

# THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

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## Notes of Recent Exposition.

If the question were asked of almost any student of contemporary theology, whether there is an expression which covers all that Jesus came to do and to teach, he would unhesitatingly answer, 'Yes, the kingdom of God.' 'The kingdom of God,' says Professor Candlish, 'is the name by which our Lord habitually spoke of His work.' Says Professor Wendt, 'The whole contents of the teaching of Jesus can be classed under this general theme.' 'I have no hesitation,' says Professor Bruce, 'in regarding the kingdom of God as an exhaustive category.' And when Professor Bovon would gather the whole teaching of Christ according to the Synoptics under five great heads, the names he gives to them are these — (1) The Announcement of the Kingdom of God; (2) The Legislation of the Kingdom of God; (3) The Founder of the Kingdom of God; (4) The Members of the Kingdom of God; and (5) The Consummation of the Kingdom of God.

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But in his Kerr Lectures on *Morality and Religion* (T. & T. Clark), Dr. James Kidd denies the application. Either, he says, the phrase has no consistent and intelligible meaning, or else it is not a complete designation of Christ's teaching, much less of His teaching and work combined. And he mentions two great leading masses of His teaching which cannot be driven within it.

The first is His doctrine of Fatherhood. The Fatherhood of God 'is, in some respects, the very kernel of Christ's gospel—the fundamental truth which He had to proclaim, and the ultimate ground of the effort which He was to put forth. What, then, of this element? Surely it is apparent that it cannot, in any real sense, be classed under the category of the kingdom of God. Fatherhood does not suggest or pertain to a kingdom. It suggests and pertains to a family. The ideas that flow from it are not kingship and citizenship, but parentship and sonship.'

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And when it is answered that the idea of kingship historically arose out of that of fatherhood, Dr. Kidd very properly replies that that is not the point. The point is, Does kingship cover fatherhood now? Does it cover it in the teaching of Jesus? And he pertinently quotes Professor Bruce, who says that the title Father is the appropriate name of God in the kingdom of grace, and that the kingdom Christ preached is a kingdom of filial relations with God.

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But not only does Dr. Kidd deny the right of modern theology to include the Fatherhood of God under this great grasping title of the kingdom of God, he even resists the inclusion of Salvation there. For what is salvation according to Jesus

Christ? It is the restoration of the lost, first to their God, and then to themselves. But this salvation rests on sacrifice: 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son; 'the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.' And how can you bring sacrifice such as this within the category of the kingdom of God? A king is a governor. Now a governor must give laws, and must see his laws obeyed. That is, he is both a legislator and a judge. If there are those who disobey his laws, he is bound to punish them or expel them from his kingdom. He may pardon them, no doubt. But if he does, it is at the suggestion of his humanity, not of his kingship. And in any case he does not give himself a ransom for them.

Thus Dr. Kidd excludes from the all-comprehensive phrase 'the kingdom of God' these two great doctrines of Fatherhood and Salvation. And having done so, he proceeds to show that Jesus did not use the phrase so consistently or so constantly as is often claimed. He used it at the beginning of His ministry, because it was easily understood by those who heard Him. But as His ministry advanced, and they became more acquainted with His words, He used it less and less till He dropped it altogether. Again, He used it loosely. Now it expresses one thing, now it covers another. The Parable of the Leaven suggests penetration and permeation. The Parables of the Pearl and the Treasure, which immediately follow, suggest possession and enrichment. And none of these thoughts coincide well with the conceptions of a kingdom. Of a kingdom we may be members, of pearls or treasures we may be owners. Between a political institution and an article of value, in respect of the relation which men bear to them, there is an essential distinction. They stand on different levels and pertain to different spheres. Hence in these parables Christ is clearly employing the phrase 'Kingdom of God' loosely and generally, as a convenient title for His work, supplied by the circumstances of His age, but

which, by the combinations in which He presents it, He is declaring inadequate, and is slowly merging in that which is more comprehensive and more penetrating.

The lectures upon the Sermon on the Mount which Canon Gore has been delivering in Westminster Abbey have drawn large audiences to hear them. They have also drawn many reporters to write them down. If you cannot listen to them, you may, at least, read them in any one of the journals that give themselves to the reporting of sermons. And they are worthy of this attention. For Canon Gore has made the Sermon on the Mount his special study for a long time. In modern phrase, he may be called a specialist on that subject. And these lectures, so simple as they seem, enter profoundly into the spirit and even catch the very manner of their text. They have both the fervour of a first love, and the chastened reserve of a long acquaintance.

At the present moment that part of the Sermon on the Mount which presses most upon our attention is Christ's interpretation of the Law of Retaliation (Matt. v. 38-42). We owe its insistence, not to Tolstoy only, but to the spirit of our day. With some singular exceptions the Church has hitherto moved on, exacting an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, whenever the occasion arose; ignorant of or else ignoring the great adversative *But I say unto you*, that stood in its way. For two thousand years it has moved on so. But it has been arrested now. It has come to see now that Christ meant something when He placed that *But I say unto you* there. It is asking anxiously what He did mean.

Count Tolstoy says He meant just what He said. He said, 'Whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also,' and He meant that. And Tolstoy has a great advantage over those who say He meant something else. It is not the advantage of a literal interpretation. As for that

it is easy to answer Tolstoy, and say, that Jesus uttered other words which a literal interpretation would make ridiculous. He said, 'Work not for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat that abideth unto eternal life' (John vi. 27). What does Count Tolstoy's own horny hand say to a literal interpretation of that precept? Besides, it happens that Jesus Himself refused the literal interpretation of the very words in question. When the officer struck Him on the cheek, as He stood before that whited wall Annas, He did not turn the other also, He demanded why He had been smitten.

Count Tolstoy's advantage is not that he interprets literally. It is that he drives us all into an attitude of apparent apology. He says boldly, 'Turn the other also.' We first say we cannot, and then begin to explain why we should not. And it is no use retorting on Tolstoy that neither can he. The very peculiarity and point of this precept is that an individual always can obey it. It is the community that cannot. Did not Edward Irving actually practise the precept, 'If any man take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also'? And he might have gone on practising it as long as he had a cloke to give. But his neighbours dare not follow his example. It is actually easy, if we have police, to give to him that asketh of us. But we must have police.

So Count Tolstoy's advantage must not disconcert us. It is always easier to carry out Christ's words in the letter than in the spirit, but the letter killeth. They are not carried out in that way.

And yet we must see to it that we do not let that proverb rob all Christ's words of all their meaning and all their use. 'The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.' It is most true. But the Church quoted that proverb for two thousand years and did nothing. Under cover of that proverb it exacted an eye for an eye and a tooth

for a tooth, and passed Christ's great adversative by. The words Christ speaks to us are spirit, but they are also life. We may not carry them into our life in their literality, but surely we must carry them into our life.

Canon Gore does this. And his way is very simple. He gives examples. Take this one: 'How are we to act on this sort of principle, "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away?"' What are we to do about that? I suppose it would hardly ever do to let a thief have his own way, simply in the interests of society. But if I shall not weary you by specifying an instance, let me tell you how some one, whom I know, acted when he was subjected to a tremendous wrong. A fraud was perpetrated upon him,—a money fraud,—and it was accompanied by a really grave insult to him. It plainly was his duty to prosecute the fraudulent person, and he prosecuted him. There was no doubt about his guilt, and the man was sent to Portland for hard labour. So far so good. But my friend in this case was at pains, before the man went, to see him. He did what is a kindness, I believe, to persons subjected to hard labour; he took his clothes and kept them for him while he was there. He got leave to go and see him more than once while he was in prison. He was able to get hold, seemingly, of something good in the man, though he seemed a very abandoned character. And as a matter of course he was able to enter into friendly relations with him as soon as he came out, and there seemed to be something redeemable in the man's character. Now that seems to me a way of continuing your duty to society with the most real acting upon our Lord's injunction in this respect.'

That is Canon Gore's way. It is so simple that it reads like an extract from a divinity student's first sermon on the subject. But the audience in the Abbey listened, and some of them at least, when the sermon was over, went and did likewise.

Now take another way. It happens that there is a paper on this subject in *The Primitive Methodist Quarterly* for the present quarter, written by Mr. J. H. Taylor. This paper is not so surface simple as Canon Gore's sermon, for it is written for a different audience. It reaches its end in another way, but the end it reaches is the same. The difficulty, you observe, is with society. 'If a man take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also,'—the individual can do that easily, but society cannot. Mr. Taylor, however, shows that it is specially to society and in the interests of society that our Lord utters the precept. The old precept was, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' That was given to protect society. It looks as if it were laid down in the interest of individual vengeance. On the contrary, it was a restriction on revenge. The older method was two eyes for an eye—nay, the whole life for an eye, and with tortures, if it can only be obtained. Moses said, 'An eye for an eye—that and nothing more.' It was a restriction, and it was given in the interests of society. For it was given not that you might exact the eye for the eye, but that you might exact *no more* than the eye for the eye; or, as Jerome has it, 'the aim of this law was not to sacrifice a second eye, but to save both.'

But the Rabbis did not understand. Moses said, An eye for an eye—no more than that; and he opened the door for forbearance to come in. The Rabbis interpreted it, An eye for an eye—that, and that exactly. No more, they said, but also certainly no less. They saved the letter in their narrow, nervous way, and utterly lost the spirit. Then Jesus came. When He came it was the punctilious interpretation of the Rabbis that held sway. He must meet that first. The Rabbis taught by instances; He will take instances also. The Rabbis said, A tooth for a tooth. He answered, I am not come to destroy the law or the prophets; but I say unto you, Whosoever smiteth thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other also.

But He did not answer the Rabbis only. He met the glosses and guesses of all time. We have passed beyond the Rabbis' interpretation to-day. We know now that an eye for an eye will not do. But surely, we say, Jesus went to the other extreme: 'Give to him that asketh thee.' It is easy enough, we answer, for the individual to do that, it is even extremely pleasant; but it is the very dissolution of society. Jesus answers, I came not to destroy society, but to save it. If it is easy for the individual and hurtful to society, the individual is repeating the way of the Rabbis, and losing the spirit while he saves the letter. For the individual the only safety is self-denial, the only salvation sacrifice.

The *Zeitschrift für alttest. Wissenschaft* for April contains an article by Professor Cheyne of Oxford on 'The Date and Origin of the Ritual of the Scapegoat.' It is really a discussion of the origin and meaning of the name Azazel. This name is one of the gifts of the Revised Version to English readers. While the Authorized Version translates Lev. xvi. 8, 'And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scapegoat,' the Revisers have preserved the original word, and say, 'the other lot for Azazel.' It is a gift for which the Bible-reading Englishman has not yet learned to thank the Revisers. For he does not know what to do with it. And he probably suspects that the Revisers have passed it on to him because they did not know what to do with it themselves.

The Revised Version expresses the opinion that it may not be a proper name, by offering a possible translation, 'for dismissal,' in the margin. It may be said, however, that every year since the Revision appeared has made it more certain that it *is* a name, a personal name of some kind, whoever the person may be.

Now we know from Isaiah (xiii. 21, xxxiv. 14) and other books, that it was a current belief of the

Jews that *se'irim*, translated 'satyrs' in the Revised Version, but by Professor Cheyne and others 'goblins,' haunted desert places, and were very able and willing to work mischief to men who came within their reach. Accordingly Duhm has suggested that the author of Lev. xvi. intended to represent the goat as given up to appease the chief of these satyrs or goblins, who was known by the name of Azazel. But Professor Cheyne cannot agree. He admits the belief in the goblins. 'I entirely admit,' he says, 'that at any rate the post-Exilic Jews had the custom of propitiating the dangerous goblins called *se'irim* by sacrifices (2 Kings xxiii. 8 corrected text; 2 Chron. xi. 15; Lev. xvii. 7). But he believes that Azazel was far from being their chief, or one of them at all; so far indeed that he was introduced for the very purpose of putting an end to them and their worship.

In the third century B.C., the belief in these goblins has vanished. For the Chronicler assigns the custom of sacrificing to them to pre-Exilic times. What caused it to vanish? We know that our forefathers abolished the worship of heathen divinities by retaining the times and seasons (and even their very names sometimes), but filling them with a Christian meaning and morality. It is a commonplace of knowledge that even the earliest Church retained certain festivals which had a heathen origin and heathen associations, simply because they could not do otherwise. This method of introducing the leaven of a better religion was not unknown, Dr. Cheyne thinks, to the ancient Jews. They found that they could not simply abolish the cultus of the goblins, so they substituted a better worship in its stead. They introduced a personal angel, Azazel, for the crowd of impersonal and dangerous *se'irim*. This angel was no doubt a fallen angel, but of little power for evil. Besides, he came within the actual religion of Israel, and could be recognised by its most zealous defenders; while the goblins were now at least no better than heathen *'elilim*, no gods at all.

But where did this Azazel come from? In the Book of Enoch we find him. There he is one of those angels who lusted after the daughters of men (Gen. vi. 1-4), and whose children, the giants, filled the earth with blood and unrighteousness. In short, the writer of this portion of the Book of Enoch 'gives an unmistakable hint that the Azazel to whom the goat was sent is no other than the leader of the fallen angels.'

Thus it will be seen that in Professor Cheyne's judgment the ritual of the scapegoat is very late. Not necessarily so late as the composition of Enoch. For the author of Enoch i.-xxxvi. was not the first person to expand and continue the singular story in Gen. vi. 1-4. Still he believes that it cannot be dated earlier than the fourth century, and that it is 'one of the very latest of the additions to P<sup>2</sup>.'

As for the name itself, it was the invention or adaptation of some *littérateur* of these days. Possibly it is merely another form of the well-known Uzziel. In any case it contains the name of God—*El*. For the present form is a deliberate alteration from 'zaz'el (זַזְאֵל), 'God strengtheneth,' the alteration being made out of reverence, to conceal the true derivation of the *fallen* angel's name.

'This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory; and His disciples believed on Him' (John ii. 11). Why does St. John remember *this* miracle as a manifestation of Jesus' glory? And how did it so impress the disciples into belief upon Him? It manifested His power, we hurriedly answer. But is power glory? When Moses prayed and said, 'Shew me Thy glory,' the Lord answered, 'I will make all my *goodness* to pass before thee.' And the manifestation of God's goodness is glory, but never the manifestation of mere power. Jesus is the brightness of the Father's glory, because of His marvellous loving-kindness to men. As this

same St. John recalled it, 'We beheld His glory—full of grace and truth.'

This is the text of one of Dean Paget's sermons in his most recent volume, *Studies in the Christian Character* (Longmans), and this is the question that he asks: Why did St. John remember this first miracle so minutely, and how could he say it manifested forth the glory of the Lord? Now, it is possible that at the moment it was done, St. John and the rest were impressed with the mighty power displayed in turning the water into wine. But he came to see greater things than that. And writing it down afterwards, after all he had witnessed and all he now knew, it seems unlikely that the display of power would still have seemed so glorious, or its impression remained so vividly upon him.

Yet when we examine the miracle, we scarce see anything else. What was it that Jesus did? He turned water into wine. There was an unexpected dilemma. He met it. He turned water into wine, so that they drank and were filled, and that was all. It is a miracle, but (to quote Dean Paget now) it seems 'to lack that close coherence with the fact of the Incarnation, that plain congruity with the entrance of God the Son into the common life of men, which constitutes the higher naturalness, so to speak, of His mighty works. It was natural that at the brightness of His Presence the heavy clouds that darkened human hearts should break and yield; that the power of disease and death should be shaken at the coming of the Prince of Life. It would have been strange had He been there and no change come at all in these great sorrows. But this first miracle lies quite apart from all the tragedies of human life; it remedies no deep disaster, it meets no serious need.'

What shall we say about it then? Strauss said bluntly it is a miracle of mere luxury and uselessness. But Dean Paget says it is a miracle of courtesy.

And Dean Paget thinks we have not yet done justice to the greatness of courtesy or realised its true place in Christian ethics. We read this miracle, and we say, 'it was a gracious, thoughtful gentleness in our Lord's case to save His host from the embarrassment of a failure in hospitality, and the fear of confusion and of ridicule. It was the skill of prompt and perfect courtesy that fended off that awkwardness, that quietly came in to make all go well and to spare pain.' But is courtesy at its best enough to make a miracle, enough to be the motive of the beginning of miracles of Jesus Christ, and be remembered as a special manifestation of the Saviour's glory?

Dean Paget thinks it is. He believes that it is an intrinsic part of goodness, a plain, invariable duty, bound up essentially in 'the bond of perfectness.' He believes that constant courtesy, unwearied and unerring in all relations, towards all men, is a very rare grace—as rare, it may be, as saintliness itself. He believes that there is a singular power and distinction in those few lives in which we have felt sure of its unflinching presence.

For the heart of all growth in strength and worth in man is the principle of self-respect. 'Qui sibi nequam,' says the Son of Sirra, 'cui bonus?' 'He that is evil to himself, to whom will he be good?' Without self-respect no one finds his place or plays his part in life. To lose it by one's own act is profanity such as Esau's; to be robbed of it by another is to suffer the very utmost wrong. Now, courtesy is nothing else than sympathy with the self-respect of others. It helps men to sustain their self-respect by the quiet, frank, unquestioning respect it shows them; and it helps them to recover self-respect by presuming that they have not lost it.

It is no easy virtue. It demands self-withdrawal, self-denial. It demands some promptness to take the lower or less pleasant part; some carelessness about our own comfort; some perseverance when we are tired, and perhaps when others are un-

gracious ; some resoluteness not to let ourselves off easily. It requires the generosity of

The gentle soul, that no excuse doth make,  
But for its own another's wish doth take,  
So soon as that by any sign is shown.

So Jesus was courteous always. He was courteous enough to work a miracle of courtesy.

A few months ago—it was on the 12th of January—the *Spectator* contained an article on 'Sentiment and Sepulture.' It is not always easy to find subjects of interest for a weekly newspaper, when it requires so many as the *Spectator*, and it was almost inevitable that the romance surrounding Mr. Stevenson's burial should be found sufficient to suggest one. The article began in this way: 'Just behind Vailima—Mr. Stevenson's estate on the coast of Samoa—rises a precipitous though well-wooded hill, itself a peak of the gigantic mountain which, lifting itself for miles through water from the floor of the Pacific, has for its top the group of islands which we used to call the "Navigators," but now habitually designate Samoa, from the name of the largest in the group. On the peak is a little plateau hardly bigger than a room, from which the eye can take in the whole coast of the main island, and miles upon miles of the calm waters of the endless Pacific; and it was here that the novelist whom England and America are regretting desired that, if he died in Samoa, his body should be laid. His family and the chiefs whom he had befriended carried out his wish, though they had to hack a road through an impassable jungle, and to carry the coffin up precipices so severe that, writes Mr. Stevenson's stepson, had they but thought beforehand of the difficulty of the task, they might have pronounced it impossible, and left it unperformed. It was, however, performed successfully, and Mr. Stevenson lies, as he had desired, in his nearly inaccessible eyrie, far above all that suffers below in the savage country he loved.'

And then the writer of the article, who is afterwards plainly enough revealed to be the editor himself, goes on to ask why Mr. Stevenson made so unreasonable a request, and why his relatives felt that they were bound to carry it out. For Mr. Hutton has no doubt whatever that it was unreasonable. He sees, or rather he feels, 'we all instinctively feel, that it was *natural* that a man like Louis Stevenson, novelist and poet, with a weird imagination, and a high idea alike of himself and of Samoa, should have chosen so grand a place for sepulture; and most of us would acknowledge that if his wish had not been fulfilled, something would have seemed wanting, alike in the piety and the regard of his relatives and his dependants. And yet it is difficult to justify either the wish of the deceased, or the respect with which we all, had we been there, should have been disposed to treat it.'

For it does not matter, says the editor of the *Spectator*, what after death may become of a man's body, and a Christian has no business to care. A Mussulman may care, for Azrael must find his body before he can enter heaven, and a mountain eyrie for a grave is nearly as abhorrent, being so far out of the way, as cremation and an urn. Also a Hindu may care, from the very opposite reason; for if the body is the spirit's prison-house, the more utterly it is consumed and scattered the freer is the spirit's flight to glory. But why should a Christian care, and especially a Christian of the cultivated sort?

But no sooner had the editor of the *Spectator* written these sentences down and had them printed, than he found 'with some surprise' that his thoughts on the disposal of the body, and what came of it after death, were displeasing to many of his readers. And he had to write another article. One man suggested that the place where the body was laid was of consequence for the sake of the living who were left. Was it not something that they should have memories of a magnificent range of coast and miles upon miles of the calm waters

of the endless Pacific? For the memory of such occasions is indelible, even though the spot should never be revisited.

But the chief concern of the *Spectator's* correspondents was not with the memories of the living. It was over the fate of the dead, the future history of the body that was laid in the grave. And the editor was much surprised to find that 'many of our correspondents believe that the body which is to clothe the soul after death is identically the same as that which clothes the soul in this world.' The surprise was natural. For do not both science and St. Paul declare that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven? Nevertheless, whatever may be said of the students of science, it is probable that a majority of the students of St. Paul to-day believe that the body which clothes the soul after death is identically the same as that which clothes the soul in this world.

There is a sermon on the subject, a sermon of considerable ability, in *The Homiletic Review* for April. The author is the Rev. T. W. Young of Louisville. After a survey of the history of the question, in which he confesses that Jerome's view, which became the finding of the Catholic Church, is 'gross, material, and sensuous,' Mr. Young takes his stand upon the 'identical body' theory, and gives his reasons. They are of three

kinds. First, there is the argument from the resurrection of Jesus. That it was His identical body that rose from the grave no believer is found to deny. But was it not gradually changed during the forty days? Mr. Young sees no evidence for that. Next, there is the language of Scripture, and particularly of St. Paul himself. Take these two passages: 'Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory' (Phil. iii. 21, R.V.); and, 'But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in you' (Rom. viii. 11, R.V.). To these Mr. Young is easily able to add further passages, and at the same time he presses the use of the very words 'resurrection' and 'rising again.' How can there be a resurrection of that which never was laid down? Finally, there is the serious difficulty of finding any other theory to fit the facts. Which theory, he asks, shall we take? Shall we take the Gnostic, which holds that when Scripture says 'body' it means 'soul'; or the Swedenborgian, which accredits every person with two bodies in this life, one of which he lays down at death and never sees again, while the other meets him at the resurrection; or the environment theory, which leaves the present body to science and the earth, and finds another for the soul in the environment of heavenly places?

### After Winter.

I HEARD the river rippling Time,  
Each moment seemed a tremulous rhyme,  
From source of tears, a song sublime  
To touch Eternity.

I heard the psalm that rose to God  
From sunny tree and golden sod,  
Methought the ploughman turned the clod  
The earth's sweet sigh to free.

I saw the hills that knelt to heaven  
As for the wider world unshriven,  
Within their peace I felt forgiven  
As though they prayed for me.

My fervent soul had fain outrun,  
Where silver carries caught the sun,  
The footsteps of the spring begun  
In snow-wreathed purity.

SARAH ROBERTSON MATHESON.