that our Lord was the Messiah ; as " Son of David " was a traditional Messianic title. The blind man's faith is shewn in the persistency of his cry, and his refusal to be silenced by the crowd. The multitude was evidently in a high state of excitement (cp. xix. 11) ; and did not want the triumphal progress of Christ, as they imagined it, to be hindered even to do a miracle for a lonely sufferer. He Himself, with His characteristic care for the individual, acted very differently.

*Subjects for Study*

## 1. The ministry in Peræa.

Compare the four Gospels.

*Jesus Christ* in Hastings' Dictionary.

## 2. Our Lord's teaching on Prayer in St. Luke.

Collect examples from the Gospel.

Gore, *Prayer and the Lord's Prayer*.*The Meeting with Zacchæus* (xix. 1-10)

xix. <sup>1</sup><sub>2</sub> And he entered and was passing through Jericho. And behold, a man called by name Zacchæus; and he was a chief publican, 3 and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and 4 could not for the crowd, because he was little of stature. And he ran on before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: 5 for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and said unto him, Zacchæus, make haste, and come 6 down; for to-day I must abide at thy house. And he made 7 haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, He is gone in to lodge with a 8 man that is a sinner. And Zacchæus stood, and said unto the

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xix. 1 **Jericho.** At this time Jericho was a rich and prosperous city, with a trade of its own in balsams and dates, and being a frontier city it would be a profitable location for publicans. The Romans were in possession of its revenues, and Zacchæus may have been in charge of the imperial farms. The incident which follows is in remarkable contrast with that of the rich young ruler. Zacchæus was a proof of the Lord's saying that things impossible with men are possible with God.

7 **they all murmured.** This was probably not only a repetition of the old Pharisaic attitude towards "publicans and sinners"; but was the expression of the impatience of the crowd full of national and religious bigotry. The multitudes were eager to press on to Jerusalem, and establish the Messiah there as king, and His attitude towards Zacchæus seemed to them utterly inconsistent. But, as always, He fearlessly disregarded popular feeling and fulfilled His own mission.

Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor ; and if I have wrongfully exacted aught of any man, I restore fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, To-day is salvation come to this house, 9 forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man 10 came to seek and to save that which was lost.

*The Parable of the Pounds (xix. 11-28)*

And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, 11 because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that

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8 **I restore fourfold.** Zacchæus in his eagerness to shew gratitude for the Lord's condescension, does not wait to be asked, but spontaneously offers half his goods in charity, and desires to make restitution for any wrongful gain, far in excess of what the Law required. Only a fifth part in addition to the original sum is demanded in Numbers v. 7. Zacchæus goes back to the earliest enactment of justice in Exodus xxii. 1.

9 **he also is a son of Abraham.** It is not certain whether Zacchæus was a Jew or a Gentile. But in any case our Lord pronounces him to be in the true sense a son of "Abraham," a man of humility and faith. In contrast with this, He had pronounced the Jews of Jerusalem to be no sons of Abraham at all (St. John viii. 39-40). The parallel between these utterances and the teaching of St. Paul should be noticed. See Romans iv. ; Galatians iii.

10 **For the Son of man, etc.** In contrast to the worldliness of the crowd, He announces the true object of His mission to the world, the conversion and restoration of sinful humanity.

11 **he added and spake a parable,** i.e. He spake it in addition to the teaching just given with respect to Zacchæus. This parable was apparently repeated in a different form to the disciples only, a few days later (S. Matt. xxv.). In the later one, the Parable of the Talents, the leading lesson is man's responsibility to God for gifts entrusted to him. This lesson is of course also contained in the present one ; but v. 11 suggests that the primary intention was to warn the excited multitudes that the revelation of the kingdom of God would be very different from what they expected. Instead of a dramatic assumption of the throne at once, He was to be for a long time withdrawn from view ; His right to the kingdom would be bitterly opposed by those who ought to have welcomed Him, and the preparation for His coming glory in the Second Advent would be entrusted to His servants and would be a matter involving long waiting, patience, and faithfulness to their trust.

12 the kingdom of God was immediately to appear. He said there-  
 fore, A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for  
 13 himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called ten <sup>1</sup>servants of his, and gave them ten <sup>2</sup>pounds, and  
 14 said unto them, Trade ye *herewith* till I come. But  
 his citizens hated him, and sent an ambassage after  
 him, saying, We will not that this man reign over us.  
 15 And it came to pass, when he was come back again,  
 having received the kingdom, that he commanded  
 these <sup>1</sup>servants, unto whom he had given the money,  
 to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by  
 16 trading. And the first came before him, saying, Lord, thy pound  
 17 hath made ten pounds more. And he said unto him, Well done,  
 thou good <sup>3</sup>servant : because thou wast found faithful  
 in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bond-servants*.

<sup>2</sup> *Mina*, here translated a pound, is equal to one hundred drachmas. See ch. xv. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Gr. *bond-servant*.

12 A certain nobleman went into a far country. It has often been thought that our Lord was making use of contemporary events which were fresh in the memory of His hearers. Both Herod the Great and his sons, Archelaus, Philip, and Herod Antipas, had gone to Rome to receive their kingdoms. The palace of Archelaus at Jericho would give local colouring to the parable ; and the hearers would remember how " an ambassage " had actually been sent by the Jews to Augustus to protest against Archelaus and the Herod family in general.

The nobleman, literally " one of high birth," represents Christ Himself, the Son of God ; the citizens are the Jews, His own people, who would not receive Him ; the servants, the ministers of His Church, and all who are entrusted with the privileges of the Gospel.

13 ten pounds. The " pound," or " *mina*," is nominally equivalent to £3 6s. 8d. The same sum is entrusted to each servant, unlike the " talents " in the later parable, for the stress is not laid here on individual degrees of ability and responsibility, but upon the common trust of the one Christian Faith, with its sacramental privileges, which are alike for all.

Trade ye herewith. The servants have to make the best they can in legitimate ways of business out of the money entrusted to them. It is implied that the work of preparing for the kingdom will not be accomplished in any sudden or startling manner, but by the slow processes of labour, foresight, conscientiousness in discharge of duty.

17 have thou authority over ten cities. The reward is proportioned

And the second came, saying, Thy pound, Lord, hath made five <sup>18</sup> pounds. And he said unto him also, Be thou also over five <sup>19</sup> cities. And <sup>1</sup>another came, saying, Lord, behold, <sup>20</sup> <sup>1</sup> *Gr. the other.* here is thy pound, which I kept laid up in a napkin : for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man : <sup>21</sup> thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. He saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth <sup>22</sup> will I judge thee, thou wicked <sup>2</sup>servant. Thou <sup>2</sup> *Gr. bond-servant.* knewest that I am an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow ; <sup>3</sup> Or, *I should have gone and required.* then wherefore gavest thou not my money into the <sup>23</sup> bank, and <sup>3</sup>I at my coming should have required it with interest ? And he said unto them that stood <sup>24</sup> by, Take away from him the pound, and give it unto him that hath the ten pounds. And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten <sup>25</sup> pounds. I say unto you, that unto every one that hath shall be <sup>26</sup> given ; but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall

to the success of the trading ; and the reward of work is more work, though of a nobler and still more responsible character.

**20 laid up in a napkin.** This grumbling and self-excusing servant had treated his money with outward care and reverence, but had done nothing with it. The napkin was only like the grave clothes round a corpse.

**23 the bank,** literally " a table." Cp. " the tables of the money-changers." It is difficult to attach a definite meaning to this detail in the parable. It may refer to the regular machinery of Christian work in the Church, presided over by the ministry ; by means of which those who are really desirous of improving their " pound " may by almsgiving or deeds of charity do so. It is remarkable that our Lord refers here to " interest " on money, at any rate without condemnation, though through its confusion with " usury " all such interest was condemned not only by Jews, but for many centuries by the Christian Church. Whether approving of it or not our Lord draws a spiritual lesson from the practice, and one of His traditional sayings is, " Be ye good (or approved) bankers."

**26 unto every one that hath, etc.** This paradox, put in parenthesis, contains a profound moral truth. Gifts are increased by the use of them : and the neglect to use them reacts on the possessor until he loses them altogether.

- 27 be taken away from him. Howbeit these mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.
- 28 And when he had thus spoken, he went on before, going up to Jerusalem.

## V. The Holy Week

### *The Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem (xix. 29-48)*

- 29 And it came to pass, when he drew nigh unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called *the mount* of Olives, he sent  
30 two of the disciples, saying, Go your way into the village over against *you*; in the which as ye enter ye shall find a colt tied,  
31 whereon no man ever yet sat: loose him, and bring him. And if any one ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say, The  
32 Lord hath need of him. And they that were sent went away, and

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29 **Bethphage and Bethany.** The Synoptists narrate this event, as if it followed continuously on the journey from Jericho; but we learn from St. John xii. that our Lord had arrived at Bethany a week before the Passover. He spent Friday and Saturday nights at Bethany, where He was anointed by Mary. On the afternoon of the Sunday (Palm Sunday) He began His progress to Jerusalem over the Mount of Olives, accompanied by His disciples and a crowd of followers. Bethphage is unknown otherwise; it must have been a village between Bethany and Jerusalem, at the beginning of the rise of the Mount of Olives.

30 **ye shall find a colt tied.** St. Luke does not mention (writing as he did chiefly for Gentiles) that this was a designed fulfilment of the prophecy of Zechariah ix. 9 (see St. Matt. xxi. 4-5). Our Lord had hitherto refrained from any public declaration of His Messiahship, but now He arranged to enter the Holy City in such a manner, combining dignity and humility, as would to those who wished to understand, be distinctly a claim to be the King foretold in the prophets. St. Matthew mentions that there were two animals, the colt and its mother, which more exactly fulfilled the prediction "upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass." He rode upon the colt, the ass walking by its side. The ass was not a despised animal among the Jews, but usually took the place which the horse occupies in other times and nations. To ride on one was a mark of dignity.

found even as he had said unto them. And as they were loosing 33 the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt? And they said, The Lord hath need of him. And they <sup>34</sup><sub>35</sub> brought him to Jesus: and they threw their garments upon the colt, and set Jesus thereon. And as he went, they spread their 36 garments in the way. And as he was now drawing nigh, *even* 37 at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *powers*. the <sup>1</sup>mighty works which they had seen; saying, 38 Blessed is the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. And some of 39

<sup>2</sup> Or, *Teacher*. the Pharisees from the multitude said unto him, <sup>2</sup>Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered 40 and said, I tell you that, if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out.

And when he drew nigh, he saw the city and wept over it, 41

**36 they spread their garments in the way.** The usual way of shewing impromptu honour to some great visitor. St. John (xii.) speaks of another multitude which came forth from Jerusalem to meet the procession, bearing branches of palm. This again was a well-known mark of public rejoicings, or of honouring some person of distinction. So Simon Maccabæus had been welcomed (1 Macc. xiii. 51). Palm-branches were regularly carried and waved at the Jewish festivals.

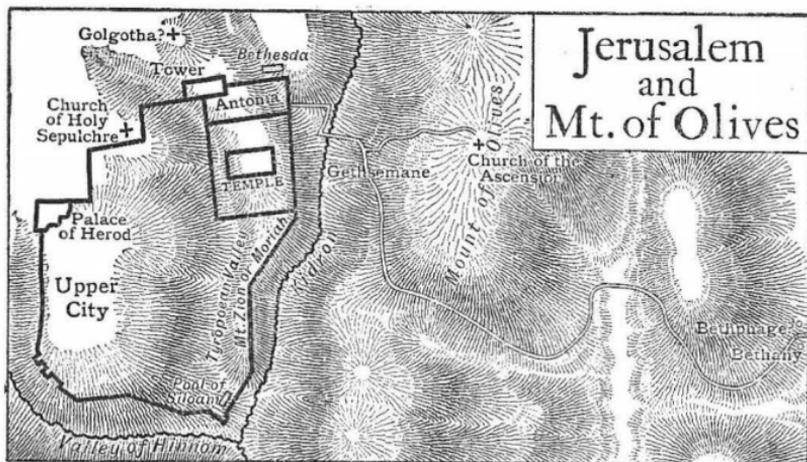
**38 Blessed is the King that cometh.** These unrehearsed plaudits of the multitude were couched in the words of Psalm cxviii., which was sung at the festivals. Originally this psalm was a welcome to the pilgrims as they entered the Temple; but "he that cometh" had become a recognised title of the Messiah. St. Luke, perhaps, introduces the word "King" to make it clearer to his Gentile readers, and for the same reason he paraphrases the cry "Hosanna," quoted by the other evangelists. Literally it means "save now." "Peace in heaven," i.e. peace between man and God would be the natural answer to such a prayer for salvation. "Glory in the highest" (cp. the angel-song at Bethlehem) means "praise to God in the highest heavens." The praises of earth are re-echoed in heaven.

**41 he saw the city, and wept over it.** This remarkable incident is recorded by St. Luke alone. The word used for "wept" implies loud and violent sorrow. The view of Jerusalem bursts upon the traveller as he turns the corner of a shoulder of the Mount of Olives. Still an imposing

42 saying, <sup>1</sup>If thou hadst known in this day, even thou, the things which belong unto peace! but now they  
 43 are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, when thine enemies shall cast up a <sup>2</sup>bank about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in  
 44 on every side, and shall dash thee to the ground, and thy children

<sup>1</sup> Or, *O that thou hadst known.*

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *palisade.*



within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation.

45 And he entered into the temple, and began to cast out them

sight, it must have been more magnificent than with the gold and marble of Herod's Temple glittering in the afternoon sun. The prospect to a Jew was the most impressive that earth could give. "The view of Jerusalem is the history of the world: it is more, it is the history of earth and of heaven" (*Tancred*).

43 **For the days shall come upon thee.** This prediction was literally fulfilled in the great siege by Titus, A.D. 70. The "bank" or palisade was a mount, surmounted by a wooden fortification which would blockade the city and enable missiles to be hurled over the walls. A still more thorough destruction of Jerusalem was accomplished by the Emperor Hadrian in A.D. 126.

44 **the time of thy visitation**, i.e. the appointed hour when God visited them with the offer of salvation through the Messiah. Cp. i. 68.

45 **began to cast out them that sold.** This took place (St. Mark xi.)

that sold, saying unto them, It is written, And my house shall be a <sup>46</sup> house of prayer : but ye have made it a den of robbers.

And he was teaching daily in the temple. But the chief priests <sup>47</sup> and the scribes and the principal men of the people sought to destroy him : and they could not find what they might do ; for <sup>48</sup> the people all hung upon him, listening.

## CHAPTER XIX

### *Questions*

1. Describe the incident of Zacchæus. Why did the multitude "murmur" at it ?
2. What was the immediate application of the Parable of the Pounds ? Compare it with that of the Talents.
3. Describe the entry into Jerusalem, with any other details you can gather from the other Gospels.
4. Why did our Lord weep over Jerusalem ?
5. What was the purpose of this entry ?
6. When and why did our Lord cast out the buyers in the Temple ?

### *Subject for Study*

The claim of our Lord to be the Messiah.

*Jesus Christ* in Hastings' Dictionary.

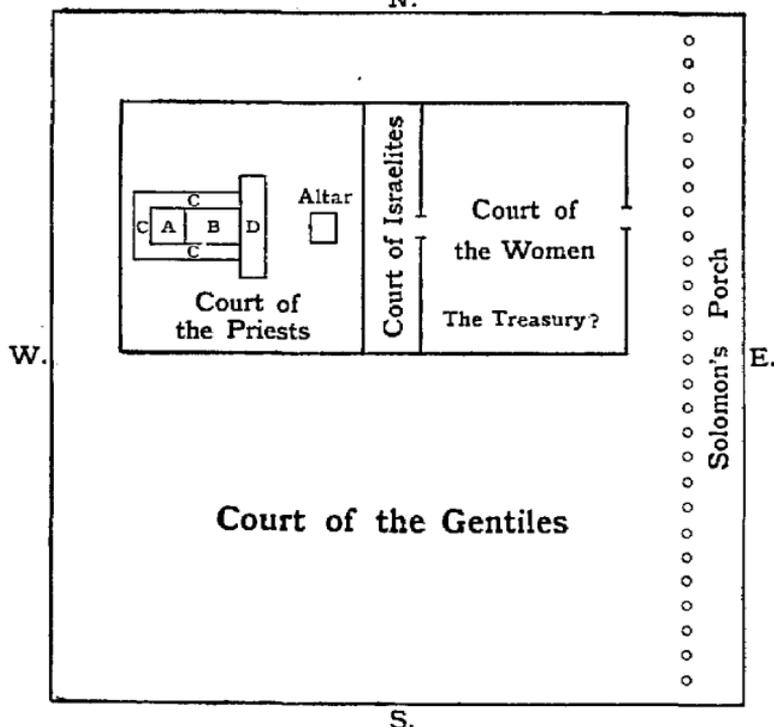
Bruce, *Apologetics*.

on the next day, Monday. St. John (ii.) records a similar act at the commencement of our Lord's ministry. The incident is described much more fully by St. Matthew and St. Mark. The "selling" was carried on in the Court of the Gentiles, where a regular market was held for beasts required for sacrifice. There was also a lucrative business in the changing of money ; for only the Jewish shekel could be offered in the Temple, and Jews coming from other countries had to change their money, and pay a heavy percentage. The chief priests had control of these sources of irreverent gain ; and their anger against Jesus must have been much increased at His action and the strange panic which fell upon the sellers and money-changers.

<sup>46</sup> It is written. The quotation is a combination of Isaiah lvi. 7 and Jeremiah vii. 11.

*The Question of Authority* (xx. 1-8)

- 1 And it came to pass, on one of the days, as he was teaching the people in the temple, and preaching the gospel, there came upon N.



A. Holy of Holies B. Holy Place C. Chambers D. Porch

## GROUND-PLAN OF HEROD'S TEMPLE

- 2 him the chief priests and the scribes with the elders; and they spake, saying unto him, Tell us: By what authority doest thou

xx. 1 **on one of the days.** A comparison with the other Gospels points to this day being the Tuesday in Holy Week, apparently the last day our Lord spent in the Temple teaching.

2 **By what authority doest thou these things?** The priestly families and religious leaders at Jerusalem had been extremely irritated at the popular enthusiasm which marked our Lord's entry, and especially at the plaudits which He had received from the children (St. Matt. xxi. 15, 16), as well as by His cleansing of the Temple. This question was intended, if possible, to bring matters to a head, and to compel Jesus to declare Himself to be the Messiah, when no doubt they would have renewed the demand for "signs from heaven."

these things ? or who is he that gave thee this authority ? And <sup>3</sup>  
<sup>1</sup> Gr. *word.* he answered and said unto them, I also will ask you a  
<sup>1</sup>question ; and tell me : The baptism of John, was <sup>4</sup>  
it from heaven, or from men ? And they reasoned with them-<sup>5</sup>  
selves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven ; he will say, Why  
did ye not believe him ? But if we shall say, From men ; all the <sup>6</sup>  
people will stone us : for they be persuaded that John was a  
prophet. And they answered, that they knew not whence *it was.* <sup>7</sup>  
And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority <sup>8</sup>  
I do these things.

*Parable of the Vineyard (xx. 9-18)*

And he began to speak unto the people this parable : A man <sup>9</sup>  
planted a vineyard, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into

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<sup>3</sup> I also will ask you a question. Our Lord's counter-question exposed the insincerity of the chief priests. What was the authority of the Baptist's mission—Divine or human? The last thing the questioners thought about was the *truth*. All that they schemed for was to save their own reputation, and avoid either being overthrown in argument or finding themselves opposed by popular feeling. They therefore took refuge in the agnostic position.

<sup>8</sup> Neither tell I you, etc. Truth can only be appreciated by the sincere, by those who honestly wish to be taught the truth. The chief priests by their deliberations and their reply had shewn themselves ruled only by motives of expediency and popularity. Therefore in our Lord's eyes, they were both unworthy to be told the truth, and incapable of appreciating it if it were told them.

At the same time, our Lord's counter-question was no mere skilful piece of fencing. The two problems of the Baptist's mission and His own were indissolubly connected. Those who had judged rightly about the first, would find no difficulty about the second. Cp. St. Matthew xxi. 32.

<sup>9</sup> A man planted a vineyard. This parable, the last recorded by St. Luke (xxi. 29 is only a similitude), for those who had "ears to hear," answers indirectly the question about our Lord's authority ; and directly it is an exposure of the whole attitude of the Jewish nation and her rulers towards God and His revelation. The same image of the vineyard had been used in a famous passage of Isaiah (v.), and with the same meaning of the failure of Israel to answer to God's care and purpose. Cp. Psalms lxxx. ; Jeremiah ii. 21 ; Ezekiel xv. In this

10 another country for a long time. And at the season he sent unto  
 the husbandmen a <sup>1</sup>servant, that they should give  
 him of the fruit of the vineyard : but the husbandmen <sup>1 Gr. bond-</sup>  
 11 beat him, and sent him away empty. And he sent <sup>servant.</sup>  
 yet another <sup>1</sup>servant : and him also they beat, and handled him  
 12 shamefully, and sent him away empty. And he sent yet a third :  
 13 and him also they wounded, and cast him forth. And the lord of  
 the vineyard said, What shall I do ? I will send my beloved son :  
 14 it may be they will reverence him. But when the husbandmen  
 saw him, they reasoned one with another, saying, This is the heir :  
 15 let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. And they cast  
 him forth out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore  
 16 will the lord of the vineyard do unto them ? He will come and  
 destroy these husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto  
 others. And when they heard it, they said, <sup>2</sup>God  
 17 forbid. But he looked upon them, and said, What <sup>2 Gr. Be it</sup>  
 then is this that is written, <sup>not so.</sup>

The stone which the builders rejected.

The same was made the head of the corner ?

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parable the "planter" is God Himself; the vineyard the theocracy or Church of Israel; the husbandmen the rulers and priests of the Jews; the servants are the prophets, and the son, Jesus Christ.

10 **that they should give him of the fruit.** The husbandmen did not pay rent, but were bound to render a certain proportion of their produce—a system well known under the Roman Empire, and still existing in some countries.

13 **I will send my beloved son.** Cp. Hebrews i. 1–2. This is one of the clearest indications in the Gospels of our Lord's claim to be more than a prophet or servant of God. He places Himself on a different level, and claims to be of Divine nature, the son and heir of Him who planted the vineyard. He also here foretells clearly His own approaching death.

16 **God forbid.** All the hearers recognised at once, from their familiarity with Isaiah's parable, the terrible meaning of our Lord's words.

17 **The stone which the builders rejected.** The quotation is from Psalm cxviii. The "stone" probably referred originally to the Jewish nation, apparently rejected (by the angels that rule the destinies of

Every one that falleth on that stone shall be broken to pieces ; 18 but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will scatter him as dust.

*The Question of Tribute to Cæsar* (xx. 19-26)

And the scribes and the chief priests sought to lay hands on 19 him in that very hour ; and they feared the people : for they perceived that he spake this parable against them. And they 20 watched him, and sent forth spies, which feigned themselves to be righteous, that they might take hold of his speech, so as to deliver him up to the rule and to the authority of the governor. And 21

empires) when Jerusalem fell before the Babylonians and the people were taken into captivity ; but again restored to high and honourable place when the exiles returned and the Temple was rebuilt. But our Lord is evidently applying the name "stone" to Himself, and this is in accordance with other Messianic prophecies, e.g. in Isaiah xxviii. 16 the Messiah is spoken of as a "corner-stone," i.e. the important stone which binds two walls together. Cp. St. Peter's use of the word in Acts iv. 11 and 1 St. Peter ii. 4-8. Our Lord means that He Himself, rejected by the rulers of Israel, will hereafter be the "corner-stone," which will bind into one both Jews and Gentiles in the new spiritual Temple of the Catholic Church. Cp. Ephesians ii. 19-22.

18 **every one that falleth on that stone**, etc. There is an allusion to two other Messianic prophecies, Isaiah viii. 14 (cp. 1 St. Peter ii. 6), where Jehovah Himself is spoken of as a stone on which disobedient Israel shall stumble (cp. St. Matt. xi. 6 : "Blessed is he, whosoever shall find none occasion of stumbling in me") : and Daniel ii. 34, 35 : 44, 45, where a "stone cut without hands" (referring to the miraculous birth of Christ) destroys all the kingdoms of the heathen.

Our Lord's meaning seems to be (1) that the individual who through unbelief stumbles or falls over His claim to be the Son of God and the Messiah will be broken to pieces, utterly ruined ; (2) that when He comes again in judgment He will "fall" upon those who rejected Him and scatter them like dust.

20 **so as to deliver him up**. As the malice which had tried to put Him to confusion before the multitudes had conclusively failed, the scribes and chief priests take a new line. They hope to be able to extract something from Him which will serve as a charge of sedition, and bring Him under the notice of Pilate, the Roman governor. We learn from the previous Gospels that these "spies" consisted partly of Pharisees and partly of Herodians—two diametrically opposite political parties, united for the moment by a common hatred.

they asked him, saying, <sup>1</sup>Master, we know that thou <sup>1</sup>Or, *Teacher*. sayest and teachest rightly, and acceptest not the <sup>22</sup>person of any, but of a truth teachest the way of God: Is it <sup>23</sup>lawful for us to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not? But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Shew me a <sup>24</sup>penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? <sup>2</sup> See marginal note on <sup>25</sup>And they said, Cæsar's. And he said unto them, <sup>26</sup>Then render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, <sup>28</sup>Matt. xviii.

**21 Master, we know.** The elaborate flattery of the address is noteworthy. They ascribe to Jesus hypocritically just those virtues of justice, truth, sincerity, in which they were most lacking themselves.

**22 Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or not?** The question was double-edged. If He said it was lawful, the Pharisees were ready to accuse Him to the people as the betrayer of their national ideals of liberty; if He said it was not, the Herodians would at once denounce Him to Pilate as a teacher of sedition. The payment of tribute was a very sore point with the Jews.

**24 Shew me a penny.** This was the silver *denarius*, bearing the "image" or head of Tiberius Cæsar, and his name and style as Emperor engraved above it—the "superscription." Our Lord had turned the money-changers out of the Temple on the previous day, and the coin would have to be fetched from one of the tables outside. It was the amount of the *tributum capitis*, or poll-tax.

**25 Then render unto Cæsar, etc.** It is clear that the answer was one that could not be taken hold by either party as ground for an accusation. What belonged to a man could not with justice be denied him. But there is more in the answer than the mere parrying of a dilemma. The usual explanation seems somewhat inadequate. Our Lord is represented commonly as teaching that religious questions must not be confounded with worldly politics—that there are two distinct spheres in which man lives at the same time, two societies to which he belongs, the State and the Church, and that his duties to his lawful sovereign and his duties to God need not and must not interfere with each other. But such an answer would be virtually in favour of the Herodians, and it would be open to the obvious retort—"but how will it be when the two duties come in collision—when the ruler demands something unlawful?" Probably the real emphasis in our Lord's words lies on the second clause, "unto God the things that are God's." What was wrong with both parties was that they were practically leaving God out of their thoughts; at any rate, they were so absorbed by their political jealousies and passions that they did not put God

and unto God the things that are God's. And they were not able <sup>26</sup> to take hold of the saying before the people : and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.

*The Question of the Resurrection of the Dead (xx. 27-40)*

And there came to him certain of the Sadducees, they which <sup>27</sup> say that there is no resurrection ; and they asked  
<sup>1</sup> Or, *Teacher*. him, saying, 'Master, Moses wrote unto us, that if a <sup>28</sup>

first. The supreme consideration for man's true life is not whether he is rich or poor, free or a slave, but what is his attitude towards God. This was our Lord's invariable teaching, and it seems to underlie this present answer.

As to the Christian duty with regard to taxes and tribute see Romans xiii. 1-7.

**27 the Sadducees.** These were the party opposed to the Pharisees, both religiously and politically. Their name was probably derived from Zadok, the high priest of David's time. The Sadducees were worldly and unspiritual, for the most part greedy of wealth, and at this time were in possession of the chief priestly offices. In theory they regarded moral duties as of more importance than ceremonial, but their practice was no better than that of the Pharisees. They accepted the Law of Moses, but disparaged the prophets and the other books of the O.T. We learn from other allusions that they denied not only the resurrection of the dead, but the existence of angels and spirits, in all which the Pharisees were strong believers (Acts xxiii. 8). Politically they supported the rule of the Herods and of Rome, and did not sympathise with the narrow and bitter nationalism of the Pharisees.

**which say that there is no resurrection.** They based this denial on the absence of allusion to a resurrection in the Books of Moses. Hence in our Lord's reply (*v.* 37) He refutes them out of their own authorities. The belief in the resurrection of the dead was strong among the Pharisees and stricter Jews. It had become an article of Jewish belief in the later period of their history, since the captivity in Babylon. A very strong impetus had been given to it by the remarkable prophecy of Daniel xii. 2-3 ; but there are also plain allusions to a resurrection in such passages as Isaiah xxvi. 19 ; Psalms xvi. 9-10 ; xvii. 15.

**28 Moses wrote unto us.** Deuteronomy xxv. 5. This institution of the "levirate" marriage (Latin *levir*=brother-in-law) was probably a primitive Hebrew custom, for the purpose of preserving the family name and succession, and was only sanctioned and codified by Moses.

man's brother die, having a wife, and he be childless, his brother  
 29 should take the wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. There  
 were therefore seven brethren : and the first took a wife, and died  
 30 childless ; and the second ; and the third took her ; and likewise  
 31 the seven also left no children, and died. Afterward the woman  
 32 also died. In the resurrection therefore whose wife of them shall  
 33 she be ? for the seven had her to wife. And Jesus said unto them,

The sons of this 'world marry, and are given in <sup>1</sup> Or, *age*.  
 35 marriage : but they that are accounted worthy to  
 attain to that 'world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither  
 36 marry, nor are given in marriage : for neither can they die any  
 more : for they are equal unto the angels ; and are sons of God,  
 37 being sons of the resurrection. But that the dead are raised, even  
 Moses shewed, in *the place concerning the Bush*, when he calleth

It was not a popular institution, and by our Lord's time had largely fallen into disuse. In any case it can only be regarded as a temporary concession to primitive ideas, and is of course contrary to the Christian law of marriage.

34 **And Jesus said unto them**, etc. Our Lord's reply lifts the whole controversy to a higher level. He does not condescend to argue the matter in the fashion of the Jewish schools, but draws the vast and solemn distinction between this life and that which is to come. The Sadducees' problem rested on the assumption that in the resurrection of the dead (as taught by the Pharisees) there would simply be a continuance of the old relationships and conditions.

36 **for neither can they die any more**. When man is raised to an immortal state in the resurrection there will be no need of marriage to bring to birth new children to fill the gaps made by death, as on earth. That was the chief aspect in which the Sadducees regarded marriage, and they are answered accordingly. But our Lord's words do not preclude the possibility of marriage in a higher and more spiritual sense in the resurrection life (cp. the remarkable lines in Browning's *The Ring and the Book—Pompilia*, at the end).

**sons of God, being sons of the resurrection**—not of course in the sense in which our Lord is "the Son of God," but as being united closely to God, and members of His family. "Sons of the resurrection" is a Hebraism, meaning partakers in that new and Divine life by which man's nature is transformed and glorified in the resurrection.

37 **even Moses shewed**. See note on v. 27 above. The Jews popularly spoke of different sections of the Scripture by some typical name or

the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Now he is not the God of the dead, but of the 38 living: for all live unto him. And certain of the scribes 39  
 1 Or, *Teacher.* answering said, 'Master, thou hast well said. For 40 they durst not any more ask him any question.

*Christ's Own Question (xx. 41-44)*

And he said unto them, How say they that the Christ is David's 41  
 son? For David himself saith in the book of Psalms, 42  
 The Lord said unto my Lord,  
 Sit thou on my right hand,  
 Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet. 43  
 David therefore calleth him Lord, and how is he his son? 44

word. The title, "the Bush," was given to Exodus iii., where Jehovah appears to Moses in the burning bush.

Our Lord's argument is no mere verbal confutation of the Sadducees. It embodies the profound truth that personal relations between God and individual men are not transitory things, and cannot be broken short by death. God cannot change, and man taken into union with God has therein the assurance of his own immortality, and because the body is a real part of man's nature, of his resurrection also. This truth is implied in various parts of the O.T. Cp. Psalm lxxiii. 23-26. Our Lord here states definitely that the patriarchs have not ceased to exist: they are still in living union with God.

41 **How say they that the Christ is David's son?** Our Lord is not denying that the Christ was to be the Son of David, but He was shewing that there is another and still greater relationship, which the scribes ignored though it is implicit in the very Scriptures that they appealed to.

42 **For David himself saith.** The quotation is from Psalm cx. 1, which the Jews recognised as referring directly to the Messiah, and which they believed to be the words of David himself, uttered by inspiration. David spoke of Jehovah addressing the Messiah, whom the poet calls by the reverential title of *Adonai*, "my Lord." David would not, naturally, call his son by such a title, however great he was to be. The answer to the difficulty is clear, if we acknowledge Jesus as the Son of David indeed in His earthly descent, but as also the eternal Son of God. Our Lord is claiming Divinity for the Messiah, and by implication for Himself.

*Denunciation of the Scribes : the Widow's Offering (xx. 45-xxi. 4)*

45 And in the hearing of all the people he said unto his disciples,  
 46 Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love  
 salutations in the market-places, and chief seats in the synagogues,  
 47 and chief places at feasts ; which devour widows' houses, and for  
 a pretence make long prayers : these shall receive greater con-  
 demnation.

xxi. 1 And he looked up, <sup>1</sup>and saw the rich men that were <sup>1</sup> Or, *and saw*  
 2 casting their gifts into the treasury. And he saw a <sup>them that . . .</sup>  
 3 certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. And <sup>treasury, and</sup>  
 he said, Of a truth I say unto you, This poor widow <sup>they were</sup>  
 4 cast in more than they all : for all these did of their <sup>rich.</sup>  
 superfluity cast in unto the gifts : but she of her want did cast  
 in all the living that she had.

46 **Beware of the scribes.** St. Luke here gives only a small portion of the great attack on the religious leaders of Israel, which formed, according to St. Matthew, the close of His teaching in the Temple. But cp. also the passage xi. 39-52 which is included in St. Matthew xxiii.

47 **which devour widows' houses,** i.e. they enrich themselves out of the property of widows and other unprotected persons, who trusted too much in the apparent righteousness of the scribes.

xxi. 1 **the treasury.** This was in the court of the women, and was a place for collecting alms : thirteen brass chests with apertures shaped like trumpets stood there, for the worshippers to deposit their offerings for various sacred purposes.

2 **two mites**—the smallest Jewish coins, two of which made the value of the smallest Roman coin, the *quadrans*, the fourth part of an *as*.

3 **This poor widow cast in more than they all.** Our Lord proclaims the true value of things in the eyes of God. The farthing was literally *more* to Him than all the ostentatious offerings of the rich.

Our Lord was now leaving the Temple : a further incident is recorded by St. John (xii.), the coming of the Greeks, and the voice from heaven (in the Court of the Gentiles). After this He crossed the Kidron and began to ascend the Mount of Olives,

## CHAPTER XX-XXI. 4

*Questions*

1. How did our Lord answer the question as to His authority ?
2. How does this incident illustrate the character of the religious rulers of Israel ?
3. Compare the parable of the Vineyard with the earlier parable of Isaiah v.
4. Explain "the stone which the builders rejected."
5. What was the point of our Lord's answer about the tribute-money ?
6. Who were the Sadducees ?
7. What did our Lord teach with regard to the resurrection-life ?
8. How did He answer the Sadducees from the writings of Moses ?
9. In what ways in this chapter did our Lord teach His own Divinity ?
10. How did our Lord speak of the Scribes ?

*Subjects for Study*

1. The teaching of the O.T. about immortality and the resurrection of the dead.

Streeter, *Immortality*.

*Resurrection* in Hastings' Dictionary.

2. The interpretation of Psalm cx.

Kirkpatrick, *Psalms in Cambridge Bible*.

*The Great Prophecy of the End (xxi. 5-38)*

5 And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with  
 6 goodly stones and offerings, he said, As for these things which ye  
 behold, the days will come, in which there shall not be left here one  
 7 stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And they  
 asked him, saying, <sup>1</sup>Master, when therefore shall these  
 things be? and what *shall be* the sign when these <sup>1</sup> Or, *Teacher*.

This discourse of our Lord, called "eschatological," as being concerned with "the last things," was, as we learn from the other Synoptists, delivered on the Mount of Olives, as He and His disciples pausing in their journey sat down and looked at the city and the Temple. As recorded by St. Luke, it does not present such difficulties as the accounts of St. Matthew and St. Mark, though the prediction of the fall of Jerusalem is to some extent combined with that of His Second Coming (20-28). St. Luke's account is chiefly concerned, however, with the bearing of the terrible events of the future upon the personal faith and courage of the disciples.

**5 goodly stones and offerings.** The stones of the Temple were looked upon with great admiration, both for their size and their beauty. Josephus describes some of them as being 45×18×12 feet. The materials included marble of different colours. The effect is described as like "a mountain of snow fretted with gold." St. Luke uses the ordinary word, familiar to the Greeks, for votive-offerings, i.e. rich gifts presented to the Temple by eminent benefactors. Many kings presented such things to the Temple. Herod the Great had given the great golden vine which adorned the frontage. Herod Agrippa I, a few years later, presented a golden chain, the gift to him of the Emperor Caius when he was released from captivity.

**6 there shall not be left here one stone.** It was a dangerous prophecy to utter. Jeremiah for a similar prediction had narrowly escaped death (Jer. xxvi.). The Sanhedrin regarded it as blasphemy punishable by death, to speak of the destruction of the Temple. But the Lord's words were literally fulfilled. The Temple was burnt in the sack of Jerusalem, despite the orders of Titus; and the whole of the ruins were subsequently demolished by the soldiers of the Tenth Legion, left behind for that purpose. A still more complete destruction was wrought by the Emperor Hadrian.

**7 And they asked him.** St. Mark records the names of those who asked—Peter, James, John and Andrew. We can gather from our Lord's answer that the question was prompted not merely by fear, but

things are about to come to pass? And he said, Take heed that ye be not led astray: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am *he*; and, The time is at hand: go ye not after them. And when ye shall hear of wars and tumults, be not terrified: for these things must needs come to pass first; but the end is not immediately.

Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be great earthquakes, and in divers places famines and pestilences; and there shall be terrors and great signs from heaven. But before all these things, they shall lay their hands on you, and shall persecute you, deliver-

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *you* *being brought.* ing you up to the synagogues and prisons, <sup>1</sup>bringing you before kings and governors for my name's sake. It shall turn unto you for a testimony. Settle it

<sup>13</sup>  
<sup>14</sup>

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by the still eager desire of the disciples for the manifestation of the glory of the Messiah. They thought the destruction of the Temple might have as its immediate sequel the worldly triumph of Christ which they had been led to expect.

**8 Take heed that ye be not led astray.** This is the invariable form of warning given by our Lord with regard to the future. Not what happens to the disciple or to the world around him is of real importance, but what he is in himself. Faithfulness and courage are his greatest needs.

**many shall come in my name.** False Messiahs were of frequent appearance in the last phase of Jewish history; notably one Bar-cochab ("son of a star"), who headed the last futile rebellion against Rome, resulting in the utter destruction of Jerusalem by Hadrian. But no doubt the reference is wider than that, and includes all false teachers and founders of new religions. At many times in Christian history, apprehensions as to the coming end of the world have caused widespread terror and disorder, notably about the year A.D. 1000, which was almost universally believed to be "the time of the end."

**11 terrors and great signs from heaven.** Cp. v. 25 and the mysterious prediction of St. Matthew xxiv. 30. The exact meaning is quite uncertain, and left for time to disclose. It is remarkable, however, how many strange portents are recorded as having happened before the destruction of Jerusalem—visions of armies in heaven, the appearance of a sword-shaped comet, and the mysterious voice heard in the Temple, "let us depart hence."

therefore in your hearts, not to meditate beforehand how to  
 15 answer: for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all  
 your adversaries shall not be able to withstand or to gainsay.  
 16 But ye shall be delivered up even by parents, and brethren, and  
 kinsfolk, and friends; and *some* of you <sup>1</sup>shall they  
 17 cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all <sup>1</sup>Or, *shall*  
 18 men for my name's sake. And not a hair of your <sup>they put to</sup>  
 19 head shall perish. In your patience ye shall win your <sup>death.</sup>  
<sup>2</sup>souls. <sup>2</sup>Or, *lives.*  
 20 But when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know

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13 **It shall turn unto you for a testimony.** These persecutions of Christians—some, as recorded in the Acts, taking place before the siege of Jerusalem, and many others afterwards—would, so far from weakening the Christian Church and its witness to Christ, strengthen it. Christian fortitude would bear testimony to the supernatural faith and confidence of the sufferers, and make a deep impression even on the persecutors. This prediction has been abundantly fulfilled in Christian history. “The blood of Christians is the seed of the Church.”

17 **And ye shall be hated of all men.** Extraordinary and irrational as it seems, the hatred of Jews and heathen towards the Christian Church justified this prediction. Tacitus speaks of the Christians as “hated for their crimes,” and they were considered “the enemies of the human race.”

18 **And not a hair of your head shall perish.** This does not of course mean that Christians will be literally preserved from death. It is a vivid way of promising that no persecution can really affect the faithful. They are absolutely in God's care. And though their bodies may be destroyed, in the resurrection everything that belongs to the perfection of the individual will be completely restored.

19 **In your patience.** The word translated “patience” means rather “stedfast endurance.” Christians will attain the great end of their being, salvation, the true life, not by resistance to their persecutors, but by enduring to the end, as the Lord did, the utmost of human malice, and so proving themselves victorious over it all.

20 **But when ye see Jerusalem, etc.** It is characteristic of St. Luke that he substitutes this clear prediction for the mysterious allusion to “the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet,” which occurs in St. Matthew and St. Mark. Jewish readers would understand what the allusion meant; but for the sake of the Gentiles for whom St. Luke is principally writing, he has evidently paraphrased

that her desolation is at hand. Then let them that are in Judæa<sup>21</sup> flee unto the mountains; and let them that are in the midst of her depart out; and let not them that are in the country enter therein. For these are days of vengeance, that all things which<sup>22</sup> are written may be fulfilled. Woe unto them that are with child<sup>23</sup> and to them that give suck in those days! for there shall be great

<sup>1</sup> Or, *earth*. distress upon the land, and wrath upon this people.

And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall<sup>24</sup> be led captive into all the nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in sun and moon and stars; <sup>25</sup>

it. This section clearly relates to the actual destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, which some of His hearers would live to see. But in *v.* 25 the prediction passes to the greater and more universal catastrophe, of which the fall of Jerusalem was a type, the end of this world, and the Second Advent of Christ.

**21 flee unto the mountains.** This actually happened in the course of the great siege. The Christians in Jerusalem succeeded (in answer, it is said, to a Divine warning) in making good their escape from the doomed city. They took refuge in Pella, a town some sixty miles away, among the mountains, beyond Jordan.

**24 they shall fall by the edge of the sword, etc.** More than a million Jews are said to have perished in the siege: for in addition to the sword of the Romans, famine and pestilence were rife in the crowded city; and the rival Jewish factions fought with each other, till the streets and Temple-courts ran with blood. Some 97,000 were taken captive by the conquerors; and the Colosseum at Rome is said to have been built by these wretched exiles. And since that time the Jewish race has been subjected to innumerable persecutions and oppressions among different nations.

**until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.** No hint is given as to how long these times of the domination of the Gentiles and the oppression of Israel are to last. Indeed both St. Matthew and St. Mark record the strange saying of our Lord that not even the angels nor the Son Himself know when the End will be. But the whole tone of this discourse implies a long period. There is no justification for saying that our Lord expected the End to come quickly. See note on *v.* 32.

**25 And there shall be signs, etc.** It is impossible to say whether these portents are to be understood literally or not. The physical ending of this world might be caused by some great catastrophe in the

and upon the earth distress of nations, in perplexity for the  
 26 roaring of the sea and the billows; men faint-  
 ing for fear, and for expectation of the things which  
 are coming on <sup>2</sup>the world: for the powers of the  
 27 heavens shall be shaken. And then shall they see  
 the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and  
 28 great glory. But when these things begin to come to pass, look  
 up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth  
 nigh.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *ex-  
 piring.*  
<sup>2</sup> Gr. *the  
 inhabited  
 earth.*

29 And he spake to them a parable: Behold the fig tree, and all  
 30 the trees: when they now shoot forth, ye see it and know of your  
 31 own selves that the summer is now nigh. Even so ye also, when  
 ye see these things coming to pass, know ye that the kingdom of

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heavenly bodies. But the language used is familiar in prophecy, and may be understood figuratively, as in Isaiah xiii. 10, and Joel ii. 30-32, to mean great and awful changes in what men think most stable and secure.

**for the roaring of the sea and the billows.** A comparison with Isaiah v. 30 suggests that this is to be understood figuratively of the noise and uproar of heathen invasion; the sea is a common figure in the prophets for the unrest of the heathen world. The translation is difficult, and some have understood it to mean that men will be terrified because the sea *ceases* to roar and is dried up.

**27 And then shall they see the Son of man.** There is a clear allusion to Daniel vii. 13. Cp. St. Matthew xxvi. 64. The prediction may be to some extent interpreted figuratively of a coming of Christ in the great retributions of history. The fall of Jerusalem proved His words to be true, and shewed that He, and not man's force and craft, is the master of the world. But without doubt, as the Church has always believed, there will be a literal fulfilment when Christ will appear visibly to end this present world. Cp. 2 Thessalonians ii. 8; Revelation i. 7.

**29 a parable.** The word is used in its wider sense of a similitude or parallel. The unseen rise of the sap in the trees produces the outward effect of buds and leaves and men know that summer is near. So in the course of human history, events which appear sudden and catastrophic have been prepared for secretly, and the signs of their approach will be recognised by those who have the key to them. The terrors and calamities just spoken of will be a mere puzzle to the world, but to the Christian they will be the signs of a new era at hand.

God is nigh. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not<sup>32</sup> pass away, till all things be accomplished. Heaven and earth<sup>33</sup> shall pass away : but my words shall not pass away.

But take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be over-<sup>34</sup> charged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly as a snare : for so shall it<sup>35</sup> come upon all them that dwell on the face of all the earth. But<sup>36</sup> watch ye at every season, making supplication, that ye may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

And every day he was teaching in the temple ; and every night<sup>37</sup> he went out, and lodged in the mount that is called *the mount of*

**32 This generation shall not pass away.** This is a difficult saying and has led some to suppose that our Lord anticipated His Second Coming during the lifetime of His own contemporaries. But this is entirely inconsistent with other sayings of His. " This generation " probably means the whole period, however long it may be, until the end of the world. In the eyes of Him, " the spectator of all time and all existence," it appeared as but one scene, the last, in the world's great drama.

**33 my words shall not pass away.** In these remarkable words our Lord is evidently claiming to be the authoritative interpreter of the whole course of the world. His teaching is final ; no new gospel or religion will be revealed. His words being absolute truth are eternal, and will outlast all created and temporal things.

**34 But take heed to yourselves.** The discourse ends as it began by the warning that far more important than the secrets and the terrors of the future, is the steadfastness in faith of each individual Christian. And faith may be easily quenched and the spiritual vision dulled, by indulgence in sensuality, or absorption in material things, the business and the anxieties of this present life.

**36 to stand before the Son of man,** i.e. as servants prepared to give their account to their Master and Judge.

**37 And every day he was teaching in the temple.** St. Luke's chronology of these closing days of our Lord's ministry is indefinite. If we conclude from the other Gospels that this discourse on the last things was the end of His teaching, St. Luke's words in *vv.* 37, 38 may be regarded as a general summary of what was already over. He had visited and taught in the Temple on the first three days of the week ; now He retires to Bethany for the unrecorded hours of Wednesday and Thursday (until the afternoon),

38 Olives. And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, to hear him.

## CHAPTER XXI. 5-38

### *Questions*

1. Which of our Lord's predictions in this chapter have already been fulfilled ?
2. What did our Lord teach about His own Second Coming ?
3. What did our Lord impress on His disciples as the most important duties in view of the future ?

### *Subject for Study*

The significance of the fall of Jerusalem.

Hort, *Judaistic Christianity*.

Westcott, *Epistle to the Hebrews*.

## VI. The Passion

*The Betrayal : the Preparation for the Passover* (xxii. 1-13)

xxii. 1 Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called  
2 the Passover. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might put him to death ; for they feared the people.

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xxii. 1 **the feast of unleavened bread.** The Passover was the greatest national and religious festival of the Jews ; kept in memory of their miraculous deliverance from Egyptian servitude (Ex. xii. 14-28), and from the destroying angel who slew the Egyptian firstborn. It commemorated the birth of a nation, and the separation of that nation to be the people of Jehovah. The Passover itself was kept in the evening of the fourteenth of Nisan or Abib, the first Jewish month (March-April) : and its central feature was the sacrifice and eating by each family of a lamb. This could only be performed at Jerusalem. The feast of unleavened bread was really distinct in its institution from the Passover, though in practice, as we see from St. Luke's words, identified

And Satan entered into Judas who was called Iscariot, being<sup>3</sup> of the number of the twelve. And he went away, and communed<sup>4</sup> with the chief priests and captains, how he might deliver him unto them. And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Or, *without tumult.* And he consented, and sought opportunity to deliver<sup>6</sup> him unto them <sup>1</sup>in the absence of the multitude.

with it. It lasted for a week, from the fourteenth to the twenty-first of Nisan. On the evening of the previous day, the thirteenth, there was (and still is) a ceremonial search in every Jewish house, by candlelight, to find any fragments of ordinary or leavened bread, which are destroyed the next day.

**2 for they feared the people.** Jerusalem at Passover-time was crowded with a great influx of pilgrims, Jews from all parts of Palestine, and indeed from many countries, who visited the Temple in accordance with the Law. Many of these pilgrims were Galilæans who were enthusiastic believers in and supporters of Jesus as the Messiah. It was from these that the chief priests feared an attack if they openly laid hands on Him.

**3 And Satan entered into Judas.** Judas Iscariot had no doubt shared with the rest of the Twelve the temporal expectations of the glory of the Messiah: but perhaps more worldly-wise than they he now saw clearly that these hopes were doomed to disappointment. He was eager to make what he could for himself out of a situation that had become impossible. Naturally he was prone to covetousness, and his office as treasurer of the apostolic company had already led him to dishonesty (St. John xii. 6). More than a year before (*ib.* vi. 70) our Lord had foretold his treachery. He seems to have been further embittered by the waste, as he thought it, of Mary's ointment (*ib.* xii. 4-5) and the Lord's rebuke at the disciples' murmuring. He became an easy prey to Satan; and gave himself up to evil. Some have thought that Judas had an ulterior motive, thinking that our Lord, betrayed to the chief priests, would be compelled to declare Himself openly as the Messiah, and would use His miraculous powers to save Himself, and assume His throne. But this theory is probably a mere refinement; Judas's conduct is sufficiently explained by his disappointment and covetousness.

**5 covenanted to give him money.** The amount was very small, "thirty pieces of silver," or shekels; the compensation paid under the Law for the loss of a slave (Ex. xxi. 32). The value, at the highest computation, would be no more than £12.

- 7 And the day of unleavened bread came, on which the passover must be sacrificed. And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and make ready for us the passover, that we may eat.
- 9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we make ready? And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house whereinto he goeth.
- 11 And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, <sup>1</sup> Or, *Teacher*. The <sup>1</sup>Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?
- 12 And he will shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.
- 13 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

**7 And the day of unleavened bread came.** These words seem clearly to mean that this Thursday was the actual day, i.e. Nisan 14th, in the evening of which all Jews in Jerusalem would be eating the Passover lamb, which that same afternoon had been slain in the Temple. But St. John's Gospel seems equally clearly to imply that the Passover was eaten on the next day, Friday, so that our Lord's last supper would be on the thirteenth. See St. John xiii. 1 and xviii. 28. In this case we must assume either that our Lord anticipated the Passover by one day, or that His last supper was a substitute for the Passover, following, no doubt, the general ritual of the feast, but without a paschal lamb.

**10 a man bearing a pitcher of water.** This would be an unusual sight, as women were almost invariably the carriers of water. No doubt the man's master was a friend or disciple of our Lord, who had secretly received instructions; so that our Lord's place of meeting would be unknown to His enemies. Very probably the house was that of John Mark and his mother Mary, afterwards a well-known resort of Christians (Acts xii.). It was quite customary for pilgrims to Jerusalem to hire a room for keeping their Passover, and the only payment allowed was the skin of the Paschal lamb.

**12 furnished,** i.e. provided with tables and couches, suitable for those eating the Paschal supper. The original ritual of partaking of the Supper, standing with staves and shoes as for a journey, had long fallen into disuse.

**13 and they made ready the passover.** If there was to be a lamb, the disciples would have to buy it earlier in the day, and take it to the Temple to be killed in the afternoon. They would also have to provide

*The Last Supper : the Eucharist (xxii. 14-23)*

And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the apostles<sup>14</sup> with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to<sup>15</sup>

wine, flat cakes of unleavened bread, and a special sauce, called *charoseth*, made of fruit and vinegar and bitter herbs.

The usual ritual of the Passover was as follows :—

(1) The first cup of wine and water, called "the cup of consecration," was blessed by the president and passed round. This was followed by ceremonial washing of hands (to which our Lord (St. John xiii.) added the washing of the disciples' feet).

(2) Cakes of unleavened bread, and the sauce of bitter herbs, etc., were placed on the table. Into this sauce those present dipped their pieces of bread; one of these pieces would be the "sop" which our Lord gave to Judas (St. John xiii.).

(3) The second cup was blessed. This was accompanied by the *Haggadah*, or "shewing forth," the president at this point being asked the set question, "What mean ye by this service?" and replying in due form by a commemoration of the Egyptian bondage and the great deliverance. This was followed by the singing of Psalms cxiii. and cxiv. the first part of festal psalms called the *Hallel*.

(4) The Paschal lamb was placed on the table, and partaken of by all, together with bread and bitter herbs. At this point our Lord appears to have instituted the Holy Eucharist, pronouncing one of the cakes which He had blessed and broken to be His Body. If there was no Paschal lamb, the act would appear even more significant. See below.

(5) The third cup, called "the cup of blessing," was passed round. This our Lord pronounced to be His Blood.

(6) The fourth cup, "the cup of joy," followed by the remaining Psalms of the *Hallel*, cxv.-cxviii.

**14 And when the hour was come.** There is a note of peculiar solemnity and mystery throughout the whole of this passage. St. Luke has preserved several incidents and sayings (*vv.* 24-38) unrecorded by the other Evangelists, which he must have drawn from some independent source.

**15 With desire I have desired.** This is a Hebraism, meaning "I have earnestly desired." The words that follow might be understood to imply that "this passover" was not the usual one, and so be harmonised with St. John's statement. "I will not eat it, etc.," is difficult otherwise to explain; like the similar words in *v.* 18. Our Lord certainly means that the great climax is at hand, and that the ancient

16 eat this passover with you before I suffer : for I say unto you, I  
 17 will not eat it, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he  
 received a cup, and when he had given thanks, he said, Take this,  
 18 and divide it among yourselves : for I say unto you, I will not  
 drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom  
 19 of God shall come. And he took <sup>1</sup>bread, and when  
 he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave to them <sup>2</sup>  
 saying, This is my body <sup>2</sup>which is given for you :  
 20 this do in remembrance of me. And the cup in like

<sup>1</sup> Or, a loaf.  
<sup>2</sup> Some  
 ancient  
 authorities  
 omit which

types are about to be fulfilled in the new era of the kingdom of God. Some have thought that He is referring to the eating and drinking with His disciples after His Resurrection (Acts x. 41).

17 **And he received a cup.** This was probably the first cup of the Supper, to which the words "fruit of the vine" were applied in the ritual formulas of the Passover. St. Matthew and St. Mark place these words of our Lord *after* the institution of the Eucharist, making them much more difficult of explanation. St. Luke, however, more usually gives the historical order ; spoken in this place the words seem like a solemn farewell to the old Covenant now passing away, preparatory to the institution of the distinctive sacrament of the new Covenant.

19 **This is my body,** etc. These mysterious words cannot be evaded or dismissed as a mere figure of speech, in the light (1) of the words used by our Lord a year previously (St. John vi.) at Capernaum of the necessity of "eating His flesh and drinking His blood" as the means of life ; (2) of the interpretation which the Church from the beginning gave to them. Cp. St. Paul's warning, 1 Corinthians xi. 29, to those who eat the Eucharist as if it were common food, "not discerning the body." Our Lord plainly identifies the broken bread with His own Body which He was about to "give" as a sacrifice for men. Instead of the flesh of the Paschal lamb, a type of Him who had been called by the Baptist, "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," He gave His own flesh, i.e. His human life offered in sacrifice, to be the food of believers.

**this do in remembrance of me.** These words are peculiar to the accounts of St. Luke and St. Paul (1 Cor. xi. the earliest account historically that we possess). Their surface meaning to English readers is a command to continue in the future this act of remembrance, when the Lord's bodily presence was withdrawn. Without doubt this meaning is intended ; and the Church from the beginning universally obeyed, and made the "breaking of the bread" her distinctive service.

But the Greek words plainly carry with them a further implication.

is given for  
you . . .  
which is  
poured out  
for you.  
<sup>1</sup> Or, testa-  
ment.

manner after supper, saying, This cup is the new 'covenant in my blood, *even* that which is poured out for you. But behold, the hand of him that betrayeth <sup>21</sup> me is with me on the table. For the Son of man <sup>22</sup> indeed goeth, and it hath been determined : but woe

They suggest that our Lord was instituting a sacrifice, which was to take the place of all the typical sacrifices of the Law. Both the words "do" and "remembrance" inevitably carried with them sacrificial associations. "Do" was the common word for offering a sacrifice, especially that of the Passover. "Remembrance" in its use in the O.T. implied not so much a subjective act of memory, as an outward memorial before God and man (cp. Lev. xxiv. 7; Num. x. 10). Hence the Church from very early times called the Eucharist "the sacrifice," and spoke of "offering" it to God.

**20 This cup is the new covenant in my blood.** There is a plain allusion to two remarkable passages in the O.T. In Exodus xxiv. 8 the covenant made at Mount Sinai through Moses was ratified by the sprinkling of the blood of sacrifices. In Jeremiah xxxi. <sup>31</sup> the prophet foretells "a new covenant" to be made in days to come. Our Lord is claiming evidently to be making this new covenant between God and man, ratified by His own blood. And, as in the case of the bread, He identifies the cup of wine and water, in some mysterious manner, with the Blood which He is about to pour out for man's sake—"unto remission of sins" (St. Matt. xxvi. 28).

The older rendering of the word for covenant was "testament," derived from the Vulgate. A testament means a "will," which is the meaning of the Greek word *diatheké*. Probably this word was expressly chosen to describe a Divine covenant, in contrast with a mere agreement (*syntheké*) between two parties. In a Divine covenant, all that God gives is absolutely at His own disposal, like the property which a man disposes of by his will. Man has no claim to it, unless God gives it. The Epistle to the Hebrews (ix. 16) points out a further resemblance to a will. A will implies the death of him who makes it: the Divine covenant made with man was ratified by the death of Christ its Mediator.

N.B.—It is important for arriving at a full view of the meaning of this passage to compare it carefully with the other three accounts. All the four differ to some extent in its details, though attempts were evidently made by early copyists of MSS. to bring them into more complete agreement. But these variations, as now clearly seen in R.V., are really more valuable than a verbal identity would have been. There were evidently different strains of tradition as to our Lord's precise words; the language varies, but the main features are the same.

23 unto that man through whom he is betrayed! And they began to question among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

*Warnings at the Last Supper (xxii. 24-38)*

24 And there arose also a contention among them, which of them  
25 is accounted to be <sup>1</sup>greatest. And he said unto them, <sup>1</sup>Gr. *greater*.

St. Matthew and St. Mark are akin: so are St. Luke and St. Paul. But comparing them, we find these facts brought out in varying ways and degrees by them all:—

(1) Our Lord was teaching the sacrificial and atoning nature of His death. Cp. St. Matthew xx. 28; St. Mark x. 45.

(2) He was identifying the broken bread and poured out wine with His sacrificed life so that those who partook of them might receive His Body and Blood and the benefits of His Sacrifice. (In this connection it must be remembered, what is often overlooked, that eating and drinking were an essential part of an ancient sacrifice; and that a covenant always required a sacrifice to confirm it, of which sacrifice the covenanting parties partook.)

(3) He was ordaining for believers not merely a means of sharing in the fruit of His Sacrifice, but an act of sacrificial worship. In celebrating the Eucharist they would be themselves pleading the Sacrifice as a memorial before God. Cp. 1 Corinthians xi. 26.

**22 For the Son of man indeed goeth,** etc. The Death of the Lord, to which He was going, was no unforeseen catastrophe, but had been "determined" in the Divine counsels, and foretold by the prophets, as the means of reconciliation between God and man. Cp. Revelation xiii. 8.

**woe unto that man.** The warnings to Judas are more fully given in the other Gospels. Though our Lord's death was "determined," Judas was acting of his own free-will, and the Lord evidently yearned to rescue him from incurring such guilt.

**23 And they began to question.** Again, St. Luke only briefly summarises what is contained more fully and vividly in the other Gospels—the anxious questioning of individuals, the direct warning to Judas himself, and the intimation given to St. John as to who the traitor was. (St. John xiii.)

**24 And there arose also a contention.** It is uncertain at what point in the Supper this took place, but probably it was at the beginning, in connection with taking their places round the table. Their minds were

The kings of the Gentiles have lordship over them ; and they that have authority over them are called Benefactors. But <sup>26</sup> ye shall not be so : but he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger ; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that <sup>27</sup> 'sitteth at meat, or he that serveth ? is not he that 'sitteth at meat ? but I am in the midst of you as he that serveth. But ye are they which have continued with me in my <sup>28</sup> temptations ; and <sup>29</sup> I appoint unto you a kingdom, <sup>30</sup> even as my Father appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom ; and ye shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *reclineth*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *I appoint unto you, even as my Father appointed*

still full of the expected glories of the Messianic kingdom. St. John, apparently (St. John xiii.), sat in the second place, on our Lord's right. Perhaps Judas Iscariot claimed and got the first place, on His left. He was evidently near to our Lord, as St. John's narrative implies.

**25 The kings of the Gentiles, etc.** In these solemn, almost rhythmical sentences our Lord contrasts the gradations of office in the kingdoms of this world with the humility and mutual service which will mark greatness in the kingdom of the Messiah. "Benefactor" (Greek *Euergetes*) was a semi-official title often given to Eastern potentates.

**27 I am in the midst of you as he that serveth.** Their Master, the Son of God, had not come on earth to lord it over men ; but to take the humblest place, as their example (cp. Phil. ii. 5-8). And as St. John (xiii.) records, He proceeded to give them a practical proof of this, by actually assuming the office of a slave and washing their feet.

**28 in my temptations.** To be understood in the general sense of sufferings and trials, as well as the direct attacks of Satan. To suffer with Christ is the way to the kingdom.

**29-30 I appoint unto you a kingdom, etc.** Although the worldly ideals and ambitions of the Twelve are rebuked, their true dignity and reward are expressed in striking language. They are to share the kingly power of Christ : they are to occupy a position of honour in His court, "to eat and drink at his table" being a regular expression for the honour paid by a sovereign to those whom he specially desired to honour.

**judging the twelve tribes of Israel.** The imagery is Jewish : but the words must have a wider interpretation. The literal twelve tribes were a type of something greater—the spiritual Israel, the Catholic Church ;

31 Israel. Simon, Simon, behold, Satan <sup>1</sup>asked to have  
 32 you, that he might sift you as wheat: but I made  
 supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not: and do  
 thou, when once thou hast turned again, stablish thy  
 33 brethren. And he said unto him, Lord, with thee I  
 34 am ready to go both to prison and to death. And he  
 said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow  
 this day, until thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.  
 35 And he said unto them, When I sent you forth without purse,

*unto me a  
kingdom,  
that ye may  
eat and  
drink, etc.*

<sup>1</sup> Or, *ob-  
tained you  
by asking.*

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twelve being not merely numerical, but a sign of perfection or completeness. Cp. Revelation vii. 4-8. A similar promise to the Twelve had been made before (St. Matt. xix. 28).

This promise of a kingdom cannot be limited to the original Twelve (especially as one was turning traitor): it must be interpreted of the continuity and the authority of the Apostolic ministry, who in succession to the Apostles were to govern the Church through all time.

31 **Simon, Simon.** This mysterious and remarkable saying, peculiar to St. Luke, seems evidently to be a personal reminiscence of one of the Twelve, probably St. Peter himself. Satan can tempt no one, except by God's permission. He was eager to tempt all the Twelve, and gain more of them, as he had already sifted out Judas. The metaphor is derived from the common process of separating the chaff from the grain.

Notice that "you" is plural, and applies to all the Apostles and not St. Peter only.

32 **but I made supplication for thee.** Here the singular pronoun is used. As Simon Peter was the recognised head of the Twelve, our Lord had specially interceded for him, knowing the danger that was at hand.

**when once thou hast turned again.** It is difficult to grasp the exact force of the words. They seem to imply that Peter was for the time turned, by his own self-confidence, in the direction of failure, and of falling a victim to Satan. His "turning again" would be when he turned to Christ in humility and repentance. The subsequent history of the Apostles shews how the prayer was answered. Peter was the first to preach the Gospel both to Jews (Acts ii.) and Gentiles (Acts x.), and his first Epistle is peculiarly one of "strengthening" those who were in danger of losing faith under persecution. Cp. the words of 1 St. Peter v. 10.

35 **When I sent you,** etc., i.e. in their preliminary mission through the villages of Israel—described in ix. 1-6. The command not to take

and wallet, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing. And he said unto them, But now, he that hath a purse,<sup>36</sup> let him take it, and likewise a wallet: <sup>1</sup>and he that hath none, let him sell his cloke, and buy a sword. For I say unto you, that this which is written must <sup>37</sup> be fulfilled in me, And he was reckoned with transgressors: for that which concerneth me hath <sup>2</sup>fulfilment. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two <sup>38</sup> swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

<sup>1</sup> Or, and he that hath no sword, let him sell his cloke, and buy one.  
<sup>2</sup> Gr. end.

### *The Agony (xxii. 39-46)*

And he came out, and went, as his custom was, unto the<sup>39</sup> mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed him. And<sup>40</sup>

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shoes (i.e. boots suitable for a long journey on foot) comes, however, from the charge to the Seventy (x.).

**36 But now, he that hath a purse,** etc. The instruction can hardly be meant literally, but is rather to be interpreted as a vivid way of warning them that a great change in their position is at hand. Their Master was about to be taken from them, and they would have to face a hostile world. They must make all preparations; though the remembrance that before they had "lacked nothing" would give them hope for the future.

**37 And he was reckoned with transgressors.** The quotation is from Isaiah liii., the great picture of the rejection and sufferings and death of "the Servant of the Lord," a passage which seems to have been often in our Lord's mind. Cp. St. Peter's application of it, 1 St. Peter ii. 21-25.

**38 here are two swords.** They took His words with curious literalism. One of the swords, we know, was St. Peter's. Perhaps the other belonged to Simon the Zealot. They must have armed themselves, expecting to take part in a battle for the Messiah's kingdom.

**It is enough.** The reply seems to be one of sad irony. They did not understand His words, and for the present He puts the matter aside. It was not of such swords that He was speaking, as they were soon to learn. Cp. St. Matthew xxvi. 52-53.

**39 And he came out.** This going out of the city is an incident which makes it improbable that this was the actual Passover-night. St. Luke, like the other Synoptists, makes no mention of the great discourses recorded by St. John (xiv.-xvi.), which were delivered either in the

when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter  
 41 not into temptation. And he was parted from them about a  
 42 stone's cast; and he kneeled down and prayed, saying, Father,  
 if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not  
 43 my will, but thine, be done. <sup>1</sup>And there appeared  
 unto him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. <sup>1</sup> Many  
 44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: ancient  
 and his sweat became as it were great drops of blood authorities  
 omit ver.  
 43, 44.

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upper room or on the way out of the city, nor of the great Prayer of self-dedication (St. John xvii.).

**40 And when he was at the place.** The place was already well known to Christians and St. Luke does not mention its name. It was the garden of Gethsemane, an enclosed garden on the lower slope of the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem. The name means "oil-press," and there are still some ancient olive-trees to be seen there. The garden was no doubt the property of some friend, and a favourite place of our Lord's for prayer and retirement. Gethsemane is one of the few traditional sites at Jerusalem that are quite certainly historical.

**Pray that ye enter not into temptation.** The words throw some light on the meaning of the similar clause in the Lord's Prayer. The disciples were inevitably about to be tempted: but they are instructed to pray that they may come safely through it, and not be tempted beyond their strength.

**42 nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.** Again a parallel to the Lord's Prayer. Our Lord is praying as man, and in taking the fullness of man's nature in His Incarnation, He took also a human will. He offers this, as man, in obedience to the Father's will, which is also the will of the Son in His Divine nature, and of the Holy Ghost. The Church relied on this passage in condemning the heresy of the Monothelites, who denied the human will in Christ, thus impairing His complete human nature. In Christ, being God and man in one Person, there are two wills, Divine and human, acting in perfect harmony and union.

**44 And being in an agony.** All the Synoptists use the strongest possible words to describe the acute suffering, the intense mental and spiritual strain which our Lord underwent. There may have been in it some human shrinking from a horrible death; also some reaction from the spiritual exaltation of the last Supper. But these are not adequate to explain this mysterious anguish. More probably we should recognise in it the final struggle with the Tempter, who was trying again, as in the wilderness, to turn our Lord away from His chosen path of the Passion.

falling down upon the ground. And when he rose up from his 45 prayer, he came unto the disciples, and found them sleeping for sorrow, and said unto them, Why sleep ye ? rise and pray, that 46 ye enter not into temptation.

### *The Arrest (xxii. 47-53)*

While he yet spake, behold, a multitude, and he that was called 47 Judas, one of the twelve, went before them ; and he drew near unto Jesus to kiss him. But Jesus said unto him, Judas, 48 betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss ? And when they that 49

And also this must have been the agony of a perfectly sinless soul, feeling to the utmost the horror and the burden of human sin.

as it were great drops of blood. It is uncertain from the words whether actual blood flowed (a phenomenon not without parallel in cases of acute agony), or whether the sweat fell as thickly as blood from a wound. Christian tradition is in favour of the former alternative. See the Litany.

45 **And when he rose up.** St. Matthew and St. Mark record that the prayer was thrice repeated. After each repetition our Lord came back to His disciples, or to the three who were nearest, St. Peter, St. James and St. John, and gently reproved them for their slumber.

**sleeping for sorrow.** A remarkable expression: it may have been that they were beginning to realise that it was no glorious earthly triumph that lay before them, but suffering and tragedy. Or their grief may have been, as it were, subconscious. The cloud of anguish which the coming Passion had brought upon our Lord's human soul, may have affected them to some extent : depression had fallen on them, numbing their previous eagerness and making them fall asleep, in spite of His exhortation to watch and pray.

47 **behold, a multitude.** This multitude, as we see from v. 52, was an armed force, consisting (1) of officers and men from the Temple guard, armed with swords and clubs, and (2) some Roman soldiers from the garrison of Jerusalem (St. John xviii. 3), who would be specially active at Passover time, when tumults were always apprehended. St. John calls this body a " cohort," which usually consisted of about two hundred men, commanded by a " tribune."

to kiss him. The usual reverential and affectionate salutation of a master by a disciple.

were about him saw what would follow, they said, Lord, shall  
 50 we smite with the sword? And a certain one of them smote the  
 'servant of the high priest, and struck off his right  
 51 ear. But Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. <sup>1 Gr. bond-</sup>  
 52 And he touched his ear, and healed him. And Jesus <sub>servant.</sub>  
 said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and  
 elders, which were come against him, Are ye come out, as against  
 53 a robber, with swords and staves? When I was daily with you in  
 the temple, ye stretched not forth your hands against me: but  
 this is your hour, and the power of darkness.

*The First Jewish Trial: St. Peter's Denials (xxii. 54-65)*

54 And they seized him, and led him *away*, and brought him into  
 55 the high priest's house. But Peter followed afar off. And when

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**50 And a certain one of them.** All the evangelists record this incident, but St. John only, writing many years afterwards, when all concerned were dead, discloses the names. The swordsman was St. Peter, the servant was called Malchus.

**51 Suffer ye thus far.** The exact meaning is doubtful. It may be addressed to the disciples, and be an appeal to them to abstain from resistance: they are to allow even this outrage to be done. Our Lord did not need the sword to defend Him. Cp. St. Matthew xxvi. 52-53.

**And he touched his ear.** This is the last miracle of healing, most characteristic of our Lord's forbearance and pity for human ignorance; and like the First word from the Cross, it is recorded only by St. Luke.

**53 this is your hour.** It was only by Divine sufferance that they were allowed even now to arrest Him. Had He willed, He could have escaped them. But behind the outward display of armed authority, He recognises the malice of Satan, the temporary power of the spirits of evil. Cp. "the prince of the world cometh," St. John xiv. 30. The high priests and their soldiers were only the puppets of "the power of darkness," a memorable expression—"darkness" is usually in Scripture a symbol of evil, and they had fittingly chosen the night in which to do their wicked deed.

**54 the high priest's house.** St. John explains that our Lord was led first to Annas, the deposed high priest whom the Jews still recognised; and then to his son-in-law Caiaphas, whom the Romans had appointed (see p. 27). They were apparently in different parts of the same house. In the centre of the house would be the *atrium*, the "court" of v. 53

they had kindled a fire in the midst of the court, and had sat down together, Peter sat in the midst of them. And a certain maid <sup>56</sup> seeing him as he sat in the light of the fire, and looking stedfastly upon him, said, This man also was with him. But he denied, <sup>57</sup> saying, Woman, I know him not. And after a little while another <sup>58</sup> saw him and said, Thou also art *one* of them. But Peter said, Man, I am not. And after the space of about one hour another <sup>59</sup> confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this man also was with him : for he is a Galilæan. But Peter said, Man, I know not what <sup>60</sup> thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter <sup>61</sup>

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open to the sky : the various rooms opened out of this court, and a considerable view of the proceedings could be obtained by those in the court.

**But Peter followed afar off.** He was introduced into the house by another disciple, evidently St. John, who was known to the high priest.

**56 And a certain maid seeing him,** etc. The four accounts of St. Peter's denials are full of interesting but somewhat puzzling variations. This maid was apparently the doorkeeper who challenged St. Peter at his entrance, or shortly afterwards. The next person who drew attention to him appears in St. Luke's account as a man, in the other Gospels as another maidservant or the same one as before. Probably the word was passed from one person to another. The third interlocutor is described by St. John as a kinsman of that Malchus, who had been struck by St. Peter's sword. And his accusation was echoed generally by those sitting round the fire (St. Matt. and St. Mark).

**59 for he is a Galilæan.** St. Peter's broad Galilæan dialect had betrayed him (St. Matthew and St. Mark) : it was the Galilæans who were known and feared in Jerusalem as the enthusiastic supporters of Jesus.

**60 the cock crew.** St. Mark alone (the companion and interpreter of St. Peter) records that the cock was twice heard to crow, and that our Lord's prediction had definitely spoken of twice. St. Matthew and St. Mark speak also of the oaths and imprecations with which St. Peter in his terror tried to emphasise his denial. St. Luke, with his characteristic forbearance with sinners, omits them.

**61 And the Lord turned.** This pathetic incident is recorded only by St. Luke.

The events of the Jewish trials are difficult to disentangle. St. Luke

remembered the word of the Lord, how that he said unto him,  
 62 Before the cock crow this day, thou shalt deny me thrice. And  
 he went out, and wept bitterly.

63 And the men that held <sup>1</sup>Jesus mocked him, and <sup>1</sup>Gr. *him*.  
 64 beat him. And they blindfolded him, and asked  
 65 him, saying, Prophecy : who is he that struck thee ? And many  
 other things spake they against him, reviling him.

*The Second Jewish Trial (xxii. 66-71)*

66 And as soon as it was day, the assembly of the elders of the  
 people was gathered together, both chief priests and scribes ;

clearly shews that there were two trials, a preliminary one before the high priest, and a more official one early in the following morning. But he says nothing of what happened at the first examination. St. John speaks of the high priest questioning Jesus as to His disciples and His teaching, no doubt with the intention of getting Him to incriminate Himself. Probably also there was some examination of witnesses. Many false witnesses had been provided, but as Jewish law required them to give evidence separately, they contradicted each other. The nearest approach to unanimity was provided by two, who said (with some variations) that Jesus had spoken of destroying the Temple and rebuilding it in three days (cp. St. John ii. 19, which gives the key to this false charge). St. Matthew and St. Mark then speak of the high priest solemnly adjuring our Lord, putting Him on His oath, to say whether He were the Christ or not. It is not clear whether this is what St. Luke refers to in the following verses (66-69), or whether questions of the same sort were asked at both trials.

**63 And the men that held Jesus.** This foul conduct of the servants and the rabble of the high priests' household took place in the break between the two Jewish trials. At the end of the first one, the judges had apparently declared Him to be worthy of death, though the sentence had to be confirmed both by the Sanhedrin and the Roman governor. The servants, regarding Him as already practically condemned, vented their malice and brutality upon Him all the rest of the night.

**64 Prophecy.** The Galilæans had hailed Him as a prophet, and proclaimed Him as such at the triumphal entry. The servants of Caiaphas mock at this, and challenge Him to shew His supernatural powers—the " vision " and insight that marked a prophet.

and they led him away into their council, saying, If thou art the <sup>67</sup> Christ, tell us. But he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe: and if I ask *you*, ye will not answer. But from hence-<sup>68</sup> forth shall the Son of man be seated at the right hand of the <sup>69</sup> power of God. And they all said, Art thou then the Son of God? <sup>70</sup>

And he said unto them, <sup>71</sup> 'Ye say that I am. And they said, What further need have we of witness? for we ourselves have heard from his own mouth.

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**66 their council**, i.e. the Sanhedrin, the highest Jewish court, which met in the Temple, and until the Roman occupation had the supreme power of life or death.

**67 If thou art the Christ, tell us.** An open admission of Messiahship would be a convenient charge to carry to the Roman governor. As our Lord's reply shews, the question was not asked with any sincerity or desire to know the truth.

**68 and if I ask you.** This second part of our Lord's answer is somewhat difficult. He seems to be stating the insincerity of His judges from both points of view. Just as *they* asked with no desire but to condemn Him; so they would, He knows, refuse to answer anything that *He* might ask with a view to making clear the truth. It would be no use for Him either to question the witnesses, or to ask anything of the judges.

**69 But from henceforth.** This allusion to Daniel vii. 13, 14, combined with His own frequent use of "Son of man" as a title for Himself, shews that He is asserting definitely (1) to be Himself the Messiah foretold; (2) to be about to enter on His everlasting kingdom. "The right hand of God" means the highest place of dignity and power in heaven.

**70 Art thou then the Son of God?** St. Luke alone gives this as a separate question. The high priest in his previous adjuration (not recorded by St. Luke) had asked whether He were "the Christ, the Son of God." It was probably known in Jerusalem that He had claimed to be the Son of God as well as Son of man (as recorded by St. John). The exalted position He had just claimed at the right hand of God would also suggest a claim to be more than man.

**Ye say that I am.** Evidently meant and recognised as an affirmative answer: "ye are yourselves confessing me to be such."

**71 What further need have we of witness?** The primary object of the Jewish trials had been to get grounds for a charge of "blasphemy," which the Jews in general would regard as justifying a sentence of death. Our Lord's reply would seem to them to have delivered Him into their hands.

## CHAPTER XXII

*Questions*

1. What was the Passover ?
2. Why did Judas betray our Lord ?
3. Describe the ceremonies of the Passover supper.
4. What reasons are there for supposing that our Lord's last supper was not the ordinary Passover ?
5. Describe the institution of the Eucharist.
6. What incidents and sayings at the last supper does St. Luke alone record ?
7. What is the meaning of " the new covenant in my blood " ?
8. Describe our Lord's agony and prayer on the Mount of Olives.
9. Describe St. Peter's denials.
10. Distinguish the two Jewish trials of our Lord
11. On what charge did the Sanhedrin condemn our Lord ?

*Subjects for Study*

1. The character of Judas.  
Bruce, *Training of the Twelve*.  
Stalker, *Trial and Death of Jesus Christ*.  
Liddon, *Passion-tide Sermons*.
2. The Institution and meaning of the Eucharist.  
Gore, *The Body of Christ*.  
*The Lord's Supper* in Hastings' Dictionary.
3. The meaning of the Agony in Gethsemane.  
Dale, *The Atonement*.  
Newman, *Mental Sufferings of our Lord* in *Sermons to Mixed Congregations*.
4. The relation of the Last Supper to the Passover.  
*Jesus Christ* in Hastings' Dictionary.  
*Passover and Eucharist* in Murray's Dictionary.

*The Roman Trial of Our Lord* (xxiii. 1-7)

And the whole company of them rose up, and brought him <sup>xxiii. 1</sup> before Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, We found <sup>2</sup> this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to <sup>3</sup> Cæsar, and saying that he himself is <sup>1</sup>Christ a king. And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou

<sup>1</sup> Or, *an anointed king.*

**xxiii. 1 Pilate.** Under the Roman rule, the Sanhedrin had been deprived of its powers of life and death, and it was necessary for the sentence upon Jesus to be confirmed by the Roman governor.

Pontius Pilate, a nominee of the infamous Sejanus, had been appointed by the Emperor Tiberius as *procurator* of the imperial province of Judæa in 26. He continued till 36, when he was recalled to Rome and fell into disgrace. He had a bad reputation with the Jews, for his cruelty (see p. 138) and his contemptuous disregard of their religious feelings. He had allowed the Roman eagles to be carried by his soldiers into Jerusalem: and on one occasion had seized the money in the Temple treasury to build an aqueduct. His usual residence was at Cæsarea, but he was staying at Jerusalem during the Passover-time, to guard against any popular disturbance. He was probably lodged at a palace of Herod's: or he may have been in the tower of Antonia, adjoining the Temple.

The crowd of Jews, headed by the chief priests, presented themselves before the stairs which led into the *atrium*. They would not go further lest they should incur "defilement," by entering a heathen house with its images (St. John xviii. 28). Pilate examined the prisoner within the house, and came out to the top of the stairs when he addressed the crowd.

**2 And they began to accuse him.** In order to get Pilate's consent to the execution of Jesus, it was necessary to present an accusation that a Roman official would recognise as serious. So an entirely false charge of sedition was shouted out. The charge of blasphemy, which was their own ostensible ground of condemning Him, was for the present kept in the background; though it appeared later (St. John xix. 7).

**3 And Pilate asked him, etc.** A much fuller account of this private examination of our Lord by Pilate is found in St. John xviii., which helps to explain why Pilate, though he received an affirmative answer from Jesus ("Thou sayest"), yet treated the charge as without foundation. He probably considered Jesus as a mere visionary, whose

4 sayest. And Pilate said unto the chief priests and the multi-  
 5 tudes, I find no fault in this man. But they were the more  
 urgent, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout  
 6 all Judæa, and beginning from Galilee even unto this place. But  
 when Pilate heard it, he asked whether the man were a Galilæan.  
 7 And when he knew that he was of Herod's jurisdiction, he sent  
 him unto Herod, who himself was at Jerusalem in these days.

*The Trial before Herod (xxiii. 8-12)*

8 Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he  
 was of a long time desirous to see him, because he had heard  
 concerning him; and he hoped to see some <sup>1</sup>miracle <sup>1</sup> Gr. *sign*.  
 9 done by him. And he questioned him in many words;  
 10 but he answered him nothing. And the chief priests and the  
 11 scribes stood, vehemently accusing him. And Herod with his

fantastic claim to an empire "not of this world" presented no danger to the Roman rule. And he saw clearly that the charge had been brought by the malice of the Jews, whom he detested.

**5 teaching throughout all Judæa.** These words throw an interesting light on the supposed discrepancy between the Synoptists and St. John. The latter alone describes a ministry of our Lord in Judæa and Jerusalem, while the former confine themselves to His work in Galilee and Peræa. But this incidental allusion, quoted from the cries of the accusers, shew that there had been teaching in Judæa. Liars though they were, they could scarcely have said this had it not been matter of common knowledge; it would otherwise have been so easily refuted.

**7 he sent him unto Herod.** Herod Antipas, the murderer of the Baptist, ruled over Galilee and Peræa. He usually resided at Tiberias, but came to Jerusalem for the Passover. St. Luke alone records this trial before Herod, shewing himself here as elsewhere, especially well informed as to the doings of Herod and his court. Pilate was feeling uneasy about the threatening attitude of the mob, and their refusal to accept his decision. He clutched at the opportunity of shifting the responsibility and at the same time paying a compliment to Herod.

**8 for he was of a long time desirous to see him.** This desire has already been alluded to in ix. 7-9. It was only the desire of a new excitement; and our Lord refused to plead before him or answer his questions, still less to gratify him with a miracle.

soldiers set him at nought, and mocked him, and arraying him in gorgeous apparel sent him back to Pilate. And Herod and Pilate<sup>12</sup> became friends with each other that very day : for before they were at enmity between themselves.

*The Roman Trial Resumed (xxiii. 13-25)*

And Pilate called together the chief priests and the rulers and<sup>13</sup> the people, and said unto them, Ye brought unto me this man, as<sup>14</sup> one that perverteth the people : and behold, I, having examined him before you, found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him : no, nor yet Herod : for he sent him back<sup>15</sup> unto us ; and behold, nothing worthy of death hath been done by

him. I will therefore chastise him, and release him.<sup>16</sup>  
<sup>1</sup> Many ancient But they cried out all together, saying, Away with<sup>18</sup>

**11 And Herod with his soldiers, etc.** Although they treated our Lord as an object of public derision, they evidently regarded Him as innocent of the charges brought against Him, and like Pilate, saw the malice which lay behind the vehemence of His accusers.

**in gorgeous apparel**—literally “bright”—perhaps some disused royal robe ; probably white, and embroidered in gold or colours : not like the scarlet or purple robe which the other Evangelists describe Pilate’s soldiers as clothing Jesus with, in mockery. That would no doubt be some military cloak.

**12 And Herod and Pilate became friends.** It is not known what was the cause of their previous enmity. It may have been some quarrel about their respective jurisdictions (see p. xv.) ; or Pilate may have imagined that Herod being on friendly terms with the Emperor Tiberius was conveying information about him to Rome. See also p. 138.

**13 And Pilate called together, etc.** This has all the appearance of a formal sentence of acquittal, publicly delivered from the *bema* or judgment seat, with all the dignity of Roman law. Pilate, from examination of the prisoner, was thoroughly convinced of his innocence, and he would have been glad to release him both from a sense of justice and from his dislike and contempt for the Jewish leaders and their mob. He had also, as we learn from St. Matthew, received a warning from his wife, who had been distressed by a dream concerning Jesus.

**16 I will therefore chastise him.** The weakness and worthlessness of Pilate’s character comes out in this sentence. If the prisoner was innocent, why subject him to the severe penalty of a Roman scourging

19 this man, and release unto us Barabbas : one who authorities  
 for a certain insurrection made in the city, and for insert ver.  
 20 murder, was cast into prison. And Pilate spake unto 17 : *Now he*  
 21 them again, desiring to release Jesus ; but they *must needs*  
 22 shouted, saying, Crucify, crucify him. And he said *release unto*  
 unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath this *them at the*  
 man done ? I have found no cause of death in him : *feast one pri-*  
 23 I will therefore chastise him and release him. But *soner. Others*  
 they were instant with loud voices, asking that *add the same*  
 24 he might be crucified. And their voices prevailed. And Pilate *words after*  
 25 gave sentence that what they asked for should be done. And *ver. 19.*  
 he released him that for insurrection and murder had been  
 cast into prison, whom they asked for ; but Jesus he delivered  
 up to their will.

with loaded whips ? It was a mere concession to the brutality of the crowd, hoping that they would be content with something short of the death penalty. Pilate had an evil conscience, as a bad and cruel administrator, and though his decision was just, he was afraid to stand to it ; not daring to risk complaints to the Emperor, and only wanting to get rid of an unpleasant business.

17 The verse in the margin, missing in the best MSS., may have been added by copyists to bring the text into accordance with the other Gospels which allude to this. "Needs," or "of necessity," means, of course, the compulsion of an established custom.

18 **Barabbas.** The name means "Son of a father" : and if his first name, as early tradition seems to say, was also Joshua, or Jesus, the coincidence is indeed remarkable. Jewish hypocrisy comes out in the fact that the prisoner, whose release they demanded, was actually guilty of the very crime of which they had falsely accused our Lord.

24 **And their voices prevailed.** The epigrammatic style and tragic note that distinguish this brief account should be noticed. There is a tremendous irony in the words "whom they asked for."

The other evangelists give many more details, e.g. Pilate's washing his hands before the multitude, to signify his personal innocence of the death of a just man : the scourging of Jesus : the mockery by the soldiers, who clothed Him in a mock-regal robe and crowned Him with thorns : Pilate's final attempt to excite the pity of the mob, by bringing Him out again after the scourging and the mockery, with the words "Behold the man !"

*The Way to Calvary* (xxiii. 26-32)

And when they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon of 26  
Cyrene, coming from the country, and laid on him the cross, to  
bear it after Jesus.

And there followed him a great multitude of the people, and of 27  
women who bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning 28  
unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but  
weep for yourselves, and for your children. For behold, the days 29  
are coming, in which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and  
the wombs that never bare, and the breasts that never gave suck.  
Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us ; and to 30

26 **one Simon of Cyrene**, a town in North Africa. Simon was probably recognised as a sympathiser with Jesus : he was, apparently, coming into Jerusalem for the festival, and the soldiers forcibly impressed his services and compelled him to turn back with them. Simon seems to have been well known afterwards in the Church : St. Mark speaks of him as "the father of Alexander and Rufus." Cp. Romans xvi. 13.

**and laid on him the cross.** Crucifixion was a punishment inflicted by the Romans only on slaves and provincials. It was the most painful and humiliating form of lingering death, and was regarded with horror by the Jews. Hence the persistency with which the hatred of the chief priests had clamoured for its infliction on our Lord. The Cross was made of two pieces of timber : fastened together at the place of execution. The condemned criminal had to carry himself the transverse beam, and also a board bearing his name and crime. It seems from St. John's account that Jesus Himself at first bore, as was usual, the beam of the Cross. But probably He fell under its weight, and Simon of Cyrene did not carry it entirely, but supported one end of it from behind our Lord.

**27 women who bewailed.** As these are addressed as "Daughters of Jerusalem," they could not have been women who had accompanied Him from Galilee. They were probably those who made a pious practice of accompanying the condemned with expressions of sorrow, and providing the medicated wine, which was given before crucifixion to numb the pain (see St. Mark xv. 23). Our Lord directs them to turn their sorrow rather to the sins of Jerusalem, which in days to come will be visited with such terrible retribution, that to be childless will be counted a blessing, and men will pray for death.

**30 Then shall they begin to say to the mountains.** This tremendous

- 31 the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry ?
- 32 And there were also two others, malefactors, led with him to be put to death.

*The Crucifixion (xxiii. 33-49)*

- 33 And when they came unto the place which is called <sup>1</sup>The skull, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand and the other on <sup>1</sup> According to the Latin, *Calvary*, which has the same meaning.
- 34 the left. <sup>2</sup>And Jesus said, Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do. And parting his garments among them, they cast lots. And the people <sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities
- 35 stood beholding. And the rulers also scoffed at him,

prediction is quoted from Hosea x. 8, and is again applied in Revelation vi. 16 to the final terror of the wicked at the approach of Christ as Judge.

31 **For if they do these things in the green tree.** This was probably a proverbial expression. Cp. Ezekiel xx. 47. Trees are so precious in the East that the contrast between a dry and a green tree is naturally used to point a moral lesson. The meaning may be : " If these sufferings are inflicted on an innocent person, what will be the sufferings of those, who like a withered tree, bear no fruit ? " Or, " If in Jerusalem, while still she is green with life, such tears as yours are shed, what weeping will there be when her own time for destruction comes ? "

32 **And there were also two others.** This was an unconscious fulfilling of the Scriptures. Cp. Isaiah liii. 9 and 12, and St. Mark xv. 28 (margin R.V.). The two are described elsewhere as highway robbers, or brigands.

33 **the place which is called The skull.** The Hebrew is Golgotha, the Latin Calvaria. The place was probably so-called because it was a rounded hill resembling a skull in shape. With less likelihood, the name is thought to have been derived from the unburied skulls and bones of criminals executed there. The locality is much disputed (see p. 232), but it was certainly outside the walls (Ileb. xiii. 12) ; probably the traditional site to the N.W. of the city is correct. Ancient legend said that here was the grave of Adam, and the old painters represented his skull at the foot of the Cross.

**there they crucified him.** Sometimes the criminal was only tied to the cross, and died of exhaustion and starvation ; but it is evident,

omit *And Jesus said, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.* saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if this is the Christ of God, his chosen. And the soldiers <sup>36</sup> also mocked him, coming to him, offering him vinegar, and saying, If thou art the King of the Jews, save <sup>37</sup> thyself. And there was also a superscription over <sup>38</sup> him, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

And one of the malefactors which were hanged <sup>39</sup> railed on him, saying, Art not thou the Christ? save thyself and us. But the <sup>40</sup>

from the records of the Resurrection, that our Lord's hands and feet were nailed to the Cross.

**34 Father, forgive them.** This wonderful prayer for the heathen soldiers in their ignorance is recorded only by St. Luke, and is the first of the Seven Words from the Cross. It was also the dying prayer of the first martyr, St. Stephen (Acts vii. 60).

**And parting his garments.** The clothes of the criminal were the requisite of the executioners. St. John gives more details, and alone alludes to the fulfilment of the prophecy of Psalm xxii. 18, a psalm which contains remarkable predictions of the words and doings at the Crucifixion.

**36 offering him vinegar.** This would be the sour wine which was the usual drink of the soldiers; not to be confused with the cup of drugged wine which He had refused. Perhaps that refusal, which seemed folly to the soldiers, led to this act of derision. They were again unconsciously fulfilling prophecy (Psalm lxxix. 21).

**37 a superscription.** This was the usual inscription put on a cross, written in black letters on a whitened board. Pilate had himself written this one, specially wording it so as to insult the Jews. St. John records their unavailing protest. It was written in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, the three great languages of the world: an unconscious proclamation of the Catholic gospel.

**39 And one of the malefactors.** This remarkable incident is peculiar to St. Luke. The other evangelists only record that the malefactors reviled Him. Both probably did so at first, but one repented, and recognised Jesus as the Christ. St. Luke, with his customary emphasis on the Divine pity towards penitent sinners, would naturally preserve this affecting scene.

**Art not thou the Christ?** The malefactor was a Jew, and no doubt shared the usual ideas of his age about a conquering Messiah, the destroyer of the Romans. Our Lord's crucifixion seemed to him to be the conclusive proof that He could not be the Christ.

other answered, and rebuking him said, Dost thou not even fear  
 41 God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed  
 justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this  
 42 man hath done nothing amiss. And he said, Jesus, remember me  
 43 when thou comest <sup>1</sup>in thy kingdom. And he said  
 unto him, Verily I say unto you, To-day shalt thou  
 be with me in Paradise. <sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read *into thy kingdom.*  
 44 And it was now about the sixth hour, and a darkness  
 45 came over the whole <sup>2</sup>land until the ninth hour, <sup>3</sup>the  
 sun's light failing: and the veil of the <sup>4</sup>temple was  
 46 rent in the midst. <sup>5</sup>And when Jesus had cried with a  
 loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend  
 my spirit: and having said this, he gave up the ghost.  
 47 And when the centurion saw what was done, he  
 glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous  
<sup>2</sup> Or, earth.  
<sup>3</sup> Gr. the sun failing.  
<sup>4</sup> Or, sanctuary.  
<sup>5</sup> Or, And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said.

40 **But the other answered.** He rebukes his fellow-sufferer for his attitude, so unfitting to one about to die; he confesses his sin and the justice of his punishment; he acknowledges the innocence of Jesus, and by his prayer shews his new-found belief that He is really the Messiah.

43 **To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.** "Paradise" is a Persian word, meaning a royal garden shaded with trees; the image of rest, peace, and refreshment, in contrast with the agony which the crucified were enduring. Our Lord evidently means by it the place or state of the souls of the righteous after death: a condition which was to follow in this case at least, immediately on death; and in which it is implied the soul will be conscious, happy, and in the presence of Jesus. Such a condition is not inconsistent with the state of the departed being one of progress and even of purification; nor need it be identified with the final "Heaven."

This is the Second Word from the Cross; and was followed, as St. John records, by the Third, addressed to St. Mary and St. John, who were among the few faithful who remained close by the Cross.

44 **a darkness came over the whole land.** This extraordinary darkness, lasting from noon to three o'clock, was not an eclipse; none took place at that time: but some abnormal obscuring of the sun's light, an awe-inspiring gloom, such as might precede the earthquake which St. Matthew records.

45 **and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.** This may well have been caused by an earthquake. There were two veils in the

man. And all the multitudes that came together to this sight, <sup>48</sup> when they beheld the things that were done, returned smiting

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Temple, one before the entrance to the Holy Place and a second between that and the Holy of Holies. It was probably the former which was rent, as Origen suggests. The event must have been very terrifying, as it was the hour of the evening sacrifice, and probably of the slaying of the Paschal lamb—the Temple courts would be crowded. Christians were not slow to grasp the symbolic meaning of this tearing of the veil. Only the priests, the sons of Aaron, were allowed to pass even the first veil; but now the way into the kingdom of heaven, the Church of which the Holy Place was a type, is opened to all believers. The Holy of Holies probably symbolised Heaven itself, where Christ has entered now, “within the veil,” and which is still hidden from human eyes. Cp. Hebrews x. 19–22.

**46 cried with a loud voice.** If this marks a separate utterance from the words that follow (the margin combines them) it probably refers to the Fourth Word from the Cross, the only one recorded by St. Matthew and St. Mark—“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Ps. xxii. 1). (See notes on these Gospels in this series.) It was the word of steadfast faith triumphing over human desolation and the loss for the time of the sense of God’s presence.

St. John records also two other utterances, the Fifth and Sixth Words, “I thirst,” and “It is finished,” both probably uttered in rapid succession after the great darkness had lifted.

**Father, into thy hands.** A quotation, with the addition of the first word, from Psalm xxxi. 5. This Seventh Word, of peace and resignation, is recorded only by St. Luke.

**he gave up the ghost.** All the evangelists avoid using the word “died,” but simply speak of our Lord breathing out His spirit, as if to draw attention to the voluntary nature of His death. Cp. St. John x. 18.

**47 And when the centurion saw what was done.** The centurion in command of the soldiers charged with the execution, saw in the circumstances of our Lord’s death, His words, and His self-command, as well as the portents of nature that accompanied it, something unparalleled. He attributed it to Divine intervention and the holiness of the Sufferer; indeed St. Matthew and St. Mark say that his words were, “Truly this was a Son of God.” It is quite likely that the centurion used both expressions: or St. Luke may be paraphrasing. Tradition says that this centurion afterwards became a Christian bishop and a martyr.

**48 returned smiting their breasts.** This was the usual Eastern way of expressing violent grief or horror at some calamity. The way in

49 their breasts. And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed with him from Galilee, stood afar off, seeing these things.

*The Burial of Jesus* (xxiii. 50-56)

50 And behold, a man named Joseph, who was a councillor, a good  
51 man and a righteous (he had not consented to their counsel and deed), *a man* of Arimathæa, a city of the Jews, who was looking  
52 for the kingdom of God : this man went to Pilate, and asked for  
53 the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid him in a tomb that was hewn in stone, where

which our Lord suffered and died, and the awful events that had taken place, caused, evidently, a revulsion of feeling among the spectators. They began too late to realise, like those in later days who burnt Joan of Arc, that they had been accessories to an awful crime.

**49 the women that followed.** See viii. 2, 3. The "standing far off" is a reminiscence of the Passion Psalms xxii., xxxviii. and lxix.

The names of the few who stood close to the Cross are given in St. John xix.

**50 a councillor,** i.e. a member of the Sanhedrin. Joseph was secretly a disciple of the Lord's, and was assisted, as St. John relates, in his work of preparing our Lord's body for burial by another rich man of similar position and faith, Nicodemus. Cp. St. John iii. 1 ; vii. 50 ; xix. 39.

Legend makes Joseph a missionary afterwards to Britain, and the founder of a church at Glastonbury.

**51 Arimathæa :** probably the same place as Ramathaim, the birth-place of the prophet Samuel. Joseph evidently also had property in Jerusalem, close to Calvary.

**53 wrapped it in a linen cloth.** St. John adds that Nicodemus provided aromatic spices, " a mixture of myrrh and aloes," in which the linen shroud would be steeped as a measure of temporary embalmment, until the Sabbath was over. The courage of these two men was remarkable. They had been afraid during His lifetime to confess Christ, but His death marked a turning-point in their attitude. Touching His body would make them ceremonially " unclean " for the Passover, so their act was practically a break with Judaism.

**a tomb that was hewn in stone.** It was customary to bury the dead in caves, either natural, or artificial like this one. Those that were hewn out artificially often had two parts, a smaller inner cave in which

never man had yet lain. And it was the day of the Preparation, <sup>54</sup> and the sabbath <sup>1</sup>drew on. And the women, which <sup>55</sup> <sup>1</sup>Gr. *began to dawn.* had come with him out of Galilee, followed after, and beheld the tomb, and how his body was laid. And <sup>56</sup> they returned, and prepared spices and ointments.

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the body was laid, secured by a stone, and a larger outer cave for the mourners to visit and pray in. Joseph had prepared this tomb in his garden for his own burial. As our Lord was born of a virgin and rode on an ass never before ridden, so He was buried in a new unused tomb. His burial was in fulfilment of prophecy (Isaiah liii. 9), and stress is laid on the fact of it by St. Paul (1 Cor. xv. 4), doubtless as evidence for the bodily nature of His Resurrection.

Though much controversy has arisen in modern times as to the locality of this tomb, it seems most probable that Christians would preserve the memory of it, and that the traditional site, within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, is correct. The exact spot is said to have been identified by the Empress Helena, the mother of Constantine, in 330.

A rival site has recently found many supporters; outside the north gate of Jerusalem, in the garden of the hospice of the Templars, built in the twelfth century. This spot is said to fulfil all the conditions of the narrative, and near it is a knoll which may have been Calvary.

**54 the day of the Preparation**, i.e. Friday, the preparation day for the Sabbath. The Sabbath began at sunset, and if we are guided by St. John's Gospel, it was also the Passover Day.

**55 the women**—prominent among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less, and Salome, mother of James and John.

**beheld the tomb.** It is remarkable how all the evangelists lay stress on the observation of the exact locality of the tomb by the mourners, as if to prevent the possibility of it being argued that they made a mistake on the morning of the Resurrection.

St. Matthew also records how the tomb was guarded by soldiers provided by the chief priests and Pharisees, who remembered our Lord's prediction of His rising again better than His disciples did; and how the stone which blocked the entrance was officially sealed.

**56 prepared spices and ointments.** These were usual in the burial ceremonies of the wealthy, and those of high rank. Cp. the description of the burial of Asa (2 Chron. xvi. 14). But these ceremonies could not lawfully be performed until the Sabbath was over.

## CHAPTER XXIII

*Questions*

1. Describe the attitude of Pontius Pilate during his trial of our Lord.
2. What subterfuges did he employ in the hope of escaping from condemning Him ?
3. What event does St. Luke record on the way to Calvary ?
4. What words from the Cross does St. Luke record ?
5. What other words are mentioned by the other Evangelists ?
6. What strange events occurred at the death of our Lord ?
7. Describe the burial of our Lord.

*Subjects for Study*

1. The Trials of our Lord.  
*Stalker, Trial and Death of Jesus Christ.*
2. The Seven Words from the Cross.  
*Isaac Williams, Devotional Commentary.*  
*Bright, Seven Sayings from the Cross.*
3. The place of the Crucifixion and the Entombment.  
*Sepulchre and Jerusalem in Hastings' Dictionary.*  
*G. A. Smith, Jerusalem.*

## VII. The Resurrection

*The Resurrection Proclaimed by Angels* (xxiv. 1-12)

xxiv. 1 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came unto  
2 the tomb, bringing the spices which they had prepared. And

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xxiv. 1 **the first day of the week.** The day we now call Sunday, or better, "the Lord's Day"; henceforth observed by all Christians as the weekly festival of the Resurrection, and destined to supersede the Jewish Sabbath.

they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. And they 3  
 entered in, and found not the body <sup>1</sup>of the Lord  
 Jesus. And it came to pass, while they were per- 4  
 plexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them  
 in dazzling apparel: and as they were affrighted, and 5  
 bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto  
 them, Why seek ye <sup>2</sup>the living among the dead? <sup>3</sup>He 6  
 is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake  
 unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying that the 7  
 Son of man must be delivered up into the hands  
 of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise 8  
 again. And they remembered his words, and re- 9  
 turned <sup>4</sup>from the tomb, and told all these things to  
 the eleven, and to all the rest. Now they were Mary 10  
 Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the *mother* of

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit of the Lord Jesus.  
<sup>2</sup> Gr. *him that liveth.*

<sup>3</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *He is not here, but is risen.*

<sup>4</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *from the tomb.*

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**2 And they found the stone rolled away.** The stone had been removed (by an angel, St. Matthew), not to allow the Lord to rise, which He had already done, but to shew that the tomb was empty.

**4 two men stood by them.** Two angels are mentioned by St. John: one only by St. Matthew and St. Mark.

**6 remember how he spake unto you.** Cp. ix. 22; St. Matthew xvii. 22, 23; St. Mark ix. 31.

**9 returned from the tomb.** St. Luke, singularly enough, does not record the appearances of the risen Lord to the women. But it appears from St. John's account (xx.) that St. Mary Magdalene, after announcing the empty tomb to the disciples, and after it had been visited by St. Peter and St. John, returned herself alone to the tomb, and saw the Lord. St. Matthew also records an appearance to the other women as they were going away to tell the disciples. St. Mark's account is imperfect.

It is difficult to harmonise in detail all the accounts of the Resurrection, though they agree in their main features. But this is really a proof of the independence of the evangelists, and the sincerity of the accounts they preserve. The fragmentary character and apparent discrepancy of these is what we should expect from those who had passed through such an overwhelming and unparalleled experience.

**10 Joanna.** See viii. 3. It has been conjectured that she was the direct informant of St. Luke, who was evidently familiar with the persons of Herod's household.

James : and the other women with them told these  
 11 things unto the apostles. And these words appeared  
 in their sight as idle talk ; and they disbelieved  
 12 them. <sup>1</sup>But Peter arose, and ran unto the tomb ; and  
 stooping and looking in, he seeth the linen cloths by  
 themselves ; and he <sup>2</sup>departed to his home, wondering  
 at that which was come to pass.

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit ver. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Or, departed wondering with himself.

*The Appearance to two Disciples (xxiv. 13-35)*

13 And behold, two of them were going that very day to a village  
 named Emmaus, which was threescore furlongs from Jerusalem.  
 14 And they communed with each other of all these things which had  
 15 happened. And it came to pass, while they communed and

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11 and they disbelieved them. Nothing is more remarkable than the testimony of the evangelists to the unexpectedness of the Resurrection to our Lord's disciples, and the unbelief and bewilderment with which the news of it was received. This in itself is a great testimony to the sincerity of the narrative. The disciples seem to have lost all hope at the Crucifixion, and were in a condition of despondency and fear. The extraordinary change that came upon them afterwards, the courage with which they declared the Resurrection, can hardly be explained reasonably by any other cause than the actual occurrence of the Resurrection. They were clearly not deceivers, and they were not in the least ready to be deceived.

12 But Peter arose. A fuller account of this visit of St. Peter to the tomb, accompanied by St. John, is given in St. John xx. The presence of the linen graveclothes " by themselves " shewed that the body could not have been removed secretly. Thieves would not have waited to unroll the body, nor would there have been room to do it within the narrow limits of the cave. St. Peter was puzzled, but apparently not yet convinced. See below, *v.* 34.

13 And behold, two of them, etc. These two disciples were not of the Eleven (*v.* 33). One was called Cleopas (*v.* 18), of whom nothing more is known. Conjecture has of course been busy with the second unnamed one. Some have thought it was St. Luke himself, but this is hardly likely in view of St. Luke's own statement that he had received the Gospel from others (*i.* 2).

Emmaus. The site is disputed, as there was more than one place of that name. Probably it was *Khamasah*, S.W. of Jerusalem.

questioned together, that Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. 16

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *What words are these that ye exchange one with another.* And he said unto them, <sup>1</sup>What communications are 17 these that ye have one with another, as ye walk? And they stood still, looking sad. And one of them, 18 named Cleopas, answering said unto him, <sup>2</sup>Dost thou <sup>2</sup> Or, *Dost thou sojourn alone in Jerusalem, and knowest thou not the things.* alone sojourn in Jerusalem and not know the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he 19 said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God

and all the people: and how the chief priests and our rulers 20 delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we hoped that it was he which should redeem Israel. 21 Yea and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things came to pass. Moreover certain women of our company amazed 22 us, having been early at the tomb; and when they found not his 23 body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. And certain of them that 24 were with us went to the tomb, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not. And he said unto them, O 25

16 **But their eyes were holden.** Our Lord, after His Resurrection, was seldom recognised at first sight (cp. St. Matt. xxviii. 17; St. John xx. 15; xxi. 4). Just as He was only seen by those to whom He willed to disclose Himself, so He was only recognised when He willed. His form and face were still the same, but mysteriously changed. Something of the glory and mystery of the eternal world had passed upon them. His body was identical with that which had been laid in the grave, but it had become spiritualised, completely under the dominion of the Spirit, so that He passed naturally through the grave-stone, or through closed doors, and appeared and disappeared at His will.

18 **Dost thou alone sojourn in Jerusalem, etc.?** The exact force of the words is uncertain. They may mean, "Are you the only person staying in Jerusalem who does not know?" or "Do you stay completely by yourself in Jerusalem, and therefore do not know?"

24 **but him they saw not.** Evidently these two had started on their journey before any news had reached the disciples of an appearance of

foolish men, and slow of heart to believe <sup>1</sup>in all that <sup>1</sup>Or, *after*.  
 26 the prophets have spoken ! Behoved it not the Christ  
 27 to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory ? And beginning  
 from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them  
 28 in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. And they drew  
 nigh unto the village, whither they were going : and he made as  
 29 though he would go further. And they constrained him, saying,  
 Abide with us : for it is toward evening, and the day is now far  
 30 spent. And he went in to abide with them. And it came to pass,  
 when he had sat down with them to meat, he took the <sup>2</sup>Or, *loaf*.  
<sup>2</sup>bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.  
 31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him ; and he vanished  
 32 out of their sight. And they said one to another, Was not our  
 heart burning within us, while he spake to us in the way, while

the Lord to the women. St. Mary Magdalene was the first to report that (St. John xx. 18).

25 **O foolish men.** A gentle rebuke—"men without understanding." They knew the prophets, but had read them only in the conventional sense of their own day ; dwelling on the coming glories of the Messiah, but ignoring the predictions of the Passion.

26 **Behoved it not the Christ to suffer,** etc. It was *necessary* in the Divine counsels ; and the prophets had foretold it. The kingdom was to be won by the Cross.

27 **the things concerning himself.** He gave them a new and deeper interpretation of their familiar Scriptures. He shewed that they were full of the suffering Christ. The types in the Books of Moses, such as the Paschal lamb, the sacrifices, the brazen serpent ; the predictions of the prophets, such as that of the suffering and dying servant of the Lord in Isaiah liii., no doubt were dwelt on. And we may conjecture also something of our Lord's teaching from the passages to which the Apostles drew special attention in their later preaching, e.g. in Acts ii., iii., iv., viii., and xiii.

30 **he took the bread, and blessed it.** It has been often disputed whether this act was a celebration of the Holy Eucharist or not. It seems more probable that there was no Eucharist between the institution and the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. But in any case the Lord's act would suggest to those who witnessed it that henceforth that Sacrament would be the great means of realising His unseen presence.

he opened to us the scriptures ? And they rose up that very hour, 33 and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, saying, The Lord is 34 risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they rehearsed 35 the things that *happened* in the way, and how he was known of them in the breaking of the bread.

*An Appearance to all the Disciples (xxiv. 36-43)*

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.*

And as they spake these things, he himself stood in 36 the midst of them, <sup>1</sup>and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and 37 supposed that they beheld a spirit. And he said unto 38 them, Why are ye troubled ? and wherefore do reasonings arise in your heart ? See my hands and 39 my feet, that it is I myself : handle me, and see ; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having. <sup>2</sup>And when he had said this, he shewed them 40

<sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities omit ver. 40.

**34 and hath appeared to Simon.** This refers evidently to an occurrence later than that recorded in *v. 12*. And St. Paul specially mentions an appearance to "Cephas" (1 Cor. xv.). As He had first appeared to a penitent woman, so now the risen Lord vouchsafed a manifestation of Himself to His penitent Apostle, to pardon him and confirm his faith. The public restoration of St. Peter to his place as chief of the Apostles took place later by the Sea of Galilee (St. John xxi.).

**36 he himself stood in the midst of them.** This appearance to the disciples (there were more present than the Eleven, *v. 33*) is recorded also by St. John (xx.) and mentioned by St. Paul (1 Cor. xv.). The doors were shut, but the Lord appeared suddenly among them. In addition to the record of St. Luke, St. John speaks of a commission given on this occasion to the Church, and especially of the authority to remit or retain sins. St. Luke's account is chiefly concerned with the proof of a bodily Resurrection.

**39 See my hands and my feet.** Evidently our Lord is drawing attention to the marks of the nails of the Cross. The body they saw and touched was real, and it was identical with that which had been crucified and laid in the grave. It was no mere vision, a creation of their own imagination. Nor was it merely a bodiless spirit. The Resurrection meant more than the continued existence of Jesus. He lived on in the fullness of man's nature, body and soul.

41 his hands and his feet. And while they still dis-  
 believed for joy, and wondered, he said unto them,  
 42 Have ye here anything to eat? And they gave him  
 43 a piece of a broiled fish<sup>1</sup>. And he took it, and did eat  
 before them.

<sup>1</sup> Many  
 ancient  
 authorities  
 add *and a  
 honeycomb*.

*The Commission to the Disciples (xxiv. 44-49)*

44 And he said unto them, These are my words which I spake  
 unto you, while I was yet with you, how that all things must  
 needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the

41 **Have ye here anything to eat?** This eating after the Resurrection is again alluded to in Acts x. 41. It is impossible to explain it with our limited knowledge of the real nature of matter, and of the laws of the Resurrection-state. Probably this eating was for evidential purposes only: to prove that the body was in every sense real. We can scarcely suppose that the human body, changed and spiritualised through the Resurrection, actually *needs* food; though it may for some special reason partake of it. But in view of our own vast ignorance, it is presumptuous to speak definitely. It may be noticed that in the appearance of Jehovah and two attendant angels to Abraham, they ate of the food he offered (Gen. xviii.).

42 **a piece of a broiled fish.** The marginal addition "and a honeycomb" has insufficient MS. authority, but it may represent a true tradition, preserved in some quarters.

44 **And he said unto them.** St. Luke omits all mention of the departure of the disciples to Galilee, which is spoken of by St. Matthew and St. John, and probably also was recorded in the lost ending of St. Mark (cp. xvi. 7). The instruction in v. 49 to "tarry in the city," suggests that this passage relates to a later appearance than the one just described, after the return of the disciples from Galilee.

**These are my words,** i.e. this is the fulfilment of what I said to you previously.

**in the law of Moses,** etc. This was the threefold division of the canon of the O.T. familiar to the Jews. "The prophets" included most of the historical books: "the psalms" correspond to the third section, more commonly called *Kethubim*, or "writings"; or in Greek, "*Hagiographa*" ("holy writings"), in which the Psalms occupied the first place.

prophets, and the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their <sup>45</sup> mind, that they might understand the scriptures; and he said <sup>46</sup> unto them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance <sup>1</sup>and remission of sins should be <sup>47</sup> preached in his name unto all the <sup>2</sup>nations, beginning from Jerusalem. Ye are witnesses of these things. <sup>48</sup> And behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high.

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read *unto*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *nations*. Beginning from Jerusalem, ye are witnesses.

**46 and rise again from the dead.** This too, as St. Paul asserts, was "according to the Scriptures." Isaiah liii., after describing the sufferings and death of the righteous "Servant of the Lord," plainly speaks of His living again (*vv.* 11-12). Other passages referred to in N.T. are Psalms ii. 7; xvi. 10-11. The type of Jonah had been already referred to by our Lord Himself. See also Hosea vi. 2. The reference to the Law of Moses must be understood rather of types and suggestions than of direct predictions, e.g. the day after the Sabbath, on which our Lord rose from the dead, was the day appointed in Leviticus xxiii. 10-14 for the offering of the firstfruits of the new harvest. To this St. Paul refers in 1 Corinthians xv. 20, 23.

**47 repentance and remission of sins.** This was the great standing feature of the New Covenant, as distinguished from the Old. See notes on v. 17-26 and cp. Acts xiii. 38-39.

**unto all the nations.** The Catholic nature of the Gospel is thus clearly set forth; it is the one absolute and final religion for all equally, irrespective of sex or condition or nation; a truth which it cost the early Church many struggles to realise. Cp. St. Matthew xxviii. 19 and Acts xv.

**49 the promise of my Father.** i.e. the gift of the Holy Ghost, spoken of more fully in St. John xiv.-xvi. and Acts ii. St. Luke's readers would know well what was meant.

**50 And he led them out,** i.e. out of the city. It is uncertain whether this was on the same day on which the commission in the preceding verses was given. Forty days had now elapsed since the Resurrection. A somewhat fuller account of the Ascension is given by St. Luke in Acts i. It is alluded to by St. John on other occasions (vi. 62; xx. 17) and in the epilogue of St. Mark; but not mentioned by St. Matthew. The fact has from the first formed part of universal Christian belief.

*The Ascension (xxiv. 50-53)*

50 And he led them out until *they were* over against <sup>1</sup> Some  
Bethany : and he lifted up his hands, and blessed <sup>ancient</sup>  
51 them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, <sup>authorities</sup>  
he parted from them, and <sup>omit and was</sup> <sup>carried up</sup> <sup>into heaven.</sup> <sup>1</sup>was carried up into  
52 heaven. And they <sup>2</sup>worshipped him, and returned <sup>2</sup> Some  
53 to Jerusalem with great joy ; and were continually in <sup>ancient</sup>  
the temple, blessing God. <sup>authorities</sup>  
<sup>omit wor-</sup>  
<sup>shipped him,</sup>  
<sup>and,</sup>

**over against Bethany.** The wording is somewhat vague : it points only to some spot on the Mount of Olives, opposite Bethany. The traditional place is on the summit, but more probably the event took place in some more secluded region of the mountain.

**51 he parted from them, and was carried up.** The words imply both our Lord's own act and will, and also the will of the Father receiving Him. The language used to describe the Ascension is studiously reserved ; but it describes a plain fact as it was witnessed. The only additions in Acts i. are that the receding figure was received and hidden by a cloud ; and that angels appeared and foretold His return to earth.

**into heaven.** It is idle to argue against this description of the Ascension, that we have no reason to suppose that Heaven, the abode of God and the Angels, is above our heads, or that it can be localised at all. Divine revelation deals with men as they are in their present earthly condition. It accommodates itself to human limitations of space and time. The sky above our heads has always been instinctively regarded by men as the symbol of the higher and spiritual world. It is our natural instinct in prayer and aspiration to look upwards. The Ascension, as described, was the natural and obvious way of intimating to the disciples that their Master had returned in His humanity to the presence and glory of the Father. The witnesses described what they saw, without philosophising about it.

**52 And they worshipped him.** They fell on their faces, the natural attitude of adoration of a Divine person. Henceforth the ascended Jesus was " Lord " to the Church, received Divine honour, and was addressed in prayer and worship,

**with great joy.** A remarkable contrast to the sorrow of the last Supper, and the broken-hearted agony that followed the Crucifixion.

## CHAPTER XXIV

*Questions*

1. Who were the first to visit the sepulchre on the first day of the week, and what did they see and hear ?

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They recognised the Ascension as the triumph of the Messiah, and the beginning of a new era.

**53 continually in the temple.** The first Christians in Jerusalem continued to use the Temple as the place of their prayer and worship, and to attend its services. It was not till a later time that Jewish opposition drove them out. They knew that their Master had Himself loved and honoured the Temple, and that His life and work was what the Temple and all its sacrifices and ceremonial had pointed to. But had this state of things continued, they could scarcely have come fully to realise that the Gospel was a new thing, and the Church more than a mere development of Judaism.

St. Luke records some four or five appearances of the risen Lord. The following seems to be a complete list, as supplemented from other parts of the New Testament.

1. To St. Mary Magdalene at the Sepulchre (St. John xx.).
2. To the women : probably Mary, the mother of James and Josès, Salome and Joanna (St. Matt. xxviii.).
3. To the two disciples as they walked to Emmaus (St. Luke xxiv.).
4. To St. Peter (St. Luke xxiv. 34 ; 1 Cor. xv. 5).
5. To Ten of the Apostles, and probably others (St. Luke xxiv. ; St. John xx.).
6. To the eleven Apostles, and probably others (St. John xx.).
7. To seven of the Apostles by the Sea of Galilee (St. John xxi.)
8. To the Eleven and probably many others on a mountain in Galilee (St. Matt. xxviii. ; 1 Cor. xv. 6).
9. To St. James, " the Lord's brother " (1 Cor. xv. 7).
10. To the Eleven at Jerusalem (St. Mark xvi. 14-18 ; St. Luke xxiv. 44-49).
11. To the Eleven, and probably others, at the Ascension (St. Luke xxiv. ; Acts i.).
12. To St. Stephen, at his martyrdom (Acts vii.).
13. To Saul of Tarsus, on the way to Damascus (Acts ix., etc.).
14. To St. John, on Patmos (Rev. i.).

2. Shew from the narrative that the Resurrection was unexpected by the disciples.
3. Describe the appearance of our Lord to the two disciples.
4. How did our Lord prove the reality of His Resurrection to the disciples ?
5. What did He teach about the O.T. Scriptures after His Resurrection ?
6. What instructions did He give to His disciples ?
7. Describe the Ascension.
8. What was its effect on the disciples ?

*Subjects for Study*

1. The various appearances of the risen Christ.  
     Swete, *Appearances of the Lord after the Passion.*  
     Whitham, *Life of Our Blessed Lord.*  
     Moberly, *Sayings of the Great Forty Days.*
2. The proofs of the bodily Resurrection.  
     Westcott, *The Gospel of the Resurrection.*  
     Milligan, *The Resurrection of Our Lord.*  
     *Our Lord's Resurrection in Oxford Library of Practical Theology.*
3. The Commission to the disciples.  
     Woodford, *The Great Commission.*
4. The significance of the Ascension.  
     Milligan, *The Ascension of Our Lord.*

## INDEX

### A

Abel, 124  
 Abijah, 4  
 Advent, Second, 94, 170, 263, etc.  
 Alabaster, 75  
 Almsgiving, 132, 197  
 Annas, 27  
 Annunciation, 8-10  
 Appearances of Christ, 242-3  
 Apocalyptic books, xx  
 Apocryphal Gospels, 1-2  
 Apostles, 59  
 Arimathæa, 231  
 Ascension, 241  
 Augustus, 18

### B

Bank, 184  
 Baptism, 28  
 Barabbas, 225  
 Bartholomew, 60  
 Beatitudes, 61, etc.  
 Beelzebub, 117  
*Benedictus*, 14, etc.  
 Bethany, 111, 185  
 Bethlehem, 19  
 Bethsaida, 90  
 Brethren of Christ, 82  
 Bridechamber, Sons of, 55

### C

Cæsarea Philippi, 92  
 Caiaphas, 27  
 Calamities, 139  
 Camel, 178  
 Capernaum, 43, 44  
 Census, 18

Centurion, 69, 230  
 Chorazin, 106  
 Christ, 20  
 — Divinity of, 9, 16, 25, 33, 35, 37,  
 49, 50, 58, 83, 91, 92, 95, 97, 108,  
 121, 128, 167, 177, 191, 196, 215,  
 220, 241  
 Chronology, 27, 39  
 Circumcision, 13  
 Commandments, 177  
 Covenant, 210  
 Covetousness, 129, 160  
 Cross, 93  
 Crucifixion, 226

### D

Daniel, xx, 203  
 David, 9, 58, 196  
 Deuteronomy, 37-8  
 Devil, 36  
 Doctors, 25, 51  
 Dove, 33

### E

Eagles, 172  
 Elect, 174  
 Elijah, 6  
 Emmaus, 235  
 Eucharist, 209, etc., 237  
 Eye, single, 121

### F

Fan, 32  
 Fasting, 55, 175  
 Fire, 32, 135  
 Firstborn, 19, 22  
 Forgiveness, 52-3, 240

## G

Gabriel, 6, 8  
Galileans, 138  
Galilee, xvi, 7  
Gehenna, 127  
Genealogy, 33, etc.  
Gennesaret, 48  
Gerasenes, 84  
Gethsemane, 215  
Golgotha, 227  
Green tree, 227

## H

Hades, 106, 163  
Hellenists, xxii  
Herod Antipas, 27, 32, 144, 223  
— the Great, xiv, 4  
Herodians, xviii  
Herodias, 32  
Holy, 12  
Holy Spirit, xiii, 5-6, 10, 31, 33,  
36, 107, 116  
— — Sin against, 128  
Horn, 14  
Hypocrite, 67

## I

Incense, 4  
Inn, 20  
Isaiah, 29, 40, etc., 214

## J

Jacob, 10  
James, son of Alphæus, 60  
James and John, 49, 59, 101  
Jericho, 181  
Jesus, 8  
Joanna, 78, 234  
John the Baptist, 5, 27, etc., 71, etc.  
Jonah, 120  
Joseph, 8  
— of Arimathæa, 231  
Joy, xiii  
Jubilee, 42  
Judæa, xvii  
Judæan ministry, xii, 46, 223  
Judas Iscariot, 60, 206  
— son of James, 60

## K

Kingdom of God, xx, 28, 79, etc.,  
115, 132, 169, etc.

## L

Lazarus, 163  
Leaven, 127, 142  
Legion, 84  
Leprosy, 49, 50  
Levi, 53  
Luke, ix, etc.  
Lysanias, 27

## M

Maccabæans, xiv  
*Magnificat*, 11, etc.  
Mammon, 159  
Marriage, 162  
Mary, xiii, 8, 23, etc., 120  
Mary Magdalene, 78  
Miracles, 50, 83  
— Demoniac at Capernaum, 44  
— Simon's wife's mother, 45  
— Draught of fishes, 48  
— Leper cleansed, 49  
— Paralytic at Capernaum, 51  
— Withered hand, 58  
— Centurion's servant, 69  
— Raising widow's son, 70  
— S. Mary Magdalene, 78  
— Stilling the storm, 82  
— Demoniac at Gerasa, 84  
— Jairus' daughter raised, 86  
— Issue of blood, 86  
— Feeding five thousand, 90  
— Demoniac child, 97  
— Dumb devil, 117  
— Spirit of infirmity, 140  
— Dropsy, 146  
— Ten Lepers, 168  
— Blind man at Jericho, 179  
— Servant's ear, 217  
— Multitudes, 46, 61, 72  
Moses, 194  
Mote, 66  
Mysteries, 79

## N

Nain, 70  
 Name of God, 114  
 Nature-miracles, 83  
 Nazareth, 8, 25, 40-4  
 Nazirite, 5  
*Nunc Dimittis*, 22

## O

Old Testament, 161, etc., 239

## P

Parables, 55, 78  
 — of patched garment, 56  
 — — wine-skin, 56  
 — — two debtors, 75  
 — — sower, 78  
 — — good Samaritan, 109  
 — — rich fool, 129  
 — — servants, 133  
 — — unfruitful fig tree, 139  
 — — mustard seed, 141  
 — — leaven, 142  
 — — places at feast, 147  
 — — great supper, 149  
 — — lost sheep, 153  
 — — — coin, 154  
 — — prodigal son, 155  
 — — unjust steward, 158  
 — — rich man and Lazarus, 162  
 — — importunate widow, 173  
 — — Pharisee and publican, 175  
 — — pounds, 182  
 — — vineyard, 190  
 — — fig tree, 203  
 Paradise, 229  
 Paralysis, 51  
 Passover, 24, 205, 207, etc.  
 Paul, S., ix-xii  
 Peace, 20, 136  
 Peter, S., 48, 92, 134, 217, etc.  
 Pharisees, xviii, 50  
 Philip, 27  
 Philip, S., 60  
 Phylacteries, 24-5  
 Pilate, xv, 222  
 Possession, Demonic, 44-5, 84, 119  
 Prayer, xiii, 33, 59, 173, etc.  
 — the Lord's, 113, etc.

Procurator, xv  
 Prophets, 15  
 Psalms, 38, 186, 191, 196, 239  
 Publicans, 30

## Q

Q, xi  
 Quirinius, 18-19

## R

Repentance, 6, 28, 154  
 Resurrection, 194  
 Retaliation, 64  
 Riches, xiii, 130, 160

## S

Sabbath, 58  
 — "second-first," 57  
 Sabbatical year, 28  
 Sadducees, xviii, 194  
 Salt, 152  
 Samaria, xvi, etc.  
 Samaritans, 100, 110, 169  
 Sanhedrin, xix, 219, etc.  
 Satan, 107  
 Scandal, 72  
 Sermon on plain, 61, etc.  
 Seventy, The, 104  
 Sheba, Queen of, 120  
 Shekinah, 20, 96  
 Shewbread, 58  
 Siloam, 139  
 Simon of Cyrene, 226  
 — the Zealot, 60  
 Sodom, 105  
 Soldiers, 31, 216  
 Son of God, 9, 33, 35  
 Stone, 192  
 Susanna, 78  
 Swine, 85  
 Synagogues, 39, etc., 129

## T

Taxation, xix, 193  
 Temple, 199, 242  
 Temptation, 37, 39, 109, 115, etc.,  
 212, 215

Tetrarch, xv, 27  
 Theophilus, 3  
 Thomas, S., 60  
 Tiberius, xv, 27  
 Tithe, 123  
 Tomb, 231, etc.  
 Transfiguration, 95  
 Tribute, 193

## V

Veil, 229

## W

Washing, 122  
 Wilderness, 16, 36  
 Wisdom, 74  
 Woes, 63  
 Writing tablet, 13

## Z

Zacchæus, 181, etc.  
 Zachariah, 124  
 Zealots, xviii