

COMMENTARY
ON
THE GOSPELS.

BY THOS. O. SUMMERS, D.D.

VOL. I.
ST. MATTHEW.

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TO
WILLIAM MAY WIGHTMAN, D.D., LL.D.,
Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South,

This Volume

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

By his former colleague and devoted friend,

The Author.

PREFACE.

FOR several years the author has been employed, as far as other engagements would permit, in writing a Commentary on the Gospels, based on a Harmony different from any that he has seen in print, and presenting synopses of the views of leading expositors of the sacred text, ancient and modern. But this work having grown on his hands to such extent as to be altogether too elaborate for general students, such as members of Bible-classes, Sunday-schools, and many ministers, he has postponed its publication, yielding to the importunities of judicious friends, and prepared a condensed Commentary on the Gospels, in which results are given, for the most part, without the processes by which they were reached, and without noticing conflicting opinions of other authors. Though the original text has been kept constantly in view, he has refrained from citing it, in conformity with his main design. The author could not farther condense the work, without making it too elementary and superficial to meet the wants of those who may seek its aid in studying the inspired records. He has prepared Questions on the Gospels, based upon this Commentary, which he hopes will prove available to both teachers and students.

NASHVILLE, TENN., August 7, 1869.

INTRODUCTION.

IN a Commentary on the Gospels, the question of their genuineness and authenticity has no place. It is assumed that these Histories are authentic, as to their matter, and genuine to their professed authorship. The student must satisfy himself on this subject by a careful study of the Evidences of Christianity, in which he may be sufficiently aided by consulting the admirable works of Lardner, Paley, Horne, Watson, or others of the numerous excellent writers in this department of sacred literature.

The term *gospel* comes from the Anglo-Saxon *god*, good, and *spell*, message, or history, and like the Greek *euangelion*, means a good or joyful message, and especially, the "good tidings" of salvation through Jesus Christ. At a very early date the Histories of the Saviour acquired the title, which they have ever since retained.

The word *Hagion* in the titles of the Gospels, in some Greek MSS., may be construed with Gospel—"the *Holy Gospel*"—or with the author—"Saint Matthew." But in many of the most ancient MSS. it is "The Gospel according to Matthew," etc.—that is, as delivered, written, or edited, by Matthew.

The chronological order of the Gospels in the received text is that of the majority of Greek MSS. and ancient versions and catalogues of canonical books; and Irenaeus, in the second century, says the correctness of this order was not questioned.

Some have imagined that each succeeding Gospel was designed to supply omissions in the preceding; but this was not the case; as Mark, for example, omits half of what Matthew records, and records scarcely any thing not found in Matthew. Luke records much, while he omits a great deal found in Matthew and Mark, and inserts much that is peculiar to himself. John has little in common with the other three—as he deals more with the discourses of Christ, while their design was rather to give synopses of the leading events in the Life of Christ—hence they are called Synoptists.

The latest dates assigned to the first three Gospels is A.D. 64; and to John, A.D. 97. It is likely they were written at earlier dates.

Some think Matthew wrote his Gospel as early as A.D. 37. Eusebius is probably not far from the truth when he dates it A.D. 41. The Fathers say it was written in Hebrew—that is, Syro-Chaldee—and many moderns adopt this opinion. But the Fathers may have confounded the "Gospel according to the Hebrews," which the Nazarenes attributed to Matthew, with the genuine Greek, which they considered a translation. But the Greek copy exhibits all the marks of originality; and Greek was the language generally spoken in Judea and elsewhere—so that there was no necessity of writing it in Hebrew. Some think Matthew wrote it first in Hebrew for Jewish Christians, and then at a later date translated it into Greek for Gentile Christians. The idiom is Hellenistic, like that of the LXX. Matthew abounds more than the other Evangelists in Hebraisms, and this agrees with the tradition that it was written primarily for Hebrew Christians, which is favored by the theocratic references with which it abounds. He traces the lineage of Jesus to David and Abraham, and cites numerous prophecies concerning the Messianic kingdom. It is not, however, correct to say that he wrote for Jews alone—he knew that Gentiles were incorporated into the Church as well as Jews, and he wrote his Gospel for their benefit also; hence he sometimes explains terms which, though familiar to Jews, were not so to Gentiles—points of this nature are illustrated in the Commentary. It is not denied that Matthew may have written a narrative of the Life of Christ in Syro-Chaldee, at an early date, for the special benefit of Jewish Christians, and subsequently have written our present Gospel in Greek for general and permanent use. There is no reason to doubt that all our four Gospels are substantially correct copies of the inspired autographs, which were naturally soon lost sight of, as numerous transcripts and translations were made at a very early date.

Concerning the authors of the four Gospels we know nothing certain beyond what is said of them in the New Testament. Matthew and John belonged to the College of Apostles. (See notes on Matt. ix. x.) Besides his Gospel, John wrote also three General Epistles and the Book of Revelation. Mark and Luke are not named in the Gospels. The former is alluded to in Acts xii., xiii.; 2 Tim. iv. 11; 1 Pet. v. 13; and the latter in Col. iv. 14; 2 Tim. iv. 11; Philemon 24; and he is associated with Paul in the account of his travels in the Acts of the Apostles. Those who wish to know what tradition has said concerning the four Evangelists, may find a condensed view of the subject in Cave's "Lives of the Apostles and Evangelists."

In this work, the sacred text, including the headings of chapters, and marginal readings and references, has been carefully printed from the standard edition of the American Bible Society.

To save room, the passages of Scripture referred to in the notes are not generally quoted; but as they are of great importance in the elucidation of the text,

the student is earnestly requested to turn to them, in every instance, as the Bible is its own interpreter.

It did not belong to the author's plan to append "practical reflections" to his comments on the text; though ministers and others who may honor him by consulting the work will find *suggestions* of this sort, which it is hoped will prove "good to the use of edifying," and tend to promote the glory of Him whose wonderful History he has endeavored to explain.

THE
GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW.

CHAPTER I.

1 *The genealogy of Christ from Abraham to Joseph.* 18 *He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary when she was espoused to Joseph.* 19 *The angel satisfieth the misdeeming thoughts of Joseph, and interpreteth the names of Christ.*

I.—1 *The book of the generation*—The genealogy. So Gen. v. 1, book of the pedigree. *Biblos* meant originally, the inner bark of the papyrus, of which books were made—then a volume, roll, or catalogue, as here. It seems to refer to the genealogy in v. 2-17, which is a preface or introduction to the history. *Jesus*—The Greek form of the Hebrew Joshua. The successor of Moses is called Jesus in Acts vii. 45; Heb. iv. 8. It means a Saviour. (See on v. 21; Eccus. xlvi. 1.) *Christ*,—Hebrew, Messiah, the Anointed. Persons were consecrated to the priestly, prophetic, and regal offices, by anointing, (Ex. xxix. 7; 1 Kings xix. 16; Isa. lxi. 1.) which symbolized the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, necessary to qualify them for the exercise of their functions. Jesus was the only person who ever held all these three offices—he held them too in their highest sense; hence he is called the Messiah by emphasis. Dan. ix. 25, 26; Luke iv. 18; Acts x. 38. By frequent application to Jesus, the appellative acquired the force of a proper name, and is used without the article, as here, and in v. 16, 18; Matt. xxvii. 17, 22; Mark i. 1; ix. 41; Luke xxiii. 2; John i. 17; ix. 22; xvii. 3; Acts and Epistles, *passim*. Tacitus, Suetonius, and Pliny, speak of Jesus by no other name than Christ, *Christus*. *Son*—A remote male descendant. Heb. vii. 5. *Of David*,—He was predicted and expected to come as the Son of David. Isa. xi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5; Matt. xii. 23; xxi. 9; xxii. 45. *Of Abraham*.—(See Gen. xxii. 18; Gal. iii. 16.) Abraham is put after David perhaps because David was nearer the time of Christ; the promise referring to him was plainer and more popular; and, besides, the genealogy was to begin with Abraham. Matthew, writing primarily for Jews, traces the Messiah merely to Abraham; Luke, writing for Gentiles, to Adam.

2. *Begat*—This word is used with a latitude common in the East: it means, preceded in the genealogical line, without necessarily implying immediate paternity. It is repeated, because genealogies are usually precise. *And his brethren*;—These words were added probably to show that all the tribes, as the

offspring of Abraham, were interested in the promised Seed; though it is likely Matthew found them in the public register.

3. *Zara*—Mentioned, perhaps, because he was twin-brother of Phares, who is thus more fully identified. Gen. xxxviii. 28-30.

5. *Rachab*;—Usually identified with Rahab. Josh. ii. The chronology is not inconsistent with this. Num. vii. 12; Josh. vi. 23-25; Ruth iv. 18-22; 1 Chron. ii. 10-12. The names of some less distinguished persons may have been omitted in this case, as in others.

6. *That had been the wife*—These words are supplied to suit our idiom. In the New Testament the relation is frequently not expressed, as being well known. Mark xvi. 1; Luke vi. 16; Acts i. 13. Women were not generally put into genealogies. It has been suggested that Bathsheba, Ruth, Rahab, and Tamar—these four women only—are mentioned in this list, when more reputable ancestresses of Christ are omitted, to show that he was not indebted to his ancestry for his transcendent moral excellence, and to obviate the cavils of the Jews against the mean condition of Mary.

8. *Ozias*;—Was not the immediate son of Joram, as Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah, came between them. 1 Chron. iii. 11, 12; see on v. 2. Spanheim and others think they were omitted because of their connection, through Athaliah, with the house of Ahab. Simeon is omitted by Moses, Deut. xxxiii.; Zebulun and Dan in 1 Chron.; and Dan in Rev. vii. Matthew may have omitted these three names merely to make the first "fourteen."

11. *Jechonias*—From 2 Kings xxiii. 34; xxiv. 6; 1 Chron. iii. 15, 16, it appears that Eliakim, or Jehoiakim, was the son of Josiah, and Jehoiachin, or Jechoniah, was the son of Jehoiakim; accordingly, some MSS. read, "Josias begat Joakeim, and Joakeim begat Jechonias." It was not found, however, in the copy quoted by Porphyry, who based an objection against the Christians on the omission. As the names are nearly alike in Hebrew, and as the LXX., Jer. lii. 31; Josephus, Antiquities x. 8; and Clement Alex., Strom. i., call Jechoniah Joakeim, Jerome and many others suppose the Jechonias in v. 11 was Jehoiakim, (son of Josiah,) whose *brethren*, Jehoahaz and Zedekiah, sat also on the throne, and therefore are alluded to in the genealogy; and that the Jechonias in v. 12 was the son of the Jechonias, or Jehoiakim, in v. 11. *About the time*—At the time of the Babylonish exile. Though Josiah died twenty years before the first deportation to Babylon, yet, as his sons were carried into captivity, the language is sufficiently precise. The Jews probably used the term *metoikesia*, change of abode, or migration, as being less offensive than transportation, or captivity. 2 Kings xxiv. 16; 1 Chron. v. 22, LXX.; Acts vii. 4, 43.

12. *They were brought*—The Babylonish exile, as v. 11. *Jechonias begat Salathiel*;—When Jeremiah (xxii. 30) said Coniah, or Jechonias, should be "childless," he meant so far as the royal succession was concerned, as he explains it. *Salathiel begat Zerubbabel*;—So Ezra iii. 2; Neh. xii. 1; Hag. i. 1; Luke iii. 27. In 1 Chron. iii. 19, Zerubbabel is mentioned as the son of Pedaiah, brother of Salathiel: this may have been a different Zerubbabel, or Salathiel may have raised up seed to his brother.

13. *Zerubbabel begat Abiud*;—Abiud is not found among the sons of the Zerubbabel in 1 Chron. iii. (See on v. 12.) Lightfoot and others think Abiud was another name for Meshullam. The names that follow are not found elsewhere: they were probably copied by Matthew from public or family records, both of which were kept by the Jews. Josephus says he took the materials of the abstract of his family lineage from the public records. 1 Tim. i. 4; Tit. iii. 14.

16. *Jacob begat Joseph*—Luke (iii. 23) says Joseph was the son of Heli. It is the common opinion, and probably correct, that Matthew gives the lineage of Joseph, the putative father of Jesus, and Luke that of Mary, his virgin mother, who was the daughter of Heli. Joseph was therefore his son-in-law, but is called simply his son, according to the Hebrew usage: so Luke calls Salathiel the son of Neri, probably meaning his son-in-law, the natural father of Salathiel being Jechonias. The Rabbins call Mary the daughter of Eli. Thus our Lord naturally descended from David through his mother, who was a descendant of David's son Nathan, and legally through his putative father, who was a descendant of David's son Solomon. Both branches of the Davidic family united in Salathiel and Zerubbabel, though there was another divergence in Abiud, the ancestor of Joseph, and Rhesa, the ancestor of Mary, but these two lines came together by the marriage of Joseph and Mary. Jesus is therefore the legal and natural son of David, and heir of his throne. Luke i. 32; Acts ii. 29, 36; Rom. i. 3; 2 Tim. ii. 8; Rev. xxii. 16.

17. *Fourteen generations*;—Successions of persons, as from father to son. (See on v. 11.) The Jews divided their genealogies into classes to aid the memory: thus in Synopsis Sohar: "From Abraham to Solomon were fifteen generations; from Solomon to Zedekiah were other fifteen generations." Matthew doubtless copied from accredited genealogical tables, as we read of no exception to his account by the Jewish enemies of Christianity of that age: emendations were therefore unnecessary or inexpedient.

18. *Now the birth*—Now the procreation of Jesus Christ occurred in this manner, to wit: his mother Mary having been engaged to be married to Joseph, before the marriage was consummated, she was discovered to be with child by the Holy Ghost. *When as*—At the time when: there is no occasion for the use of this antiquated form. A year or six months generally intervened between espousals and marriage. Matthew adds "by the Holy Ghost"—not that it belonged to the

discovery. Mary was a common name among the Jews—the Hebrew Miriam, meaning "rebellion"—as was Joseph, meaning "he will add."

19. *Her husband*,—So he was considered after the espousal; and a breach of the contract was punished as adultery. Deut. xxii. 22-27. *Being a just man*,—Being a conscientious observer of the law, and yet not willing to expose her, determined to divorce her privately. Selden says the Jews held it infamous to retain an adulteress; but he could not put her to death, as he had no proof that she was guilty of this crime after the espousals; nor had he the two witnesses which the law required, though she might be divorced without proof. Deut. xxiv. 1. The law did not require him to state the cause of the divorce. The punishment for a crime of this sort was stoning, though the Jews had not, probably, the power, at that time, to inflict it. If Mary was Joseph's cousin, as many think, this may partly account for his not being disposed to put her to shame.

20. *But while he thought on*—But while pondering these things. *Behold*,—sometimes rendered "lo," and frequently used by Matthew and Luke to indicate a transition, and usually to prepare the reader for something unexpected, or wonderful. *The angel*—A messenger from heaven: angel is the English form of the Greek word, and has usually this meaning in Scripture. *In a dream*,—A miraculous dream, common in patriarchal and prophetic times. Gen. xx. 3; Num. xii. 6; 1 Kings iii. 5; but in the New Testament, only here and Matt. ii. 12, 19, 22. (See on Matt. xxvii. 19.) *Son of David*,—Descendant of David. (See on v. 1, 16.) *Fear not*—Hesitate not, scruple not. *To take unto thee*—To take home, from her parents. *Mary thy wife*:—*Gune*, considered in relation to a man, may mean a woman affianced, as well as one married. *That which is*—The neuter is commonly used of the child before its birth, though in this case the sex was known. *Conceived in her*—Begotten in her *of the Holy Ghost*.—By his miraculous power. Luke i. 35.

21. *Thou shalt call*—It was the prerogative of the father to name the child. Luke i. 62. Joseph was to be the putative father of Jesus. *JESUS*:—(See on v. 1.) *He*—Emphatically—he alone. *Save*—Deliver and preserve. *His people*—So the Israelites are frequently called in the Old Testament. Ex. xviii. 1; Zech. ix. 16: so Luke i. 68, 77; ii. 32; Rom. xi. 1, 2. The angel meant the Jews, the Saviour being first sent to them. Matt. x. 6; xv. 24; Acts iii. 25, 26; v. 31. Christ's salvation, however, is designed for and offered to all men. John x. 16; 1 John ii. 2. *From their sins*.—Pardoning them through his atoning merits, and sanctifying them by his renewing grace. Rom. v. 1-11; vi. 1-11. He cannot save from the punishment, without saving from the guilt, pollution, love, and practice of sin. A political emancipation, imagined by Meyer, is out of the question. The language of the angel seems designed to oppose that Jewish conception.

22. *Now all this was done*,—This appears to be the language of Matthew, not of the angel. *That it might be fulfilled*—God directed and permitted the foregoing events to transpire so that the prediction of Isaiah might be accomplished.

23. *Behold*,—The usual form of calling attention to an important or wonderful subject. *A virgin*—The occasion of the prophecy was the invasion of Judah by the kings of Israel and Syria. To comfort the Jews, Isaiah was commissioned to inform them that before a child that should be born of a virgin the prophet was about to wed, should be old enough to eat butter and honey, those delicacies should abound in the land, peace having been restored by the destruction of the hostile powers. The name given to this child, Immanuel, indicated that God was with his people, and would not forsake them in time of trial. The prophet and his son thus became "signs and wonders"—Isa. viii. 18—that is, symbolical personages; and the prophecy concerning the latter may well be appropriated to Him who in a proper sense was the "Offspring of a virgin's womb." By comparing Isa. vii. 14-16; viii. 2, 3; 2 Kings xv. 30; xvi. 9, it will be seen that the prophecy was fulfilled in the birth of the prophet's son, and the destruction of the two kings before the child was three years old. But the prophecy seems to be so worded as to apply to a typical Immanuel, Isaiah's son, and in a vastly higher sense to the true Immanuel, who in the fullness of time was to be born of a virgin of the house of David. *They shall call his name*—Isaiah says, "thou shalt call"—both may mean simply, his name shall be called. *Emmanuel*,—It does not appear that either the prophet's son or Jesus himself was familiarly called by this name. It was a kind of descriptive surname, like that given to Solomon at his birth—Jedidiah, beloved of the Lord—which, however, is never repeated in the history of that king. Jesus was called Immanuel, perhaps in reference to his incarnation. John i. 14; 1 Tim. iii. 16; and his gracious presence with his people to the end of time. Matt. xxviii. 20.

24. *Sleep*,—The sleep implied in v. 20. *Had bidden him*,—Though the language in v. 20 is not imperative, the intimation of the will of God is equivalent to a positive precept.

25. *And*—And yet. *Knew her not till*—Which implies that after the birth of Jesus, Joseph and Mary lived together, in all respects, as man and wife. The word till does not always exclude the time following; nor does the designation first-born necessarily imply that there were others born of the same mother; but as there is nothing in this case to set aside the proper meaning of these terms, neither reason nor Scripture warranting the dogma of the perpetual virginity of Mary, the tradition which affirms it may be repudiated as superstitious and vain.

CHAPTER II.

1 *The wise men out of the east are directed to Christ by a star.* 11 *They worship him, and offer their presents.* 14 *Joseph fleeth into Egypt, with Jesus and his mother.* 16 *Herod slayeth the children.* 20 *Himself dieth.* 23 *Christ is brought back again into Galilee to Nazareth.*

II.—1. *Now*—A continuative particle, connecting the following with the foregoing. *When Jesus was born*—After the birth of Jesus. There is no means of ascertaining how long after. Justin Martyr says, at the time or just after his birth. It was probably just after his presentation in the temple; for if it had been before, the gifts of the wise men would have enabled Mary to offer a lamb instead of the two doves for her purification, (Luke ii. 23, 24,) and Jesus could hardly have been taken to Jerusalem with safety, and presented in the temple with so much notice, (Luke ii. 25-38,) after what took place on the visit of the wise men. Luke passes over all the events of this chapter, except the return to Galilee. *Bethlehem of Judea*—Thus distinguished from another Bethlehem in Zebulun. Josh. xix. 15. It is called Bethlehem-judah, Jud. xvii. 7-9; Ruth i. 1, 2; 1 Sam. xvii. 12. Ephrath, Gen. xxxv. 19. Bethlehem-ephratah, Mic. v. 2; Ruth iv. 11. "The city of David," Luke ii. 11: *cf.* 1 Sam. xvi.; 2 Sam. xxiii. 16, 17; John vii. 42. It is 6 Roman miles south of Jerusalem—in itself an insignificant village. *In the days*—During the reign. *Herod*—Called "the Great:" son of Antipater, an Idumean, and Cypros, an Arabian. He died A.M. 4001, aged 70, having reigned 34 years from the death of Antigonus, and 37 from the time of his investiture by the Romans. The visit of the wise men took place a little before Herod's death. *There came wise men from the east*—Wise men from the east came. The east may mean Arabia, Jud. vi. 3; Job i. 3; Chaldea, Num. xxiii. 7; or Persia, Isa. xli. 2; xlvi. 11; as there were Magi in all these countries. The Magi were the priests, philosophers, and literati—they were devoted to all kinds of studies, especially to medicine and astronomy, or astrology. Their name is generally considered of Persian origin, and Persia or Media is said to have been their original seat; though they were in high repute in Chaldea before the Medo-Persian conquest. Dan. iv. 6-9. In later times, as Ptolemy says, Arabia became "the receptacle of the Magi," which favors the ancient and common opinion, that these wise men came from Arabia. Arabia Felix was the proper region of the articles presented by them, especially the myrrh and frankincense, and Ps. lxxii. 10, 15; Isa. lx. 5, are supposed to favor this view. Arabia was peopled by a Hebrew, though not a Jewish, race, (Gen. x. 25-30; xxv. 1-6; Jud. vi. 3; 1 Kings iv. 30, 31; Job i. 1, 3,) who were better acquainted with the predictions concerning the Messiah than other Gentiles, and in view of their origin and character, might be expected to be favored with the first manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles. The tradition which makes them three kings deserves no regard. If they had been, as Luther says, "governors of Arabia," would Herod have laid orders on them? *To Jerusalem*,—As they were looking for the King of the

Jews, they naturally repaired to the Jewish metropolis, expecting him there to make his appearance.

2. *Star*—Probably a luminous meteor, called a star, because of its resemblance to one. It was, of course, supernaturally directed. *In the east*,—It is not likely that the star was east of the wise men, but rather in a westerly direction, though both they and it were in the east when they saw it. *To worship him*.—To do him homage. The Orientals perform homage to their superiors, whether human or divine, by falling prostrate before them. Matt. viii. 2; ix. 18; xviii. 26, 29; Mark v. 22; Luke viii. 41. The Magi may have been so well acquainted with the character of the promised Messiah, as to offer him religious adoration: though they considered him King of the Jews, yet they did not consider him King over them alone; but while salvation is of the Jews, (John iv. 22,) they rightly regarded it as designed for the Gentiles, as well as the Jews. Origen and others think they were influenced by Balaam's prophecy concerning the "Star of Jacob:" (Num. xxiv. 17:) that, however, refers to David. It is likely that by intercourse with the Jews, who were expecting the Messiah at this time, and also by a divine suggestion, they were induced to think the star portended the advent of the great King. According to Origen, the heathen believed that the rise of a new star portended the birth of a great person; and from Homer and Virgil, it appears they thought the gods sent stars, or meteors, to direct their favorites.

3. *Troubled*,—Agitated: the same word as in John v. 4, 7. Herod, being a usurper, was agitated with fear that his throne was about to be transferred to another, the rightful heir: his subjects were probably agitated with hope that such was the case, and with fear that it might not be so: the chief priests may have been alarmed with fear that their selfish administration was about to close by the coming of a King who should reign in righteousness and be a priest upon his throne. Isa. xxxii. 1; Zech. vi. 13. Suetonius, a Roman historian, says, "An ancient and common opinion prevailed throughout the East, that the Fates had decreed some to arise in Judea who should attain universal empire." So Tacitus. This was enough to agitate a mind so suspicious as Herod's.

4. *All the chief priests*—Including the high-priest and his sagan, or deputy, with all who had held the office, and the heads of the 24 courses. 1 Chron. xxiv.; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14; Ezra viii. 24; Neh. xii. 7. Josephus, in his Life, speaks of "many of the chief priests." *Scribes*—Formerly the secretaries of state, (2 Sam. viii. 17; xx. 25,) and of war, (2 Kings xxv. 19; 2 Chron. xxvi. 11,) were called scribes. Afterward the name was given to those who transcribed the sacred books, and interpreted them. Ezra vii. 6; Matt. xxii. 35; Luke x. 25; v. 17; Acts v. 34. The chief priests and scribes, with the elders of the people, (Matt. xvi. 21; xxvi. 3, 59,) constituted the Sanhedrim. Herod was in quest of information, hence he applied to the chief priests and scribes, as men skilled in sacred lore.

Demanded—Inquired. *Christ*—The Messiah. *Should be born*.—Where, according to prophecy, is he born? John vii. 42.

6. *Bethlehem, in the land of Juda*,—Within the bounds of that tribe. Micah (v. 2) has Ephrathah. (See on v. 1.) *Art not the least*—Micah says, "though thou be little." The two may perhaps be reconciled thus: Though Bethlehem is one of the smallest cities of Judah, yet it will be one of the greatest in celebrity, as the birthplace of the Messiah. *Princes*—Micah says, "thousands." The Jews divided their tribes into companies, containing each a thousand families. Jud. vi. 15, Heb.; 1 Sam. x. 19; 1 Chron. xii. 20. In Matthew they are designated by their governors. *Rule*—Tend, as a shepherd his flock, ruling and feeding. The Greeks call kings shepherds of the people. The word corresponds with *governor*, which in the original is cognate with the word rendered princes in the preceding clause. *My people Israel*.—(See on Matt. i. 21.) The priests and scribes seem to have designed to give the sense, and not the exact language, of Micah.

7. *Inquired of them diligently*—Procured from them exact information. *What time the star appeared*.—The time of the star's appearing. As Herod wanted to know when Christ was born, this event was marked by the first appearance of the star.

8. *Go and search diligently*—Going, inquire exactly. *When*—When, if at all. *Bring me word again*,—Report to me, that I also may go and do him homage. The hypocrite did not send any of his courtiers, so as not to excite suspicion.

9. *When they had heard*—So having received the orders of the king. *Lo*,—(See on Matt. i. 20.) *In the east*,—(See on v. 2.)

10. *When they saw the star*,—And seeing the star, as it moved before them, and then stood over the house, having fulfilled its mission. *They rejoiced with exceeding great joy*.—A very strong expression, indicating transports of delight.

11. *The house*,—Joseph and Mary had probably removed from the stable to a dwelling-house. *Mary*—Joseph is not mentioned, perhaps not happening to be present. *Fell down*,—Falling down, they did him homage. (See on v. 2.) *Treasures*,—Caskets, chests, or bales. A *thesauros*—whence our word treasure—is a receptacle for valuable things. The Orientals never appear before their superiors without gifts, usually the chief productions of the country of the party presenting them. Gen. xxxii. 13; xlii. 11, 26. The Magi scarcely intended, as the Fathers thought, to symbolize by the gold the regal character of Jesus, by the frankincense his divinity, and by the myrrh his humanity: they probably offered these things as the principal productions of their country. *Gold*—Ps. lxxii. 10, 15. This was a providential supply for the expenses to Egypt and subsistence there. *Frankincense*,—A whitish, resinous substance, having an acrid taste and a strong, fragrant smell: it is procured from incisions made in a tree which grows

in Arabia Felix and in India. Strabo says the best comes from the borders of Persia. *Myrrh*.—A precious gum, having a strong but not disagreeable smell, and a bitter taste: it is procured by incisions, and sometimes by spontaneous issue, from a tree which grows in Arabia, Egypt, and elsewhere: it was much used as a perfume.

12. *And being warned of God*—"Of God" is not in the original, though implied: so in v. 22. (See on Matt. i. 20.)

13. *The angel*—An angel: so v. 19. *Egypt*,—This was a Roman province, not far from Bethlehem: it was away from Herod's jurisdiction, and many Jews were there enjoying civil and religious freedom. *Bring thee word*:—Inform thee when to return home. *Will seek*—Is about to seek the infant in order to destroy him.

14. *When*—Then he arose: so v. 21. It would seem that he arose that night, and departed, showing his prompt obedience, and concealing his departure.

15. *That it might be fulfilled*—God directed and permitted all this, so that what Hosea (xi. 1) said was accomplished. Israel was figuratively called God's son, (Ex. iv. 22,) and was considered by the Jews a type of the Messiah, who is the proper Son of God. The metaphorical declaration of Hosea was literally fulfilled in the exodus of Christ.

16. *Was mocked of*—Was deluded by. Herod expected the Magi to return to him, but it does not appear that they promised to do so. *Children*—Male children. *Coasts*—Borders—the country lying around the town. *From two years old*—From the child of two years of age. Not knowing but that the child Jesus might have been born some time before the Magi saw the star, the jealous tyrant extended the time to two years, so as to be sure to kill the infant King. The massacre of 14,000 infants, according to the Greek Calendar and the Abyssinian Liturgy, though admitted by the credulity of Jeremy Taylor and the infidelity of Voltaire, is too absurd to be noticed, any more than the opinion of others that the number was 144,000. As Bethlehem and its district did not contain probably a population of more than 2,000, sober critics think that not more than 50 children could have been massacred; hence there is no wonder that the affair was not noticed by Josephus, it being of small importance in the sanguinary life of Herod.

17. *Then was fulfilled*—Then was accomplished, in another sense, what Jeremiah wrote concerning the captives. Jer. xxxi. 15.

18. *In Rama*—Identified with er-Ram, a village 12 miles north of Bethlehem: it was in the tribe of Benjamin, (Josh. xviii. 25,) and was the place to which the Jews were taken by Nebuchadnezzar before they were transported to Babylon. Jer. xl. 1. *Rachel*—The ancestress of the Benjamites, who inhabited Ramah, and who were blended with the tribe of Judah in the captivity, was buried 1¼ mile north of

Bethlehem, (Gen. xxxv. 16-20; 1 Sam. x. 2,) and is represented as rising out of her grave, and bewailing her lost children. *They are not.*—The prophet meant, they were gone into captivity—they were not to her: the language applies with great force to the slaughter of the Innocents. It does not imply that they had no existence after death. Gen. v. 24; xlii. 13; Jer. x. 20; xlix. 10; Lam. v. 7.

20. *They are dead*—The plural for the singular, as in Ex. iv. 19.

22. *Archelaus*—Herod left the tetrarchy of Galilee and Perea to his son Antipas; that of Gaulonitis, Trachonitis, Batanea, and Paneadis, to his son Philip; and the kingdom of Judea to Archelaus. The Roman Government refused to grant Archelaus the title of king, but only that of ethnarch, (though he soon assumed that of king,) and after some years of oppression and misrule, banished him to Vienne in Gaul. Josephus calls him a king, and speaks of his reigning, and of his tyranny. *He was afraid*—Perhaps being aware that Archelaus inherited the cruelty of his father: it is said that he caused 3,000 people to be put to death at one of the passovers: he would hardly have scrupled to kill Jesus if he could have found him. *Notwithstanding,*—But being divinely warned. (See on v. 12.) *He turned aside*—He withdrew into the district of Galilee, where he lived before Christ was born. He probably journeyed from Egypt along the coast of the Mediterranean, and heard of the accession of Archelaus when he reached Azotus in the land of Israel, tribe of Dan; then fearing to go into Judea, he withdrew to Galilee, the tetrarch of which was of a comparatively mild disposition, and was at variance with Archelaus; Joseph, therefore, had a guaranty of protection in his province.

23. *That it might be fulfilled*—God so directed and permitted these events, as to fulfill those prophecies which refer to the contempt with which the Messiah should be treated. Nazareth was proverbially a despised place, hence Nathanael asked, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" John i. 46; vii. 41, 52. The Jews have always used the phrase, "Jesus of Nazareth," or "the Nazarene," in the way of reproach. Thus the very place of Christ's residence, as well as that of his birth, verified the predictions concerning him. As no particular prophet is specified, the reference may be to all those predictions which speak of the contempt in which the Messiah should be held. *By the prophets,*—May mean, "in the book of the prophets," as Acts vii. 42; and the reference may be especially to Isa. liii. 1-3. Nazareth was a small city in the tribe of Zebulun, situated on the slope of a hill, just north of the plain of Esdraelon, about midway between the Lake of Tiberias and the Mediterranean, some 70 miles north of Jerusalem. Luke i. 26; iv. 16, 29.

CHAPTER III.

1 *John preacheth: his office: life, and baptism; 7 he reprehendeth the Pharisees, 13 and baptizeth Christ in Jordan.*

III.—1. *In those days came*—Now in those days cometh. The conjunction (in the original) connects this chapter with the foregoing, though nearly thirty years had intervened. "Those days" is used by the Hebrews with considerable latitude. Ex. ii. 11; Luke i. 39; xx. 1. The present tense is used (in the original) as is common in history.

The Baptist,—A title of office, meaning, the baptizer. The manner in which Matthew speaks of John shows that he was a well-known historical personage: so Josephus, Ant. xviii. 5. 2. *Preaching*—Proclaiming as a herald. *Wilderness*—An uninclosed region, whether barren or fertile. The wilderness of Judea is for the most part a dreary waste: it stretches west of the Jordan from Jericho to the mountains of Edom. That part of it where John was brought up seems to have been west of the Dead Sea. Luke i. 80; iii. 2.

2. *Repent ye*;—The original word means properly, take afterthought, change the mind: here it means so to change the mind as to reform the life. Athanasius says, *metanoia* "is so called because it transfers the mind from evil to good." This change is, of course, always connected with grief for the evil done. 2 Cor. vii. 9-11. *The kingdom of heaven*—Literally, "of the heavens," in allusion perhaps to Dan. iv. 26, "the heavens do rule." Matthew alone uses the word, as a Hebraism for God, the term used by the other evangelists—neither form occurs in the Old Testament—the latter occurs Wis. x. 10. Matthew may have used it, as Bengel suggests, to wean the Jews, for whom he wrote, from their notions of a worldly kingdom. The gospel dispensation is called a kingdom in conformity with the theocratic style with which the Jews were familiar. Ps. ii.; Isa. ii. 2-4; ix. 1-7; xi.; Jer. xxiii. 6, 7; Dan. ii. 44; vii. 13, 14, 18, 27; Mic. iv. 1-7, where the Targum has kingdom of the heavens. Agreeably to the peculiar character of his dispensation, John the Baptist doubtless, spoke of it in its external aspects, but not without embracing its spiritual elements and inward character. In this realm the Messiah is King; the ministers of the Church are his officers; those who believe in him are his subjects; and the Bible is the code of laws by which they are governed. By the kingdom of God is sometimes meant the obligations it imposes and the privileges it secures—Matt. xiii.; Rom. xv. 17—and sometimes the heavenly state into which it is to be developed. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10; Gal. v. 21; 2 Pet. i. 11. *Is at hand*.—Has come nigh.

3. *For this is he*—In John i. 23, the Baptist is represented as saying, "I am the voice"—but here it seems to be the language of Matthew, who uses the present tense as being more vivid than the past. *The voice of one crying*—A voice of a

crier. The quotation gives the sense, though not the precise language, of either the Hebrew or the LXX. of Isa. xl. 3. *Prepare ye the way*—Alluding to the practice of Eastern monarchs, who when on an expedition used to send pioneers to level hills, fill hollows, and straighten the roads, to prepare an even and direct way before them. The primary application of this prophecy to the return of the Jews from captivity is doubted by some, because they returned "in scattered parties, without pomp, and especially without any visible presence of the Lord;" but Ps. cxxvi. seems to warrant the application of the passage, highly wrought and poetical as it is, to that event, which symbolizes one more glorious to which it is applied by the evangelists. Baruch v. 7. John prepared the way of Christ, by exciting attention, removing prejudice, and producing reformation.

4. *And the same John*—Now John himself—reverting from the prophecy to the person of John. *Camel's hair*,—Probably woven into a coarse cloth. The Talmud says, Camel's-hair garments were much worn by the Jews. Zech. xiii. 4; Rev. vi. 12; Joseph. Wars, i. 17. Ascetics and poor persons in the East, at this day, wear clothes made of camel's hair and wool. A fine cloth is also made of camel's hair, and hence called camlets. *A leathern girdle*—Literally, "a girdle of a skin," as rendered Mark i. 6—not a fine one of linen, silk, silver, or gold, which was common among the Jews, but a coarse one corresponding to the tunic which it encircled. John thus imitated his illustrious type, Elijah. 2 Kings i, 8. *His meat*—Food. *Locusts*—Locusts were recognized as food by the Levitical code; (Lev. xi. 22;) and Strabo, Pliny, and others, attest that they were continually used as such in the East: it appears that the Greeks also ate them; and they constitute a considerable article of food at the present day, both in Asia and Africa. They are dried in the sun, roasted, and also salted away to be used after the locust season has passed. *Wild honey*.—The production of bees which abounded in Palestine: it is frequently found in trees and in hollow rocks, and that too in this very desert. Deut. xxxii. 13; Jud. xiv. 8; 1 Sam. xiv. 25, 26; Ps. lxxxii. 16. Thomson says, "Wild honey is still gathered, in large quantities, from trees in the wilderness, and from rocks in the valleys, just where the Baptist sojourned, and where he came preaching." Dr. Livingstone says, "There is a physiological reason why locusts and honey should be eaten together." The austerity of John showed that he was not the harbinger of a temporal monarch.

5. *Jerusalem*,—Specified, because it was the metropolis of Palestine. Of course, the inhabitants are here meant. *Judea*,—The land of Judah, being the most southern of the four divisions of Palestine. *All the region*—Probably portions of Samaria, Galilee, and Perea. Universal terms are employed, because the masses of the people went to be baptized: it is not necessary to give the passage a strictly literal construction. John xii. 19. *Jordan*,—The Jordan—the only river of consequence in Palestine: it has a sinuous, southerly course of about 200 miles, from the Anti-libanon Mountains to the Dead Sea.

6. *Were baptized*—Baptism is spoken of as a well-known rite, lustrations by water being common among the Greeks and Romans, as well as the Jews: by the latter they were used on various occasions, and particularly on the reception of proselytes. Mark vii. 2-5; John ii. 6; iii. 25, 26; 1 Cor. x. 2; Heb. ix. 10, 13. John's baptism was a symbol of moral purification and a pledge of reformation, in view of the approaching reign of the Messiah. *Of him*—By him. *In Jordan*,—The Greek preposition means in, within, at, on, with, by, nigh to, etc., according to the subject: here it may mean within the outer bank of the river, which has double banks, or nigh to the river. John i. 28; iii. 26; x. 40. As *baptizo* in the New testament never means to immerse, but to purify, in a ceremonial sense, and in all cases in which there is any reference to the mode, it is by affusion, (Mark vii. 2-5; Acts i. 5; ii. 1-18; x. 44-48; xi. 15, 16; Tit. iii. 5, 6; Heb. ix. 10, 13,) we may reasonably conclude it was thus administered by John. Wesley says, "Such prodigious numbers could hardly be baptized by immersing their whole bodies under water; nor can we think they were provided with change of raiment for it, which was scarcely practicable for such vast multitudes. And yet they could not be immersed naked with modesty, nor in their wearing apparel with safety. It seems, therefore, that they stood in ranks on the edge of the river, and that John, passing along before them, cast water on their heads or faces, by which means he might baptize many thousands in a day. And this way most naturally signified Christ's baptizing them with the Holy Ghost and with fire, which John spoke of, as prefigured by his baptizing with water, and which was eminently fulfilled when the Holy Ghost sat upon the disciples in the appearance of tongues, or flames of fire." It was physically impossible for John to immerse the multitudes whom he baptized, even if he could stand in the water day and night engaged in the work. In ancient pictures of the Baptism of Christ, found in the catacombs of Rome and elsewhere, and supposed to be as old as the age immediately succeeding that of the apostles, John is represented as pouring water from a shell on the head of Jesus, who is standing a few feet in the river, the Baptist being on the bank. *Confessing their sins*.—This may have been a particular and personal, but could not have been a private, auricular confession.

7. *Pharisees*—The strictest, most popular, and most numerous sect of the Jews. Josephus says they were of considerable weight in the days of John Hyrcanus, B.C. 108: that they (as well as the Sadducees) originated in the time of Jonathan the high-priest, B.C. 159-144; and that they numbered 6,000 at the death of Herod the Great. They probably derived their name from the Hebrew *pharash*, separated, because they separated themselves from other Jews, under pretense of greater purity and a stricter observance of the law, written and oral. Whatever they were at their origin, they appear to have been, with some exceptions, (John iii. 1; Acts v. 34,) great hypocrites in the time of Christ. Matt. v. 20; xxiii.; Mark viii. 11-15; Luke xi. 52; xviii. 9-14. *Sadducees*—A Jewish sect deriving their name, according

to some, from the Hebrew *zedek*, q.d., the just; according to the Talmudists, from Sadok, a disciple of Antigonus Sochaeus, president of the Sanhedrim, B.C. 260. They rejected tradition, and some say disallowed all Scripture except the Pentateuch, though this is probably incorrect. They denied a future state and the existence of angels and spirits. They were not numerous. Josephus says, they drew over to them only the rich, and their tenets spread chiefly among the young. They were characterized by worldliness and carnal unbelief, as the Pharisees were by superstition and hypocrisy. Though great enemies of the latter, they joined them in opposition to Christ. Matt. xxii. 23-34; Acts iv. 1, 2; xxiii. 6-8. *Come—Coming. To his baptism*,—For the purpose of receiving his baptism; probably to make interest with the coming Messiah; but when they ascertained the condition, viz., repentance, it would seem that the Pharisees, at least, were not baptized. Luke vii. 27-30. *O generation of vipers*,—Offspring, or brood of vipers—a venomous species of serpents: wicked sons of wicked sires. *Who hath warned you*—Who hath told you to make use of this means to escape the coming judgment? It seems to be an expression of surprise that self-righteous Pharisees and worldly-minded Sadducees should come to a baptism of repentance. *The wrath to come?*—The punishment which was about to be inflicted on the Jewish nation. Mal. iv.

8. *Bring forth*—Produce. *Therefore*—In view of your profession. *Fruits meet for repentance*:—Performances produced by repentance.

9. *And think not to say within yourselves*,—And presume not to think. *We have Abraham to our father*:—For a father: q.d., "Being descendants of Abraham, we must be accepted of God." The Jews used to say, "Abraham sits near the gates of hell, and suffers no Israelite to descend into it." *I say unto you*,—A preface indicating the great importance of what follows. *God is able of these stones*—Pointing perhaps to the stones which lay around him in the wilderness, or on the strand between the outer and inner banks of the river. Luke xix. 40. It is an expression of divine omnipotence and independence. God can put the Gentiles into the place of the Jews. Matt. viii. 11, 12; Rom. iv.; Gal. iii.

10. *And now also*—And even now. *Is laid unto*—Lieth at. The judgment is imminent, and will be complete. The woodman has laid down his axe to take off his coat, and is going immediately to work to cut down the trees. *Is hewn down*,—The present tense denotes that the principle, or law, was then in operation. The execution of judgment on communities and individuals is frequently and significantly set forth by this imagery. Jer. xlvi. 22, 23; Ezek. xxxi.; Dan. iv. 23; Matt. vii. 19; John xv. 6. The Jews apply Isa. x. 33-xi. 1, to the Messiah. The Rabbins inferred from that passage that he would come immediately on the destruction of Jerusalem.

11. *Unto repentance*:—In order to repentance; as John's baptism was a symbol and pledge of repentance, hence called "the baptism of repentance." Mark i. 4. *He that cometh*—He who is coming—a phrase denoting the Messiah. Matt. xi. 3. The present participle expresses certainty and proximity. *After me*—John considered himself the forerunner of the Messiah. John iii. 27-31. *Mightier*—Having greater authority, as the Messiah. *Shoes*—Literally, things bound under—that is, under the feet: in the New Testament, the word means the same as sandals—which were originally soles of wood or leather, bound to the feet by straps of leather. This fastening is called a latchet in Mark i. 7, which differs a little from the account in Matthew, though the sense is the same—showing that the evangelists did not consider it necessary to give the precise words of the speakers so long as they faithfully reported the substance of what they said. According to the ancient Jews, Greeks, and Romans, carrying the sandals, and, of course, unloosing them, was the office of the lowest menial. The Rabbins say that the shoes of Jewish teachers were borne by their disciples; and Eusebius says the same custom obtained among the first Christians. The Talmud says, "Every office that a servant does for his master, a scholar should perform for his teacher, except loosing his sandal thong:" that they called "a reproachful work, fit only for a Canaanitish, not a Hebrew, servant." *With the Holy Ghost, and with fire*:—With the illuminating, quickening, and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, which descended upon the believers on the day of Pentecost, accompanied with "cloven tongues like as of fire," by which those influences were visibly symbolized. Mark omits the fire, as being the mere symbol of the Spirit.

12. *Fan*—Winnowing shovel. Dr. Shaw says, "After the grain is trodden out, they winnow it, by throwing it up against the wind with a shovel: the *ptuon*, mentioned Matt. iii. 12, there rendered a fan, too cumbrous a machine to be thought of; for it is represented as carried in the hand." *Thoroughly purge*—Thoroughly cleanse. *Floor*,—The *halon* was an elevated area, formed by hardening the ground with a cylinder, where the grain was trodden out by oxen: the straw was thrown away with a fork, and the mass of grain, chaff, etc., was thrown up by the shovel; the chaff was blown away by the wind, while the grain fell in a heap on the floor, which is said to be purged when the grain on it is winnowed. *Garner*;—The place into which the grain is gathered, a granary: in the East it is frequently a subterranean repository, covered with thatch. Jer. xli. 8. *Chaff*—The *achuron* means not only the chaff, but also and principally the straw—every thing separated from the grain. *Unquenchable fire*.—A fire that burns till it consumes all that is cast into it. The fan and floor, wheat and garner, chaff and fire, are perhaps particularized merely for the completeness and force of the metaphor, which, like that of the woodman, (v. 10,) and the refiner, (Mal. iii. 1-5,) was designed to represent the discrimination between the good and the

bad, the protection of the former and the punishment of the latter, which should take place after the coming of the Messiah.

13. *Then*—After this: it seems to have been when John was in the height of his ministry. It is not said that the people were present at the baptism of Jesus. *From Galilee to Jordan*—I.e., from Nazareth, which was not on the Jordan. *Of him*.—By him.

14. *Forbade*—Opposed. *I have need*—I ought to be baptized by thee—an expression denoting his inferiority; for, as Grotius says, "he who binds another by baptism seems to be superior to him who is bound." As Jesus had lived in Galilee and John "in the deserts" of Judea, "till the day of his showing unto Israel," the latter was not personally acquainted with the former; but as he approached him for baptism, it is probable he recognized him as the Messiah by a supernatural impulse, which was confirmed by ocular and audible miracles when he baptized him. Thus there is only a seeming discrepancy between this verse and John i. 33.

15. *Suffer it to be so now*:—Literally, permit now. Let the seeming incongruity pass for the present, intimating that the official superiority of John was only for the present, as the Baptist intimates, John iii. 28-30. *For thus it becometh us*—For it is proper for me to receive baptism and for thee to administer it, that I might fully perform every requirement of the law. Christ submitted to circumcision, and to redemption as the first-born: he observed the Jewish feasts, and paid tribute, as a member of the Jewish Church; and therefore as John called all Jews to baptism, Jesus, being a Jew, submitted to this ordinance also. But his baptism was not to repentance, as he had no sins of which to repent; but as by his circumcision his membership in the Jewish Church was recognized, so by his baptism and the anointing of the Holy Ghost, his Messiahship was recognized, particularly his priestly office. Ex. xxix. 4, 7; Num. iv. 3; John i. 31; Acts x. 37, 38; Heb. v. 4. Some of the Fathers say, Christ was not sanctified by the water, but the water by Christ. The sentiment is pretty, and it may perhaps be said that Christ dignified this element in being consecrated by it; but there is no scriptural ground for the conceit, least of all for the absurd notion that the water of baptism cleanses the soul. It can scarcely be said that Christ was baptized as our example—only as his respect for divine ordinances is worthy of our imitation—for surely we are not to postpone baptism till we are thirty years of age, nor are we to be baptized for induction to the ministerial office. Christ was not baptized as our substitute, in the same sense as he was sacrificed for us; as that would supersede our baptism, and involve the Antinomian system of imputation. As Christ's circumcision denoted his personal purity, so his baptism denoted his official sanctity; but in neither case was there any thing set forth by the symbol, except a holy character and state, no purifying agency, or process, being necessary in his case, as in ours, because of his original, perfect, and perpetual holiness; hence the ceremony of his consecration

consisted in the simple rite administered by the Baptist, exclusive of the sacrifices of atonement which were proper at the inauguration of the Aaronic priests, but would have been incongruous in his case. Lev. viii. 14-34; Heb. vii. 26-28. Some think there can be no reference to the consecration of the Levitical priests, "since their baptism was a mere ablution, which was constantly repeated during their ministry." Their daily ablutions, as well as sacrifices, had reference to their "infirmities," (Heb. v. 1-3,) and symbolized their sanctification in a moral sense; but over and above this, their baptism and anointing at the time of their admission to the priesthood, indicated their consecration to the holy office, and constituted their sanctification in a ceremonial sense, in which sense alone Christ was sanctified by his baptismal inauguration. John xvii. 19.

16. *And Jesus,*—And being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water, in the margin of which he appears to have stood to receive the rite: *apo* means properly from, rather than out of. *The heavens were opened*—From Luke iii. 21, 22, it appears that this took place while he was praying, after the baptism, which did not impart the Holy Ghost. This was not lightning, nor a mere spiritual vision, but a miraculous phenomenon, evident to the bodily senses, like the phenomena mentioned Acts vii. 55, 56; ix. 3. *Unto him,*—To Jesus. *He*—Jesus. *The Spirit of God descending like a dove,*—Generally interpreted of the form which the Spirit assumed—probably a lambent flame shaped like a dove—as well as the hovering motion in his descent. The symbol was well chosen, the dove being the emblem of purity, gentleness, and peace. *Lighting upon him:*—Coming upon him: from John i. 32, 33, it appears that the symbol remained for some time on the Saviour—long enough to show that it was no optical illusion. This proves that Jesus was the subject of the prophecies in Isa. xi. 1, 2; xlii. 1.

17. *And lo,*—A note of admiration. *A voice*—Articulate speech, as Matt. xvii. 5; John xii. 27-30. *From heaven,*—Literally, out of the heavens; but it seems to mean the same as "from heaven;" Dan. iv. 28, LXX. (31, Eng. ;) though there is a reference to the opening of the heavens, v. 16. The voice came through the lower heavens, from the third heaven where God resides. *My beloved Son,*—Being his only begotten Son, and so the object of his highest love. Mark xii. 6; *cf.* Gen. xxii. 2, 12, 16. *In whom I am well pleased.*—In whom I take delight. Isa. xlii. 1. The announcement at this time was the formal divine authentication of the Messiah's mission, which was repeated near the close of his ministry. Matt. xvii. 5.

CHAPTER IV.

1 *Christ fasteth, and is tempted.* 11 *The angels minister unto him.* 13 *He dwelleth in Capernaum,* 17 *beginneth to preach,* 18 *calleth Peter, and Andrew,* 21 *James, and John,* 23 *and healeth all the diseased.*

IV.—1. *Then*—Immediately after his baptism. Mark i. 12; Luke iv. i. The transactions recorded by John (i. 19-52) seem to have taken place after the temptation—the account of which, as well as of the baptism, John omits. *Led up*—From the river to the mountainous range adjacent. Tradition locates it in a rugged, desolate region, between Jerusalem and Jericho, about four miles from the scene of the baptism, and twenty from Jerusalem—called Quarantana, from the forty days' fast. It is a frightful region, infested by wild beasts. Mark i. 13; Jer. xlix. 19. *Of the Spirit*—By the impulse of the Holy Ghost, of whose influence he was full. Luke iv. 1; John iii. 34; Acts x. 38. He was not driven (Mark i. 12) against his own will—he voluntarily yielded to the powerful influence exerted on him. *To be tempted*—To be tried, by solicitation to sin. His character was thoroughly tested at the very outset of his ministry. This was ordered, perhaps, to demonstrate his invincible virtue, and consequent fitness for the work he had undertaken; (John xiv. 30.; Heb. iv. 15;) to qualify him to become our sympathizing High-priest; (Heb. ii. 17, 18;) and to present an edifying example to all his tempted followers. 1 Pet. ii. 21, 22. *The devil*.—*Diabolos* means a slanderer, accuser—used appellatively in 1 Tim. iii. 11; 2 Tim. iii. 3; Tit. ii. 3. The LXX. use it for the Hebrew *Satan*, which means an enemy, the adversary of God and man, and the traducer of both. Gen. iii. 5; Job i. 6; Wis. ii. 24; John viii. 44; 1 Pet. v. 8; Rev. xii. 9, 10. In this sense, it is always used in the singular: there is but one devil, though under his principality there are legions of demons, called devils in our version. Matt. ix. 34; xii. 24. None but he is ever called *the devil*—with the article, which is not used John vi. 70.

2. *And when he had fasted*—And having fasted. *Forty days and forty nights*,—The nights are specified by a pleonasm common in Scripture. Jonah i. 17; Matt. xii. 40. Moses and Elijah, the representative men of their times, fasted miraculously for the same period. Ex. xxiv. 18; xxxiv. 28; 1 Kings xix. 8. *He was afterward an hungered*.—He afterward hungered, or desired food, having eaten nothing during the forty days, (Luke iv. 2,) his appetite probably being held in abeyance by a spiritual ecstasy. The miraculous character of this fast shows that Christ was not our exemplar in his fasting.

3. *And when the tempter came to him*,—And coming to him, the tempter said. This does not prove that he had not tempted him before, during the forty days, as affirmed in our version of Luke: it may refer not to the first approach, but to the first in the closing series of temptations, which are alone recorded. The devil is styled the tempting one, the tempter, by emphasis. He probably came in a spiritual manner, as he commonly comes to tempt men. *He said*,—Probably by internal suggestion. *If thou be the Son of God*,—Since thou art God's Son—alluding perhaps to Matt. iii. 17. *Be made bread*.—Become loaves: the resemblance between a stone and a loaf is noted, Matt. vii. 9. Luke has the singular: the evangelists did not affect a verbal precision.

4. *It is written*,—Deut. viii. 3—where "word" is not in the Hebrew, but is supplied in the versions. The Israelites lived by the word of God when they subsisted on the manna which was produced by his word. Jesus was hungry, and in a desert: Satan tempts him to work a miracle to supply his wants: Christ repels the temptation to distrust the providence of God by a quotation from the Old Testament, which teaches us that when our ordinary means of support fail us, he can furnish extraordinary means, by the word of his power; so that in no strait whatever ought we to allow our confidence in him to be shaken. *Man shall not live*—Christ thus identifies himself with our common humanity.

5. *Then*—Luke puts this temptation last, without saying, however, that it occurred last. *Taketh him*—It need not be supposed that the devil transported Jesus through the air: if there were any bodily movement, the tempter induced Jesus to accompany him: if the temptation was wholly spiritual, then the scene was suggested by the devil to the mind of Jesus. Ezek. viii. 3; xi. 1; Rev. xvii. 3. *The holy city*—So called because it was the site of the temple: it is styled on Jewish coins, "Jerusalem, the holy." Neh. xi. 1, 18; Isa. xlvi. 2; lii. 1; Matt. xxvii. 53; Rev. xi. 2. The Orientals still call it *El-kods*, the holy. *Setteth him*—Caused him to stand. *A pinnacle*—The wing; perhaps that part of the temple which was called the King's Portico, which overhung the precipice at the southeast corner: the depth of the Valley of Jehoshaphat below was prodigious. Josephus, Ant. xv. 11. 5.

6. *It is written*,—Satan imitates Jesus in quoting Scripture: he quotes Ps. xci. 11, *verbatim*, from the LXX.; but of course perverts the Psalmist's meaning, which was to encourage faith, not presumption. *In their hands*—A metaphor taken from the custom of parents and nurses, who carry little children over rough, stony places, lest they should stumble. *Dash thy foot against a stone*.—This is said to be a proverbial expression to denote any misfortune, but it is here used in continuing the metaphor of walking. Matthew and Luke cite differently—verbal precision not being important. The phrase "in all thy ways," omitted by both, may have been quoted by Satan, but it was not necessary to cite the text in full; though Jerome and others think the devil omitted that part of it, as if it referred to a prescribed course of life, whereas it probably means only, "wherever thou goest."

7. *It is written again*,—In another place. Jesus quotes *verbatim* from the LXX., Deut. vi. 16. The reference is to the temptation at Massah, where Israel put the Lord, to the proof of his ability and willingness to supply their wants: "They tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us or not?" Ex. xvii. 1-7. We may test the wisdom, goodness, and power of God, by a submissive faith, (Ps. xxxiv. 8; Isa. vii. 11, 12; xxxviii. 7, 8, 22; Mal. iii. 10,) but not by a querulous distrust. Jesus was so well assured that he was the Son of God, that he would not show distrust by demanding other proof after the voice from heaven, (Matt. iii. 17,) as if he doubted it. To distrust God's faithfulness is to presume on his forbearance.

Ekpeirazein is used here, and in Ps. lxxvii., LXX. (lxxviii., Eng.) 18; Luke x. 25; 1 Cor. x. 9, in a bad sense, and never of God's trial of men. It was not by such thaumaturgical feats as Satan proposed that Jesus was to establish his claims.

8. *Again*,—At another time. *An exceeding high mountain*,—The particular summit regarded as the scene of this temptation is conspicuous to the traveler passing from Jerusalem to Jericho. Dr. Olin conjectures it is 2,000 feet in perpendicular height: "the highest summit of the whole immense pile, and distinguished for its sear and desolate aspect: it is crowned with a chapel, resorted to by the devouter pilgrims." *Sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world*,—Perhaps not merely of Palestine, or of the Roman Empire, but of the habitable earth. If the temptation was wholly spiritual, the terms may be taken in their utmost latitude, as Satan could show, or suggest to the mind, "in a kind of visionary representation," all the kingdoms of the world, "in a moment of time," as is added by Luke. This accords too with the language of the lying usurper (in Luke) "For that is delivered to me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it." There is some show of truth in his possession and disposal of worldly kingdoms. John xii. 31; xiv. 30; xvi. 11; 2 Cor. iv. 4; Ephes. ii. 2. *And the glory of them*,—The grandeur of their extent, resources, etc. The spiritual vision of the New Jerusalem is represented as made to John on "a great and high mountain." Rev. xxi. 10. The prospect might be spread out before the eye of the mind, as from a high mountain, though there might be no actual, bodily elevation.

9. *Worship*—(See on Matt. ii. 2.) As the sovereignty of the world is God's, this act, recognizing the sovereignty of Satan, would be an act of idolatry, and so Christ understood it.

10. *Get thee hence*,—Begone. *Satan*:—(See on v. 1.) *It is written*,—The quotation is *verbatim* from Deut. vi. 13, LXX., (*cf.* x. 20,) with the exception of worship for fear: *serve* is used in a religious sense: our word *latria* comes from the original word. But as Satan did not profess to be the Creator of the world, it is not likely that he arrogated the highest kind of worship: the answer of Jesus shows that no religious worship of any sort can be lawfully paid to a creature. The word *only* is not in the Hebrew of Deuteronomy, though it is implied: it is expressed 1 Sam. vii. 3. All three of Christ's quotations are from Deuteronomy. The Jews were specially versed in that book, as an epitome of the Law. Jesus vanquished Satan with "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Ephes. vi. 17. He thus set an example to his followers, who will need this weapon till the warfare is finished.

11. *Then the devil leaveth him*,—Luke adds, "for a season." He doubtless renewed his attacks frequently during our Lord's ministry, but at its close he came upon him with redoubled violence. In the wilderness he presented objects of desire corresponding with those specified 1 John ii. 16, (*cf.* Gen. iii. 6,) in the

garden of Gethsemane he presented objects of aversion, exciting fear. Matt. xxvi. 38-44; Heb. v. 7. *Ministered unto him.*—Waited on him, perhaps supplying him with food. These heavenly messengers may have appeared in human form, visible either to his bodily eyes or to his inward perception. Jud. xiii.; 1 Kings xix. 5-8; Heb. i. 14. After the assault in the garden, "there appeared an angel from heaven, strengthening him." Luke xxii. 43.

12. *John was cast into prison,*—The occasion of his imprisonment is stated, but not the time, Matt. xiv. 1-13. *He departed into Galilee;*—Withdrew. (See on Matt. ii. 22) He had lived there before his baptism and temptation; (Matt. i. 22, 23;) and he had made a visit thither after those events: (1 John i. 43-ii. 12:) he then returned to Judea, and remained there while John was at liberty: (John ii. 13-iii.:) he then went back to Galilee. John iv. 1-3, 43. The synoptics say nothing about Christ's ministry in Judea till the last week of his life. As Herod Antipas resided at Machaerus, in Perea, near the lower Jordan, where John was imprisoned, and Nazareth was an obscure town in the center of Galilee, the latter would be a comparatively secure retreat. John's reason for Christ's going to Galilee (iv. 1-3) harmonizes with Matthew's. The Pharisees, jealous of Christ's popularity, would seek occasion to deliver him over to Herod, that he might share the fate of John: this Jesus prevented by retiring to Galilee, as his hour was not yet come.

13. *And leaving Nazareth,*—Where he sojourned awhile: his mother (in all likelihood a widow) probably still resided there: she was present at the wedding in Cana, about nine miles north-east of Nazareth. John ii. 1, 2. This sojourn in Nazareth seems to be identical with that in Luke iv. 16-30. *Capernaum,*—On the north-west coast of the Sea of Galilee, within the territory of Zebulun, not far from the line of division between Zebulun and Naphtali: the exact spot cannot be identified. This was afterward called "his own city," (Matt. ix. 1,) where he paid taxes. Matt. xvii. 24. Andrew and Peter resided here, and probably James, and John, and Matthew. It was in a central position, and being on the lake, Jesus could cross over to Perea with facility whenever he wished retirement.

14. *That it might be fulfilled*—That, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, (ix. 1, 2,) Galilee might be the great theater of his ministry.

15. *The land of Zabulon,*—This extended along the west side of the Sea of Galilee. *The land of Nephthalim,*—This extended north of Zebulun to the northern boundary of the Holy Land, east of Asher, and west of the Jordan. *By the way of the sea,*—An ellipsis for the country by the way of the Sea of Galilee, as it extends around the head of that sea. *Beyond Jordan,*—Which it crosses between the Sea of Galilee and the waters of Merom. Isaiah did not use this phrase, as it was used during the captivity, to denote the country west of Jordan, but east. *Galilee of the Gentiles:*—Galilee included all the northern part of Palestine, lying between the Jordan and the Mediterranean, and between Samaria and Phenicia. It was called

Galilee of the Gentiles, because many foreigners from Phenicia, Arabia, and Egypt, settled there, especially in the upper part. 1 Mac. v. 15, 21-23. The Jews call all "Gentiles," or "nations," who are not Israelites.

16. *Which sat*—Who abode. *In darkness*,—Ignorance, sin, and misery. The Galileans, living far from the temple, were considered almost as benighted as heathens. *Great light*;—The gospel, bringing knowledge, righteousness, and joy. *The region and shadow of death*,—The country of death-shade, denoting literally the state of death, as in Job iii. 5; xii. 22; xxxiv. 32; xxxviii. 17; Amos v. 8; (*cf.* Ps. xxiii. 4;) and metaphorically, as here and Luke i. 79, the same as the moral darkness spoken of before. *Light is sprung up*.—The gospel shines forth, like the rising sun. Mal. iv. 2; Luke i. 78.

17. *From that time Jesus began to preach*,—He had taught and baptized before, principally in Judea; (John ii.-iv. ;) but now he began his public course as a herald of the gospel in Galilee: hence his regular ministry dates from the time of his removal to Capernaum. Acts x. 36, 37. Matthew does not notice Christ's preceding ministry in Judea. The substance of our Lord's ministry seems to have been the same as that of John's. (See on Matt. iii. 1, 2.)

18. *Sea of Galilee*,—Chinnereth, Num. xxxiv. 11; Deut. iii. 17; Chinneroth, Josh. xi. 2; Cinneroth, 1 Kings xv. 20; Lake of Gennesaret, Luke v. 1; Sea of Tiberias, John vi. 1; xxi. 1. (See on Matt. xiv. 34.) It is formed by the waters of the Jordan, and is about 12 miles long, and 6 broad. *Simon called Peter*,—(See on Matt. xvi. 18; John i. 42.) *Andrew*—(See on Matt. x. 2.) *A net*—A seine, or large drag-net. Eccles. ix. 12; Hab. i. 15-17, LXX. Lynch says, "The water of the lake is cool and sweet, and the inhabitants say that it possesses medicinal properties. It produces five kinds of fish, all good."

19. *Follow me*,—Accompany me as my disciples. (See on Matt. x. 38.) *I will make you*—I will constitute you ministers of the gospel. Fishing and hunting expressions are used in the classics for gaining disciples, making friends, etc. Jer. xvi. 16. It is probable, as Lightfoot says, the disciples, on their first coming, (John i. 41,) attended Jesus to Cana and Jerusalem, (John ii.,) and were dismissed by him when he retired from Judea. (See on v. 12.) He remained for some time without attendants, and was received in the synagogues, rejected at Nazareth, and removed to Capernaum; (Luke iv. 16-31;) and when the proper time arrived, he began openly to manifest himself, and preach, and call his disciples, as here, and Luke v. 1-11.

20. *Straightway*—Immediately: their previous intercourse with Jesus, and their training by the Baptist, will account for their promptness. (See on v. 19.)

21. *James and John*—(See on Matt. x. 2.) *A ship*—The boat. *Ploion* means a vessel of any size—here it means a fishing-smack. Josephus calls it *skaphe*,

(hence our word skiff,) and says there were 230 vessels of this sort on the Lake of Galilee, each having four or five men.

22. *Immediately*—The same word rendered straightway, v. 20. James and John had probably heard of Jesus from Andrew and Peter, or they may have been previously personally acquainted with him; hence their ready obedience.

23. *Synagogues*—Houses of worship among the Jews. Synagogues date from the time of the Babylonish captivity, though before that there were "meeting-houses" (called synagogues, Ps. lxxiv. 8) in the land of Israel. They were erected by the Jews in towns and country-places, especially by rivers, for the sake of water used in their frequent purifications. Ten men, at least, were to compose the assembly; which was governed by a presbytery, the president of which was called the ruler of the synagogue, though the elders were called rulers in common, Mark v. 22, 35-38; Luke viii. 41; xiii. 14, 15; Acts xiii. 15. A deacon collected the alms; a messenger carried the alms from foreign synagogues to Jerusalem, sometimes read prayers, and performed other duties; a servant took charge of the sacred books, etc. Luke iv. 20. Those who taught in the synagogues were sometimes called pastors. The services, which were held morning, afternoon, and evening, on the Sabbath, consisted of singing, prayer, reading and expounding the Scriptures, and collections of alms; but there were no sacrifices, Disputations on religious subjects, catechising of children, scourging for minor offenses, also took place in the synagogue. Matt. x. 17; Acts xxii. 19; xvii. 1-4. Any competent person was allowed to speak in the synagogue, under the control of the elders. Luke iv. 16-22; Acts xiii. 15. The worship and government of the Church seem to have been modeled after the forms of the synagogue. The Jews say there were 480 synagogues in Jerusalem at the time of Christ. *Preaching the gospel of the kingdom*,—Proclaiming the good news of the approaching reign of the Messiah. (See on v. 17.) *Sickness*,—*disease*—*Nosos* and *malakia* are often used interchangeably in the LXX.: probably the first here means a violent disorder; the second, a chronic debility.

24. *His fame*—The report of his miracles. *Syria*:—Which joined Galilee on the north. Mark i. 28. *They brought unto him*—They carried to him, those who were not able to walk. *Sick people*—Those who were ill. *That were taken with*—Who were confined to the house with. *Divers diseases*—Various disorders: the plural of *nosos*, v. 23. *Torments*,—Severe pains. Luke xvi. 23, 28. *Those which were possessed with devils*,—Demoniacs: those whose diseases were produced by the influence of demons, or wicked spirits, who had taken possession of them. *Those which were lunatic*,—Epileptics, whose disorders were supposed to be affected by the moon. *Those that had the palsy*;—Paralytics: those who had lost the vital power of any organ.

25. *Galilee*,—(See on v. 15.) *Decapolis*,—A canton of ten cities, as the name imports. Pliny says they were Damascus, Philadelphia, Raphana, Scythopolis, Gadara, Hippos, Dion, Pella, Galasa, Canatha. As Pliny has some doubt about Damascus and Raphana, Cellarius substitutes Cesarea Philippi and Gergesa. It is likely that the cities varied at different times. Damascus and Cesarea were north of the sea of Galilee; Scythopolis, the ancient Bethshan, was west of the Jordan; all the rest were south of the sea of Galilee, and east of the Jordan. Decapolis was inhabited, for the most part, by Greeks. *Judea*,—The southern division of Palestine. *Beyond Jordan*.—Perea, the region lying chiefly between the Jabbok and the Arnon. Jewish writers frequently speak of this region as beyond the Jordan, and as being inferior to the land flowing with milk and honey.

CHAPTER V.

1 *Christ beginneth his sermon in the mount: 3 declaring who are blessed, 13 who are the salt of the earth, 14 the light of the world, the city on an hill. 15 The candle: 17 that he came to fulfil the law. 21 What it is to kill, 27 to commit adultery, 33 to swear: 38 exhorteth to suffer wrong, 44 to love even our enemies, 48 and to labour after perfectness.*

V.—1. *And seeing the multitudes*,—(See Matt. iv, 25.) *Into a mountain*:—To the mountain: so distinguished, perhaps, because it is the only hill in the neighborhood, standing separate, except Tabor, which is too far from the lake to be this mountain, while the "Mount of Beatitudes," as it is called, near Saphet, is visible from its shores: it rises 60 feet above the ridge, which is easily accessible from the lake which it borders, and is a suitable place for a general concourse. *When he was set*,—Having sat down; the posture of Jewish teachers; their disciples standing or sitting around at their feet. *Disciples*—Scholars: those who followed Jesus to learn his teachings. Luke vi. 13, 17; John vi. 66, 67.

2. *He opened his mouth*,—Began a formal discourse. Ps. lxxviii. 1, 2. *Them*,—His disciples, who were nearest to him; though he also spoke generally to the multitude. Matt. vii. 28, 29. *Saying*,—The "Sermon on the Mount" comprehends Matt. v., vi., vii., and seems to have been delivered entire, on this occasion, as given by Matthew, who places it long before the call of the apostles, whereas the similar discourse in Luke vi. 20-49, is placed after the call. Luke gives only 30 verses of the 107 in Matthew, and four woes and other matters not contained in Matthew. As Christ was in the habit of repeating many of his weighty sayings, it is likely the discourse in Luke was delivered on a separate occasion; nevertheless, in connection with Luke xii. 22-34, it affords great aid in expounding the sermon in Matthew.

3. *Blessed*—A better word, perhaps, than happy: so the Latin, *beati*; hence these eight benedictions are commonly called beatitudes. They are pronounced in opposition to the vices to which the Jews were chiefly addicted. *The poor in spirit*:—Those whose minds are suited to the lowness of their station. Luke vi. 20 has "ye poor," i.e., the disciples of Christ, who were, for the most part, in humble circumstances: not the poor indiscriminately, but those whom James (ii. 5) styles "the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom." Isa. lxi. 1; lxvi. 2; Matt. xi. 5; xix. 29. (See on Luke iv. 18.) *For theirs is the kingdom*—None but the lowly in mind and heart are qualified or entitled to enjoy the blessings of the gospel—the kingdom of grace here or of glory hereafter. This announcement must have been startling to the Jews, who called the rich and proud happy, (Mal. iii. 15,) and thought that such would be the subjects of the Messiah's kingdom.

4. *They that mourn*:—The afflicted followers of Christ. Luke, "Ye that weep now." *They shall be comforted*.—Those who are in distressed circumstances, if they are patient under them, shall be blessed with spiritual blessings, and so be made to "laugh"—as it is in Luke—i.e., to rejoice. Ps. cxxvi. 2. Christ assured his disciples that the blessings of the new dispensation, into which they were entering, should more than counterbalance all the troubles they might be called to experience. Isa. lxi. 1-3; Matt. xix. 29; Jas. i. 2; iv. 9, 10. This was a startling paradox to the Jews, who placed their happiness so much in temporal prosperity.

5. *The meek*:—The mild and gentle, as opposed to the harsh and implacable. *They shall inherit the earth*.—There seems to be a reference to Ps. xxxvii. 9, 11, 22, 29, where the earth means the land, viz., of Canaan, which was the patrimony of God's ancient people. Though the word rendered inherit may mean to possess in any way, or to enjoy, and though the meek do enjoy the world more than the irascible and haughty, yet the children of God, in a proper sense, inherit the kingdom of grace here and of glory hereafter, of which, to the Jewish mind, the earthly Canaan was an expressive symbol. Isa. lx. 21; Acts xx. 32; 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10; Rom. vi. 17; Ephes. i. 14; v. 5; Heb. iv.; vi. 12; ix. 15; Jas. ii. 5. How strangely this beatitude must have sounded to the Jews who expected to acquire the mastery of the world by the sword, in the days of the Messiah!

6. *They which do hunger and thirst*—They who intensely desire to be conformed to the will of God. *Filled*.—Satisfied. Those who ardently seek after righteousness shall obtain what they seek. Ps. xvii. 15; Isa. lv. 1, 2; Ephes. iii. 19; Phil. i. 11. In Luke, Christ seems to refer to the outward condition of his disciples, which suggested the metaphors in Matthew. The *filling* in Luke, too, doubtless, had reference to spiritual blessings. Such a blending of the temporal with the spiritual is not uncommon in Scripture. (See on v. 3.)

7. *The merciful*:—The compassionate, who feel for the miseries of others, and endeavor to relieve them. *They shall obtain mercy*.—Frequently from their

fellow-men; always from God. Ps. xli. 1; Prov. xi. 25; Matt. vi. 14; Jas. ii. 13; Ecclus. xxviii. 1-5.

8. *The pure in heart*:—Those who are inwardly holy. Acts xv. 9; 1 Thess. v. 23; 1 Tim. i. 5. *They shall see God*.—They shall enjoy intercourse with God. The reference seems to be to the custom of Eastern monarchs, who did not allow themselves to be seen but by a select few. Esth. iv. 11; Matt. xviii. 10; Luke i. 19. Among the Jews, ceremonial cleanness was indispensable to admission to the tabernacle or temple service, where were the symbols of God's presence, and which was a type of heaven, the place of God's residence, into which none can enter without holiness. Ps. xvii. 15; xxiv. 3, 4; John iii. 3; Heb. xii. 14; 1 John iii. 2, 3; Rev. xxii. 4.

9. *The peace-makers*:—Those who try to prevent or terminate contentions. *They shall be called*—They shall be recognized as the sons of God: he is the God of peace, (Rom. xvi. 20,) and they resemble him, as children resemble their father. Ephes. iv. 31-v. 1: they are like his Son, the great Peace-maker. Ephes. ii. 14-17.

10. *They which are persecuted*—Pursued with acts of enmity. Acts xxvi. 11. *For righteousness sake*:—On account of religion. 1 Pet. iii. 14; iv. 14. *For theirs is the kingdom of heaven*.—These words connect the last beatitude with the first, v. 3. The poor and persecuted followers of Him who had not where to lay his head, can claim the kingdom of grace here and of glory hereafter.

11. *Blessed are ye*—This is not a ninth beatitude: it is an appropriation of the eighth by a direct address to the disciples, comprehending all who are prepared to receive it. *Reville*—Rendered reproach, Luke vi. 22: assail with opprobrious words. Matt. xxvii. 44; Rom. xv. 3. *Persecute*—Pursue with acts of enmity, as in v. 10. *Shall say*—Shall speak falsely every evil thing against you: this comprises every kind of calumny uttered against Christians on the score of their religion.

12. *Rejoice, and be exceeding glad*:—The two Greek words are not synonymous—the latter, leap for joy, exult, is stronger than the former, rejoice. 1 Pet. iv. 13; Rev. xix. 7. *Great is your reward in heaven*:—Though a free gift, the crown of glory will be a reward proportioned to our services and sufferings for Christ. Rom. vi. 23; 1 Cor. iii. 8. In the midst of your fiery trials, exult in hope of your final reward.—*For so persecuted*—i.e., thus the prophets were persecuted, and it is an honor to suffer as they suffered. 1 Kings xix. 2, 10; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16; Neh. ix. 26; Matt. xxiii. 34-37; Acts vii. 52; 1 Thess. ii. 15.

13. *Ye*—My disciples; not ministers exclusively: ministers are not specified in this sermon. *Are*—By your vocation and profession. *The salt of the earth*:—What salt is to food, etc., Christians are to the rest of mankind. By its pungent, permeating, hardening properties, salt purifies, seasons, and preserves the substances to which it is applied. Salt was used in the Levitical sacrifices: (Lev.

ii. 13:) so also by the heathen. It was employed by Elisha in purifying the fountain at Jericho. 2 Kings ii. 20. Its use as a condiment is alluded to Job vi. 6; and it is reckoned among the necessities of life, Eccclus. xxxix. 26. Its use in cleansing and hardening the skin of infants is alluded to in Ezek. xvi. 4; which may have given rise to the use of salt in the baptism of infants in the early Church. The minister put it into the mouth of the child, saying, "Take the salt of wisdom to eternal life." (See Col. iv. 6.) Greece is called by Livy, "the salt of the nations," as the world was enlightened by its wisdom. So Christians are to season and save the world by their religion. *But if the salt have lost his savour*,—The neuter pronoun "its" is never used in our version of the Bible, but the old form "his"—If the salt has become insipid. Maundrell says he saw salt, in the Valley of Salt, which by exposure to the rain, sun, and air, had perfectly lost its savor, though it had the sparks and particles of salt. Shaw noticed a similar phenomenon in Barbary. Thomson, a missionary in Palestine, saw vast quantities of salt brought from the marshes of Cyprus, which by contact with the ground lost its savor, and was thrown into the streets to be trodden under foot. Schoettgen says large quantities of bituminous salt, from the Dead Sea, were carried to the temple to be cast on the sacrifices—some of this, by exposure, became insipid, and, being thus unfit for the sacrifices, was scattered over the pavement to be trodden on by those who waited at the altar. *Wherewith shall it be salted?*—Not, wherewith shall the earth be salted? but, how shall the saltness be restored to the insipid salt? *It is thenceforth good for nothing*,—Having lost its peculiar virtue, which cannot be restored, by any known process of nature or art, it has become worthless. If Christians, whose business it is to purify the world, fail to do so, and are corrupted by it, there is nothing in the world which can restore to them their purifying virtue—they become worthless as the world itself. He who first made the mineral can, indeed, impart to it afresh its saline property; so degenerate Christians can be restored by his grace, if they will avail themselves of it.

14. *Ye are the light of the world*.—As the sun enlightens the globe, so Christians enlighten the world of mankind with religious truth: they do so in view of their relation to Christ, the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Ps. lxxvii. 1, 2; John i. 9; v. 35; viii. 12; Ephes. v. 8; Phil. ii. 15. Rabbins and philosophers were called lights of the world. *A city that is set on an hill*—There is no necessity of supposing any reference to Safed, Bethulia, or Jerusalem—the terms are indefinite—any city located on a mountain. Cities in Palestine were frequently built on hills, and the houses being usually constructed of chalky limestone, or whitewashed, they were quite conspicuous. Christians being separated from other people, and raised above them by their religion, cannot but be observed by them.

15. *A candle*,—Or lamp. *A bushel*,—The *modios*—a measure of capacity containing a little more than a peck. *A candlestick*:—The lamp-stand. So

specified, because there was usually one, and but one, *modios* and lamp-stand in a house; though there were more than one lamp. The lamp-stand was fixed in the common room, and the lamp which burned all night was placed upon it: smaller lamps for private apartments were lighted from the common lamp. As men do not deprive things of their utility by putting them to a use the opposite of that for which they were intended, so Christians are not made the depositaries of the truth in order to conceal it.

16. *Let your light so shine*—Thus let your light shine, viz., like the lamp in the house, like the sun in the heavens. *That they may see*—That men seeing your good works may glorify your Heavenly Father—by whose grace they were wrought, not you, the subjects of that grace. Christians are the children of God, and they honor their parentage by their piety. Ps. lxxvii.; Isa. lx. 1-3; John xv. 8; Phil. ii. 15, 16; 1 Pet. ii. 9-12. God is not often called our Father in the Old Testament, but he is so styled 16 times in this sermon!

17. *Think not*—An intimation that they were liable to fall into this error. *That I am come*—Perhaps referring to his designation, as "He that should come." *To destroy*—To cancel. *The law, or the prophets*:—Either the one part or the other of the Old Testament, which is frequently designated as the law and the prophets, as in this sermon. Matt. vii. 12; Luke xvi. 16; John i. 46; Acts xiii. 15; xxviii. 23; Rom. iii. 21. Sometimes the Psalms are specified as a third division. Luke xxiv. 44. Sometimes, when the law is spoken of without any mention of the prophets, it means the entire Old Testament. John x. 34; xii. 34; xv. 25; 1 Cor. xiv. 21. Here it means the Pentateuch, as containing the legal code: so v. 18. *To fulfil*.—To complete. If the Old Testament, as a system of religion, had been of any other than of divine origin, Christ would have destroyed it, and not completed it. If it had been complete in itself, Christ would not have destroyed it, and could not have completed it. But it was divine, and therefore Christ would not repudiate it; yet incomplete, and therefore Christ came to complete it. The New Testament is the complement of the Old. Specific political statutes of the Mosaic code are, indeed, no longer binding, as the theocratic commonwealth to which they were adapted has passed away. But Christ did not cancel even these: he obeyed such of them as were practicable in his time, and left them all on record, to guide Christian legislators by their spirit, if not their letter, to the end of time. The ceremonial code was cancelled by Christ, in no other sense than that of fulfilling it. The outline sketch of the painter may be said to be destroyed when it is filled out in the perfect picture. But though, in the nature of the case, the Levitical rites are no longer binding, yet Christ did not formally annul them: they were, of course, virtually annulled by their fulfillment in him—which is the meaning of such texts as Eph. ii. 14, 15; Col. ii. 14; Heb. vii. 12, 18; ix. 8-11; x. 1-9—nevertheless, the Levitical law is still of use in illustrating the gospel system, which it prefigured. In like manner Christ completed the prophecies, by verifying them in

himself—not by setting them aside, as if they were lying oracles. The moral precepts of the law he illustrated in his life, developed in his teachings, enforced by his authority, and enthroned by his grace in the hearts and lives of his followers. Matt. v.-vii.; xxii. 35-49; Rom. iii. 31; viii. 2-4; xiii. 10. Thus the Old Testament is not superseded, but completed by the New.

18. *For*—A note of explanation. *Verily*—Gr. *Amen*, which Christ alone, in the New Testament, uses at the beginning of a sentence, where it means truly, verily: (Matt. xvi. 28; Mark xii. 43:) in the parallels, Luke (ix. 27; xxi. 3) has *alethos*, truly, which is the word used by the LXX., in translating the Hebrew *Amen*, in Jer. xxviii. 6. The *Amen* of Matthew (xxiii. 36) is in Luke (xi. 51) *nai*, yea. Throughout John's Gospel, and in that alone, *Amen* is doubled by way of emphasis. At the end of a sentence, as of prayers and thanksgivings, it means, So be it, and is thus rendered in the LXX. Ps. lxxi. (Eng. lxxii.) 19. *Cf.* Matt. vi. 13; Rom. xi. 36; 1 Cor. xiv. 16. *I say unto you*,—A formal, emphatic, and authoritative introduction to what follows, indicating its great importance. *Till heaven and earth pass*,—A proverbial phrase, used in Scripture and in the classics to denote that a thing can never happen. Jer. xxxiii. 20, 21; Luke xvi. 17; Dionysius Hal., vi. 95, where it is agreed in a treaty that there shall be no peace as long as the heaven and the earth shall remain. Philo says the law of Moses may be expected to remain until the sun, and moon, and the whole heaven, and also the world, shall pass away. Heaven and earth are put for the universe, which the heathen supposed would never perish; and some of the Jews entertained the same opinion. Baruch i. 11; iii. 32. In Scripture, the perpetuity of the universe means its endurance in its present state until the end of time; and so long shall the law of God remain in force: indeed, as it respects the spirit of its precepts, and the retributions which constitute its sanctions, it shall never pass away. Ps. cii. 25-27; Isa. li. 6; Matt. xxiv. 34, 35; 2 Pet. iii. 10; Rev. xxi. 1. *Jot*.—*Iota*, {[y]} *yod*, the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet. *Tittle*—Horn, the little corner which distinguishes similar Hebrew letters, as {[d]}, *daleth*, from {[r]}, *resh*. This seems to be a proverbial term to express any thing very small. *In no wise*—In Greek, two negatives, which strengthen the negation. *Pass from the law*,—Pass away from the law, by abrogation or otherwise. *Till all be fulfilled*.—Come to pass: a different word from that rendered "fulfil," v. 17. The typical ordinances remained in force till they were consummated in the great Antitype; and the moral precepts remain in force till the end of time, and their sanctions through eternity. Ps. cxix. 96, 160; (see on v. 17.)

19. *Therefore*—Denoting an inference from v. 17, 18. *Shall break*—Shall set aside. *One of these least commandments*,—Those designated by the jot and tittle, v. 18: the minutest precepts. *And shall teach men so*,—Shall inculcate his lax views on others. The Pharisees considered it a venial matter to transgress the lightest injunctions of the law. Maimonides and others taught that the Sanhedrim

or a prophet could release from the obligation of any law except that against idolatry. It may be admitted that some commandments are greater than others; but none are so small that they may be disregarded with impunity. Jas. ii. 10. *He shall be called the least*—He shall be held in contempt by the loyal subjects of my kingdom. The repetition of the word "least" seems to imply that he will be repudiated by true Christians just as "these least commandments" were by him. *Shall do*,—This implies a recognition of their authority, as no one is expected to keep a law which is of no binding force; though a man may acknowledge the obligation of the law, and yet disobey it. Matt. vii. 26; xxiii. 1-4. *The same shall be called great*—He shall be held in high esteem.

20. *For I say unto you*,—A weighty and authoritative preface to what follows, as well as a confirmation of what precedes. *Except your righteousness*—Unless your obedience to the law. *Shall exceed*—Shall excel in extent and spirituality. *Scribes*—Teachers of the law, who were in great repute for their wisdom. (See on Matt. ii. 4.) *Pharisees*,—Who were in great repute for their sanctity. (See on Matt. iii. 7.) *In no case*—By no means, as in v. 18. *The kingdom of heaven*.—The kingdom of grace, which is to be developed into the kingdom of glory.

21. *Ye have heard*—Alluding to the teaching of the scribes, in which they recited passages of the law, and put corrupt glosses on them—hence he does not say read. *By them of old time*,—By the ancients, i.e., the traditional doctors—those who preceded the times of Christ, and whom the rabbins frequently call "our ancients." *Thou shalt not kill*;—Quoted *verbatim* from the LXX. of Ex. xx. 15, meaning, Thou shalt not commit murder—which was commonly interpreted of the overt act. *Shall be in danger of*—Shall deserve to be brought to. *The judgment*:—An inferior court of justice among the Jews, before the Roman Government was established in Judea, consisting, say the rabbins, of twenty-three, or, according to Josephus, (Ant. iv. 8,) of seven judges, who had the power of punishing capital offenders by strangling or beheading.

22. *But I say unto you*,—The language of legislative authority—contrasted with "the ancients said." (See on v. 21.) *Brother*—Any one of the same stock: the Jews considered every Hebrew a brother. *Without a cause*,—This is omitted in some MSS. and versions, but is probably genuine. Its insertion does not bring Christ's teachings down to a level with those of the Pharisees, who condemned causeless anger, as they also condemned impure thoughts and looks, but they did not rank anger—even when rash, intemperate, and malignant—and lust with murder and adultery, as did Christ. *Shall be in danger of the judgment*:—Shall be considered a murderer, deserving of strangling or beheading, the punishment inflicted by the court of 23. (See on v. 21.) *Raca*,—Derived, perhaps, from the Hebrew *rak*, to be empty or vain, as in 2 Chron. xiii. 7: *cf.* Jas. ii. 20, where the Greek word, *kenos*, is not used causelessly or immoderately. It seems to be an Aramaean term of

contempt or reproach, and is so used in the Talmud. *Shall be in danger of the council*:—Shall be considered a murderer, deserving to be brought to the council—worthy of stoning, the punishment inflicted on capital offenders by the Sanhedrim. This was the famous Jewish court of judicature, composed of 72 elders, having appellate jurisdiction over the inferior courts, and the sole power of taking cognizance, in the first instance, of the highest crimes, and inflicting the punishment of stoning to death. *Thou fool*,—Impious wretch, as *nabal* is frequently used in the Old Testament, especially in Proverbs: cf. Ps. xiv. 1. Christ spoke in his official character when he called the scribes and Pharisees fools, (Matt. xxiii. 17, 19,) and was therefore guilty of no violation of this precept, which was leveled against causeless anger in our common conversation. This may apply to Luke xxiv. 25; 1 Cor. xv. 36; Gal. iii. 1, 3—where, however, other Greek words are used. *Shall be in danger of hell-fire*.—Shall be considered a murderer, deserving to be cast into the fiery Gehenna—because the hatred which he cherishes, if developed into overt action, would superinduce the most capital offense of which execution and burning in Gehenna was the penalty. The phrase "hell-fire," the Gehenna of fire, or the fiery Gehenna, alludes to the Valley of Hinnom, in Hebrew *Gehinnom*. Josh. xviii. 16. This valley lies at the foot of Mt. Zion. It became infamous as the place where children were burnt to death to Molech, (2 Chron. xxxiii. 6,) and was called Tophet, probably from *toph*, a drum, because drums were beaten there to drown the cries of the tortured victims. 2 Kings xxiii. 10; Isa. xxx. 33; Jer. vii. 31; xix. 5, 6, 12, 13. Gehenna was held in such abomination that the carcasses of animals, corpses of malefactors, and the like were cast into it, and fires were kept burning to consume them. Thus it may well be called the fiery Gehenna. As the power of inflicting capital punishment was no longer invested in the Jewish courts, it can hardly be said that the murderer was "in danger" of being put to death in any mode by them; but as they formerly punished criminals according to the turpitude of their offenses, and as there are three degrees of virtual murder, viz., unjustifiable anger, contempt, and hatred, which, if developed would lead to actual murder, in corresponding degrees of criminality, therefore Christ pronounces all offenders of this sort deserving to be classed with murderers, though no earthly courts ever punished them as such.

23. *Therefore*,—A practical inference from the foregoing interpretation of the laws concerning murder. *Gifts*—Any offering at the altar. Gen. iv. 4; Lev. i. 2, 3, LXX. *And there rememberest*—Callest to mind when examining thyself—the performance of this necessary duty being assumed. *Thy brother*—(See on v. 22.) *Hath aught against thee*,—Any cause of complaint: cf. Mark xi. 25, where the other party is the offender.

24. *Before the altar*,—Not on it. *Go thy way*;—Go first and seek to be reconciled—by asking or granting forgiveness. Ps. xxvi. 6; Prov. xv. 8; xxviii. 9; 1 Tim. ii. 8. The language of Christ is Jewish though the principle is applicable

to Christians. The altar, of course, has no reference the Lord's table: no sacrifice is offered on the latter. It does not follow that charity is superior to piety, or that it may be its substitute, as the gift has to be offered after the reconciliation is made or attempted—it cannot be truly and acceptably made before. The scribes required restitution in money matters, but held that gifts and sacrifices would expiate all offenses not amenable to the judge—Christ opposes this casuistry.

25. *Agree with*—This is a still farther development of the subject; literally, Be well-minded toward.—*Thine adversary*—Probably a creditor, who has commenced a lawsuit—v. 26. *Quickly*,—Without a moment's delay, before reaching the court, as the plaintiff and defendant sometimes settled in this way, and then the latter was dismissed. Luke. xii. 58. *Lest at any time*—Lest. *Officer*,—The bailiff, who carries into effect the sentence of the judge. *Cast into prison*.—Imprisonment for debt was common among the ancients. Matt. xviii. 30.

26. *The uttermost farthing*.—The whole of the debt, or of the fine, if the imprisonment was not for debt. *Kodrantes* is the Latin *quadrans*, the fourth part of an *assarium*, which was the tenth of a *denarius*, which was equal to 7½d. This makes the *quadrans* worth three-quarters of an English farthing, two-fifths of a cent. The *assarium*, rendered farthing, Matt. x. 29; Luke xii. 6, was worth four times as much as the *quadrans*, or three farthings. The word farthing means a fourth part—a *fourthing*. The *quadrans* was the smallest coin among the Romans, as the *lepton*; or mite, (Luke xii. 59,) was the smallest among the Jews. Mark xii. 42. The language is proverbial. A litigious spirit is not only contrary to the genius of Christianity, but it involves its possessor in many evils which may be averted by the exercise of a pacific, yielding temper. Better sacrifice some of our rights than by an over stiffness exasperate the feelings of an adversary. This counsel is more explicitly given in v. 38-41, and was peculiarly adapted to the then existing state of society, when law was administered by heathen judges, when its awards were frequently given with caprice and oppression, and its penalties were unjust and severe. 1 Cor. vi. 1-7. Not only the uttermost farthing of the debt, or of the fine, but sometimes of a man's property, was expended in revengeful and vexatious lawsuits. All this is antagonistic to the spirit of the sixth commandment. "When the parallel in Luke is compared," says Davidson, "we see that it has no reference to the future state, but to a suit in a court of justice."

27. *By them of old time*,—Is omitted in many MSS. versions and editions—not because the reference is to the permissive laws of Moses, as Whitby suggests in regard to v. 31, 38, 43; for the reference is to a precept of the Decalogue.

28. *Whosoever looketh*—Gazeth on a woman, whether married or single, with impure desires. *Adultery*—Including all uncleanness. (See v. 32.) *Already*—Implying that as soon as circumstances will admit, the desire will be developed into overt action. Some of the heathen philosophers and Jewish rabbis

maintained that a moral defilement attaches to lascivious desire or intention; but very few, if any, denounced it as virtual adultery, and human laws never punished it as such, yet the precept is directed against the desire as well as the act. Ex. xx. 14; Prov. vi. 25; 2 Pet. ii. 14. The rabbins interpreted the seventh commandment strictly, calling it the 35th precept, forbidding to lie with another man's wife, on which account, probably, Christ said it is also a prohibition of all incitements to adultery.

29. *And if*—If therefore: this v. and v. 30 refer to what precedes. *Thy right eye*—Which is more serviceable than the left, particularly in battle. *Offend thee*,—Cause thee to stumble, or ensnare thee. (See on Matt. xvi. 23.) *It is profitable*—Expedient: a proverbial form of expression—it is better to lose one member, however valuable, than to lose the whole body. *Cast into hell*.—Into Gehenna, where the whole body was consumed. Under the theocracy, adultery and some other sins of the flesh were punished with death. Lev. xx. 10-16. At Jerusalem, the guilty party was taken by the chief witness to a spot overhanging Gehenna, and cast down on a rock in the valley: the second witness hurled a great stone on his breast: if he survived this, the spectators stoned him till he died. The Jews say he was sometimes burnt to death in Gehenna. (See on v. 22.) The indulgence of a sinful passion may afford temporary gratification, but as it entails the loss of the soul, it is emphatically expedient to forego such indulgence. Rom. viii. 13; Gal. v. 24; Col. iii. 5-8.

30. *Thy right hand*—(See on v. 29.) As the eye is the inlet of impure desire, (Job xxxi. 1,) some think the hand is specified as the instrument of anger, but the reference is probably to the same sin—as Bengel says, "from seeing we pass on to doing."

31. *It hath been said*,—In Deut. xxiv. 1-4, which was designed by God to protect the woman. Such was the brutality of the Hebrews at that time, that they would abuse, if not kill, a hated wife, or put her away without ceremony, in a moment of passion, but for the permission and injunction in question. The Pharisees, who were generally of the school of Hillel, held that the Mosaic permission allowed divorce for any cause; (Matt. xix. 3;) for so they interpreted the phrase which we render, "some uncleanness," (Deut. xxiv. 1,) which, says Parkhurst, "seems to denote, or at least include, some personal infirmity, which was not discovered till after marriage, but such as a truly good man might bear with." Rabbi Akiba said, "If a man saw a woman handsomer than his own wife, he might put his wife away, because it is said in the law, 'If she find not favor in his eyes.'" Josephus says, "I put away my wife, who had borne me three children, not being pleased, with her manners." They held that divorce was lawful if a wife did not dress a man's victuals to his liking. Cf. Eccclus. xxv. 26. The school of Schammai opposed these lax principles, and held that adultery alone would justify

divorce. In this Schammai was right; but Hillel does not appear to have been wrong in not so limiting Deut. xxiv. Moses does not here treat of the causes of divorce, but only the form and consequence thereof. If it was wanton or cruel, it was not held guiltless under the Mosaic dispensation. Mal. ii. 14-16.

32. *But I say unto you*,—The law of Moses left the party at liberty to determine for himself what was a proper cause of divorce; Christ does not repeal the law, but he authoritatively restricts its application. *Fornication*,—*Porneia* seems properly defined, "any commerce of the sexes out of lawful marriage." *Caused her to commit adultery*:—A wife dismissed by her husband for a trifling cause, would be likely to marry again, the divorce granting her that liberty; but as Christ decreed divorces of this sort unlawful, of course, the marriage of a person so divorced would be unlawful, as she was really the wife of him by whom she was repudiated. If a man put away his wife for an insufficient cause, and marry another woman, he commits adultery, and may be lawfully repudiated by his former wife, who is then at liberty to marry again.

33. *Forswear thyself*,—Swear falsely, or violate an oath. Ex. xx. 7; Lev. xix. 12; Num. xxx. 2; 1 Esd. i. 48; Wis. xiv. 28-31. *But shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths*:—Which is substantially found in Num. xxx.; Deut. xxiii. 23. The Pharisees so interpreted this, as if only those oaths which were sworn by God were binding.

34. *Swear not at all*:—This prohibition has no reference to solemn or judicial swearing, which was only by the name of God. Deut. x. 20; Isa. xlv. 23; Jer. iv. 2; Matt. xxvi. 63, 64; 2 Cor. i. 18; Heb. vi. 13-18. As the letter of the law only forbade perjury, the violation of solemn oaths, profaning the name of God, the Jews held that a man may swear by any creature, and in common conversation, and annul in his heart the oath of his lips. They were well acquainted with the Jesuitical doctrine of mental reservation: thus Akiba, in the Talmud, "swore with his lips, yet, at the same time, absolved himself in his mind." All such swearing Christ forbids. *Neither by heaven*:—As we may not swear lightly or profanely by God, so we may not swear at all by any of his creatures—partly, because they are creatures, and therefore such oaths involve idolatry; and partly because they are his creatures, and therefore such oaths involve profanity. Isa. lxvi. 1; Matt. xxiii. 16-22. A common oath among the Jews was, "By heaven, so it is!" But they did not attach any importance to this. Maimonides says, "If any swear by heaven, by earth, by the sun, etc., although the mind of the swearer be under these words, to swear by Him who created them, yet this is not an oath. Or, if any man swear by some of the prophets, or by some of the books of Scripture, although the sense of the swearer be to swear by Him who sent that prophet, or who gave that book, yet this is not an oath." The Talmud says, "If any adjure another By heaven or earth, he is not guilty." The heathen were aware of this Jewish casuistry; hence Martial,

in one of his epigrams, says, "Behold, thou deniest, and swearest by the temples of Jupiter; but I do not believe thee: swear, Jew, by Anchialus"—i.e., *am chi aleh*, as God liveth, which the Jew considered a binding oath.

35. *Neither by Jerusalem;*—The temple, as the palace of God, the King of Israel, being in Jerusalem, therefore it was called *the city of the great King*. Ps. xlvii. 2; lxxxvii. 3. Rab. Judah said, "He that saith, 'By Jerusalem,' saith nothing, unless with an intent purpose, he shall vow toward Jerusalem." "By the temple," was a common oath among the Jews.

36. *By thy head,*—Thus the Jews swore: "One is bound to swear to his neighbor, and he saith, 'Swear to me by the life of thy head.'" The heathen also used this oath. Ody. xv. 261; AEn. ix. 300. *Because thou canst not make one hair white or black.*—I.e., to become white or black. God alone can do that. As he has the absolute proprietorship of us, we have no right to swear by ourselves, or by any of our members. Christ's prohibition includes all Jew-like swearing by God, substituting for his name something that resembles it, as "By gosh," or "golly!" or, "By gog's wounds," as in Shakspeare, or the name of some man, as, "By George!" or some heathen deity, as, "By Jove!" Socrates said it was wrong to swear by a deity, though he swore by the dog, the goose, the plane-tree. Zeno swore by the caper—others by the cabbage. Becker suggests that *chen* (goose) was a trick of the tongue for *Zen* (Jupiter)—as *gosh* for *God*. Plato and other philosophers recommend abstinence from swearing. Ecclus. xxiii. 9-11.

37. *Communication*—Speech. *Yea, yea; Nay, nay:*—Be content with a serious affirmation or denial: so Jas. v. 12. *Cometh of evil.*—Springs from the deceitfulness and incredulity which abound in the world.

38. *An eye for an eye,*—That is, thou shalt give an eye, etc. Ex. xxi. 23, 24, LXX. The *lex talionis*, or law of retaliation, was not only incorporated into the Jewish code, but also into the Greek and Roman codes, which provided that if a man willfully put out the eye of a person who had but one eye, thus making him wholly blind, he forfeited both of his own eyes. Among barbarians and semi-civilized nations, the right of private retribution is recognized, and the Jews of our Lord's time exercised it, thus taking the law from the magistrate into their own hands, being less regardful of public order than of personal resentment. They practiced it under their construction of this law; hence our Lord seems to oppose this, as well as revengeful legal prosecutions, in the following verses. The Jewish law of retaliation was not designed, as Augustin observes, to excite revenge, but rather to repress it—not to show how far retribution must be exacted, but beyond what point it must not extend. Whitby argues from Num. xxxv. 31, and from the Hebrew doctors, that the punishment might be commuted at the instance of the plaintiff; and Josephus says (Ant. iv. 8) that the law allowed him to estimate his own damage, and that if he did not take pecuniary satisfaction, he was deemed

cruel. It was a palpable perversion of the law to make it patronize private revenge, which is positively forbidden, Prov. xx. 22; xxiv. 29; Eccclus. xxviii. 1-4.

39. *Resist not evil*.—Oppose not violence to violence. Rom. xii. 17, 21. *Smite*—To slap a man in the face was a common mode of insult. 1 Kings xxii. 24; Lam. iii. 30; Matt. xxvi. 67; John xviii. 22; xix. 3; and it was severely punished by the Jewish and Roman laws. *Turn to him*—Rather than resent the first affront, submit to a second. That Christ did not mean that we should invite the repetition, is evident from his own example. John xviii. 22, 23; cf. Acts xxiii. 2, 3. The language is obviously proverbial. Livy iv. 35; Tacit. His. iii. 31.

40. *If any man will sue thee at the law*,—If any one should be disposed to contend with thee for thy *chiton*, rather than contend with him, let him have also thy *himation*. The *chiton* was a tunic, or under-garment: the *himation* was a cloak, or mantle, which was more valuable than the former, and was not used by a man when he was at work, (Mark xiii. 16,) and not at all by many of the common people; hence Horace calls them "the tunicked rabble." If, as is generally thought, the contention refers to a suit at law, then the precept is directed against the indulgence of a litigious spirit; but from Luke vi. 29, it seems to refer to a personal encounter, as in 2 Sam. xix. 9; Eccl. vi. 10, LXX. 2 Mac. xv. 17. It is not uncommon in the East to strip a man of his tunic in which he is at work: when such a case happens, rather than seek revenge on the villain, leave to him also the cloak, which was stripped off on entering on the labors of the day. Luke reverses the order, giving that in which the two garments would be taken from the body.

41. *Shall compel thee*—The Greek word is derived from *hangaros*, the Persian courier, who, in forwarding dispatches, had the power to force the owners of horses to supply them, and to accompany them if needed. The Romans adopted this custom, and the Turks still retain it. The rabbins use the word in this sense. It is also used in Matt. xxvii. 32. *To go a mile*,—*Milion*, from the Latin *mille*, a thousand, as the Roman mile consisted of 1,000 paces. *Go with him twain*.—Go two miles rather than quarrel about being compelled to go one. Christ requires his disciples to bear those injuries to their reputation, v. 39; possessions, v. 40; and liberty, v. 41, rather than strive with those who perpetrate them. In times of persecution for conscience' sake, a Christian must submit to the loss of all things; and at all times he had better forego some of his rights than fight or litigate for them. This, however, is not to be pushed to such an extent that legal protection should be repudiated, and villains be allowed to go unwhipped of justice. But nothing must be done to gratify personal revenge.

42. *Give to him that asketh thee*,—Our beneficence must, of course, be regulated by a due regard to the beggar's wants and our own means: we are not to give to a known impostor. *Would borrow*—Without usury, or interest, seems to be implied; but not, as some say, because usury was forbidden by the Jewish law,

for that law was not intended to survive the theocracy. The Jews were always allowed to take usury of a Gentile, though not of an Israelite. Deut. xxiii. 19, 20. Usury, i.e., interest for the use of money, was common in the time of Christ, and was not condemned by him. Matt. xxv. 27; Luke xix. 23. In this place, he inculcates a spirit of beneficence and liberality, in opposition to the covetousness and avarice, for which the Jews were notorious. Neh. v.; Matt. xxiii. 14; cf. Ps. cxii. 5.

43. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour,—*Lev. xix. 18—*and hate thine enemy.*—This is found nowhere in the Bible; but, as under the theocracy, various idolatrous nations were sentenced to extermination, and the Israelites were not allowed to "seek their peace," (Deut. xxiii. 3-6,) therefore they concluded that they were commanded to hate them; and as they considered none but an Israelite their neighbor, i.e., as they understood it, their friend, Luke x. 29-37, (the Hebrew *rea*, friend, being rendered in the LXX., neighbor,) therefore they hated every Gentile as an enemy, notwithstanding they had specific instructions to the contrary. Deut. xxiii. 7, 8; Jonah iv. 11. They thought themselves authorized to kill a Jew who apostatized; and to this day they hate such with a most intense hatred. If they see a Gentile in peril of his life, they must do nothing to save him. Maimonides says, "If a Jew see a Gentile fall into the sea, let him by no means lift him out, for it is written, Thou shalt not rise up against the blood of thy neighbor; but he is not thy neighbor." Who but a Jew could press such a text into the cause of inhumanity? Eccus. xii. 4-7. Well may the Gentiles charge the Jews with being enemies of the human race.

44. *Love your enemies,*—With a love of benevolence: we may thus love our most deadly foes, those whom we cannot love with any affection of gratitude or esteem. *Bless them that curse you,*—Give them good words for bad ones. Rom. xii. 14; 1 Cor. iv. 12, 13. *Do good to them that hate you,*—Though they would do you evil. Prov. xxv. 21, 22; Rom. xii. 19-21. *Pray for them which despitefully use you,*—Harass for the pleasure of giving annoyance. *And persecute you;*—Press upon you by more direct injurious action: (see on v. 11, 12:) those whom you can only benefit by your patience and prayers. Luke xxiii. 34; Acts vii. 60. "By this," says South, "a man, as it were, acknowledges himself unable to do enough for his enemy, and therefore he calls in the assistance of Heaven, and engages Omnipotence to complete the kindness." It caps this beautiful climax.

45. *That ye may be the children*—Such as are sons of God—made like him, viz., in benevolence, as children usually resemble their father. Eph. v. 1. *For he maketh his sun to rise*—As he first created it, so he still controls it. *On the evil and on the good,*—On bad and good. *And sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*—On just and unjust—i.e., on their fields. The later Jews used similar language: (borrowing perhaps from the New Testament, though they did not make

practical use of our Lord's teaching:)"Greater is the day of rain than the day of the resurrection of the dead; for the resurrection of the dead is for the just; but rain is both for the just and the wicked." Seneca says, "If we would imitate God, we must give benefits to the ungrateful, for the sun rises to the wicked, and the seas are open to the pirates."

46. *For if ye love them*—Supply "only." *What reward have ye?*—Laid up in heaven: v. 12; Matt. vi. 1. *The publicans*—Those who farmed or collected taxes, or public revenues. They were of two classes among the Romans: *mancipes*, who, being of the equestrian order, were held in repute, and *socii*, the common collectors, who were much despised by both heathens and Jews. Theocritus says, "Among the beasts of the mountains, bears and lions were the most cruel: in the cities, tax-gatherers and sycophants." They were charged with making illegal exactions, and as they were agents of the Roman Government, they were specially odious to the Jews, who ranked them, though of their own nation, with the vilest reprobates. Matt. xxi. 31; Luke vii. 34; xv. 1, 2; xviii. 10-13; xix. 1-10.

47. *Salute*—The Greek word sometimes means "embrace;" but here it seems to refer to the *salaam*—"Peace be with you!"—which the Orientals pronounce to one another when they meet or part. They accompany it with laying the right hand on the breast, and inclining the body: to persons of great rank they bow nearly to the ground, and kiss the hem of their garments, and sometimes the feet and knees. The manner of salutation among the wise men was thus: He that salutes says, "A good day to my lord!"—the other replies, "A good and long day to my lord!" He who replies doubles the salutation. Sometimes from policy they saluted Gentiles; but generally they would not give the *salaam* to a heathen, and some of them would not to a Jewish publican. *Your brethren*—Men of the same stock. *What do ye more than others?*—Ye do not excel the scribes and Pharisees; (see on v. 20;) or even the despised publicans. The thought is expanded, Luke vi. 32-35.

48. *Be ye*—Ye shall be: a delicate way of suggesting a duty—softer, says Winer, than the imperative. It means, Ye are required to be. *Therefore*—In view of what precedes: (see especially v. 45.) *Perfect, even as your Father*—Like God in the exercise of benevolence. Luke vi. 36; Eph. iv. 32; v. 1, 2. The conjunction sometimes denotes similarity, referring to the quality, not the equality, of character or conduct. (Matt. xix. 19:) the same kind and manner, though not of equal degree. "The precise meaning is," says Bishop Sherlock, "Let your love be universal, unconfined by partialities, and with respect to its objects as large as God's; not that our love, either to enemies or friends, can be supposed in other respects, and as to the effects of it, to bear any proportion to the divine love." Lev. xi. 44; 1 Pet. i. 16.

CHAPTER VI.

1 *Christ continueth his sermon in the mount, speaking of alms, 5 prayer, 14 forgiving our brethren, 16 fasting, 19 where our treasure is to be laid up, 24 of serving God and mammon: 25 exhorteth not to be careful for worldly things; 33 but to seek God's kingdom.*

VI.—1. *Take heed*—Beware, mind. *That ye do not your alms*—The beneficence alluded to Matt, v. 42. The phrase "to do alms" occurs in Tobit xii. 8, 9; Eccclus. vii. 10; xxxv. 2. Our word alms is an abridgment of the original *eleemosune*. *Before men, to be seen of them*:—Ostentatiously, to be applauded. Matt. xxiii. 5. *Otherwise*—If ye do. *Ye have no reward*—Laid up for you by God in heaven. Matt. v. 46.

2. *Do not sound a trumpet before thee*,—A proverbial expression for making a thing public, as both Jews and heathens used to do by the sound of a trumpet, calling the multitude together by it, using it in their triumphs, and before they began to act their plays. A trumpet belonged to every synagogue. There is no proof that the Pharisees literally sounded a trumpet to call attention to their alms-giving. *The hypocrites*—The Pharisees: the word hypocrites means actors, who wore masks, hence dissemblers, as were the Pharisees in question. *Synagogues*,—At which alms were frequently dispensed. *They have their reward*.—All they sought, and all they will get.

3. *Let not*—The right hand is designated as the instrument, because it is most usually employed, without any reference to the superstition which made the right lucky, and the left unlucky. The proverb imparts secrecy—the hiding of our alms-giving, if possible, from ourselves: it is opposed to ostentation, not to discretion or to a due regard to exemplary influence. Ps. cxii. 5; Matt. v. 13-16.

4. *In secret*:—In the secret place; in private. *Openly*.—In the public place; in public: in sight of the universe, at the resurrection of the just. Luke xiv. 14. Some MSS and versions reject the clause rendered "openly," here and in v. 6, 18, and some critics countenance the omission, and the rather as they think the motive it suggests is inconsistent with the scope of the passage. But such a regard to the esteem of men is by no means inconsistent with a disregard to such human applause as that which the Pharisees courted and Christ denounced. Matt. x. 32, 33; Rev. iii. 5.

5. *Thou shalt not be as*—Thou shalt not behave thyself like the Pharisees. (See on v. 2.) This is a stronger form of expression than "Do not," etc. *They love to pray standing*—The Jews frequently stood in prayer, (Mark xi. 25,) especially in the synagogues and at the crossings of the streets, where there was a great concourse. The Pharisees probably contrived to be at such places at the canonical hours of prayer. The Talmud says, "I saw Rabbi Jannai standing and praying in the

streets of Tripkor, and repeating an additional prayer at each of the four corners." Such ostentatious devotion is common among the Mohammedans and Hindoos.

6. *Closet*.—In Luke xii. 24, the word means a store-room: here it means any private place. Some identify it with the "upper chamber," (Acts i. 13,) but it seems to be a place more retired. In Isa. xxvi. 20, LXX.; the language occurs nearly *verbatim*. The Hebrew *chaidar* is usually rendered chamber. In Kings xx. 30, we read of an inner chamber—a chamber in a chamber. (See 1 Kings xxi. 30, LXX.) Christ's precept is not of course to be construed as interdicting social and public prayer, which, when conducted at proper times and in a proper spirit, is a most acceptable duty. Ps. c. 4; Matt. xviii. 19, 20; xxi. 13; Acts iii. 1; xii. 12; 1 Tim. ii. 8. *Thy Father which is in secret*;—Invisible, but spiritually seen and felt in sacred retirement. *Which seeth in secret*,—Who sees in the dark, as well as in the light. (See on v. 4.)

7. *Use not vain repetitions*,—Literally, do not battologize, which seems to be an onomatopoeic term, and may have given name to Battus, the Cyrenian prince, who stammered; to Battus, the silly poet who made prolix hymns full of tautologies; and the babbling Battus in Ovid, Met. ii. The heathen were famous for battology in their devotions. See the Hymns of Homer, Orpheus, and Callimachus—also Terence: "Pray thee, wife, cease from stunning the gods with thanksgivings, because thy child is in safety, unless thou judgest of them from thyself, that they cannot understand a thing, if they are not told of it a hundred times." AEschylus has nearly 100 verses at a time made up of tautologies. Cf. 1 Kings xviii. 26; Acts xix. 34. The Chinese attach great merit to the oft-repeated vociferations of the name of Buddha; and the Latin and Greek Churches are not far behind them in this kind of superstition. The rabbins say, "Every one that multiplies prayer shall be heard. The prayer which is long shall not return empty." (See on Matt. xxiii. 14.) These vain repetitions, and *much speaking*—as the Vulgate and Suidas render battologize—impeach the wisdom and goodness of God, and are therefore forbidden. Eccles. v. 2; Eccles. vii. 14. But when our petitions are repeated, and our devotions prolonged, as the fruit of our faith and fervor of spirit, they are not only allowed, but highly commendable. Dan. ix. 16-23; Matt. xxvi. 44; Luke xviii. 1-7; 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9. *They shall be heard*—Heard favorably, answered: so Luke i. 13.

8. *Your Father knoweth*—As he is your Father, he is willing to supply your wants: as he knows what they are, he does not want you to inform him, only as thereby you will be more fully impressed with a sense of your necessities, and will more fully feel your indebtedness to him, when, in answer to prayer, he will supply them. (See on Matt. vii. 11.)

9. *After this manner therefore*—Thus therefore—in contrast with the vain repetitions, v. 7. The adverb rendered "after this manner" frequently means "thus"

in the LXX., referring to the precise language, e.g., Num. vi. 23; xxiii. 5, 16. Isa. viii. 11. Christ may have given this prayer in the Sermon on the Mount to be used both as a model and a form, and yet the disciples may not have committed it to memory to use it as a form; hence their application to him afterward for a form, as stated by Luke xi. 1, 2; besides, many of the disciples who made this application were not present at the delivery of the sermon. It is absurd to ask why both evangelists did not record the prayer as given on the Mount, and also as repeated with variations on a subsequent occasion: we may as well ask why the four evangelists did not write one identical Gospel, or rather, why more than one of them wrote at all. Some suppose that Christ intended this prayer to be used till the day of Pentecost, (Acts ii.,) there being in it no mention of the name of Christ, in which Christians are to pray, and there being no example of the use of it in the Acts and Epistles. But what hint have we of such a temporary purpose in our Lord's instructions? And we have no formal account of the worship of the first Christians, either private or social; and the Lord's Prayer may be offered in the name of Christ, i.e., through his mediation, without any express mention of it. Acts i. 24, 25; iv. 24-30. It does not follow that the Lord's Prayer was not used as a form in public, as well as in private worship, before the third century, because Tertullian and Cyprian are the first who speak of it as a "lawful and ordinary" prayer. It seems always to have been used as a form in public as well as private worship and also as a model, and, from its comprehensive fullness, it is entitled to this distinction. The Jewish teachers gave their disciples summaries of this sort, to be used both as forms and models. The Lord's Prayer consists of a preface, six petitions, and a doxology. It does not appear that Jesus took any part of it, as many think, from the existing Jewish forms; though all of it, except the clause "as we forgive our debtors," is found in substance in the Jewish liturgy. *Our Father*—This preface is an invocation adorably adapted to inspire reverence and confidence, which are eminently filial sentiments. God is our Father, by creation, providence, and grace. The Jews used to pray in the plural, even in their closets: by doing this, we recognize the brotherhood of all believers, and, indeed, of all men, for God, as even the heathen say, is the common Father of mankind. Mal. ii. 10; Acts xvii. 28; Gal. iv. 6. *Which art in heaven*,—Literally, "in the heavens;" not singular, as in the third petition: the plural, as a Hebraism, is better adapted to the divine dignity. It expresses God's immensity, 1 Kings viii. 27; omniscience, Ps. xi. 4; omnipotence, Ps. cxv. 3; sovereignty, 2 Chron. xx. 6; and holiness, Isa. lvii. 15—rather than any local habitation. The mention of heaven assists us in the elevation of our thoughts to him, as an infinitely exalted, spiritual, and objective Being. *Hallowed be thy name*.—We hallow—i.e., sanctify—God when we set him apart from all his creatures, in all our thoughts and feelings, and exalt him in all our words and actions, above all his creatures. Neh. ix. 15; Isa. viii. 13; 1 Pet. iii. 15. The verb is imperative (a stronger form than the optative): applied to man, it expresses a strong desire that he should be made holy—applied to God, it

expresses a strong desire that he should be recognized as holy—viewed in his true character, as glorious in holiness. God's name is his revealed being—himself, as far as he can be known. Ex. xxxiii. 21; 1 Chron. xxix. 10-13. God seeks to be glorified by us, the more effectually to secure our happiness.

10. *Thy kingdom come.*—This petition, as offered by the disciples, comprehended the ushering in of the gospel dispensation, as well as its universal triumph. As offered by us, it means, Let thy reign become universal by the conversion of the world to Christ. (See on Matt. iii. 2.) *Thy will*—Literally, Let thy will be done, as in heaven, (so) also on the earth. Let there be such an acquiescence in thy good pleasure by men on the earth, as there is by angels in heaven! There is nothing to oppose it in heaven—let there be nothing on the earth. Of course, this embraces obedience to God's law, which is his revealed will. Matt. vii. 21, where the word for "doeth" is different from this here, as is that in Ps. ciii. 20, 21, LXX., cf. Matt. xxvi. 42; Acts xxi. 14, where it is the same as here. The foregoing three petitions refer to God, and partake of the nature of adoration: the succeeding three refer to ourselves, and partake of the nature of supplication. We are thus taught, says Chrysostom, not to seek any thing concerning our own good before God's praise.

11. *Give us this day our daily bread.*—The word rendered "daily" is found nowhere but here and in Luke xi. 3: it probably means sufficient for our subsistence: "bread" means the necessaries of life. Give us daily what is necessary for our subsistence. Prov. xxx. 8; Jas. ii. 16.

12. *And forgive us our debts,*—In Luke xi. 4, it is "sins," which is the same. As obedience is due to God, by failing in our duty we become indebted to his justice, which demands the execution of the penalty of the law: by forgiveness that obligation is discharged. *As we forgive our debtors.*—"As" denotes similitude, as Tyndale renders, "even as we forgive," or, as we also forgive; which agrees with Luke xi. 4. This does not imply that our act of forgiveness is as perfect as God's; but rather recognizes his grace in enabling us to forgive our debtors: his forgiving love is exemplary to us, not ours to him; while it is implied that we shall not secure it if we do not imitate it. Cf. v. 14; Matt. xviii. 21-35; Eph. iv. 32-v. 2.

13. *And lead us not into temptation,*—Let us not be brought by thy providence into a state of trial. Deut. vii. 19; Eccclus. ii. 1-5; Matt. xxvi. 41; Luke viii. 13; 1 Cor. x. 13; Jas. i. 2-4, 12; 1 Pet. i. 6; 2 Pet. ii. 9. Providential trials are to be distinguished from solicitations to sin: the latter kind of temptations never come from God, but from the world, the flesh, and the devil. Luke iv. 2-13; 1 Tim. vi. 9; Jas. i. 13, 14. Of course, we may pray to be *kept from* these, as well as not to be providentially *brought into* the former; though when the trials of life do come upon us, we must be patient and even joyful under them, as they can be overruled for our good. Rom. v. 3, 4; 2 Cor. xii. 5-10; Jas. i. 2. *But deliver us from*

evil.—The evil, i.e., the evil implied in the temptation: not only, do not bring us into trying circumstances, but keep us from them. Rom. xv. 31; 2 Thess. iii. 2; 2 Tim. iv. 18. Of course, we may pray to be delivered *out of* them, when they come upon us, as in 2 Tim. iii. 11; 2 Pet. ii. 9. The Reformed Churches seem right in following Chrysostom, who made this latter clause a part of the sixth petition, and not a seventh petition, according to the Romish and Lutheran divines. *For thine is the kingdom*.—The universal sovereignty, comprehending that in the second petition, and administered in particular relation to it. *The power*.—The energy by which that sovereignty is maintained. *The glory*.—The praise resulting from his wise, powerful, and benign administration. *For ever*.—To the ages, the cycle of time and that of eternity. *Amen*.—(See on Matt. v. 18.) As this doxology is not found in many ancient MSS., versions, and Fathers, it is omitted by most editors, as an interpolation from ancient Greek liturgies. It is, however, sublime and scriptural, (1 Chron. xxix. 10-13,) and constitutes a ground for the petitions.

14. *For if ye forgive men*—This refers to the fifth petition, from which it is not far removed, if the doxology be omitted. *Their trespasses*—Offenses. *Your heavenly Father*—Under which character he is addressed in the Lord's Prayer. Christ himself never says, *Our Father—our God*; but *my* and *your*. John xx. 17. *Will also forgive you*.—If no other condition be wanting. Mark xi. 25, 26; Eccclus. xxviii. 2-5. What importance our Lord attaches to a forgiving spirit!

15. *But if ye forgive not*—It is agreeable to the Hebrew idiom to propound the same sentiment both affirmatively and negatively, in order to make the greater impression. Deut. ix. 7; Isa. iii. 9. No one can obtain forgiveness without putting away an unforgiving spirit, and no one can retain forgiveness, after it has been granted, without imitating the Divine placability. The reference seems to be not so much to the first obtainment of forgiveness from God, as to the repeated renewals and ratifications of forgiveness, which we constantly need. Matt. xviii. 21-35; Eph. iv. 32; Jas. ii. 13.

16. *When ye fast*.—The word means to totally abstain from food, for a given time, on a religious account. Fasting among the Jews was rather public (Zech. viii. 19) or private, (2 Sam. xii. 16, 21:) the latter seems to be here alluded to. *Be not as the hypocrites*.—The Pharisees. *Of a sad countenance*.—Lucian speaks of men who aped philosophers, and calls them hypocrites, ridiculing their gloomy, sour looks, using the term here employed. Gen. xl. 7; Dan. i. 10, LXX.; Luke xxiv. 17; Eccclus. xxv. 23. *Disfigure their faces*.—Literally, make invisible: (Jas. iv. 14;) here, to deform, by letting the hair go untrimmed, putting ashes on the head, and assuming a woe-begone expression. The Arabic renders "make them black." The Jews say, Whoever makes his face black on account of the law in this world, God will make his brightness to shine in the world to come. *That they may appear*—(See on v. 1, 2.)

17. *Anoint thine head*,—Appear as at other times. The Jews anointed and washed regularly, except on days of humiliation. Ruth iii. 3; 2 Sam. xii. 20, 21; Eccl. ix. 8; Dan. x. 3.

18. *That thou appear not unto men, to fast*.—Let not the observation of men be the object. (See on v. 3, 4, 6.) Fasting is intimately connected with fear, sorrow, anger, and desire, which have been styled the four elements of repentance. It was practiced on special occasions by the first Christians, (Acts xiii. 2, 3,) but no stated fast is appointed in the New Testament. Aquinas says, "Alms-giving, prayer, and fasting"—the abuses and proper use of all which are here discussed by Christ—"are the three especial Christian sacrifices: the first, out of our estates; the second, of our souls; the third, from our bodies—which are the three principal parts of a man; every one therefore being obliged to pay its tribute of acknowledgment to the Creator."

19. *Lay not up*—Literally, treasure not up treasures. *Thesaurus*, whence our word treasury, here means that which is deposited in what is considered a safe place, coin, jewels, costly apparel, grain, etc., all of which articles are stored up by the Orientals. Jer. xli. 8; Ezek. xxviii. 4; Hos. xiii. 15; Jas. v. 2, 3. Horace (Ep. i. 6) says he had 5,000 suits in his wardrobe. *Moth—Ses*—the Hebrew for moth. Isa. li. 8. *Rust*—Corrosion: any thing that eats, gnaws, or consumes: it is not the word used Jas. v. 3. *Doth corrupt*,—Destroy, or consume: the word is rendered disfigured in v. 16: the moth destroys the garments: the curculio, e.g., destroys the grain, etc. *Thieves break through*—Money and jewels deposited in the most guarded place are not secure; for the walls of houses—particularly those of the Orientals, which are frequently built of hardened clay—may be dug through, and the treasures may be stolen. Ex. xxii. 2; Job xxiv. 16; Ezek. xii. 5, 7, 12, LXX. The interdict does not forbid all accumulation of property, business capital, etc.; but avaricious hoarding, as if wealth constituted our real treasure.

20. *But lay up*—This not only means that we should prefer heavenly to earthly treasures, as Joseph Mede and Lardner have it, as a Hebraism—"have more care to lay up the one than the other"—but that we should make our earthly treasures heavenly by deeds of charity, as all that is laid out for pious and merciful purposes, is laid up in heaven, and there it is safe: the reward of beneficence is great, certain, and everlasting. Ps. cxii. 9; Matt. xix. 21; Luke xii. 33; xvi. 9; xvii. 22; 1 Tim. vi. 17-19.

21. *Heart*—The affection, including, of course, thought and volition. That on which we think with affection is our treasure.

22. *The light*—The lamp, as Matt. v. 15. *Single*—Clear, presenting a well-defined and single image to the brain. *Full of light*.—Enlightened.

23. *Evil*,—Diseased, doubling, confusing, and distorting the object of vision: opposed to the single eye, v. 22—double, double-sighted, v. 24. *Full of darkness*.—Dark. *If therefore the light*—If the eye, which should be light, prove dark, i.e., blind—how great the darkness! as it extends to the whole body. Our Lord perhaps refers to the conscience, the guiding principle of the soul: if this be blind, how dark must be the passions and appetites! As the salt may become saltless, (Matt. v. 13,) so the light may become darkness.

24. *No man can serve two masters*:—If their claims are opposing, as implied in the following words: the word means serve as a slave, who belongs to his master, and is obsequious to his will. *For either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else*—The suppositions seem to be the reverse of one another. He will either dislike A and like B, or hold to A and slight B. *Mammon*.—A Chaldee word signifying riches, probably derived from *aman*, to trust, because men are apt to trust in riches. It is personified, like the Greek Plutus, though the notion that there was a Syrian deity called Mammon does not appear to be well-founded. Ps. lxxii. 10; Prov. xi. 4; xxiii. 5; Ezek. vii. 19; Luke xvi. 9-14; Gal. i. 10; 1 Tim. vi. 17. Chrysostom says, "Job was rich; but he did not act as a slave to mammon, but he owned it, and kept it in subjection, and was its lord, not its slave."

25. *Take no thought*—The word comes from *merizo*, to divide, hence *merimna*, distraction of mind, anxiety. Matt. xiii. 22. It is generally rendered, "Be not anxious:" the Geneva version is, "Be not careful." The derivatives are rendered "care," Matt. xiii. 22; 1 Cor. xii. 25; 2 Cor. xi. 28; Phil. ii. 20; 1 Pet. v. 7; (where the second word "careth" is *melei*: what would give us anxiety, does not give God any;) "careful," Luke x. 41; Phil. iv. 6; "carefulness," "careth," 1 Cor. vii. 32, 33, 34. Care in these places means "carking care," i.e., anxiety. Ezek. iv. 16. "To take thought," two or three centuries ago, meant to be anxious. Thus in Original Letters by Sir John Fenn (Let. xli., dated 1471) is this phrase, "Ye shall be of good cheer, and take no thought." So Shakspeare, (Julius Caesar, ii. 1,) "Take thought and die for Caesar." (See Bishop Sanderson's Sermon on Phil. iv. 11.) *More than*—More valuable than. *Meat*,—Food of any kind. If God has given you a life—a vital, sentient principle—and a body, you may surely expect him to supply you with the lesser gifts of food and clothing for their support.

26. *Behold the fowls*—Look at the birds: a flock of birds may have been just flying by. Stanley (Sinai and the Holy Land) speaks of "the countless birds of all kinds, aquatic fowls by the lake side, partridges and pigeons hovering over the rich plain, their number, their beauty, their contrast with the busy stir of sowing, and reaping, and putting into barns, visible in the plain below, whether of Hattin or Gennesaret." Instead of fowls, Luke (xii. 24) has ravens or crows, which abound in the neighborhood of Gennesaret. It has been often remarked, that God speaks more frequently of his regard for young ravens than any other birds,

because ravens are observed to forsake their young sooner than any other. Job xxxviii. 41; Ps. cxlvii. 9. *Of the air*:—To the names of animals the Hebrews frequently add the places where they live. Ps. viii. 7, 8. Euripides (*Electra*, 897) calls birds, "children of the air:" wild birds, for which no man cares. *For*—This points out the reason for calling attention to the birds. *They sow not*,—Christ does not mean that we are to imitate the birds in not sowing, etc., but to learn from them a lesson of trust in Providence while doing what is required of us in view of our superior nature. *Yet*—And yet. *Your heavenly Father*—Not theirs. God is, indeed, the Father, or Creator, of all creatures, but he sustains a peculiar paternal relation to men, especially Christians. 2 Cor. vi. 18. (See on v. 9.) *Much better*—Much more valuable, being rational, immortal, redeemed, and accountable creatures.

27. *Taking thought*—(See on v. 25.) *One cubit*—A cubit is the distance from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger, reckoned at 1 ft. 6 in., or 1 ft. 9 in.; and as this is a great deal to add to a man's stature, whereas the smallest thing is implied in the question, (*cf.* Luke xii. 25, 26, "that thing which is least,") it is generally thought that *helikia* should be rendered not stature, but "age," as in John ix. 21, 23. Cubit, like span, hand-breadth, etc., (Ps. xxxix. 5,) is not unfrequently applied to measures of time. Mimnermus says, "We taste the spring of youth for a cubit's length of time." Christ is speaking of the preservation of life, and any reference to stature would seem to be out of place; not to say, that men are not often anxious about adding to their stature, though they are to prolong their life. Life is a pilgrimage which cannot be extended one cubit beyond the appointed limit.

28. *Consider*—Observe minutely, in order to learn—implying more attention than "behold," v. 26. *The lilies of the field*—Not perhaps the white lilies whose petals outvie the white robes of monarchs, as they do not appear to grow in the fields of Palestine, where there are several species of red and yellow lilies. Stanley saw there in March and April large yellow water-lilies, and Bowring, in April and May the *lilia Syriaca*, of a brilliant red color, half the size of the tiger-lily: it abounds in Galilee, where there are also a great many beautiful wild flowers of the daffodil and tulip species—all of which may be comprehended under the general term *krina*. *How they grow*;—In what manner. *They toil not*,—To cultivate the earth, by which they are made to grow. *Neither do they spin*;—To make their apparel: they follow neither male nor female occupations.

29. *Solomon in all his glory*—Alluding perhaps to 2 Chron. ix: so superior is nature to art. Josephus says, Solomon was usually clothed in white—the royal robes were very rich and splendid; Jewish writers say, "Garments are the glory of a man." 1 Cor. xi. 15.

30. *Wherefore, if God*—Since therefore God so clothes. *The grass*—*Chortos*, herbage, comprehending—like the Hebrew *eseb*—not only grass, but also corn, flowers, and other herbs, as distinguished from trees and shrubs, which have perennial stalks. Gen. i. 29, 30; Rev. viii. 7. *Which to-day is*,—I.e., in the field: so it is expressed, Luke xii. 28: *cf.* Isa. xl. 6-8; 1 Pet. i. 24. *And to-morrow is cast*—A proverbial idiom for a sudden transition; but here it may be taken literally: the present tense gives great vivacity to the picture. *Oven*,—Which is heated with dry grass and other herbage in the East, where wood is scarce: the *klibanos* was a round pot of earthen or other materials, two or three feet high, narrowing toward the top: the fire was made within to heat it, and then the dough was spread on the sides to bake, thus forming thin cakes.—*Shall he not*—Will he not much more clothe you: the language is very emphatic. *O ye of little faith?*—Distrustful ones. Matt. viii. 26. Anxiety about worldly things betrays lack of confidence in God's providence.

31. *Therefore*—An emphatic deduction. *Take no thought, saying*,—Say not anxiously. (See on v. 25.)

32. *After all these things*—The heathen seek after worldly things exclusively, because they know of no better, and anxiously, because they have no knowledge of God's providence, and, of course, no dependence on it: this is sad in them, but it would be shameful in us. Ps. iv. 6, 7; xvii. 14; Juvenal, Sat. x. *For your heavenly Father*—Knowing your wants: as he is your heavenly Father, he can neither be indisposed nor unable to supply them.

33. *But seek ye first*—Let it be your chief concern to become the subjects of God's kingdom, or dispensation of grace. (See on Matt. iii. 2.) *And his righteousness*.—The holiness which God requires, and which he will enable you to realize; (Rom. xiv. 17; 1 Mac. ii. 29;) as opposed to the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. Matt. v. 20. *And all these things*—all necessary temporal things shall be given you, in addition to the spiritual. It is implied that we may seek temporal things, provided that we do so without anxiety and with due subordination to spiritual things.

34. *Take therefore no thought*—As worldly things are of minor importance, and as God will supply such of them as are needful, be not anxious about future supplies of them. *The morrow shall take thought*—Your anxiety for the future now, will not lessen your anxiety for it then, if you should live to see it. *Sufficient unto the day*:—I.e., the present day—every day has its own trouble. So Moschus (Idyl iv.): "Sure each sad day sufficient sorrow bears." Bab. Talmud: "Sufficient for vexation is the present time." These appear to be proverbial sentences.

CHAPTER VII.

1 *Christ ending his sermon in the mount, reproveth rash judgment, 6 forbiddeth to cast holy things to dogs, 7 exhorteth to prayer, 13 to enter in at the strait gate, 15 to beware of false prophets, 21 not to be hearers, but doers of the word: 24 like houses builded on a rock, 26 and not on the sand.*

VII.—1. *Judge not*,—Censure not others, gratuitously, hastily, uncharitably, as in so doing, you invite the censures of others. Rom. ii. 1; xiv. 3, 4, 10, 13; 1 Cor. iv. 3-5; Jas. iv. 11, 12. In this place, and Luke vi. 37, there is, of course, no reference to legal judgments, though the terms are forensic, nor to unfavorable opinions which we cannot help forming of the bad conduct of others: *cf.* v. 20; 1 Cor. v. 12. (See Sanderson's Sermon on Matt. vii. 1, and Barrow's on Rom. xiv. 3.)

2. *For with what judgments*—As you censure others, they will be very apt to censure you. *And with what measure*—By the rule with which you deal out censures to others.

3. *Beholdest*—The word means to look attentively. *Considerest*—The word does not mean simply to see, as in the Vulgate, but to regard, the object being in the eye of him of whom the act is predicated. *Karphos* means any light, dry thing, probably here a splinter, as opposed to *dokos*, a beam. The proverb was used by the Jews, and similar adages are found in the classics. Our translation gives the sense.

4. *Or*—To state the case thus. *How wilt thou say*—With what face canst thou say: *cf.* Luke vi. 42. *Brother*,—(See on v. 22.) Bengel correctly says, "This expresses the pretended show of discharging a *brotherly* office; and to this the other term, *hypocrite*, is significantly opposed." *A beam*—The beam, viz., that in v. 3. Horace has a saying not unlike this in his Satires, i. 3, 25: "When you can so readily overlook your own wickedness, why are you more clear-sighted than the eagle, or the serpent of Epidaurus, in spying out the failings of your friends?"

5. *Thou hypocrite*,—(See on Matt. vi. 2.) He who does not correct his own faults, while he proposes to correct his neighbor's, shows that he is not actuated by a proper hatred to sin, but by a spirit of pride and censoriousness, and is thus chargeable with hypocrisy. *Then shalt thou see clearly*—Literally, see through: the word used here by Matthew and Luke, is found in scarcely any other author: it denotes an attentive inspection for a kind purpose, and not an idle and unkind gazing. This shows that we are not to be blind to our brother's faults; but it suggests the necessity of living virtuously ourselves, if we would reform others, and prescribes the spirit and manner in which this delicate and difficult task is to be attempted. Gal. vi. 1. Plautus says, "Let him who censures first inspect himself;" but Christ goes farther than that.

6. *Give not that which is holy unto the dogs*,—Alluding perhaps to the consecrated flesh of sacrifices. (See Jer. xxii. 16, LXX., where the word is thus used.) Dogs are always spoken of in Scripture with contempt, and considered the symbols of impure and malicious men. Ex. xxii. 31; Deut. xxiii. 18; Phil. iii. 2; Rev. xxii. 15. *Neither cast ye your pearls before swine*,—Which were despised by the Jews, as of all animals the most unclean, and considered the symbols of the most profane persons. Lev. xi. 7; Isa. lxv. 4; lxvi. 3, 17; 2 Pet. ii. 22. *Under their feet*,—With their feet. *And turn again*—And turning round, rend you: this is supposed to refer to the oblique direction in which hogs make their attack: these ferocious animals, when hungry, would be very apt to turn round and tear any one who would cast nothing before them better in their estimation than pearls, which they would trample with their feet. Bishop Jebb, and many other critics after him, refer the trampling to the swine, and the rending to the dogs, supposing that the four clauses of the verse are arranged by what they call *epanodos*, a going back and speaking to the last subject first, and the first last, as in 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16. This seems forced; and the notion that "the holy" is a mistranslation of *kadasha*, a Chaldee word meaning an ear-ring, deserves no notice. It has been suggested that pearls bear a resemblance to peas or acorns, the food of swine, but ear-rings do not to that of dogs. The swine would trample upon pearls with rage, but the dogs would readily enough devour the consecrated meat, though it would be a profanation to give it to them. We must not offer the mysteries and privileges of our religion to libertines and infidels. This passage and Prov. ix. 7, 8; xxiii. 9, are not to be so construed as to oppose others, as Luke xix. 17; Prov. i. 22, 23. It qualifies v. 1; as Bengel says, "Refrain from judging, that is, without knowledge, without charity, without necessity: still, a dog must pass as a dog, and a swine as a swine." The Jews, Arabs, and others, call wise and beautiful sayings *pearls*.

7. *It shall be opened*—The door is implied.

8. *For every one that asketh, receiveth*;—The proper spirit and object of prayer are implied. Mark xi. 24; John xiv. 13; Jas. i. 5, 6; iv. 2, 3. These appear to be proverbial phrases, meaning the same thing; though, perhaps, seeking may express more concern than asking, and knocking may express more earnestness than either of the other terms. Here is the strong assertion as a fact of what is stated in v. 7 as a promise—also the universality of the application.

9. *Or*—To state the case thus. (See on v. 4.) *What man*—This is emphatic: who among you *men*, with all your imperfections. *Whom if his son ask bread*,—Here are two accusatives, as in Josh. xv. 18. Here the first question is broken off, or blended with the second, by *anacoluthon*. *Will he give*—Put into his hand. *A stone?*—Which bears some outward resemblance to a loaf. (See on Matt. iv. 3.)

10. *Serpent?*—Which resembles some kinds of fishes. The stone would do him no good; the serpent would do him harm, as would the *scorpion*, (added in Luke,)

which, it is said, is sometimes not unlike an egg. Rev. ix. 5, 10. The most common articles of food are here mentioned: fish was much used near the Sea of Genesaret.

11. *If ye then being evil*—Though you are depraved. Stier thinks this the most rigorous *dictum probans* for original sin in the Bible. (?) *Know how to give*—A Hebraism, implying both ability and inclination. We have a similar idiom in English: so Phil. iv. 12; 2 Pet. ii. 9. *Your Father*—Who is not evil like you, but infinite in his benevolence, as in his resources. *Which is in heaven*—Literally, "who is in the heavens." (See on Matt. vi. 9.) Luke has, "who is of heaven," meaning the same. Good *things*—Those for which we ask, or if these should be unsuitable, (as children may ask for stones and serpents, mistaking them for bread and fish,) he will withhold what we ask, and give us what he knows will be good for us. So Plato commends the old poet, who prayed to Jupiter, "Give us good things, whether we pray for them or not, and remove from us evil things, even though we pray for them." Socrates was accustomed to pray simply for good things to the gods, as they only knew what things were good. So Milton: "Be bounteous still to give us only good." Luke has, "the Holy Spirit," whose gracious influence, comprehends all spiritual good things: all necessary temporal things will be superadded. (See on Matt. vi. 33.)

12. *Therefore*—In view of the preceding interpretations of moral precepts, cautions, and promises. *This is the law and the prophets*.—This is the sum of Old Testament teaching on man's relative duties: "a perfect breviary of the whole law." Gibbon and other infidels sneer at this, because this golden precept, as it is called, is found in substance in the writings of the rabbis and philosophers; but they forget that it is here alone set in a proper light, as consistent with justice as well as with mercy, stamped with divine authority, and connected with the promise of grace by which its observance may be both practicable and pleasant. Lampridius says the wise Emperor Severus learned this rule of the Christians, and magnified it exceedingly. Maimonides mangles the latter part thus: "Do you the same to your brethren in the law and in the commandment"—a pregnant exemplification of Jewish bigotry. Tobit (iv. 15) is better: "Do that to no man which thou hatest." So Hillel; and Siracides (xxxii. 15): "Judge of thy neighbor by thyself." But Christ does not confine himself to negations, nor does he, as Neander thinks, include only "external, material, obvious actions;" he includes also the internal principle and feeling. We must be influenced by such motives of benevolence in our conduct toward our neighbor, as we would wish to obtain in his conduct toward us. As this rule is an abridgment of the law, it must, of course, be so construed and applied as not to militate with any of the provisions of the law; hence it means, whatsoever ye would, in conformity with reason and revelation, on a change of relation, that others, etc. It does not require you to give your neighbor your estate, because you may covet his; but rather requires you not to covet his, as you would

not have him covet yours. This rule; thus applied, will preserve intact all the interests of equity, justice, charity, and friendship.

13. *Enter ye in at*—Enter in through. *The strait gate*;—The narrow gate. *For*—This indicates a reason for the injunction: the wide gate and broad way, which is so much frequented, leads to destruction.

14. *Because*,—The same word (in the received text) rendered "for," v. 13—indicating the converse reason for the injunction. *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way*,—Literally, the way is crushed in, restricted—strait, or narrow, corresponding to the gate to which it leads. The narrow way is that pointed out in this sermon, in contrast with the laxer and more popular religion of the times: the strait gate, or door, is the entrance into the kingdom of heaven, which will be opened to all who strive to enter and knock for admittance. Ver. 7, 21; Matt. v. 20. This corresponds with Luke xiii. 24, 25, where, however, there is no reference to the broad way, but the closing of the strait gate to those who do not adopt the course prerequisite to admission. Rev. xxii. 14, 15. There is a remarkably similar passage in the *Tabula* of Cebes (xv.), where the Old Man is represented as saying. "Do you not see a little door, and, before the door, a way which is not much crowded, but very few are going along it, as difficult of ascent, rough, and stony? And does there not seem to be a high hill, and the road up it very narrow, with precipices on each side? This is the way leading to true instruction." (In this quotation, the reading *pro*—before the door—is adopted, as in Schweighaeuser, and not *pros*—as in other editions—which some render "beyond.") Our course of life is frequently described as a way, Ps. cxix. 9, 32, 104; Prov. xv. 24; Jer. vi. 16; Acts xix. 9; 2 Pet. ii. 2, 15, 21; and as a course of virtue is opposed to the evil principles of our nature, and the evil that is in the world, it is described as a narrow way, and a strait gate. *Cf.* 2 Esdras vii. 3-21. It must not, however, be supposed that because there are difficulties in a religious life, particularly on our entering upon it after a course of sin, that therefore it is a miserable life. It is precisely the reverse. When our hearts are "set at liberty," our feet can run in the way of God's commandments;" and if we are guided by Wisdom, we shall find that "her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." Prov. iii. 17. Sincerity, benevolence, liberality, and heavenly-mindedness—the virtues opposed to the vices denounced by our Lord in this sermon—are distasteful to our corrupt nature, and contrary to the course of this world, but the difficulty of practicing them may be overcome by persistent effort and an humble dependence on divine grace.

15. *Beware of false prophets*,—The *de*, omitted by our translators, ought to be rendered, But beware of, keep away from, the false prophets: thus marking the opposition between the preceding directions and those of the false prophets. In every age there are men who profess to be commissioned by God to teach his will,

while they are nothing but impostors; hence it is said, in the original, *the false prophets*: there may be also special reference to those spoken of Matt. xxiv. 24. Cf. 2 Pet. ii. 1; 1 John iv. i; Rev. ii. 2. *In sheep's clothing*.—There may be a reference to the sheep's skin raiment of the prophets; (Zech. xiii. 4; Matt. iii. 4;) but the language seems to be proverbial: they put on the guise of sheep the better to deceive the flock. Rom. xvi. 17, 18. *Ravens wolves*.—Which are proverbially sneaking and ravenous. Gen. xlix. 27; Ezek. xxii. 27, 28; Acts xx. 29, 30.

16. *Ye shall know them*—You will distinguish them. *By their fruits*.—Their actions, for when closely watched their hypocrisy will be seen; especially, as Stier says, by the disciples of Christ, who have spiritual discernment. Cf. v. 21-23; Matt. iii. 8; xii. 33-37. *Grapes of thorns*.—Galen has a similar proverb, "The husbandman would never be able to make the thorn (*butos*) produce grapes." Luke has "figs of thorns," and "grapes of a bramble-bush," or bush, as *butos* is rendered, Matt. xii. 26; Luke xx. 37; Acts vii. 30, 35: so the LXX. Ex. iii. 2, 3. Virgil has grapes on thorns, Ec. iv. 29. *Butos* means any kind of thorn-bush. So *tribolos*, rendered *thistles* here and Gen. iii. 15, is rendered "thorns," Prov. xxii. 5, and "briers," Heb. vi. 8. Hesychius says it is "a kind of thorn." It means primarily, three-pointed, three-pronged—a caltrop composed of three or more radiating spikes, thrown on the ground to annoy cavalry; hence it is applied to a low, thorny shrub. The word rendered thorns in Matthew and Luke is the same, *akantha*, the common name for them. Hence there does not seem to be any ground for the remark of Bengel and Stier, "the briers of thorns resemble grapes, as the heads of thistles do figs"—no such resemblance being intended by Christ: his language is proverbial and popular.

17. *Even so*—This adverb introduces the converse statement. In v. 16, the worthless shrubs do not bring forth good fruit; here the good tree does bring forth good fruit, and the bad tree bad fruit: in v. 16, the effect argues the cause negatively; here the cause argues the effect positively. *But a corrupt tree*—But the bad tree—i.e., the class indicated by thorns and thistles; hence *sapron* does not here mean corrupt, rotten, but bad, worthless, as opposed to good, valuable. (See on Matt. xiii. 48.) So the fruit of the worthless tree is *evil*—that is, bad, good for nothing—called *sapron*, like the tree that produces it, in Matt. xii. 33-35, where, as in Luke vi. 43-45, the metaphor is explained.

18. *A good tree cannot*—It is contrary to its nature: so a good man will do good; he must do good while he retains his goodness; and the contrary obtains with the wicked. 1 John iii. 9, 10; v. 18. This gives no countenance to Manichaeism, though the Manichaeans quoted it to sustain their absurd heresy. The metaphor of the trees is not to be pressed beyond the point in hand: whether or not good and bad trees can change their character, and so their fruits, it is certain good and bad men can. Ezek. xviii. 26, 27. *Good*—Referring to the tree is *agathon*, the

general word for good—referring to the fruit it is *kalon*, excellent, beautiful; though *kalon* is used of both tree and fruit in Luke vi.; Matt. xii.

19. *Every tree*—A proverbial sentence, thrown in as an admonition. (See on Matt. iii. 10.)

20. *Wherefore*,—An emphatic inference from the metaphorical illustration, and looking back to the statement, v. 16: you will distinguish them by their fruits, and to the caveat, v. 15, and preparing for the solemn admonition which follows.

21. *Lord, Lord*,—*Kurios*, the same as *Rabbi*, or *Didaskalos*, (see on Matt. viii. 25,) the usual title of the Jewish doctors, or teachers, whose proper name was rarely used in addressing them. They said it is impiety to call a rabbi by his proper name. The rabbis claimed implicit obedience from their disciples—a presumption which Christ reprehended, forbidding the apostles to imitate their arrogance, he alone being vested with supreme authority. Matt. xxiii. 7-10; John i. 38; iii. 2, 10; xiii. 13, 14. The repetition implies an affectation of great respect. Mark xiv. 45. The saying Lord, here, is merely by the lip: in 1 Cor. xii. 3, it means a heart-felt confession. Christ never calls any man Lord—he reserves this title to himself and to his Father. *The kingdom of heaven*;—The kingdom of glory, though it is equally true that none can enter the kingdom of grace on any other condition. John vi. 29, 39, 40; 1 John iii. 23.

22. *Many*—Even of those who seem to be his disciples. *In that day*,—The day of judgment, implied in the foregoing words. Matt. xi. 24; Luke x. 12. *Prophesied*—Uttered inspired oracles—hence it is associated with working miracles: cf. v. 15. *In thy name?*—On thy authority, as the ancient prophets said, Thus saith the Lord: the formula is repeated for the sake of emphasis; and when it refers to casting out devils, i.e., expelling demons, (see on Matt. iv. 1, 24,) and doing wonderful works, i.e., miracles, works effected by divine power, it means that they professed to perform these acts by the authority, or power, of Jesus Christ. Acts iv. 7, 12; xvi. 18; xix. 13-17: cf. Acts ix. 34.

23. *And then will I profess unto them*,—I will tell them openly: as they will profess to me that they were my disciples, I will profess to them that I never knew them in that character: *homologeso* strongly marks the contrast; hence, too, the language of both parties is given. The knowledge, of course, implies approval. Ps. i. 6; 2 Tim. ii. 19. *Depart from me*,—As their claim of relationship to Christ is unfounded, this banishment from him will be an effectual repudiation of it. 2 Thess. i. 9. *Ye that work iniquity*.—Ye who follow lawless, or sinful, practices—ye who work at it as a trade. 1 John iii. 4. There is no proof in the New Testament that any person was empowered by Christ to preach and work miracles, who was not one of his sincere disciples. Judas Iscariot was no exception: when he fell from his apostleship, by transgression, he doubtless forfeited his apostolical

prerogatives. Wicked men, like Simon Magus, (Acts viii.,) and the vagabond Jews, (Acts xix. 13-17,) who pretended to work miracles, were mere hypocritical impostors. They were too much under the power of Satan to be able to cast him out. Matt. xii. 24-30; Mark ix. 38-40. Christ assures all such, that though they pretend to be his apostles here, and though their hypocrisy might be reproduced at the judgment-seat, yet they cannot elude his omniscience or escape his wrath. It can, however, hardly be supposed that such a scene as is described here and in Matt. xxv. 31-46; Luke xiii. 24-30, will literally take place. The style is obviously parabolical. But were it possible for a wicked man to possess all kinds of miraculous endowments, they would not avail for his salvation. 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2.

24. *Therefore*,—This particle introduces a practical inference from the foregoing. *Whosoever heareth*—Augustin well says, The Lord Jesus, without any reference to those who do not hear him, has distinguished the hearers among themselves, and that not with a fine-drawn line, but with a broad mark of separation. *These sayings of mine*,—Comprehended in the entire discourse, indicating its unity. *I will liken him to*—A popular form of expressing, "shall be compared to." *A wise man*,—A prudent, provident man. *A rock*:—The rock, i.e., the native rock: in Luke vii. 48, it is said, he digged deep, to reach the rock.

25. *And the rain descended*,—Came down in heavy gushes. *And the floods came*,—Homer (II. iv. 452) uses *potamoi* for torrents: cf. Eccus. xl. 13; Jud. v. 21; Isa. xxviii. 2. *Beat upon*—Literally, fell upon. *For it was founded upon a rock*.—For it had been based on the rock. The article is used, as is customary both in Greek and English, in connection with the great objects of nature.

26. *And doeth them not*,—And yet does not reduce them to practice. *A foolish man*,—One who lacks prudence. Eccus. xxii. 16-18.

27. *Beat upon*—Dashed against, (not as v. 25,) the house being completely exposed to its violence. *And great was the fall of it*.—Its ruin was complete. "The action," says Stanley, "is familiar to all eastern and southern climates—a torrent suddenly formed by the mountain rains, and sweeping away all before it in its descent. Yet it is an image far more natural in Galilee than in Judea; whether we take the perennial streams which run through the Plain Gennesaret, or the torrent-streams of the Kishon and the Belus, which on the west run through the Plain of Esdraelon to the Mediterranean. And if we are to press the allusion to the 'sand,' on which was built the house that fell, then there is no other locality in Palestine to which we can look, except the long sandy strip of land which bounds the eastern plain of Acre, and through which the Kishon flows into the sea." Bishop Jebb says, the marked transition in each of these connected stanzas, as he calls them, from a long and measured movement to short, rapid lines, and the resumption, at the close, of a lengthened cadence, are peculiarly expressive. The continual return, too, in the shorter lines of the copulative particle "and," a return

peculiarly Hebraic, has a fine effect: it gives an idea of danger, sudden, accumulated, and overwhelming. Bengel says, "Yes, indeed, complete and irremediable." He adds, "It is by no means requisite that every sermon should conclude with words of comfort." Whether or not the sermon in Luke is to be identified with that in Matthew, the language in Luke is less simple and more classical and condensed—especially in the last paragraph—and the difference is well reproduced in our version of the two evangelists.

28. *The people*—The multitude. Matt. v. 1. *Were astonished*—Exceedingly struck, intensely affected. *His doctrine*.—His manner of teaching, which, indeed, involved the doctrine taught.

29. *For he taught*—Was teaching—His custom was to teach as one who had divine authority to teach, and not as the scribes, who retailed the sayings of their doctors. (See on Matt. v. 21.)

CHAPTER VIII.

2 *Christ cleanseth the leper, 5 healeth the centurion's servant, 14 Peter's mother-in-law, 16 and many other diseased: 18 sheweth how he is to be followed: 23 stilleth the tempest on the sea, 28 driveth the devils out of two men possessed, 31 and suffereth them to go into the swine.*

VIII.—1. *When he was come down*—And having descended from the mountain. (See on Matt. v. 1.) Matthew seems to have placed the case of the leper in its chronological order. Luke (v. 12) says, it was in a certain city, but does not say when or where, though he records it before the sermon, following the order of Mark i. 40-45. Lepers frequently haunted the outskirts of large assemblies, towns, etc., and Lightfoot says they were not forbidden to enter except into walled cities. Luke xviii. 12. This leper may have followed at a distance, and after the multitude had dispersed, as Jesus was entering Capernaum, the cure may have been wrought; or *en*, in Luke, may mean near, by, or at, as in Josh. v. 13; x. 10, LXX.

2. *And behold*,—The usual form of calling attention to an important and wonderful subject. *A leper*—For thousands of years the lepers have formed a distinct class in the East: they marry among themselves, and so perpetuate their disgusting disease, which shows itself in their progeny as soon as they reach adult age. Its name is derived from *lepis*, a scale, because it shows itself in dry, thin scales, or scabs, which are white in the *lepra vulgaris*, (Ex. iv. 6; Num. xii. 10; 2 Kings v. 27,) and about the size of a dollar; smaller in the *alphos*; and dark and livid in the *nigricans*. Herodotus, (i. 138,) speaking of the Persians, says, "Whoever has the leprosy or white scab, does not enter into the city, or keep company with the other Persians; and they say he is afflicted with this disease for

some offense against the sun." Celsus mentions two kinds, *leuke* and *alphos*, both terms denoting whiteness; and Hippocrates calls the *leuke*, the Phenician disease. When the scales are rubbed off the quick flesh is seen. In some cases the scales appear early in certain parts of the body, as the arms, legs, or thighs; out in others they extend all over the body, as in the case of this leper, (Luke v. 12,) and always attended with violent itching. Under certain circumstances it seems to spread like an epidemic, as when the crusaders by thousands returned from Asia, it raged in some parts of Europe, so that 2,000 leper-houses were filled by its victims in France alone. The miserable wretches were clothed in shrouds, as if already dead, while masses for the dead were said for them. It does not, however, appear to be contagious, but it was considered excessively loathsome, and being incurable, except by miraculous power, it might well be viewed as an emblem of sin. Lev. xiii., xiv.; Ps. li. 2, 5. *Worshipped him*,—Mark says, "kneeling down to him;" Luke, "fell on his face:" he paid him the respect offered to superiors, perhaps recognizing him as a prophet of God. (See on Matt. ii. 2.) *Lord*,—*Kurie*—a title of respect, rendered "Sir," John iv. 19; xii. 21; xx. 15, and like *Adoni*, *Domine*, *Monsieur*, used in addressing strangers; but as it was used by the Jews, when addressing their rabbis, the leper may have used it in this sense. (See on Matt. vii. 21.) *If thou wilt, thou canst*—This implies a doubt of Christ's willingness; but that was unavoidable, as he had no promise that, on any condition, Christ would heal him: for aught he knew, it might not have been consistent with God's purpose to perform this miracle: he had great faith in believing that Christ could cleanse him, and he evidently had as firm a persuasion as the case would admit that he would do so. He does not say, "If thou canst," as Mark ix. 22. It would argue a serious want of faith in a penitent sinner, seeking to be cleansed from the leprosy of sin, were he to express any doubt in regard to Christ's willingness to cleanse him, as he has the strongest assurance of his willingness, as well as his ability. The cleansing refers to the legal impurity, which was only removed by the cure of the disease.

3. *And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him*,—An indication of power, influenced by love; hence Mark says, he was "moved with compassion." None besides Christ would dare touch a leper, he alone being safe from the pollution, and superior to the law which forbade the contact. Christ usually performed some significant act in working his miracles: the leper must have been inspired with confidence by the Saviour's touch, as well as by his word. *I will; be thou clean*,—Or cleansed: as sublime a sentence as, "Let there be light!" *His leprosy was cleansed*.—The leper was healed. Mark is more precise.

4. *See thou tell no man*;—The particularity of the charge, as reported by Mark, seems to imply that Christ wanted him to go and get his certificate from the priest, before the priest should ascertain who cured the leper, otherwise the priest might maliciously deny that he was perfectly clean, and so frustrate the design of the

miracle. Christ performed his miracles in public, and wanted them to be witnessed, but he eschewed all vainglorious ostentation—he did not want the reputation of a mere wonder-worker, his miracles being subordinate to his doctrine—he did not wish unnecessarily and prematurely to excite the jealousy of the Romans, or the malice of the Jews—and he desired those who were healed to retire and calmly and thankfully reflect upon the mercy they experienced, so as to realize the full moral effect intended. (See on Matt. ix. 26, 30; xii. 15-21; xvi. 20; Mark, v. 43; John vi. 15.) *The gift*—Lev. xiv. 1-32. Christ respected the ceremonies of the law, until the Levitical institute was consummated in himself. (See on Matt. v. 17.) Peter Lombard says, "In remitting or retaining sins, the priests of the gospel have that right and office, which the legal priests had in curing the lepers. These, therefore, forgive or retain sins, while they show and declare that they are forgiven or retained of God." But there are no "priests of the gospel," except as all Christians are "priests unto God;" and Christian ministers cannot retain or forgive sins: they can only declare on what terms sins are forgiven. One may as well talk about offering doves and lambs, flour and oil, as showing himself to the priest, to cleanse his soul from sin! *For a testimony unto them.*—For a proof to the priests that God had cured his leprosy: the words "the priests" must be supplied, or "the priest" must be taken in the collective sense, to agree with "them." The ceremonial cleansing followed the curative cleansing. Lev. xiv. 3, 4. To testify that he was healed, the man was to submit himself to the inspection of the priests, and present the prescribed offering, before he said any thing about the agency by which he was cured. After admitting the testimony of the cure, they would find it difficult to set aside the proof which it afforded of the Messiahship of Jesus, when they would ascertain that the cure was wrought by him, as the rabbins held that cleansing the lepers would be a characteristic of the Messiah. Matt. xi. 3-6. Of course, the priestly ratification would be a testimony to the people also, (as Hammond and others think is the meaning,) for they would be satisfied that the cure was perfect, if it was recognized by the priest. The man, however, was so glad of his cure that he went blazing abroad the matter, occasioning by the injudicious expression of his joy and gratitude some of the inconveniences which Jesus wished to prevent. Mark i. 45; Luke v. 15, 16.

5. *And when Jesus*—Most MSS., versions, Fathers, and editors, read, "and when he"—which unites what follows more closely with what precedes. *Capernaum*,—(See on Matt. iv. 13.) *A centurion*,—A Roman military officer, who commanded 100 men—one was usually stationed in the towns of the Roman provinces, to preserve order. Luke (vii. 3) says he sent "elders of the Jews;" but the Jews used to say, "The messenger of a man is as the man himself." It is common with all historians to say a man did a thing himself, which he did by proxy, and numerous instances are found in Scripture. Matt. xxvii. 19; John iv. 1; xix. 1; also Matt. xx. 20 with Mark x. 35. This centurion had endeared himself to

the Jews of Capernaum by building their synagogue; hence his application to Jesus through them and the interest they felt in his behalf; (Luke vii. 4;) hence, too, these may have been elders of the synagogue.

6. *Lord*,—(See on v. 2.) *Servant*—*Pais*, Vulg. *puer*, as we say, "boy," meaning servant. So the Saxon *snapa*, still retained in Yorkshire, where *snap* is used for lad or servant. Luke calls him *doulos*, a slave. Alford says, he "perhaps had but one slave, see ver. 9." He was most likely a body-servant, and, as is usual, his master was much attached to him. *Lieth at home*—Confined to bed. *Sick of the palsy*,—Paralytic, or palsied—deprived of the power of voluntary motion, in that part of the body which is affected. *Grievously tormented*.—(See on Matt. iv. 24.) In certain stages of palsy, the patient suffers great agony. In 1 Mac. ix. 55, 56, it is said that Alcinous was taken with a palsy, and died with great torment—the same terms as here. Luke says he was at the point of death.

7. *And Jesus saith unto him*,—I.e., through the messengers. Luke says, "Jesus went with them"—some of them, it appears, hastened in advance to bear the favorable answer to the centurion; hence he sent a fresh deputation of "friends," who said, on his behalf, what Matthew reports as said by himself.

8. *Lord, I am not worthy*—Luke says, "Trouble not thyself; for I am not worthy," etc.—indicating great politeness, as well as profound humility: "wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee"—i.e., in his own person—perhaps not being circumcised. *Speak the word*—Most authorities read here, as in Luke, "say in a word"—a strong expression, indicating great faith.

9. *For I am a man*—For even I, who am under authority myself, have soldiers under me, *and I say to this man*,—Luke says, "unto one"—i.e., of the soldiers. *To my servant*,—(See on v. 6.) *Do this*,—A menial service, not performed by a soldier. There is a passage in Arrian which illustrates this: (Diss. i. ch. 25, *cf.* ch. 14): "He who personates Agamemnon says to me, 'Go to Achilles, and bring Briseis: I go. He says, Come hither: I come.'" The centurion's argument, which is from the less to the greater, evinces strong faith: If I, who am but a subordinate officer, can secure obedience, at a word, much more canst thou, who hast supreme authority, at a word, make my servant's disease depart.

10. *He marvelled*,—He was astonished at his faith, as he was astonished at the unbelief of the Jews. Mark vi. 6. As a man, Christ was capable of wonder, as well as of grief, and other passions. *Verily*—(See on Matt. v. 18.) *No, not in Israel*.—Not even among the people of Israel, who might be expected to have confidence in me. (See a parallel, Matt. xv. 21-28—contrasts, John iv. 49; xi. 21, 32.) The elders, in this case, requested the personal presence of Christ. Luke vii. 3; *cf.* Matt. ix. 18.

11. *Many shall come from the east and west*,—In a similar passage, uttered on another occasion, it is added, "and from the north and the south." Luke xiii. 29. The reference is to Gentiles from all parts of the world. Gen. xxviii. 14. *Shall sit down*—Shall be placed at table; alluding to the recumbent position in which the Orientals took their meals, especially at entertainments. It is customary among all nations to represent the joys of heaven under the notion of a banquet, or feast. (Hor. Od. iii. 3, 12.) *With Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob*,—They being representative believers. Luke (xiii. 28) adds, "and all the prophets." *In the kingdom of heaven*:—This seems to mean the kingdom of glory; (Matt. xxvi. 29; Luke xvi. 22; Rev. xix. 9;) though, as Stier says, it comprehends "the fellowship of the kingdom of heaven, set up on earth." Gen. xxviii. 14; Isa. xlix. 6, 12; lx. 4. Whitby restricts it to membership in the latter—this being taken from the Jews, and given to the Gentiles; (Matt. xxi. 43;) but it surely involves eternal blessedness, as the Jews do not consider it a calamity to be excluded from the Christian Church; but those who, through their obstinacy, reject Christ, will mourn when in the great day they find themselves excluded from heaven, into which they said no Gentile could enter, and consigned to hell, into which they said no Jew should be cast. Moreover, no Jew would sit down to eat with a Gentile. Acts xi. 3.

12. *The children of the kingdom*—The Jews, who were destined to it, and who claimed it as theirs to the exclusion of all others. By Hebraism, son is used to denote one who has a property in that signified by the genitive noun with which it is joined. 1 Sam. xx. 30; Ezek. xxx. 5, LXX.; Luke x. 6. "Children of the kingdom," says Beza, "rather than of the King." *Shall be cast*—Alluding to uninvited or ill-behaved guests, who were excluded from the banqueting-room, which was illuminated, while all outside was midnight darkness. *There shall be weeping*—The weeping, the gnashing—that which belongs to the place; unexampled, intense. "The article," says Bengel, "is significant: in this life pain is not yet pain." They shall weep because they have lost it, and gnash their teeth because others have obtained it. The reference to the effect of the cold night air, producing gnashing of teeth, is opposed by Matt. xiii. 41, 42.

13. *Go thy way*;—Go. (See on Matt. xv. 28.) Chrysostom thinks from this, that the centurion came out to meet Christ, as he approached the house, which is not unlikely, but this does not prove it. Cf. 1 Sam. xxv. 41. *As thou hast believed*,—His faith was the measure of Christ's mercy. *In the self-same hour*.—At that very instant. The cure was perfect, as well as sudden. Luke says he was made "whole"—well, or sound.

14. *And when Jesus was come*—According to Mark i. 29, and Luke iv. 38, this occurred after the exorcism in the synagogue at Capernaum, which took place just after the call of Peter and Andrew, James and John. Matt. iv. 18-22; Mark i.

16-20. Christ seems to have made Peter's house his home while at Capernaum. Matt. xvii. 24, 25. Andrew appears to have resided with his brother. Mark i. 29. Lightfoot suggests that they removed to Capernaum, after Peter's marriage—"upon occasion of that alliance, as it seems," says Lardner. *His wife's mother*—Theophylact says, "Learn hence that marriage is no hinderance to virtue, since the chief of the apostles had his wife;" and never put her away. 1 Cor. ix. 5. *Sick of a fever*.—Confined to bed with a fever. Luke says, "a great fever, and they," i.e., her friends, "besought him for her"—begged Jesus to cure her. According to Mark, they did this as soon as he entered the house.

15. *And he touched her hand*,—Christ usually made some visible sign suitable to the miracle which he wrought. Luke says, "he stood over her, and rebuked the fever;" Mark, "he came, and took her by the hand, and lifted her up"—all significant actions. (See on v. 3, 26.) *And the fever left her*:—Mark adds "immediately." *Ministered unto them*.—Attended on them: a proof of the completeness of the cure.

16. *When the even was come*,—Mark and Luke say it was at sunset which was when the second of the two evenings began, the former beginning at the westerning of the sun: the Sabbath ended at sunset. Lev. xxiii. 32. (See on Matt. xiv. 25.) They waited till sunset, because it was the Sabbath, not "because the heat of the day would have been too distressing to the sick," nor because after the day's work men could be found to carry the sick. Christ did not invite them to bring the sick on the Sabbath, though when he fell in with them on that day he did not refuse to heal them. *Possessed with devils*:—Demoniacs. (See on Matt. iv. 24.) *With his word*,—By a word. (See on v. 28.)

17. *That it might be fulfilled*—He performed these cures in accomplishing the design of his mission, as predicted by Isaiah, (liiii. 4,) where the LXX. read, "This man beareth away our sins, and for us he is in sorrow." Matthew comes nearer the Hebrew, which may be rendered, "Our infirmities he hath borne; and our sorrows he hath carried them." The rabbins interpreted this passage of the sufferings of the Messiah for the sins of Israel; and Christian interpreters understand by it his atoning sufferings for the sins of the world; but as the diseases of the body are both the effects and symbols of the diseases of the mind, Matthew considered the prediction fulfilled—at least in part—when the former were cured by Christ, and the rather as their cure was frequently, if not always, accompanied by the pardon of sin. Isa. xxxv. 5, 6; Matt. ix. 2-8; xi. 5. *Took*—Took on him, in order to bear. *Bare*—Carried: a proper rendering of both the Hebrew and Greek. In his miracles of healing, Christ seems to have participated in the sufferings of the afflicted, bearing a deep and mysterious sympathy in them. If *infirmities* and *sicknesses* do not mean the same, the former may denote chronic debility and the latter violent disorders, as "disease and sickness," Matt. iv. 23.

18. *Now when Jesus saw great multitudes*—Mark (iv. 35) and Luke (viii. 22) place this after the parables (Matt. xiii.)—Mark chronologically: "And the same day, when the even was come." Matthew has no chronological note. *The other side*.—East of the Lake of Gennesaret: the parables were spoken on the western side. Christ avoided multitudes to prevent any suspicion of sedition.

19. *And a certain scribe*—Literally, one scribe, which some think implies that only a single scribe came to him, (*cf.* 1 Cor. i. 20, 26,) but it probably, means "a certain scribe;" *cf.* Matt. ix. 18, *et al.* Luke (ix. 57) simply says, *tis*, a certain (man), not calling him a scribe. From the contexts of these passages, it has been thought that the incidents recorded by Luke took place a considerable time after those recorded by Matthew—at least the first incident, the other two possibly being connected because of their cognate character. From the similarity of the incidents, it is generally thought that both evangelists alluded to one and the same occasion. Olshausen thinks the passage stands in a less appropriate place in Matthew, amidst a collection of miracles, than in Luke, where there is a reference to Christ's sufferings; but surely the sight of his miracles was the very thing to induce one of the scribes to offer in be his disciple, though he might be deterred on ascertaining the trials and difficulties involved in discipleship. It fits in very well after the miracles and parables recorded, Matt. xii., xiii., where the Harmonists generally place it. *Master*.—Teacher. Luke has "Lord." (See on Matt. vii. 21.) *I will follow thee*—As disciples frequently accompanied their teachers. It does not appear that the scribe had reference to the perils which were coming upon Jesus, and so spoke in the spirit of Thomas (John xi. 16) and Peter (Matt. xxvi. 35), as Olshausen thinks: he was probably influenced by a prospect of temporal advantage in Christ's kingdom, having witnessed his miracles; but Christ, by declaring his poverty, repressed his self-interested intentions.

20. *And Jesus saith unto him*,—Probably to test his motives. *The foxes have holes*,—Dens, or lairs. *The birds of the air have nests*;—Roosts, places of shelter. Ps. civ. 12; Dan. iv. 18, LXX. (See on Matt. xiii. 32.) *The Son of man*—A title, taken apparently from Dan. vii. 13, and applied, says Robinson, 84 times in the Gospels to Christ, always by himself, and once by Stephen, when he saw his glorified humanity. Acts vii. 56. The Jews understood it as a description of the Messiah, (John xii. 34,) the same person as "the Son of God," (Luke xxii. 69, 70:) the former title presents him from a human, the latter from a divine standpoint. As Neander says, "He called himself the Son of man, because he had appeared as a man; because he belonged to mankind; because he had done such great things, even for human nature (Matt. ix. 8); because he was to glorify that nature; because he was himself the realized ideal of humanity." Matt. xii. 8; John i. 52; iii. 13; v. 27; vi. 53. *Hath not where to lay his head*.—He may recline the head: a proverbial expression implying that he had no secure or fixed place of abode. This probably deterred the scribe from following Jesus. He was willing to follow him

whithersoever he went, provided the route did not go through the valley of humiliation.

21. *And another of his disciples*—Luke does not call him a disciple: "He said unto another, Follow me," which implies that he was only a disciple in the large sense of the word, as the scribe may have been; or an attendant on Christ's ministry, when in Galilee. John vi. 66. *Lord, suffer me first*—Which implies the call noted by Luke: perhaps he had just heard of his death, as he could not leave the house while there was a corpse in it. Theophylact construes it, "to reside with my father till his death." It was considered a sacred filial duty to take care of aged parents, and to bury them; though priests, Nazarites, prophets, and apostles, seem to have been exempt from the obligation. Lev. xxi. 11; Num. vi. 7; 1 Kings xix. 20; Matt. iv. 21, 22. But the language, "first to go and bury," intimates, as does the next verse, that the burying was now to be done; whereas Christ was just leaving that region, and if the disciple accompanied him he could not perform that service.

22. *Follow me;*—Accompany me as my disciple. *Let the dead bury their dead.*—Let the spiritually dead bury the naturally dead. The Jews called those who departed from the law dead. Maimonides says "The wicked are dead while yet alive." Philo: "Dead to happiness—dead to virtue; alive to evil." Clemens Alexandrinus says, "The philosophers esteemed those dead who subject the mind to sense." The Pythagoreans erected cenotaphs for those who had abandoned philosophy for pleasure. Eph. ii. 1, 5; v. 14; 1 Tim. v. 6; Rev. iii. 1. The ordinary avocations of life can be performed by such, whereas none but those who are spiritually alive, and called to the work, can fulfill the ministerial vocation, for which this man was designed—for it is added in Luke, "but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." The entire history of Christ shows that he did not hastily forbid his followers to perform any of the humane offices of social life—either to saint or sinner—much less that he wished them to leave the world to perish in the death of sin; it being his design in calling them to use them as instruments to restore it to life. He designed to teach us that when any secular work, however pressing, as, in this case, the burying of a father, comes in collision with any spiritual obligation, the former must succumb to the latter. This was, as Stier says, "a critical time of decision: this man was in actual danger of burying himself again, while burying his father." Luke records the case of a third, who volunteered to accompany Christ. (See on Luke ix. 61, 62.)

23. *And when he was entered into a ship,*—The boat—probably the same fishing-smack in which he had been preaching in the former part of the day. Mark iv. 1, 35, 36.

24. *A great tempest*—*Seismos*, commotion, hurricane; rendered "earthquake," Matt. xxiv. 7. Mark and Luke (viii. 23) have *lailaps*, which Aristotle defines, "a violent whirlwind, moving from beneath upward"—rendered "tempest," 2 Pet. ii.

17. The LXX. in Jonah i. 4, have *kludon*, as in Luke viii. 24. Luke says it "came down upon the lake"—travelers so describe the sudden gusts, or squalls, which frequently occur on the lake. Bartlett describes one which occurred after sunset: "As it grew darker, the breeze increased to a gale, the lake became a sheet of foam, and the white-headed breakers dashed proudly on the rugged beach." *Was covered with the waves*:—Was being covered. Mark: "the waves beat into the boat, so that it was now filling." Luke: "they were filling"—i.e., their boat was filling, a common metaphor—"and they were in peril." *But he was asleep*.—Wearied with the labors of the day.

25. *And his disciples*—The disciples, as the best MSS. read. *Lord, save us: we perish*.—Mark: "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" Luke is still more concise, abrupt, and earnest: "Master, Master, we perish!" It is likely all these forms of speech were used. Some would address him, as in Matt., *Kurie*, Lord; others, as in Mark, *Didaskale*, Master, Teacher, or Rabbi; and others, as in Luke, *Epistata*, *Epistata*. This last term, which is not found in the New Testament, except in Luke, is used by him in cases where there was only one speaker, and of course only one term used, and that a different one, according to the other evangelists: thus in Matt. xvii. 4, we have *Kurie*; in Mark ix. 5, *Rabbi*; and in Luke ix. 33, *Epistata*: in Mark ix. 38, *Didaskale*; Luke ix. 49, *Epistata*—as also Luke viii. 45, where the old version has "Commaundour." (See on Matt. vii. 21.) *Epistates* means one who is placed over others, as a governor or superintendent: it is equivalent to the other terms. It was not because of forgetfulness that the evangelists present this verbal variety in their reports, for the Holy Ghost brought every thing to their remembrance which was necessary to be written by them; but this had reference to the subject-matter rather than to the mere drapery.

26. *O ye of little faith?*—Distrustful ones! (See on Matt. vi. 30; xiv. 31.) Mark: "How is that ye have no faith?" Luke: "Where is your faith?" From the fear they manifested, they seemed to have no faith: from their application to Christ to save them, it appeared they had a little. *Then*—This implies that he rebuked them before he rebuked the wind and the sea: the other evangelists do not contradict this. *He arose*,—This makes the narrative more graphic, as Matt. ix. 6, 17, 19. *Rebuked the winds and the sea*:—Mark reports what he said to the sea, "Peace, be still:" *Siopa*, *pephimoso*—both words meaning Silence! the former, literally, Be dumb! the latter, Be muzzled! Stop your mouth! There is great elegance, as well as force, in the use of these two words of similar meaning, without any connective particle. *A great calm*.—All three evangelists use the word *galene*, which is generally derived from *gelao*, to smile, and well expresses the appearance of the tranquil lake; so Ovid, as rendered by Dryden: "The storm is hushed, and dimpled ocean smiles." The instant ceasing of the wind and the raging of the water, as Luke expresses it; the great calm which immediately took place, leaving none of

the fluctuation which naturally remains for some time after the storm is lulled, is a striking proof of the reality of the miracle.

27. *The men*—Probably the disciples—there is no evidence that any others were in the boat. *Marvelled*,—Wondered: they slowly became acquainted with the divine majesty of their Lord. Mark says, "they feared exceedingly"—the Greek is very nervous—they apprehended that one greater than a prophet was with them, the power to "still the raging of the sea" being considered a special divine prerogative. Ps. lxxv. 7. *What manner of man is this*,—"Man" is not in the original: "What personage is this!" Mark and Luke: "What kind of, or How great a personage is this!" Contrast the foregoing description with Virgil, AEn. i.

28. *Gergesenes*,—The authorities are about equally divided between this reading, and Gerasenes, and Gadarenes, in all three evangelists. Origen says a few copies, in his time, had Gadarenes, which he rejected because "there were no cliffs nor sea at Gadara," which was the metropolis of Perea, situated over against Tiberias and Scythopolis. It has been identified with *Um Keis*, near the crest of the chain of mountains which bound the valley of the Jordan on the east, and overlooking the Lake of Tiberias, the southern end of which bears from it north-west. On the east of the ruins there are many sepulchers hewn in the rock. Origen read in the MS. he used, Gerasenes, as in the Vulgate. Gerasa was a large city of Decapolis, near the confines of the Arabian Desert, and was so far from the lake that the miracle could not have been wrought in its vicinity, though it might have given name to a large territory, including this region. Origen says there was an ancient city called Gergesa, near the lake, close by which a rock was pointed out as the scene of this event. He suggested therefore the reading Gergesenes—i.e., Gergashites, (Josh. iii. 10,) of whom, however, we know nothing since they were expelled, and their cities were destroyed by Joshua. Thomson (Land and Book) says *Um Keis*, or Gadara, "is about three miles to the south of the extreme shore of the lake in that direction. But Gersa, or Chersa, is within a few rods of the shore, and an immense mountain rises directly above it, in which are ancient tombs, out of some of which the two men may have issued to meet Jesus. The lake is so near the base of the mountain that the swine rushing madly down it could not stop, but would be hurried on into the water and drowned. The place is one which our Lord would be likely to visit, having Capernaum in full view to the north, and Galilee 'over against it,' as Luke says it was. The name, however, as pronounced by the Bedouin Arabs, is so similar to Gergesa, that to all my inquiries for this place, they invariably said it was at Chersa, and they insisted that they were identical, and I agree with them in this opinion." This locality suits the narrative—better than that described by Stanley, the central ravine of the Wady Firk, nearly opposite Tiberias. It, moreover, favors the reading Gerasenes. *There met him*—Just as he landed, according to Mark and Luke. *Two possessed with devils*—Demoniacs. (See on Matt. iv. 24.) Mark and

Luke mention but one, probably the fiercer of the two, and the one who conversed with our Lord. *Coming out of the tombs*,—Some of the ancient tombs were cupolas, which would shelter persons; fit places of resort for demoniacs. Isa. lxxv. 4. Luke says, "there met him out of the city a certain man"—rather, "a certain man of the city:" one who belonged to the town, though now dwelling in the tombs. *Exceeding fierce*,—Aristotle applies the word to wild boars, and Xenophon to dogs.

29. *They cried out*,—Mark and Luke say one of them ran and prostrated himself before Jesus, doing him homage; whereupon Jesus commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man: this induced the exclamation, *What have we to do with thee*,—Literally, What to us and thee? A Hebrew idiom, sometimes repelling interference, as in 2 Sam. xvi. 10; 2 Chron. xxv. 21; John ii. 4; sometimes deprecating it, as here, Why dost thou molest us? Cf. 1 Kings xvii. 18; Luke iv. 34. *Son of God?*—Messiah, in the Jewish sense of the phrase. *Art thou come hither to torment us*—They seemed to apprehend that Jesus crossed the lake for the purpose of afflicting or annoying them, by depriving them of their power over their unhappy victims. *Before the time?*—Peculiar to Matthew: the day of judgment. 2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6. According to Mark, the demon solemnly objected, or, as Luke has it, besought Jesus not to torment him: and when Jesus asked his name, he said, "My name is Legion, for we are many"—a confused mingling of the singular and plural, the man perhaps speaking by the impulse of the demons, or the principal demon speaking in the name of those who were under him. They besought him not to send them out of the country, which seems to have furnished them with fit subjects for possession, and deprecated being sent into the abyss—i.e., hell. 2 Pet. ii. 4.

30. *A good way off from them*—From Christ and the demoniacs, being on the mountains, (as Mark and Luke say,) while Christ and the men were close to the shore of the lake. Mark, who is generally precise, says there were about 2,000 swine.

31. *Suffer us*—Mark has "send us." (See v. 32.)

32. *Go*.—Expressing permission rather than command: so Mark and Luke: "he suffered them"—as they had been permitted to possess the men—a greater mystery. Tertullian says, "If the devils, without Christ's leave, had no power over the Gadarenes' swine, much less have they power over Christ's sheep." *And when they were come out*,—This shows that they were not diseases, but real demons, and as there was a legion of them in one of the men, there were enough to furnish several for every one of the swine. *A steep place*—The cliff: cf. 2 Chron xxv. 12, where the LXX. have this word, *kremnos*. *The sea*,—Luke, "the lake"—not the hot wells of Gadara, as Bishop Taylor suggests! *Perished*—Mark and Luke say, "were choked"—suffocated, or drowned.

33. *The city*,—Probably Gergesa, or Gerasa. (See on v. 28.)

34. *The whole city*—The bulk of the inhabitants, including those of the adjacent country, as we learn from Mark and Luke, who say that they saw the formerly fierce and naked demoniac, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind; but when they ascertained how he had been relieved, and how the swine had been destroyed, they prayed Jesus to leave their territory, being afraid of one who possessed so much power. If they were Gentiles, it is easy to account for their superstitious terror; and if Jews, they would consider the destruction of the swine in the light of a judgment, as they were unclean and forbidden animals. Some suppose they were kept for the supply of the Roman army, which was stationed in that neighborhood; but this ought not to have been done in the land of Israel. Jesus took the Gerasenes at their word, and when he was embarked to return to Galilee, the restored demoniac wished to accompany his Benefactor—perhaps fearing a relapse; but Jesus told him to go and make known his merciful deliverance to his friends—whereupon the man published the miracle which Jesus had wrought, throughout Decapolis, occasioning universal astonishment. No ill consequences were likely to accrue from this in Perea, hence Jesus did not impose silence, as he usually did in Judea and Galilee. Perhaps Christ declined his attendance on him, so as to prevent the charge of vainglory, and to let him know that he could protect him elsewhere as well as when present. He suffered the demons to destroy the swine to show their virulency, as well as to punish the keepers of the swine for their violation of the law. Like many in our day, the Gerasenes loved their swine better than they loved their souls.

CHAPTER IX.

2 *Christ curing one side of the palsy, 9 calleth Matthew from the receipt of custom, 10 eateth with publicans and sinners, 14 defendeth his disciples for not fasting, 20 cureth the bloody issue, 23 raiseth from death Jairus' daughter, 27 giveth sight to two blind men, 32 healeth a dumb man possessed of a devil, 36 and hath compassion of the multitude.*

IX.—1. *A ship*,—The boat, probably the same which had brought them over; it was apparently kept on the lake for the use of Jesus and his disciples. *His own city*.—Capernaum. (See on Matt. iv. 13; xiii. 54. The Jewish canons say that thirty days' residence made a man an inhabitant, and a year's residence, in a city, a citizen thereof. This verse closes the narrative, begun Matt. viii. 18.

2. *And behold*,—This seems to connect the following with the foregoing, though Mark and Luke record it after the cleansing of the leper, without determining at what precise time it occurred. Mark ii. 1; Luke v. 17. *A man sick of the palsy*,—A paralytic. (See on Matt. viii. 6.) *A bed*:—Probably a litter, or

mattress. Acts v. 17. *Seeing their faith*,—Evinced by the expedient they adopted to bring the man to Jesus, viz., letting him down through the roof of the house, as recorded by Mark and Luke. *Son*,—An encouraging address. *Be of good cheer*;—Take courage. *Thy sins be forgiven thee*.—The Jews held that no diseased person could be miraculously cured till his sins were pardoned. Ps. ciii. 3. This may be doubted, yet as sin and disease are intimately related, the removal of the one may well be attended by the removal of the other: the faith demanded for pardon is near akin to that demanded for a miraculous cure. Christ saw that the man had this faith.

3. *Certain of the scribes*—And the Pharisees. Luke v. 17, 21. (See on Matt. ii. 4; iii. 7; xxiii. 4.) *Said within themselves*,—Mark: "reasoning in their hearts"—implying an active state of the understanding: their argument was, "It is blasphemy for any but God to assume the prerogative of forgiving sins; but this man does so: therefore he *blasphemeth*." The Jews reasoned in a similar way, (John x. 31-36,) when they were ready to stone Jesus, stoning being the penalty of blasphemy. Lev. xxiv. 15, 16.

4. *Knowing their thoughts*,—John ii. 24, 25. *Wherefore think ye evil*—Why these false and injurious reasonings concerning my character and claims? When they perceived that Jesus knew their thoughts, they ought to have been prepared to recognize his claims, as the power of reading the heart was one of their criteria of the Messiah.

5. *Whether is easier*—Which is easier: he who can say with effect, Arise and walk, can say with effect, Thy sins are forgiven.

6. *But that ye may know*—The speech and narrative seem here intermixed, as in Gen. iii. 22, 23. The simple construction would be, "But that ye may know—I say thus to the paralytic;" or, "But that they may know—then saith he." No ingenuous person could doubt that he who could miraculously cure the paralytic, could also forgive his sins, if he assumed the prerogative to do so. Where there is the inherent *dunamis*, power, or energy, to perform miracles, there is also the *exousia*, power, or authority, to forgive sins. (See on Matt. x. 1.) *The Son of man*—(See on Matt. viii. 20.) *On earth*—Implying, as Bengel suggests, that he was in heaven before he was on earth. *Arise, take up thy bed*,—Christ commonly required some work of those whom he healed. Mark i. 44; v. 19; John v. 8.

7. *And he arose*,—A proof of his cure. (See Mark and Luke, and on Matt. viii. 26.)

8. *They marvelled*,—Or feared, as many MSS., versions, and editors read: though, according to Mark and Luke, they were also transported with wonder. *And glorified God, which had given such power unto men*.—Alluding to v. 6, "the Son of man hath power"—the same word, authority—"to forgive sins," and to prove

it by a miracle. They were filled with wonder, reverence, and gratitude, when they saw that God had imparted such authority over physical and moral evil, to one of the race of men—having no knowledge of Christ's higher nature.

9. *And as Jesus passed forth from thence*,—To the sea-side; (Mark ii. 13;) Capernaum being near the Lake of Tiberias. *Matthew*,—Mark says, "Levi, the son of Alphaeus:" Luke, "a publican named Levi"—it was common for the Jews to have two names. (See on Matt. x. 3.) Though Matthew nowhere calls himself Levi, and Mark and Luke never call Matthew Levi elsewhere, yet the early tradition which makes Levi a different person from Matthew is not to be regarded. *At the receipt of custom*:—At the custom-house, or toll-office. The publicans had booths on the great roads, lakes, and rivers. *Follow me*.—Be my disciple. *And he arose, and followed him*.—Being doubtless acquainted with the character of Jesus, and ready to make any sacrifice involved in discipleship. Luke v. 28.

10. *As Jesus*—Greek, "as he," meaning Jesus. *Sat at meat*—Literally, reclined, alluding to the recumbent posture at table. *In the house*—Of Matthew, who modestly omits that, which is stated by Luke, who says it was "a great feast"—"a feast for all comers," as Beza and Leigh say—*cf.* Luke xiv. 13. Lardner says, "Matthew, it is likely, was willing to take leave of his former acquaintances in a civil manner. He was likewise desirous that they should converse with Jesus." Matthew, Mark, and Luke place the feast immediately after the call; but the Harmonists generally place the healing of the paralytic and the call of Matthew immediately after the tour through Galilee, recorded Mark i. 39; ii. 1, and the feast some six months later, after the cure of the Gerasene demoniacs: *cf.* Matt. ix. 18; Mark v. 20-22; Luke viii. 39-41. It does not follow that because Matthew left all and followed Christ, that he did not, as well as Peter, remain the proprietor of his own house in Capernaum until the day of Pentecost. "No doubt," says Donne, "but he returned often to the settling of his office, and the rectifying of his accounts." On the other hand, there is nothing in the Gospels which proves that the feast and the raising of the daughter of Jairus did not take place in the order observed by Matthew. The disciples who were present are not specified as the twelve apostles, though it is likely the twelve were present, whether or not they had been designated as apostles. Mark ii. 15; Luke vi. 13. *Publicans*—(See on Matt. v. 46.) *Sinners*—Notoriously wicked persons. Luke vi. 32; xv. 1.

11. *And when the Pharisees saw it*,—And having observed this, the Pharisees said—not that they were present at the feast: they would not be found in such company, considering it polluting. Luke associates with them the scribes who taught the law in Capernaum. (See on Matt. ii. 4; iii. 7.) *Why eateth your Master*—Luke, "Why do ye eat and drink"—they asked this of the disciples after the feast, and the disciples reported it to Jesus; though there is nothing to forbid

the supposition that some of the Pharisees propounded the question to Christ himself. They demanded his authority or reason for so doing.

12. *They that be whole*—The sound in health: a proverbial expression. When Antisthenes was asked why he conversed with wicked men he said, "Physicians are with the diseased." Diogenes was asked why he praised the Lacedemonians, but lived not with them: he answered, "Physicians live not with the healthy, but with the sick." Philo calls the *Logos* "the healer of diseases."

13. *But go ye and learn*—A rabbinical form of referring to the Scriptures: it was of pungent force as applied to the scribes, the expounders of the law. *I will have mercy*,—Hos. vi. 6: "I desired mercy"—philanthropy, humanity, kindness. *And not sacrifice*:—The LXX. read, "rather than," which is the meaning of Hosea and Christ. Sacrifice is put for ceremonial observances in general, which were always considered of less value than moral duties, though they were of great importance as shadows of good things to come. (See on Matt. xii. 7; Heb. x. 1-10.) The Chaldee paraphrase has, "For in those who exercise mercy is my delight more than in sacrifice." *I am not come to call the righteous*,—Who have no need to be called from a life of sin, which they have already abandoned, to a life of virtue, which their are now living. Of course, the proverb has an ironical application to the Pharisees, who really needed repentance as much as the publicans.

14. The *disciples of John*,—Mark adds, "and of the Pharisees," and says they "used to fast"—a remark made perhaps for the information of those who were not acquainted with Jewish customs—in Mark's style: cf. Luke v. 33, where it is added, "and make prayers"—practice ascetic devotions. Matt. vi. 5-18; xi. 18, 19; Luke xviii. 11, 12. The Pharisees fasted every Monday and Thursday, and on many occasions, as in times of pestilence, famine, war, inundations, droughts, (on account of which they sometimes appointed 13 fast-days,) dreams, etc. *Thy disciples fast not?*—Do not observe those frequent fasts, though it is likely they fasted on a few special occasions. Matt. vi. 16-18; xvii. 21. John's disciples did not ask the reason why they and the Pharisees fasted often—they were satisfied with the reason of that—but they wanted to know why Christ's disciples did not do as they did. They were probably instigated by the Pharisees, in order to sow discord between them and Christ and his disciples.

15. *Children of the bride-chamber*—The friends, or companions, of the bridegroom, were called, by a Hebraism, sons of the bride-chamber, because they had access to it during the bridal feast. Jud. xiv. 10, 11; Tobit vi. 13. *Mourn*,—Fast, as in Mark and Luke, fasting being an expression of mourning. Mark adds, "they cannot fast"—they cannot do it consistently. While Christ, the Bridegroom of the Church, was present, it was a time of rejoicing, but when he was removed by death, it was a time of mourning. It is not necessary to look for

any farther and mystical meaning, referring to the vicissitudes of the Christian life, or to suppose that Christ alluded to the Jewish saying, reported in Maimonides, "All fasting shall cease in the days of the Messiah; when there shall be only festivals, as it is written, Zech. viii. 19"—thereby proclaiming himself the Messiah. He seems to allude to what John himself said, John iii. 28, 29.

16. *No man putteth*—Mark, "seweth." *A piece of new cloth*—Literally, rough from the weaver, unfulled, harsh, such as will not yield like the old cloth, but will tear away the edges of that to which it is sewed; it here probably means new and strong; the old garment being nearly worn out. Luke has "a piece of a new garment"—which means the same—"if otherwise"—if he does so, he will both rend the new garment, (by taking out the piece,) and the piece from the new garment will not agree with the old; thus both will be injured: the new will lose its completeness, and the old its consistency. *The rent is made worse*.—A worse rent is made.

17. *Bottles*:—Tyndale, "vessels"—made of sheep and goat-skins, in general use among the Orientals and in the southern parts of Europe. When they are new, they are easily distended, but when old and stiff, they burst by the fermentation of new wine. Speaking of wine, Christ utters another proverb, recorded alone by Luke: "And no one having drunk old wine, immediately desireth new; for he saith, The old is better"—because he has acquired a taste for the old, and not for the new. Perhaps all that Christ meant to teach by these illustrations is this: that as, in common life, it would be incongruous for a man to mourn at a marriage, to patch a worn-out garment with a piece of new cloth, to put new wine into old skins, so it would be incongruous for his disciples to practice the austerities of the disciples of the Pharisees and of John the Baptist: and such a course (and *vice versa*) is as little to be expected as for a man to relish new wine when he has been accustomed to drink old.

18. *While he spake these things*—Mark and Luke place the raising of the daughter of Jairus immediately after the cure of the Gerasene demoniac; but they do not say it took place just as Christ landed on the western side of the lake, whereas Matthew makes that miracle immediately succeed the feast in his house, which had been immediately preceded by the call of Matthew and the cure of the paralytic. These occurrences may be introduced chronologically between Mark v. 21 and 22, and Luke viii. 40 and 41. (See on v. 10.) *A certain ruler*,—Mark and Luke say, "one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name"—the Hebrew Jair. Num. xxxii. 41. (See on Matt. iv. 23.) *Worshipped him*,—Mark and Luke, "fell at his feet." (See on Matt. viii. 2.) *My daughter*—Mark uses a diminutive, meaning, "my dear little daughter." Luke says she was an only-begotten daughter, about twelve years of age. *Is even now dead*:—Matthew omits the message from the house, Luke viii. 49, and states the case concisely: she is just dead. He perhaps

said, "I left her dying: she is doubtless by this time dead"—which reconciles the evangelists. *Come and lay thy hand upon her*—2 Kings v. 11. Acts iv. 30. *And she shall live*.—Mark, "that she may be healed"—saved, delivered from death—"and she shall live"—whether dying or dead: his faith was great, but not so great as that of the centurion, Matt. viii. 5-10.

19. *And Jesus arose*,—The style is picturesque. According to Mark and Luke, a multitude followed him. "Rudeness, curiosity, and good-will, were mingled in the motley crowd."

20. *An issue of blood*—Lev. xv. 19-33. *The hem*—A tassel of threads suspended from each of the four "wings," or corners, of the upper garment. Tassels of this sort were worn by the Jews in obedience to the command, Num. xv. 38, 39; Deut. xxii. 12; Matt. xxiii. 5.

21. *For she said within herself*,—She thought. *If I may but touch his garment*,—The secrecy and delicacy of the expedient, in view of the unclean character of her disease, are not more noteworthy than the woman's faith. *I shall be whole*.—Restored to health. This was great faith, but not so great as that of the centurion, who believed that Christ could speak the word at a distance, and perform the cure. Matt. viii. 8. She knew that diseased persons were healed by the Saviour's touch, from which she seemed to be debarred by her uncleanness, according to Jewish notions, but her faith substituted the garment for the person of Jesus, and that faith was rewarded. Mark vi. 50; Luke vi. 19; Acts v. 15; xix. 12.

22. *But Jesus turned him about*,—Turning and seeing her—having consciously exerted his miracle-working power. (See Mark.) *Daughter, be of good comfort*:—An encouraging address, as in ver. 2, in view of her apprehensions. (See Mark.) *Thy faith hath made thee whole*.—Restored thee to health—obtained from Christ a cure—not the touch, as if by some magical virtue. Mark and Luke go more into details.

23. *And when Jesus came into the ruler's house*,—According to Mark, while he was speaking to the woman, certain persons (Luke specifies but one—probably there were several, but only one spoke) came from the ruler's house, reporting that his daughter was dead; and as they had no conception that he could raise her from the dead, though he might be able to cure her at the point of death, they begged him not to give the Teacher any farther trouble: Jesus overhearing them, said to him, "Fear not, only believe"—Luke adds, "and she shall be saved"—restored to life. To prevent confusion, he would not permit the people to crowd into the house; but that there might be suitable witnesses of the miracle, he took with him the three leading apostles, Peter, James, and John, and naturally enough allowed the father and mother of the maiden to remain; Mark's narrative is the most

graphic, as usual. *And saw the minstrels*—The custom of making a loud lamentation over deceased friends, and hiring persons for the purpose, is alluded to Jer. ix. 17-21; xlvi. 36-39; Amos v. 16. Maimonides says that the poorest Jews had two pipers and one mourning woman; but Grotius says, the piper belonged to a later than the prophetic age. They were accustomed to drink excessively on those occasions, so that the Sanhedrim had to limit each person to ten cups! The Greeks and Romans, and indeed almost all ancient nations, kept up this practice, which is observed by many half-civilized persons at the present day. The tumultuous lamentation, and the drinking, are but too closely copied by the Irish in their wakes and ullaloos. Hackett says, "During my stay in Jerusalem, I frequently heard a singular cry issuing from the houses in the neighborhood of the place where I lodged, or from those in the streets through which I passed—no doubt, in most instances, the signal of the death of some person in the house from which it was heard. It is customary when a member of the family is about to die, for the friends to watch the precise moment, when he breathes his last; upon which they set up instantly a united outcry, attended with weeping, and often with beating upon the breast, and tearing out the hair of the head. How exactly, at the moment of the Saviour's arrival, did the house of Jairus correspond with the condition of one at the present time, in which a death has just taken place! It resounded with the same boisterous expressions of grief for which the natives of the East are still noted. The lamentation must have commenced, also, at the instant of the child's decease; for when Jesus arrived, he found the mourners already present, and singing the death-like dirge. The use of instruments of music at such a time is not universal, but depends on the circumstances of the family. It involves some expense, which cannot always be afforded. Mr. Lane mentions that it is chiefly at the funerals of the rich, among the Egyptians, that musicians are employed to contribute their part to the mournful celebration. The minstrels, therefore, appear very properly in this particular history, Jairus being a person of rank."

24. *Give place*:—Retire—Mark: "Why do ye make this tumultuous lamentation and weep?" *The maid is not dead, but sleepeth*.—This figurative language does not mean that her spirit had not departed, but that it would be restored to the body so speedily, as that her death should be like a sleep. Segneri well says, "An impostor would have used every means to convince them that she was really dead, in order to set off to the best advantage the wonder of the recovery." The objections of Woolston and others to this miracle, and those of the raising of the young man at Nain and Lazarus, are fully met by Lardner in his "Vindication." *And they laughed him to scorn*.—Derided him: "knowing that she was dead," as Luke adds, and not comprehending Christ's figurative language.

25. *The people were put forth*,—The mourners who were in the damsel's room. *He went in*,—Taking with him, as Mark says, the father and mother, (who, though in the house, were not in the room of the deceased,) and also Peter, James, and

John: these five persons could witness the miracle without interruption, the noisy crowd and vagrant minstrels being excluded. *Took her by the hand*,—Not to raise her up, or to ascertain whether or not she was dead, but, as usual, to accompany the miracle with some outward act. (See on Matt. viii. 3; Mark vii. 32, 33.) Peter took Dorcas by the hand to lift her up, but that was after, in answer to prayer, she was restored to life. It seemed proper for the Master alone to take a dead person by the hand, in a kind and friendly manner. *And the maid arose*.—According to Mark and Luke, Christ had said, "Maid, arise." Mark, in his usual manner, says she "instantly arose and walked"—a proof of her restoration, not to the feeble state to which she was reduced before her death, but to health as well as life. As a farther proof of the completeness of the miracle, and perhaps to indicate his tender care, "he commanded that something should be given her to eat." As usual, he forbore to do by extra-ordinary, what they could do by ordinary means: he economized, so to speak, his miracle-working powers. Cf. John xi. 44.

26. *And the fame hereof went abroad*—Notwithstanding Christ gave the people strict charges that they should not tell any one of it. (See on Matt. viii. 4.) From *pheme* (Lat. *fama*) we get our word fame: here it means, "this story"—"the report of this miracle."

27. *Thence*,—This probably refers to the house of Jairus. *Son of David*,—A title by which the Jews designated the Messiah. (See on Matt. i. 1.) The blind men had, doubtless, heard of the miracles by which the Messiahship of Jesus was attested, and of the prophecy, Isa. xxxv. 5; xlii. 7. *Have mercy on us*.—Pity us. *Eleos* means pity, when misery is its object—mercy, in the case of sin. (See on Matt. xv. 22.)

28. *The house*,—Probably Peter's, where Jesus lodged when in Capernaum. "He cured the blind in the house," says Le Clerc, "so as not to excite the people to take any steps in his favor." *To do this?*—Perform the cure implied in their request. He wanted to elicit their faith.

29. *Then touched he their eyes*,—To show that the miraculous power emanated from him. (See on v. 25.) *According to your faith*,—Your faith shall be crowned with the blessing you seek. Matt. viii. 13.

30. *And their eyes were opened*;—They received the faculty of sight—a proof that they had faith in Christ's ability to help them, and that it was not misplaced. *Straitly charged*—Charged strictly; involving the idea of anger or great displeasure in case of disobedience. Mark i. 43. (See on Matt. viii. 4, 34.) Their violation of so emphatic a command, no matter what may have been their motive, was wrong.

31. *In all*—Throughout all that region. Cf. v. 26; Luke vii. 17. The foregoing miracle is recorded by Matthew alone: so the following.

32. *A dumb man possessed with a devil.*—A dumb demoniac: a man who had been made dumb by a demon, who had taken possession of him. This case is like that, Matt. xii. 22; Luke xi. 14; but the latter must not be identified with the former, as there are several notes of difference in the occurrences themselves, as well as the time of their taking place. This was *as they went out*,—As they were going out, viz., of the house in which the blind men were cured: (ver. 28.)

33. *It was never so seen in Israel.*—Prophets had miraculously healed the sick and raised the dead, but it was a prerogative of the Messiah to cast out demons: the pretended exorcisms of the Jews had never been followed by such results as they now witnessed.

34. *But the Pharisees said,*—Whether the Pharisees at Capernaum invented this subterfuge, or the heads of the sect at Jerusalem instructed their adherents to resort to it, does not appear. (See on Matt. xii. 24-30.)

35. *And Jesus went about*—As was said of him in his first tour through Galilee. (See on Matt. iv. 23, 24.) This is generally called his second tour, and is identified with that spoken of in Luke viii. 1; though some consider it the third, and that in Luke viii. 1, a second, occurring some six months before this; but there is nothing in Luke to oppose the general opinion.

36. *The multitudes,*—The crowds in all the places visited. *He was moved with compassion*—The Greek expresses that commotion or yearning of the bowels which accompanies the feeling of pity or other emotions: according to the Hebrews, the bowels were the seat of the benevolent affections. Gen. xliii. 30; Prov. xii. 10. The New Testament writers do not appear to use the word with any special reference to its etymology: to pity, or have compassion, is its general import. Mark ix. 22. Here it means, he felt sorry for them. *They fainted,*—The best authorities read, they were harassed—margin, "were tired." *And were scattered abroad,*—Margin, "lay down"—as Trench says, "cast themselves along for very weariness, unable to travel any farther. The Vulgate had it rightly *jacentes*, which Wiclif follows, 'lying down.' Our present rendering dates as far back as Tyndale, and was retained in the subsequent versions, while the correct translation is relegated to the margin." Jesus saw the multitudes from Galilee and beyond Jordan, fatigued with journeying, and dispersed about the fields, and he compassionated their moral condition, which was symbolized by their external state; hence he began to teach them, and to express a desire that they might be supplied with an adequate number of suitable teachers. The Jewish teachers acted more like wolves than shepherds.

37. *Plenteous,*—Rendered "great" Luke x. 2—abundant. There are multitudes to be gathered into the Church: cf. John iv. 35. *Labourers*—The Greek word is

specially applied to agricultural laborers—reapers. Matt. xxi. 2, 8; Jas. v. 4. The rabbins call teachers reapers, and their work a harvest. Cf. 1 Cor. iii. 9.

38. *The Lord of the harvest*,—The proprietor of the farm, who alone has the prerogative of employing the reapers. *That he will send forth*—As from rest to toil—with authority and urgency. This was just on the eve of his sending forth the twelve. Luke (x. 3) has it not there, but at the sending forth of the seventy. Stier says, "Jesus, in his meekness, speaks of the Father as the Lord of the harvest, but we also understand it of himself, the Son, (Matt. iii. 12,) even as he then forthwith sends forth the laborers." Those who were instructed thus to pray, are themselves made the laborers; and whoever thus prays, offers himself as a laborer to the Lord of the harvest.

CHAPTER X.

1 *Christ sendeth out his twelve apostles, enabling them with power to do miracles, 5 giveth them their charge, teacheth them, 16 comforteth them against persecutions, 40 and promiseth a blessing to those that receive them.*

X.—1. *And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples*,—He had a multitude of disciples in a general sense, (John vi. 66,) but he had selected twelve for a specific purpose: the number perhaps was chosen to correspond with the twelve patriarchs and tribes of Israel. Luke xxii. 30; Rev. xxi. 12, 14. Luke generally calls them "the twelve"—which is probably the true reading in Luke ix. 1: "his disciples," or "apostles," as some read, may have been added, from the margin—a gloss to conform it to Matthew. Matthew makes no mention of their choosing: Mark and Luke record their election after the account of the healing of the man with a withered hand. Mark iii. 13; Luke vi. 12. *Power*—Authority, the word used by Mark, iii. 15; vi. 7. Luke has "power and authority"—capacity and prerogative. (See on Matt. ix. 6.) *Against*—A gloss, admitted into some MSS. and versions. Luke has "over"—which is the sense. *Unclean spirits*,—Luke, "all devils"—all the demons, who being unclean themselves, influence men to uncleanness, to sin of every kind. Zech. xiii. 2. (See on Matt. xii. 31.) *Sickness*,—A violent disorder. *Disease*.—A chronic debility. (See on Matt. iv. 23, 24.) Curing diseases and exorcism are probably united because possessions were usually attended with corporeal sickness. As the power to expel demons and to cure diseases was derived from Jesus, and exercised in his name, it ratified his divine legation as truly as if exercised by himself.

2. *Apostles*—From *apostello*, to send away. Herodotus (i. 21) applies it to a herald, or ambassador; and in the LXX., 1 Kings xiv. 6, Abijah calls himself "a hard apostle" to the wife of Jeroboam—that is, messenger—in which sense it is used John xiii. 16; 2 Cor. viii. 2, 3; Phil. ii. 27, and applied to Christ, Heb. iii. 1,

he having been sent forth by the Father. John x. 36; xx. 21. The twelve were so styled because they were especially sent forth by Christ: the name is distinctively appropriated to them, (Eph. ii. 20; iv. 11; Rev. xxi. 14,) as they were to have no successors in their peculiar ministry. The number twelve appears to have been kept up during the first generation of the Christian era, Matthias having been numbered with the apostles to fill the vacancy occasioned by the fall of Judas, (Acts i. 15-26,) and Paul to supply the place of James, who suffered martyrdom under Herod; (Acts xii. 1, 2;) unless Barnabas, who appears to be called an apostle, (Acts xiv. 14,) filled one of these vacancies; as some think the apostleship of Matthias was repudiated by the Head of the Church, who commissioned apostles by extraordinary vocation. Acts xiii. 2; xxvi. 16; Gal. i. This first communication of the gifts of the Spirit to the apostles, referring to miraculous cures, prepared the way for an enlarged communication after Christ's resurrection, and the impartation of plenary powers for the apostleship on the day of Pentecost.

The first, Simon,—Protos, used in an adverbial sense, means first, in order, not in dignity—as Theophylact observes, "because Peter and Andrew were first called." (See on Matt. iv. 18; xvi. 16-18; John i. 40-42.) As Peter is put first in the catalogue in the three evangelists and Acts i., and as he appears to have had a precedency among the apostles, being frequently their spokesman and representative, the term *protos* may not be improperly applied to him, as indicating simply, the first among equals; but the notion of any other primacy, such as the permanent supremacy of Peter and his successors over the catholic Church, is simply absurd: it is not intimated in Scripture, but rather precluded by various passages, e.g., Matt. xix. 27, 28; xx. 25, 26; 1 Cor. ix. 5; Gal. ii. 7-14; 1 Pet. v. 1-3. If *protos* established Peter's supremacy, the other evangelists would not have omitted it. Epiphanius thought Andrew was older than Peter, but Chrysostom and Bede say Peter was the elder, and Jerome and Cassian say that was the ground of his precedence. Simon, sometimes written Simeon, or Symeon, (Acts xv. 4; 2 Pet. i. 1,) was a common Hebrew name, meaning, "that hears or obeys." *Andrew*—A Greek name, meaning "a strong man." He is first mentioned John i. 40-44, and last, Acts i. 13. *James*—Hebrew *Jacob*, meaning, "he who supplants." *John*—Hebrew *Yehochanan*, meaning, "the grace of the Lord." These two pairs are put together, and put first, in the three Gospels and Acts, because they were brothers, were called before the rest, and three of them were chosen to be exclusive witnesses of some events in our Lord's history, though Andrew is put fourth in Mark and Acts.

3. *Philip*,—A Greek name, signifying "a lover of horses." *Bartholomew*;—As Nathanael was called at the same time with Philip, (John i. 43-51,) and as he is not mentioned by any of the evangelists except John, who never mentions Bartholomew, (John xxi. 2,) it seems evident that these are two names for the same person, and the rather as Bartholomew is a surname, meaning, son of

Tholomai, or Ptolemy, Nathanael, son of Ptolemy. *Thomas*,—John (xi. 16; xx. 24) says that he was called Didymus, which is a Greek translation of Thomas, which comes from the Hebrew *Teom*, a twin. *Matthew*—Probably from the Hebrew Mattathias, meaning, "a gift of Jehovah." *Son of Alpheus*,—Probably not the Alpheus, who was the father of James the Less: he is called Levi, Mark ii. 14; Luke v. 27, 29. (See on Matt. ix. 8.) The adjunct, *the publican*, is found in Matthew's Gospel alone: he affixed it quite likely from motives of humility. Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, and Matthew, though not in the same order, constitute the second quaternion in the lists of the apostles, in all the Synoptics and the Acts. Matthew puts Thomas before himself: Mark and Luke do not: in Acts, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew. *James the son of Alpheus*,—Called the Lord's brother, Mark vi. 3; Gal. i. 19, or kinsman, probably because he was the son of Mary, a sister of Mary the mother of Christ, and wife of Clopas, (John xix. 25,) who is supposed to be the same as Cleopas, (Luke xxiv. 18,) who is thus identified with Alpheus—the Hebrew *Chalphai* without the aspirate. He is called, (Mark xv. 40,) "the Less"—literally, the little: being probably a small man, like Zaccheus; (Luke xix. 3;) though it is generally considered positive for comparative, less, viz., than the other James, but whether in size or age cannot be determined. He is called the Just, because of his reputation for sanctity. He was one of the apostles of the circumcision, (Gal. ii. 9,) and was of great reputation among the apostles. Acts xv. 13. The Epistle of James is generally credited to him. He is supposed to be the James spoken of in the Talmud as the disciple of Jesus the carpenter, and to whom miracles are attributed, and by Josephus, (Ant. xx. 9. 1,) as "the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ," who was stoned to death by order of Ananus the high-priest, after the death of Festus, and before the arrival of his successor Albinus, about A.D. 64. *Lebbeus*,—In Luke vi. 16 and Acts i. 13, he is called "Judas, the brother of James." Judas, Judah, or Jude, means "the praise of the Lord," and Thaddeus means "that praises:" both come from the Hebrew *yadah*, "he praised." *Whose surname was Thaddeus*;—Is not found in some MSS. of Matthew; others, with the Vulgate, have only Thaddeus. Lebbeus, probably meaning "a man of heart," from the Hebrew *labab*, the heart, is found only in this place: it may have been given to Judas to indicate his zealous, earnest spirit. Jerome renders it *corculum*, a little heart: it was given to P. Scipio Nasica on account of his wisdom. For the same reason that his brother, James the Less, is called Christ's brother, he is so called, Matt. xiii. 55; Mark vi. 3. He is alluded to, John xiv. 22, as a Judas distinct from Judas Iscariot; and in the inscription of his Epistle, he modestly calls himself "Jude, (Judas,) the servant of Jesus Christ, and the brother of James." From his having three names, Jerome calls him *Trionomos*, triple-named.

4. *Simon*—Generally identified with Simon, the brother of James and Judas. (See on Matt. xiii. 55.) *The Canaanite*,—*Kananites* ought not to be translated

Canaanite, as if it came from Canaan; but Cananite—not one who lived in Cana—as it comes from the Hebrew, *kana*—Aramean, *kanan*, zealous; hence Luke translates it *Zelotes*, i.e., Simon the Zealot. Some think he was so called because of his zeal as an apostle; but it is generally supposed that it was because he had belonged to a party among the Jews called the Zealots, who manifested great zeal for the law, and executed vengeance on all its enemies, after the example of Phinehas. Ps. cvi. 30. Whatever they may have been in their early history, in the time of Josephus they were, as he says, "emulous of the greatest wickedness." *Judas Iscariot*,—Son of one Simon, who in some MSS. of John vi. 71; xiii. 26, is called Iscariot; but *cf.* John xii. 4; xiii. 2. *Iskariotes* is probably the Greek form of the Hebrew *ish-Kerioth*, a man of Kerioth, a town in the south of Judah, (Josh. xv. 25,) where Judas was probably born. Hackett suggests that Khureitun is a corruption of Kerioth: it is a few miles south of Bethlehem, and is the site of one of the most remarkable caves in Palestine. *Who also betrayed him*.—Or, as in Luke, "even he who proved a traitor." He is thus distinguished from Judas, the brother of James. It is not inconsistent with the impartial and unimpassioned style of the sacred historians, thus to designate this base apostate. John xii. 4; xiii. 2, 21; xviii. 2, 5. James, the son of Alphaeus, Judas Lebbeus, or Thaddeus, Simon Zelotes, and Judas Iscariot, constitute the third quaternion; three of them, it is likely, being cousins of Jesus: they are put in the third class by all the synoptics and in Acts: Judas Iscariot, in all the lists, with obvious propriety, is put last. The traditional history of the apostles is collected and epitomized in Cave's "Lives of the Apostles"—not much dependence, however, can be placed on it.

5. *These twelve*—They had been recognized as "the twelve" ever since they had been formally separated, or selected, from the mass of disciples, several months before. Mark iii. 13, 14. Peter, Andrew, James the Greater, John, Philip, Bartholomew, and Matthew, and perhaps the rest, had been longer with him; but now, as Mark (vi. 7) says, "he began to send them forth"—their apostleship actually dates from this time. "Having yoked the apostles two and two," says Macarius, "he sent them forth." By going in pairs, they could encourage and support each other, and bear more effectual testimony to the truth. *Go not into the way of the Gentiles*,—The way that leads (*cf.* Jer. ii. 18) to the territory of the Gentiles. *The Samaritans*—Occupied that part of the land of Israel which had Samaria for its capital, between Judea and Galilee. They were chiefly a Cuthean race planted there by Shalmaneser, when he carried the ten tribes into captivity. 2 Kings xvii. They at first worshipped idols; they then blended the worship of Jehovah with their idolatry; and in process of time, abandoned idolatry altogether. They obtained a copy of the Pentateuch, and built a temple on Mount Gerizim. A wretched remnant of them, numbering some 160, still exists at Naplous, the ancient Shechem. They perpetuate their animosity toward the Jews, to whom they bear no resemblance. They have always been detested by the latter. John iv. 9; viii.

48. The apostles were not allowed to execute their mission among any other people than the Jews, until the other of the gospel had been made to the Jews, as they constituted the visible Church; they were "the children of the kingdom," and Christ did not wish to do any thing that might unnecessarily prejudice them against the gospel. His own ministry among the Gentiles and Samaritans was but an incidental exception. He, however, intimated that this exclusiveness was to be only temporary. John x. 16. Though the apostles were not at that time permitted to go to any heathen nation, or into any city of the Samaritans while passing through their territory, it does not follow that they were to exclude all individuals of these people from the benefits of their ministry.

6. *The lost sheep*—The Jewish Church is frequently compared to a fold, and the Jews to wandering sheep, because of their frequent apostasies. Ps. xcvi. 7; c. 3; Jer. xxiii. 1-4; Ezek. xxxiv.; Zech. xi.; John x. 16; 1 Pet. ii. 25. *The house of Israel*.—The family, or descendants, of Jacob. Ps. cxv. 12; Ezek. xviii. 29-31.

7. *The kingdom of heaven is at hand*.—This indicates the preparatory character of their present mission. (See on Matt. iii. 2.) They were not yet to teach, etc., as in Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Col. i. 26-28.

8. *Heal the sick*,—As the article is not used in the Greek, the meaning is, perhaps, such sick persons, lepers, etc., as Providence might indicate. *Raise the dead*,—As these words are not in Mark and Luke, and in many MSS. and versions of Matthew, many critics consider them an interpolation; but they are found in the best MSS. and versions, and are probably genuine. Some who admit their genuineness, think that Christ did not intend that the apostles should raise any dead persons until after his resurrection. But why may they not have none so? Could not Providence throw suitable cases in their way at that time, as well as afterward, and indicate to them the propriety of thus exercising their miracle-working power, although no such cases are recorded, as there are none of cleansing lepers? *Freely*—They were not to make a trade of their miraculous gifts, as did the Jewish exorcists of their pretended power. Acts viii. 18-20; xvi. 16. This has no bearing on the maintenance of the ministry: *cf.* ver. 10; 1 Cor. ix.; Gal. vi. 6.

9. *Provide*—Get not gold, silver, or copper money, to put into your purses. Mark has only copper; Luke only silver—both meaning money in general. Mark xii. 41; Matt. xxv. 18, 27. So *aes* and *argent* are used. *Purses*;—Girdles. Speaking of the Arabs in Barbary, Dr. Shaw says, "One end of their girdles being doubled back, and sewn along the edges, serves them for a purse, agreeably to the acceptation of the word *zone*, which in Matt. x. 9; Mark vi. 8, we render a purse." In Horace (Epis. ii. 2), one who has lost his *zona*, is one who has lost his purse. So Job xiv. 17; Prov. i. 14, LXX.

10. *Nor*—The same negative as in the beginning of ver. 8, in the original, to sustain the period and give force to the prohibition. *Scrip*—A satchel, or wallet, frequently made of leather, hung around the neck to carry provisions in: So Homer (Ody. xvii.): "They filled his scrip with bread and meat." Cf. Faery Queene, i. 6, 35, etc, Mark and Luke add "*bread.*" *Neither two coats*,—No extra tunic, sandals, or staff. These instructions not only indicate the dispatch with which they were to execute their commission, but also the fact that they were to depend on those whom they served for the supply of their necessary wants—a coat, a pair of sandals, if those they wore gave out, or a staff if the one they had got broken or lost. Perhaps the singular, *staff*, is the right reading in Matthew and Luke, and does not conflict with the injunction in Mark: they might carry a staff if they had one, but they were not to get one as for a journey. So of shoes. (See on Matt. iii. 11.) *Meat*.—Maintenance, every thing needful. In Luke x. 7; 1 Tim. v. 18, the word is "hire." The sentiment seems to be proverbial. It means more than is expressed, viz., that the workman not only deserves a support, but may reasonably expect it, especially when employed in God's service. Num. xviii. 31; Matt. ix. 37; 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14. Though the letter of these instructions cannot apply to the permanent ministry, yet the spirit of them does.

11. *Town*—Rendered "village," Matt. ix. 35, as contrasted with city. *Worthy*;—Of your company: of good reputation, and willing to receive you. Their mission was to all kinds of persons, but it was not prudent for them to lodge with all indiscriminately. *There abide*—Their hurried mission would not give them time to go from house to house (Luke x. 7), though it would not absolutely debar them from accepting an invitation; and their sacred character was inconsistent with fastidiousness in regard to their accommodations—while their services amply compensated for the hospitality they received. This has nothing to do with pastoral visiting from house to house. Acts xx. 20.

12. *An house*,—The house, viz., of the person spoken of, ver. 11. *Salute it*.—Wish it peace: the Oriental salam. The form, "Peace be to this house," is added in some MSS. and versions, taken perhaps from Luke x. 5. The rabbins, say, "Great is peace, for all other blessings are comprehended in it."

13. *The house*—Meaning here its inmates. *Be not worthy*,—As they might sometimes be misinformed as to who was worthy. *Let your peace return to you*.—Your benedictions, so far as that unworthy family is concerned, shall be void—a Hebraism, as Ps. xxxv. 13; Isa. xlv. 23; lv. 11. Intercessions and benedictions can never be lost: if those for whom they are designed are not in a moral state to profit by them, they come back in some available form to the heart where they originated. The apostles were instructed so to deport themselves that the worthy might find the peace wished for, and that from the unworthy they might with a good conscience take back the peace. The imperatives are probably

used for future indicatives or optatives—denoting that such was the will of Him, who would take care that such results should follow. It may be true, as Stier says, that the spirit of these instructions binds ministers to observe the courtesies of life; but apostolic benedictions mean more than ordinary salutations.

14. *Shake off*—The Jews considered the dust of a heathen country polluted, (Amos vii. 17,) and shook it off them when entering their own land. Hence they would not import herbs from a heathen country, fearing that dust might be brought with them. By this symbolical act the apostles renounced all intercourse with the obstinate Jews, and absolved themselves from all responsibility connected with their contumacy. Acts xiii. 50, 51; xviii. 6; 1 Kings ii. 5; Neh. v. 13.

15. *It shall be more tolerable*—What Augustin means when he speaks of the mildest condemnation. *The land of Sodom*—As no destruction can be more summary and effectual than that of the cities of the plain, (Gen. xix. 24-29; Deut. xxix. 33,) and as that is past, whereas the punishment here spoken of is future, that which shall be inflicted on the inhabitants of those cities in the day of general judgment, is perhaps here meant—notwithstanding the omission of the article in the Greek, as also in Jude 6, 7: *cf.* Luke x. 12, "that day," and 14, "the judgment," where the article is used. A persistent rejection of the gospel is, of course, implied.

16. *Behold, I*—The *ego* is emphatic, reminding them of Him who possessed all power. This is supposed to refer to the great mission of the apostles, after they had fulfilled their introductory mission. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. This second part of the address ends at ver. 23. *As sheep in the midst of wolves*:—Not into the midst; but it expresses the position in which the apostles will find themselves—not the wolves in the midst of the sheep, but something more perilous. Their safeguard, however, is found in the fact that the Shepherd sends them. The apostles are not here called shepherds, but sheep sent forth to attract the lost sheep of the fold, surrounded by wolves. Matt. vii. 15; ix. 36. *Wise as serpents*,—Prudent: serpents are very adroit in eluding their enemies: they derive their Hebrew and Greek names from the acuteness of their vision. *Harmless as doves*.—Simple, guileless. They were to be as innocent as sheep, and as guileless as doves, yet not stupid and silly like those animals; (Hos. vii. 11;) but, like serpents, "learn to shun foreseen attacks." So did the apostles. Acts xxiii. 6; xxv.; 2 Cor. xi. 32, 33. But their prudence must not degenerate into guile—the columbine simplicity must go hand in hand with the serpentine prudence. Rom. xvi. 19; 1 Cor. xiv. 20. The proverb was common among the Jews.

17. *But beware of men*:—Take heed that you do not expose yourselves to the persecutions of men by a lack of prudence and simplicity. *Councils*,—Sanhedrims—the high courts of justice in the provincial cities, as well as the great Sanhedrim at Jerusalem, and those established by Gabinius at Gadaris, Amatho, Jericho, and Saphora. Jos. Ant. xiv. 10. Those "lesser sanhedrims" were

composed of 23 rulers. (See on Matt. xxiv. 9.) *Synagogues*.—The courts of three, composed of principal members of the synagogue, having power to scourge, but not to put to death. (See on Matt. v. 21, 22.) Luke xii. 11; Acts v. 40; xxii. 19; 2 Cor. xi. 24; Jas. ii. 2, 6, 7.

18. *And*—Yea, moreover. *Governors*—Proconsuls, propraetors, procurators. *And kings*—See this fulfilled, Acts xii. 1; xxiv. 10; xxv., xxvi.; 2 Tim. iv. 16. *For a testimony against them*—To bear witness of the truth of the gospel to those before whom they were brought, and through them, by their public trials, to the heathen at large. Matt. xxiv. 14; Acts ix. 15; Phil. i. 12-14; 2 Tim. iv. 17. This testimony to the truth of the gospel was indeed a testimony *against* their persecutors; for the reasons of their faith with the innocence of their lives, exposed and condemned the malice and cruelty involved in their persecutions. But this is rather implied than expressed in the passage.

19. *Deliver you up*,—The original here conveys the usual idea of treachery, the apostles being betrayed by their own countrymen to the heathen powers. (See on v. 21.) 1 Thess. ii. 14, 15. *Take no thought*—Be not anxious. (See on Matt. vi. 25.) *How or what*—Manner or matter—both included in the succeeding. *What ye shall speak*,—Ye may or should speak. They would, of course, use all their natural powers, but they were not to depend upon them, only as aided and overruled by the Holy Ghost. *Given*—Suggested or supplied.

20. *For it is not ye that speak*,—Ye are not to be the speakers, but the Spirit of your Father will speak by you: a promise admirably adapted to keep them from perturbation when called to state and defend their doctrine before their adversaries. This has no reference to the sudden inspiration of any new principles, but to the clearness and force of their apologies. Acts vi. 10. Those who, in modern times, on the ground of this text, claim inspiration and infallibility for their sermons, prayers, and decrees of councils, ought to manifest less anxiety in the premises, to set forth less error and fanaticism, and to work an occasional miracle, like those to whom this promise was given in authentication of their claims. *Your Father*—In reference to himself Christ sometimes says "My Father"—but never "Our Father," though he teaches us to say it.

21. *Shall deliver*—The same idea of treachery, as in ver. 17, 19; but there it has a national, here a domestic aspect. *Rise up against*—As witnesses in court; but the word has a wider signification, (1 Sam. xvii. 35. Mic. vii. 6,) and may here mean persecute—to manifest hostility without provocation. *Cause them*—By their testimony or otherwise. There is no article before the nouns in the original, as they express relation, as in ver. 37. Some think that this and the following verses are placed here in anticipation of Matt. xxiv., especially as the matter contained in them is not found in the parallels of Mark and Luke, and as it was not likely that Christ should speak to them of martyrdom at this early period of their career. But

why not? He does speak of the severest persecutions as involved in discipleship in every stage of his ministry, and that too in terms like those employed in this paragraph. (See on Matt. v. 10-12; xvi. 24, 25.) If these predictions were not fulfilled during the introductory ministry of the apostles, they were minutely fulfilled during their subsequent ministry; and the annals of persecution in every age will furnish horrible illustrations of the passage.

22. *The end*—Of the Jewish state. *Shall be saved*.—From the judgment which should then be executed upon the Jews. (See on ver. 23; Matt. xxiv. 13.)

23. *This city*,—This in which you may chance to be. *Another*:—the other—the next. Christian heroism is not presumption or fanaticism: when a flight from persecution will not compromise the cause of Christ, it becomes a duty; (Acts xiv. 6;) though, as Whitby justly remarks: "it follows not that a pastor may fly from his congregation in times of persecution, that case not being the same as that of the apostles, whose commission was to go through all the cities of Judea, so that they only fled from one part of their jurisdiction to another." *Ye shall not have gone over*—Literally, ye will not finish. *Till the Son of man be come*.—To destroy Jerusalem and close the Jewish state. Jesus does not say they would not have time to visit all the cities of Israel before that event; but that they would not have gone through them so as to fulfill their mission in all of them, up to the time in question; and the reason is assigned in the former part of the verse, they should be persecuted and obliged to flee from some of them. Here is a motive to encouragement: though they should be persecuted by the Jews, the Son of man would soon come, and avenge his own elect. Here is also a motive to dispatch: the entire land of Israel is to be evangelized, and as it is shortly to be laid waste by the Roman power, that which is to be done to save its inhabitants must be done quickly: if any city refuse the gospel, and persecute its heralds, let them not parley, or suffer themselves to be killed, but flee to another, and give it a trial. The ministry which they performed in their introductory tour during our Lord's lifetime, (ver. 5-15,) was different from this: in the former, they merely announced that the kingdom of heaven was at hand; in the latter, they labored assiduously to set it up. Matt. xvi. 28; xxiv.; Luke xviii. 8; Jas. v. 7-9.

24. *The disciple*—The scholar is not usually above his teacher, nor the slave above his master. The proverb here applied to persecution, is applied to spiritual illumination, Luke vi. 40. It is found in the Talmuds.

25. *It is enough*—The scholar may be satisfied if he fares as well as his teacher, and the slave if he fares as well as his master. *The master of the house*—The head of the family. *Beelzebub*,—This appears to be the same name as that of the Ekronite idol, Baal-zebul, the lord of flies. 2 Kings i. 2. As this was a title of honor, like Apomuios, banisher of flies, a name of Jupiter and of Hercules, it is thought the Jews, according to their custom, changed the name into *Beelze-boul*,

as it is in the Greek New Testament, lord of dung, or of idols, by way of throwing contempt on idolatry. The Jews gave this title to the prince of demons, or unclean spirits, as he is the great patron of idolatry. They considered the gods of the heathen evil spirits. See similar changes in Beth-el to Beth-aven, Hos. iv. 15; Amos v. 5—the house of God, to the house of vanity or idols; and Shechem, to Sychar, John iv. 5, falsehood, i.e., idolatry, or drunkenness. *Them of his household?*—His domestics—marked as they are with frailties, from which the Master is exempt. If they revile me, you may expect that they will revile you.

26. *Fear them not therefore:*—As you are only partakers of the sufferings of Christ. *For there is nothing covered,*—Your innocence, now covered with obloquy, shall be openly displayed, and your doctrine shall not remain concealed, notwithstanding their calumny and persecution. This proverbial language is also used, Luke viii. 17; xii. 2.

27. *Darkness,*—Privacy. *Light:*—Publicity. *In the ear,*—The Jewish doctor whispered his explanations of the law in the ear of an interpreter, who spoke them out aloud to the people. *Upon the house-tops.*—The houses being flat-roofed, the minister of the synagogue proclaimed with a trumpet the coming of the Sabbath from the roof of a house. The mysteries of the kingdom were not made known to the apostles to be kept in their own bosom, but to be published by them when occasion served. The special reference may be to such mysteries as the calling of the Gentiles, the abrogation of Levitical ordinances, and similar points not proper to be divulged clearly and indiscriminately at that time.

28. *Which kill*—Not can kill, but, who do kill, spoken by anticipation, ver. 21. *Are not able to kill the soul:*—The soul, therefore, is not deprived of conscious existence at death: being an immaterial substance, it defies the sword. Men and devils may be said to kill the soul when they seduce it to sin; but that is only with a man's consent, and is aside of the subject. *Rather fear him*—Men could burn the body, and that alone, in the Gehenna at Jerusalem; but there is another Gehenna in which God can destroy both soul and body. It is the general belief that this destruction consists of endless misery. Matt. xxv. 41, 46; Rev. xx. 10, 14. A fear of God's judgments, as well as reverence for his majesty, has a most salutary influence in times of persecution, when tempted to abandon his cause.

29. *Are not*—The usual form of question when an affirmative answer is expected. *Two sparrows*—Little sparrows: the diminutive is emphatical. Sparrows abound in Palestine. In Jerusalem, they are so noisy as sometimes to almost drown other sounds. Their chirping, says Hackett, "is almost an articulate utterance of the Hebrew *tsippor*"—which is rendered *strouthion*, sparrow, in Ps. xi. 1; Lam. iii. 52, LXX. They are still sold in the market, cheap, of course, because of their size and abundance. Luke has five sparrows for two farthings—the price being varied according to the number purchased. Sparrows are thought to be the birds used in

cleansing the leper, (Lev. xiv. 4, margin,) and consequently sold in the temple. *Farthing?*—*Assarium*, which was worth four times as much as the *quadrans*, rendered farthing, Matt. v. 26; Mark xii. 42. It was worth three English farthings. It was used by Hebrews and Greeks to indicate the smallest amount, as we use the word cent. *And*—*And yet*. *Shall not fall on the ground*—An idiom for perish; but it may refer particularly to the falling of the bird when hit by the fowler. *Without your Father*.—Your Father's knowledge and consent.

30. *But the very hairs of your head*,—Your, as well as ye, in ver. 31, is emphatic—as to you, in opposition to sparrows—a proverb indicating that the smallest things are under the divine care. 1 Sam. xiv. 45; Luke xxii. 18; Acts xxvii. 34.

31. *Ye are of more value*—It is not true that

He sees with equal eyes as God of all,
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall.

Augustin says, "A single fly excels the sun, because it has life." Eternal life stamps man with infinitely superior importance.

32. *Whosoever therefore*—This makes that general, which was specially applied to the apostles. *Shall confess me*—Shall make me the object of his acknowledgment—of course, consistently and perseveringly. *Before men*,—In the face of opposition. *Him will I confess*—Acknowledge as mine in the judgment.

33. *Deny me*—Disown me, as his Master, for fear of man. *Him will I also deny*—Disown as mine in the judgment—unless, like Peter, he repents of the denial. Christ himself here appears as the Arbiter of life and death.

34. *Think not*—The Jews expected uninterrupted outward peace in the days of the Messiah. *I came not to send peace, but a sword*.—He came to introduce the gospel, which he foresaw would provoke persecution—not that persecution was the final cause of his mission. The sword is the symbol of war, the very essence of division, (Luke xii. 51,) civil commotion, and domestic discord, (Jer. xiv. 13; 1 Mac. ix. 73,) the opposite of peace or concord. There may be a reference to the Jewish war, but more particularly to the social dissensions which followed the introduction of the gospel—those who did not embrace it persecuting those who did.

35. *I am come to set a man at variance*—Christ seems to refer to Mic. vii. 6: *cf.* Deut. xxxiii. 9. The Jews used this as proverbial language, expressive of social and domestic dissensions. Those who were united by blood or affinity, relations produced by marriage, would be disunited by this effect of the gospel.

36. *Shall be they of his own household*.—Will be his domestics, as in ver. 25

37. *More than me*,—So as to admit their claims in opposition to mine. *Is not worthy of me*:—Not fit to be counted my disciple.

38. *And he that taketh not his cross*—The Romans compelled malefactors to bear the cross to the place of crucifixion: so Christ bore his, (John xix. 17,) till he sunk under it, when Simon bore it after him. Luke xxiii. 26. His cross means that amount of affliction which any one suffers in being a disciple of Christ: it is absurd to call any little trial, or unrelished duty, a cross! It is a Jewish as well as Roman figure for any extraordinary sufferings. It is thought the Jews borrowed the phrase from the Persians who used this punishment. To take the cross, does not mean to go in quest of it, but not to decline it when it is in the path of duty. In Matt. xvi. 24, a strong word is used—to take up—implying that we must not wait to be compelled to bear it, like Simon; but when it cannot be avoided without sin, to stoop down, and put it upon our own shoulders. *And followeth after me*,—Literally, the word means, to follow, attend, Matt. iv. 25; metaphorically, to follow, or imitate: tread in my steps, imitate my example. (See on Matt. xvi. 24.) This seems to be the first prophetic hint which Jesus gave of his crucifixion. It is not likely that the disciples understood it, as he did not explicitly mention his own cross, though it is implied: *cf.* ver. 25. That he had his own crucifixion in view may be gathered from John xii. 32, 33, and he seems to have intended to familiarize his disciples with it.

39. *He that findeth*—Mark viii. 34, "saveth;" John xii. 25, "loveth." He who, at the expense of duty, preserves his temporal life, shall lose his eternal life; and he who, for the sake of Christ, sacrifices his temporal life, shall secure his eternal life. The finding implies a desire, or will, to save the life; not so the losing: a man is not expected to will or desire the loss of his temporal life, though he may cheerfully submit to it for the sake of Christ. (See on Matt. xvi. 24-26.)

40. *He that receiveth you*,—Christ here reverts to the twelve, whom he was sending out: ver. 32-39 being of a more general application. To receive an ambassador, as such, is virtually to receive his sovereign. The apostles represented Christ, as he represented the Father, (John xx. 21; Heb. iii. 1,) with this difference, his representation is perfect; (John v. 19-37; xiv. 9; Heb. i. 3;) theirs, imperfect. Gal. ii. 11-14.

41. *He that receiveth a prophet*—A Christian minister, without any reference to the gift of foretelling future events; yet the case of Elijah and Elisha may illustrate the principle. 1 Kings xvii.; 2 Kings iv. *In the name of*—Because he is a prophet. *A righteous man*—One of eminent sanctity, as Mede says, such as among the Jews had the surname of Just, as Simeon the Just, James the Just. It appears sometimes to have something of an official signification. Ezek. xxiii. 45; Matt. xiii. 17; xxiii. 35. The language seems to be proverbial. The rabbins used to say, "He who receives a learned man, or an elder, into his house, is the same as

if he had received the Shekinah." He aids the minister in his work, and so shares in the result of it; but "every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor." Hospitality, always an excellent virtue, was especially necessary among the early Christians, who were in danger of being thrown into the company of idolaters.

42. *And whosoever*—If a prophet is received in the name of a prophet, and a righteous man, in the name of a righteous man, then, to give a cup of cold water to one of these little ones, is to give it to one of the disciples, because it is in the name of a disciple. If distinguished from the prophets and righteous men, the little ones are private Christians, while the others sustain official relations; but no such distinction is found in Mark ix. 41. *A cup of cold water only*,—Water is not in the common text, but it is in some MSS., versions, and Fathers, and also in Mark ix. 41: it is necessarily understood—the ellipsis is common in the classics: the language is proverbial, to express a small donation. *In the name of a disciple*,—Because he is my disciple. *His reward*.—The doer's reward. This is an extended application of the principle in ver. 41. (See on Matt. xviii. 1-14; xxv. 40, 45.) Macknight conjectures that the disciples were to make the return in miracles, advice, or prayers, on behalf of the donors. Mark and Luke say that the apostles immediately went out and fulfilled their mission. Luke says they "went through the towns"—country-towns, or villages: Jesus went to the large towns, or cities, himself. (See on Matt. xi. 1.)

CHAPTER XI.

2 *John sendeth his disciples to Christ. 7 Christ's testimony concerning John: 18 The opinion of the people, both concerning John and Christ. 20 Christ upbraideth the unthankfulness and unrepentance of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum: 25 and praising his Father's wisdom in revealing the gospel to the simple, 28 he calleth to him all such as feel the burden of their sins.*

XI.—1. *Commanding*—Ordering; referring to the directions, ch. x. *To teach*—To give instruction in synagogues, etc. *To preach*—To proclaim as a herald: this is more general and public than teaching. (See on Matt. iii. 1; iv. 17, 23.) *Their cities*.—The cities of the people, viz., the Galileans. The Hebrews use a pronoun when the antecedent is not expressed, but understood from the context.

2. *Now when John*—(See on Matt. xiv. 3,) Luke (vii. 18) says, "the disciples of John showed him of all these things"—perhaps fearing that the fame of Jesus would eclipse John's. John iii. 25, 26. *Christ*—The Christ, the Messiah. When used alone and with the article in the original, it is, in the Gospels, the name of office. Matthew never applies it elsewhere to Jesus, except in i. 1, in his own narrative: it is here peculiarly appropriate.

3. *And said*—Sending two of his disciples, he said to him, viz., by the two disciples. *He that should come*,—He that cometh: this seems to have been used almost as a title of the Messiah. Ps. cxviii. 26; Matt. iii. 11; xxi. 9; John vi. 14; Heb. x. 37; Rev. i. 8. *Or do we look for another?*—Or must we look for another? or is it another we are expecting? John knew very well that Jesus was the expected Messiah; (John iii. 27-36;) and it can hardly be thought that he began to doubt it because of the discordant views entertained concerning Jesus, or his own imperfect notions concerning the Messiah, or on account of the depressing effect of imprisonment; but, as is generally thought, he raised the question for the satisfaction of his disciples, who were mortified at his imprisonment, and disappointed because Jesus did not in so many words assert his Messiahship, and deliver his forerunner: they may have been stumbled, too, at the lowliness of his birth and station, and his difference in character from their ascetic master. They may have been a little piqued too at the "decrease" of the latter, and the "increase" of the former. John may have failed to remove those scruples, and so he adopted this expedient for the purpose.

4. *Shew John again*—Relate to John. *Hear and see*:—They heard of the raising of the widow's son, which had just taken place, as well as of other miracles, and saw him perform many. Luke vii. 11-21. According to the prophecies, (Isa. xxxv. 5, 6; lxi. 1,) such wonders were to characterize the Messiah.

5. *The poor have the gospel preached to them*.—The promises of the gospel are proclaimed to poor people, who were generally overlooked by rabbins and philosophers: and who could not understand their vain janglings if they heard them. (See on Matt. v. 3.) The rabbins had a proverb that the Spirit of God never rested but upon a rich man. Cf. John vii. 49. As there is no article before the nouns in the original, render blind persons, lame persons, etc.

6. *And blessed is he*—A felicitation—happy is he. *Shall not be offended in me*.—Who will not be stumbled at my obscure appearance and the spiritual character of my kingdom. (See on Matt. xvi. 23.) This is a delicate reproof of John's disciples for their wavering faith.

7. *And as they departed*,—Jesus would not praise John in their presence, but when they were gone, he eulogized him, lest, perhaps, the people should go away with an unjust depreciation of him. *Jesus began to say*—Took occasion to say. *To see?*—The original denotes gazing as at a spectacle, implying an object of great interest: it is different from that in ver. 8, 9. The distinction is observed in Luke. *A reed shaken with the wind?*—A time-server, an unstable person, one easily influenced by outward circumstances. John's fidelity to the truth, and his imprisonment for it, showed that that was not his character.

8. *But*—This after a question implies a negative: if ye did not what then? *A man clothed in soft raiment?*—Effeminately dressed. John was no effeminate courtier: his camel's hair raiment and leathern girdle, locusts and wild honey, did not differ more from the splendid garments and luxurious living of fawning courtiers than did his character from theirs. He was not found in kings' courts, (Amos vii. 13,) though he found his way into a king's prison.

9. *More than a prophet.*—Neuter—"Something more than." "All accounted John as a prophet;" (Matt. xxi. 26;) but Christ says he was superior to a prophet, being of miraculous conception and birth, the immediate harbinger of the Messiah, his inaugurator, the subject and vehicle of prophecy. (See on ver. 10, 11.)

10. *Of whom it is written,*—In Mal. iii. 1, where the Messiah himself seems to be the speaker. *Before thy face,*—The Hebrew and LXX. have "before my face," placed after "way." All the evangelists change the person for the better application of the prophecy, (See on Matt. iii. 3; xvii. 10-13.)

11. *Them that are born of women,*—This idiom is found in Job xi. 12; xiv. 1; xv. 14; xxv. 4, LXX. *Risen*—A form of speech especially applied to the appearance of great persons. John vii. 52; Acts v. 30. *A greater*—Luke adds, "prophet." Who was spoken of by preceding prophets; he pointed out the fulfillment of their predictions concerning the Messiah, whose successful course he predicted, after preparing the way before him. *He that is least*—The humblest minister in the Christian Church is greater than John, because the ministry of the former refers to the work of redemption as accomplished, and to "the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ," which could not be realized until after Christ's ascension.

12. *And from the days of John*—From the beginning of his ministry. *Until now,*—The period was not closed then. *Suffereth violence,*—Is pressed upon in order to invasion, as a country or city by an invading army. *The violent*—As the article is not in the original, render violent persons. The allusion is to the vast crowds that were baptized by John; and the design of Christ is to exalt the ministry of the Baptist. They may have mistaken the nature of that kingdom, but when John announced it, in the popular style of his ministry, they were ready to "rush into" it, "and take it as by storm." Though the strong terms, to force and to seize, do not seem to be used to intimate that the zeal was "intermixed with much that was spurious," as Olshausen thinks, yet such was the fact. Hence our Lord may consistently deplore the little real and permanent success of his own ministry and that of John.

13. *For*—This seems to refer back to ver. 11. To show that John was greater than all his predecessors, Jesus states that they spoke of the kingdom as afar off, whereas John announced it as at hand. (See on ver. 11.)

14. *And if ye will receive it*,—Be willing to credit it, implying that they would hardly do so, as they expected Elijah would appear in his own person. *This is Elias*—He is Elias: the personage so designated by Malachi, (iv. 5,) not the Tishbite, whom the Jews fondly expected, and still expect, as the immediate precursor of the Messiah; (John i. 21;) but his antitype, prophetically called by his name, as he came "in the spirit and power of Elias." Luke i. 17. So the Jews call Phinehas, for his zeal, Elijah, and Elijah, Phinehas. He came as the messenger of the Messiah, just before the destruction of the Jewish state, while the second temple was standing, as Malachi predicted, iii. 1; iv. 5, 6. *Which was for to come*.—Who was to come. The language is as it were from an Old Testament standpoint in the New. So Heb. ix. 11. *Cf.* John xi. 27.

15. *He that hath ears*—A *nota bene*, appended to a communication which demands special attention. Matt. xiii. 9; Rev. ii. 7. It is found in the synoptists and in the Revelation, but not in the Gospel of John. The attentive mind would gather from this discourse concerning John that Jesus was the Messiah; for if Elijah was to herald the Messiah, and John was Elijah, then Jesus was the Messiah—he that was to come.

16. *But*—This adversative particle implies that some did not "hear," that is, regard with attention and candor, though some did. Luke vii. 29, 30. *Whereunto shall I liken*—The common form of introducing a simile. Mark iv. 30; Luke xiii. 18, 20; Eccus. xxv. 11. *This generation?*—Persons living at one period—in the Gospels always applied to the Jews, e.g., Matt. xii. 39, 41, 45; xxiii. 36. *Children*—The condescension of Christ is shown in his notice of the sports of boyhood. *Sitting*—In the intervals of their sports. *In the markets*,—Broad places of a city, places of concourse, like market-places. The Orientals, young and old, are fond of sitting in such places: *cf.* Mark vii. 4; Acts xvi. 19; xvii. 17. *And calling unto their fellows*,—Or to one another, as in most MSS. of Matthew and also in Luke, though Luke uses another word. This refers perhaps to the whole crowd of boys, all being capricious and dissatisfied—one set wanting this play, and another that.

17. *Piped*—Played cheerful strains, as at a wedding. *Not danced*;—To our music. *Mourned*—Sung mournful songs to you as at a funeral. *Not lamented*.—Struck your breasts with responsive sorrow. (See on Matt. ix. 23.) The captious and capricious character of the Jews is well illustrated by these sullen children, who sulkily refuse to join in those dramatic plays which their companions propose. They were not pleased with the amenity of Jesus or the austerity of John.

18. *For*—Explanatory. *John came*—As a public teacher. *Neither eating nor drinking*,—Luke fills the ellipsis with "bread" and "wine." John did not live like other men: ver. 19; Matt. iii. 4. *He hath a devil*.—He is influenced by a demon. It is elsewhere stated that the elders did not receive John, (Matt. xxi. 23-27,) but this is the only place in which it is said that they charged him, as they charged Jesus, with being in league with a demon. They did this to justify themselves in rejecting his ministry. His asceticism, forsooth, is a cloak of hypocrisy, or he is a maniac, (John x. 20,) an enthusiast and fanatic, in the original meaning of those terms.

19. *The Son of man*—(See on Matt. viii. 20.) *Came eating and drinking*,—Living like other men. *A man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber*,—A hint, perhaps, at his being at Matthew's feast, (Matt. ix. 10-15,) and at the wedding-feast in Cana. John ii. *But*—And yet, though you cavil at John's austerity and my sociability, all the truly wise have acknowledged the wisdom of God in sending us on our respective missions. Cf. ver. 25; Luke xi. 49; 1 Cor. i. 21, 24; ii. 6, 7.

20. *Then began he*—The preceding subject naturally suggesting it. *To upbraid the cities*—Reproach the inhabitants of the cities. *Mighty works*—Miraculous works wrought by divine power, only a few of which are recorded. Luke iv. 23; John xxi. 25. *Because they repented not*.—His miracles were designed to secure the success of his preaching, the burden of which was repentance. Matt. iv. 17, 23. This upbraiding seems to have been repeated at the time of the mission of the seventy. Luke x. 13.

21. *Wo unto thee*,—A denunciation of wrath as well as an exclamation of pity—Matt. xviii. 7; xxiii. 13—the upbraiding, ver. 20. *Chorazin!*—This is evidently a town, not, as some think, the desert of Zin. Robinson identifies it with Tell Hum; but others identify it with Kerazeh, two or three miles nearer the Jordan. The ruins of Kerazeh consist of a few foundations of black stones. Robinson suggests that Kerazeh might have been built after the destruction of Chorazin by some of its inhabitants. Jerome says Chorazin was on the shore of the lake; but *litore* might include the region near the lake, and he says Chorazin was two miles from Capernaum. *Bethsaida!*—According to Pliny, Josephus, and others, was situated in Lower Gaulonitis, east of the Jordan, just at its entrance into the lake. It was first a village, deriving its name, Fishing, or Hunting-town, from its locality and inhabitants; but it was afterward enlarged and beautified by Philip the tetrarch, who named it Julias, in compliment to Julia, daughter of Augustus. But after the disgrace of Julia, this name was suppressed, and the old name Bethsaida again came into use. Robinson thinks he has found Bethsaida at et Tell, where, however, the ruins "consist entirely of unhewn volcanic stones, without any distinct traces of ancient architecture." Et Tell seems to be a little too far north to be the site of Bethsaida. Reland and others after him suggest that,

besides Bethsaida of Gaulonitis, there was a Bethsaida of Galilee, west of the lake. This they say was the Bethsaida where Philip, Andrew, and Peter were born, (John i. 44; xii. 21,) and to which allusion is made in Matt. xi. 21, Mark vi. 45; whereas the Bethsaida of Gaulonitis was that alluded to in Mark viii. 22, Luke ix. 10. But neither the writers of the New Testament, nor any other ancient authors, intimate that there were two Bethsaidas. The only ground for the opinion is that the miracle of feeding the 5,000 is said by Luke to have been performed in "a desert place, belonging to the city called Bethsaida," which, from John vi. 1, 17, we know was east of the Jordan and the lake; and Mark says, after the miracle, Christ "constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people." But this mention of Bethsaida, without any note of distinction, while he was in the neighborhood, just east of "the city called Bethsaida," would lead us to conclude that this was the place which he meant. Hence the margin reads, "over against Bethsaida," and *pros* frequently has that meaning. Jesus wished the disciples to get away from the multitudes by crossing the lake just at the mouth of the Jordan, where Bethsaida was situated. It would seem (Matt. xiv. 22) that he did not wish them to go to Bethsaida, but to the opposite side over against it. John (vi. 17, 21) says they "went over the sea toward Capernaum," which was situated on the north-west shore of the lake, opposite Bethsaida. It was called "Bethsaida of Galilee," though it was in Gaulonitis, as this province was still commonly reckoned in Galilee. Thus Josephus calls Judas, the Gaulonite from Gamala, Judas the Galilean. It thus appears that there was but one Bethsaida, and that was situated east of the Jordan and the lake. (See on Matt. xiv. 22.) Chorazin was just opposite on the west. *Tyre and Sidon*,—Two famous Phoenician cities on the Mediterranean, north of the land of Israel. Though they had suffered greatly under Nebuchadnezzar and Alexander, they still existed. Acts xii. 20; xxi. 3, 7; xxvii. 3. They are ingloriously represented by the modern towns of Tzur and Saida, built of the ruins and near the sites of the ancient cities. *They would have repented*—It is reasonable to suppose they would. *Long ago*—Formerly; at the time Ezekiel denounced their destruction. *Sackcloth and ashes*.—The ancients clothed themselves in a coarse cloth of linen, wool, or hair, and sprinkled ashes on their heads in token of humiliation and sorrow. Job ii. 8, 12; Jonah ii. 15; Judith iv. 14, 15.

22. *It shall be more tolerable*—If this refer to the cities themselves, the prediction has been verified, for Tyre and Sidon still remain, though in a sad state of decadence, whereas one cannot say certainly where Chorazin and Bethsaida were situated. But it is likely the reference is to the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon, who in the day of judgment will not be sentenced to so severe a fate as that of Chorazin and Bethsaida, because they never sinned against so much light as they. (See on Matt. x. 15.)

23. *Capernaum*,—This city, to which Peter removed from Bethsaida, perhaps on his marriage, (Matt. viii. 5, 14,) was the principal dwelling-place of Jesus, Matt. iv. 13. It was "upon the sea-coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim." This locates it at the north-west corner of the lake. It cannot, therefore, be at Medjel, or Magdala, as Egmont supposed. De Saulcy locates it at the Round Fountain, which is in the plain of Gennesaret, a little north of Medjel, and a mile and a half from the shore; but no ruins have been found there. Robinson locates it at Khan Minyeh, a little farther north, almost six miles from the entrance of the Jordan. Here there is a fountain, 'Ain et-Tin, which he identifies with the fountain Capharnaum of Josephus (Wars, iii. 10. 8), and the ruins with the village Kepharnome of Josephus (Life 72). But the Capernaum of the Gospels and the Kepharnome of Josephus are generally identified with Tell Hum, which is about midway between Khan Minyeh and the entrance of the Jordan. The remains of a large synagogue and other buildings seem to indicate that there was a town of some importance at this place. It was a convenient point to which to take Josephus after he was wounded in the wrist in the skirmish near the mouth of the Jordan, being some three miles nearer than Khan Minyeh. The name Hum seems to be an abbreviation of Naum; Tell, hill, being prefixed, according to Oriental custom, instead of Capher, city, the place being on an eminence overlooking the lake, though it is some distance from the fountain spoken of by Josephus. Benjamin Tudelensis says, "Capernaum, which is by interpretation, the village of comfort, at first looks to be a place higher than Mount Carmel." Nonnus speaks of it as "Capernaum founded on high." *Which art exalted unto heaven*,—This phrase, suggested perhaps by its location, seems to refer to the advantages enjoyed by the inhabitants of Capernaum, in that it was the place of Christ's residence, and was favored so much with his ministry and miracles. Cf. John xv. 22-24. *Shalt be brought down to hell*:—The opposite of "exalted to heaven:" as the one means the highest elevation, so the other means the lowest depression, a state of complete desolation. Isa. xiv. 12-15; lvii. 9; Ezek. xxxi. 10; 1 Sam. ii. 6; Tobit xiii. 2. Hell, *hades*, means an unseen place, the invisible world, hence it is applied to the state of the dead—the grave, and the unseen world of separate spirits, whether of torment, (Luke xvi. 23,) or in general, Rev. i. 18. Capernaum has been literally reduced to *hades*, for no one can with certainty tell where it stood. *If the mighty works*—(See on ver. 21.) "These words," says Olshausen, "if they are not to be considered as a mere empty phrase, are remarkable, inasmuch as they show that our Redeemer speaks even of that which is past as of a thing not of absolute necessity. He acknowledges evidently the freedom of the human will, and the possibility of its having been otherwise if man had been obedient to the will of God."

24. *The land of Sodom*,—The region, including the other cities of the plain. Stanley observes, "It has been, indeed, more tolerable, in one sense, for the name

and perhaps even the remains of Sodom are still to be found on the shores of the Dead Sea, while that of Capernaum has on the Lake of Gennesaret been utterly lost." But see on ver. 23 and Matt. x. 15. The climax is here to be observed: Chorazin and Bethsaida are compared to Tyre and Sidon; Capernaum, greater in sin and punishment, is singled out, and compared to Sodom, whose sin and punishment were greater than those of Tyre and Sidon. Deut. xxxii. 32; Isa. i. 9, 10; Lam. iv. 6; Ezek. xvi. 46-57.

25. *At that time*—On that occasion: *cf.* Matt. xii. 1; xiv. 1. This formula is here used perhaps to intimate that other discourses, not necessary to be recorded, came between the foregoing and the succeeding. Jesus seems to have uttered the following weighty words on two occasions: on this occasion, after surveying the tearful results of unbelief in the case of "the Pharisees and lawyers, who had rejected the counsel of God," and brought ruin upon themselves, and the inhabitants of those cities whose doom he had just denounced; and afterward, on the return of the seventy from their successful mission, Luke x. 21. *Answered*—This word is frequently used in the Gospels where no question is recorded; Matt. xxii. 1; Mark ix. 5, 38; xi. 14; Luke xiii. 14; but there is usually a reference to something in the mind of the speaker or hearer—some question suppressed from brevity, or one which might arise from certain actions. Its frequent occurrence strikingly indicates the perfection of Christ's teaching, as he could speak to the unspoken thoughts and feelings as well as to the words and actions of those who waited on his ministry. Here the response seems to be to the thoughts and inquiries elicited by his discourse concerning the mysterious dispensations of Heaven. *I thank thee*,—The original seems to express praise springing from and consisting in acknowledgment and accordance. *Because thou hast hid*—As God is frequently said to do what he permits to be done, it is generally agreed that this means, because having permitted these things to be hidden to wise and sagacious persons, thou hast revealed them unto children in knowledge. Ex. vii. 3, 4; 2 Sam. xii. 11, 12; Isa. xii. 1 (Heb.); Rom. vi. 17. Jesus seems to refer to the plan adopted by the *Father* for the propagation of the gospel, which is specially apparent in Luke, where the successful ministry of the seventy called forth his exclamation. He speaks of it as a matter of wonder: that, in view of the dignity and importance of this embassy, professional men did not put themselves in the way of being employed in it. They were in circumstances favorable to canvass the claims of Jesus, yet because Christianity requires humiliation, self-denial, the cross, and imitation of Christ, not many of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him, John vii. 48; hence not many wise, mighty, or noble, were called to the ministry, but those who were reputed foolish, weak, base mere "nothings," 1 Cor. i. 26-28; men who had no philosophy, literature, eloquence, prestige: it was wonderful that the fortunes of Christianity should be intrusted to such. It was also a matter of adoration: as the *Lord of heaven and*

earth, the Father has boundless resources: he could have employed princes, priests, philosophers, against their will, as in the case of Balaam; angels, with a hearty good-will; nature, with no will; but it seemed good to him to employ agents, however mean, to whom the agency would be pertinent and congenial. It was, moreover, a matter of joy; because it proves that the gospel is independent of the wisdom, wealth, and power of man: if the great decline it, the small will do! God's plan corresponds to the unpretending character of Jesus and the genus of the gospel. It has proved successful: men acknowledged the divine character of Christianity when they heard illiterate men expound it, defend it, authenticate it by miracles, and demonstrate it by holy living. Luke x. 17-20; Acts iv. 13-37.

26. *Even so*,—An emphatic ratification of the foregoing statement, introducing the reason, *for so it seemed good in thy sight*—because it was thy pleasure that so it should be: a Hebraism, not implying an absolute will or desire without just reason, for Christ praises the equity and wisdom of God in this mystery. Cf. Matt. xviii. 14; 1 Cor. i. 21.

27. *All things*—Contained in the counsels of God for the salvation of men. Matt. xxviii. 18-20. *Are delivered*—Were communicated, not revealed—Christ himself is the Revealer. *Of my Father*;—By my Father. John vii. 16; xvii. 7, 8. It seems to be almost a quotation from John the Baptist: "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand." John iii. 35. *No man*—No one. *Knoweth the Son*,—Christ nowhere else calls himself simply the Son, except in the parallel in Luke, and in Mark xiii. 32. Luke says, "who the Son is—who the Father is"—which some refer to the mystery of the Divine nature, but this can be made known to none, whereas the knowledge of the Father is communicated *to whomsoever the Son will reveal him*—neither the Father nor the Son can be revealed to any one in the mystery of the Divine nature; so that the reference must be to the Father and the Son in the relations they respectively bear to the work of man's salvation. Col. ii. 2, 3. The felicitation which follows in Luke is highly appropriate in that connection, as is the invitation in Matthew; and the latter especially, as the phrase, "to whomsoever the Son will reveal him," as Alford suggests, "might seem to bring in an arbitrariness into the Divine counsel"—an idea which is set aside by "the wonderful and merciful generalization of the call to wisdom unto salvation."

28. *Come unto me*,—A fitting epilogue of the foregoing discourse. Become my disciples. John vi. 35-37. *All ye that labor, and are heavy laden*,—This may possibly refer to "the active and passive sides of human misery, the laboring and the burdened;" but probably it means simply those who are weary, being heavy laden with the burden of sin and suffering. This would, of course, embrace those described Matt. xxiii. 4; Acts xv. 10; Gal. v. 1, though it would embrace all other burdened souls. *And I will give you rest*.—And I will refresh you.

29. *Take my yoke upon you*,—Begin to conduct yourselves as my disciples. The yoke is the emblem of subjection and service, whether oppressive and painful, (Deut. xxviii. 48; Jer. xxviii. 14; Lam. i. 14; Gal. v. 1,) or easy and pleasant, as "the law of Christ," whose service is perfect freedom. 1 John v. 3. We must take upon ourselves the yoke of Christ; for the obligation to do so does not make it the less voluntary. Ps. cx. 3. Being a willing service, by grace and habit it becomes a delightful one. *And learn of me*:—These words are explanatory of the former: be taught by me as my disciples. *For I am meek and lowly in heart*;—A gentle and condescending teacher, not like the rabbins and philosophers, severe and haughty. Jos. Ant. xx. 6. Besides, as man, Christ bore the yoke himself, and thus, as our example, illustrated the meekness and gentleness, which he requires of us. Zech. ix. 9; Matt. xii. 18-21; Mark xii. 37; Luke iv. 18-22; John vii. 46; Phil. ii. 5-8; Heb. xii. 2, 3. Paul, in his apostolic character, bearing rule in the Church, contrasts the rod with love and the spirit of meekness. 1 Cor. iv. 21. He seldom used the former, but always practiced and recommended the latter. 2 Cor. x. 1; 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25. *And ye shall find rest unto your souls*.—An apparent allusion to Jer. vi. 16; cf. Isa. xxxii. 17. Jewish believers find rest from the burden of the law; Gentile believers, from the burden of speculation, superstition, and error; all believers find rest from the burden of sin and sorrow. Though the meekness and lowliness of Christ are here cited to recommend him to our choice, as a teacher suited to our ignorance and dullness, yet these qualities may well recommend him also to our imitation, as the possession of these virtues insures tranquillity of mind, while their opposites are destructive of peace. Augustin says, "Thou hast created us, O Lord, for thyself, and our hearts can never rest till they find rest in thee."

They shall find rest that learn of me,
I'm of a meek and lowly mind;
But passion rages as the sea,
And pride is restless as the wind.

As "heart" is nowhere else used of Christ, in the New Testament, one could wish the poet in this popular stanza could have found a rhyme for it, as another poet has done:

The meek and lowly heart,
Which in our Saviour was,
To us his Spirit does impart,
And signs us with his cross.

30. *For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light*.—The duties of Christianity are all reasonable, adapted to the character and condition of man, performed by the aid of grace, made facile by habit, and pleasant by the hope of reward. 1 John v. 4. What a contrast to the condition described ver. 28! Cf. Prov. iii. 17; Isa. lvii. 15-21. All other burdens will press down the bearer, but Christ's, like wings, will bear the bearer to heaven.

CHAPTER XII.

1 *Christ reproveth the blindness of the Pharisees concerning the breach of the sabbath, 3 by Scriptures, 9 by reason, 13 and by a miracle. 22 He healeth the man possessed that was blind and dumb. 31 Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall never be forgiven. 36 Account shall be made of idle words. 38 He rebuketh the unfaithful, who seek after a sign: 49 and sheweth who is his brother, sister, and mother.*

XII.—1. *At that time*—An indefinite phrase, not necessarily connecting what follows immediately with the preceding, though implying that there was no great interval. (See on Matt. xi. 25; Luke vi. 1.) *Through the corn*,—Probably the fields of barley, which was ripe at the passover. *Were an hungered*,—Were hungry. *Began to pluck*—As soon as they entered the field, impelled by hunger. *The ears of corn*—Some of the ears of the barley. They passed along a path which bounded the field where there was no fence, so that the grain stood within reach. Luke adds, "rubbing them in their hands"—a common practice, and allowed by the law. Deut. xxiii. 25.

2. *The Pharisees saw it*,—They were perhaps dogging him to see if Jesus went a yard beyond a Sabbath-day's journey! *Not lawful*—The rabbins considered plucking the ears of corn and rubbing out the grains, as a kind of reaping and threshing, and so unlawful on the Sabbath-day—contrary to the spirit of the law. Ex. xii. 16; xx. 10.

3. *Have ye not read*—A common form of introducing a Scripture quotation: (Matt. xxi. 42:) it implies that they were in the habit of reading the Scriptures. *What David did when he was an hungered*,—Mark adds "when he had need"—was pressed by necessity. This intimates that the disciples were in need of food: *cf.* ver. 1. Our Lord's question took the Pharisees on their own ground, for the rabbins justified the course of David, and Kimchi says, "There is nothing which may hinder to the care of life besides idolatry, adultery, and murder." Hence the Jewish proverb, "Peril of life drives away the Sabbath." The case of David is the more apposite, as it appears to have been on the Sabbath: *cf.* Lev. xxiv. 8; 1 Sam. xxi. 6; and besides, as Chrysostom says, he was had in high honor among the Jews.

4. *The house of God*,—Not the temple, which was not then built, but the court of the tabernacle, or the room occupied by the priests, Ex. xxiii. 19. *The shew-bread*,—Literally "the loaves of setting before:" in Hebrew, "bread of the presence," so called because it was ordered to be continually before the presence of the Lord. Ex. xxv. 30; 2 Chron. iv. 19. *Only for the priests?*—Lev. xxiv. 5-9.

5. *In the law*—Lev. xxiv. 5-9: *cf.* 1 Sam. xxi. 6; Num. xxviii. 9, 10. This is a stronger case than the historical precedent: the law positively orders work to be

done by the priests on the Sabbath—e.g., the preparation of the show-bread and the offering of sacrifices. *On the sabbath-days—profane the sabbath,*—Violate the Sabbath as a day of rest: do that which would be profaning the Sabbath were it not ordered by God. The rabbins say the Sabbath may be lawfully violated by sacerdotal works, and that "there is no sabbatism in the temple."

6. *One greater than the temple.*—Perhaps the true reading is, something greater—a delicate way of asserting his divinity, as the Jews considered God alone greater than the temple. The neuter is used in a similar way, Matt. xi. 9; xii. 41, 42. Christ thus seems to anticipate an objection that his disciples were not priests employed in the temple service: they were not; but they were in the service of Him who was greater than the temple in which the priests officiated, being its Lord and Proprietor. Mal. iii. 1.

7. *But if ye had known what this meaneth,*—Appreciated its force. (See on Matt. ix. 13.) Under the term *sacrifice* is comprehended the Sabbath.

8. *For the Son of man*—The Messiah. (See on Matt. viii. 20.) *Is Lord even of the sabbath-day.*—As the supreme Lawgiver, he can dispense with such laws as are of positive obligation, when their observance is incompatible with higher interests. But Christ does not here sanction the violation or repeal of the Sabbath, as he allows its rest to be invaded only by works of necessity, ver. 3, 4; of piety, ver. 5; of mercy, ver. 7; or by a special dispensation of Him by whom it was instituted, ver. 8.

9. *And when he was departed thence,*—Greswell thinks from Jerusalem, where he had been attending the passover. *Their synagogue.*—That of the people to whom he went—perhaps that which he usually attended in Capernaum. Luke (vi. 6) says it was "on another sabbath," and that he taught in the synagogue, which seems to have been his custom.

10. *His hand withered.*—The hand—that is, the right hand, as Luke expresses it. It appears to have been an atrophy of the limb, produced by a loss of the vital juices, so that the nerves and muscles were deprived of their function. 1 Kings xiii. 4. *Is it lawful*—Insinuating what the ruler of the synagogue and the Pharisees, on other occasions, (Luke xiii. 14; John ix. 16,) affirmed that it was not.

11. *What man shall there be*—Questions of this sort may have been often asked (*cf.* Luke xiv. 5) as occasions occurred. They constituted an unanswerable *argumentum ad hominem*, for the rabbins allowed animals to be watered, lifted out of pits, etc., on the Sabbath. In after-times it was forbidden in the Gemara to do more than lay planks for the beast to come out—a clause introduced, perhaps, in view of these words of Christ. Maimonides says, the rule is to feed the beast in the ditch, raising it with straw or brush-wood if in danger of drowning. The future tense is used to express supposition. The motive of property is introduced, but the

motive in question is mercy. *One sheep*,—A sheep: so Matt. viii. 19. *Pit*—A cistern in the fields. *Lay hold*—Expressing exertion, active work.

12. *How much better*—More important: man greatly exceeds a sheep—*a fortiori*, he ought to be relieved on the Sabbath. *Wherefore*—Hence it is right to heal this cripple.

13. *Stretch forth thine hand*.—Jesus usually uttered some word, or made some sign, when performing his miracles, which at once pointed out and demonstrated their superhuman character, as well as tested the faith of those who applied for his aid. *And he stretched it forth*;—He did not object that he had not the power to do so, and it was useless to make the attempt: he believed that with the command, and his attempt at compliance, Jesus would convey the power to accomplish the act; and the result both ascertained and justified his faith. The analogy between this process and that of our spiritual cure, can scarcely be overlooked. *Restored*—Brought back to its former sound condition. *Whole*,—Not necessary to complete the sense, but not tautological. So we speak of "recovery," or "recovery of health."

14. *Then the Pharisees went out*—Of the synagogue; "filled with madness," or insane rage, as Luke says, perhaps because he had performed the miracle without any external act, so that they had no pretext for the charge of breaking the Sabbath. *Held a council*—Mark says, "with the Herodians"—a political faction, to whom they were hostile; but malice as well as misery makes "strange bed-fellows." Matt. xxii. 16. *How they might destroy him*.—As Jesus had performed no outward act in healing the man, they had no legal hold on him for Sabbath-breaking; hence they called in the Herodians—they having a greater interest at court—to see how on political, if not on ecclesiastical, grounds they might contrive his death. Thus the presidents and princes first consulted on what ground they should destroy Daniel, and then they devised the means. Dan. vi. 4-7.

15. *But when Jesus knew it*,—But Jesus knowing it. *Withdrew*—To the Lake of Tiberias, preparatory to crossing. Mark iii. 7; iv. 35. As his hour was not yet come, he did not wish to put his life in peril or reduce himself to the necessity of working miracles to prevent it. *He healed them all*—All "that had need of healing." Luke ix. 6, 11.

16. *And charged them*—(See on Matt. viii. 4; Mark iii. 12.)

17. *That it might be fulfilled*—He pursued this course to develop the moral characteristics which Isaiah foretold the Messiah should possess. (See on Matt. i. 22.) This quotation from Isa. xlii. 1-4 varies from both the Hebrew and the LXX., the latter being very different from the Hebrew. Matthew substantially agrees with the Hebrew.

18. *Behold my servant*,—Jesus, as Messiah, executed the will of his Father: this was necessary to accomplish the work of redemption. Ps. xl. 7; John ix. 4; xvii. 4; Phil. ii. 6-8; Heb. x. 7. (See on Matt. viii. 6.) *Cf.* Acts iv. 27, 30. *Whom I have chosen*;—An expression of love and favor: in Isaiah it reads, in our version, "whom I uphold"—some render, "on whom I lean;" alluding to the custom of kings who lean on the arm of their most beloved and faithful servant. 2 Kings v. 1, 18; vii. 2. *My beloved*,—In Isaiah, "mine elect"—the Hebrew meaning a choice one, and so one beloved. Matt. iii. 17; Eph. i. 6; Col: i. 13. *In whom my soul is well pleased*:—This second clause is explanatory of the first, according to the Hebrew manner. *I will put my spirit upon him*,—This was eminently fulfilled at his baptism. Matt. iii. 16; Luke iv. 18; John iii. 34; Acts x. 38; Heb. i. 9. *Judgment*—The gospel dispensation, which the Messiah was to publish to the Gentiles. Isa. xlix. 6; *cf.* Ps. xix. 9; cxix. 7.

19. *He shall not strive*,—Quarrel, or litigate. *Nor cry*;—Clamor—defining the lifting up of the prophet as meaning boisterous and wrangling procedure. *Neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets*.—He shall pursue a meek, quiet, unostentatious course. This he exemplified in the incident which suggested the question.

20. *A bruised reed*—The *calamos*, Hebrew *caneh*, English cane. A cane, or reed, bruised, or crushed, is a lively emblem of weakness and worthlessness. *And smoking flax*—The *linon*, English linen. It here means a wick of a lamp made of flaxen threads. A smoking wick, which is easily extinguished, and will soon go out of itself, is a striking image of faintness of spirit, or an expiring piety. When it is said Christ will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, the design is to set forth his great tenderness and condescension. The negative, according to a common idiom, implies the affirmative: "he will strengthen wavering faith, and rekindle expiring piety." *Till he send forth judgment unto victory*.—He will continue his mild and unostentatious career till his gospel shall conquer the world.

21. *And in his name*—His revealed character, implying his mediation. Acts iv. 10-12. *Shall the Gentiles trust*.—Hope: without Christ they have no hope, (Eph. ii. 12; 1 Thess. iv. 13,) no well-grounded confidence in respect to either present or future salvation. Isaiah says, "the isles shall wait for his law:" his law, like his judgment, is the dispensation of the gospel; and the isles in Hebrew denote the remotest nations of the Gentiles, embracing, of course, those Gentiles who were near the Jews and the Jews themselves; (Gen. x. 5; Isa. xlix. 1;) so that the Hebrew, the LXX., and Matthew substantially agree.

22. *Then was brought unto him*—Luke (xi. 14) inserts this at a later period, but with no chronological note. *One possessed with a devil*,—A demoniac. *Blind and dumb*;—Luke says the demon was dumb. As the demon made the man blind and

dumb, it is natural enough to say the demon was dumb. Mark ix. 25. Luke does not say he was also blind; but a simple omission in one evangelist does not invalidate what is inserted in another, nor preclude the identity of both. Luke's reference to the case is less formal than Matthew's. *Insomuch*—So that.

23. *Were amazed*,—Out of their senses with wonder. *Is not this the son of David?*—Is it possible that this man is the Messiah? The negative was not in the edition of 1611, nor is it now in Bagster's Hexapla. The people would not be likely to affirm before the Pharisees that Jesus was the Messiah, as its insertion implies; but they would be likely enough to ask in their astonishment, Is he indeed the Messiah? So John iv. 29.

24. *The Pharisees*—Mark, who does not record the miracle, says, (iii. 22.) "the scribes," who generally belonged to the sect of the Pharisees. (See on Matt. v. 20.) *This fellow*—This man. *Devils*,—(See on Matt. iv. 24.) *Beelzebub*—(See on Matt. x. 25.) *The prince of the devils*.—Both the Jews and heathen taught that there was a hierarchy among evil, as well as good angels, or demons.

25. *And Jesus knew their thoughts*,—His omniscience took cognizance of the thoughts which prompted their malicious charge, which seems to have been covertly made. (See on Matt. ix. 4.) *Every kingdom*—A proverbial form of expression common among the classics and rabbinical writers. The application is easy: Satan knows that as the safety of a state, city, or family, depends on concord, dissensions being destructive in their tendency, so he would only ruin his own cause by taking part in expelling his own agents from the bodies and souls of men. It is not affirmed that no kingdom can stand if it has dissensions in itself, but it must be united as against all opposing kingdoms, or its days are numbered. It may, indeed, destroy itself by violent and persistent dissensions.

26. *And if Satan cast out Satan*,—In the latter instance Satan is the representative of his subjects: the king is the exponent of his kingdom. Luke xi. 18.

27. *By whom do your children*—Sons, disciples. 2 Kings ii. 3, 5; 1 Tim. i. 2; Tit. i. 4. Among the Jews there were exorcists, real or pretended. Acts xix. 13, 14. The question is an *argumentum ad hominem*: admitting that your disciples, as well as myself, really cast out demons, is it to be supposed that if I cast them out by the power of Beelzebub, they cast them out by the power of God? Can one and the same effect, having such a moral bearing as this, be attributed to two causes so opposite as God and the devil? *Therefore they shall be your judges*.—As they profess to exorcise by divine power, it is absurd to say that I do so by diabolical agency. It may, indeed, be doubted whether those Jewish exorcists ever did really cast out demons, and the rather as the authorities for the opinion are so untrustworthy. Thus Tobit (viii. 2) speaks of exorcising by means of the liver of

a fish! And Josephus (Ant. viii. 2; Wars, vii. 6) says there grew a root, called baaras, near Machaerus, by which, with the incantations of Solomon, they cast out demons, which he considered the spirits of wicked men. His account is too puerile and disgusting for repetition. Cf. Acts xix. 14-19. On the Pharisees' own ground, Jesus convicted them of prejudice: he had nothing then to do with their imposture: the next verse, however, by implication, repudiates the reality of those exorcisms.

28. *The Spirit of God*,—God's Spirit—a divine power (Luke, "finger of God,"), opposed to Satanic agency. *Then*—Then, indeed (Luke, "no doubt"). *The kingdom of God*—The gospel dispensation. *Is come unto you*.—Has overtaken, or surprised, or come suddenly upon you: it is already here without your knowing it. Luke xvii. 20, 21.

29. *Or else, how*—How else. *Spoil his goods*,—Make a spoil of what the house contains, hence it is called spoiling his house. In Luke it is a still more lively description of a bold assault and complete subjugation. Isa. xlix. 24, 25. Christ's meaning seems to be, "As I have overcome Satan, I cannot be his ally, but his foe; and as by overcoming him, I have showed myself superior to him in power, it is absurd to suppose that I am indebted to his influence."

30. *He that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad*.—An allusion, perhaps, to the folding and the scattering of sheep. John x. 12; xi. 52. Instead of their being any collusion between Satan and me, there is a direct opposition: as the devil is not on my side, he cannot cooperate in sustaining my cause. Of course, those who are not against Christ must be for him; though circumstances might preclude external fellowship. Mark ix. 38-41; Luke ix. 49, 50.

31. *Wherefore*—Because this is the case: this connects what follows with the foregoing matter, and agrees with Mark iii. 30, "Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit"—a phrase which not only indicates the moral character of the evil spirit who tempts men to commit even such acts as he cannot himself commit, but stands directly opposed to the Holy Spirit, who rested on Christ. (See on ver. 28, 32; Matt. x. 1; iii. 17; Acts x. 38.) *Blasphemy*—Injurious language, whether against God or man. Dan. iii. 29, LXX.; 2 Mac. viii. 4. *Shall be forgiven unto men*:—Of course, on repentance, which is supposed possible: it is remissible—may be forgiven. The future tense of the indicative, according to the Hebrew idiom, is used for the subjunctive or potential mood. *But the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost*,—Literally, the blasphemy of the Spirit—such detraction as has the Spirit of God for its object.

32. *And whosoever*—The sin of calumniating Christ may be repented of and forgiven. (See on ver. 31.) *This world*,—This state of existence: "now in this time." Mark x. 30. *The world to come*.—The future state. This does not imply that sins are forgiven on repentance after death. The language is a strong periphrasis,

meaning it shall never be forgiven. Mark and Luke, writing for Gentiles, use plain language, instead of the Hebrew idiom. Blasphemy against the Son of man, as it had reference to his humiliation, argued ignorance and false views of his kingdom: it was, indeed, a sin, but as it did not necessarily involve a deep-seated malignity, might, on better advisement, be repented of and forgiven. Luke vii. 23; xxiii. 34. But the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost—not speaking against the divinity or dignity of his person, or of his ordinary operations, but against the highest, and most important and most obvious manifestations of his economical functions, by which the divine legation of Jesus was authenticated, and the divine original of Christianity ratified—argued a malignity so deep and damning that repentance and pardon were out of the question. It could not be reasonably expected that those who had arrived at such a pitch of depravity as to sin so malignantly and so presumptuously would, in the future, do what they had failed to do in the past, yield to those influences by which men are brought to repentance and pardon. So it is said of those who are long accustomed to sin, it is impossible for them to reform their lives: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Jer. xiii. 23. Yet the impossibility, in the case of the habitual sinner, is not a proper philosophical impossibility, as in that of the Ethiopian or leopard. Habitual sinners—those who have grown old in crime—may repent; though, generally speaking, they never do, and it is morally impossible that they should. The apostasy spoken of in Heb. vi. 4-6; x. 26-30, does not appear to be identical with the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost, though it bears an affinity to it. That apostasy consists in a deliberate rejection of Christianity after having experienced its saving power. Those who are guilty of this sin cannot be saved, because it consists in rejecting the only means by which men can be saved. It is not likely that such men will be induced to give up their malignant opposition to Christianity; yet it is perhaps going too far to say that this is absolutely and philosophically impossible. All who are furnished with satisfactory proof that Christ's miracles were wrought by divine power and yet in consequence of malignant opposition to Christianity, attribute them to the devil, seem to be as guilty as those who did so being eye-witnesses of them.

33. *Either make*—Generally construed, account, assume, or call; and the application of the proverb seems to be this: As you consider that a good tree which brings forth good fruit, and that a bad one which produces bad fruit, why do you attribute my good works to an evil agency? (See on Matt. vii. 17.) As good fruit shows a good tree, why attribute my good actions to a bad source? *His*—Its. (See on Matt. v. 13.)

34. *O generation of vipers*,—(See on Matt. iii. 7.) The poison of these most deadly serpents was not more dangerous to life than the blasphemy of the Pharisees was to the souls or men. *How can ye,—speak good things?*—It is hardly possible for you to give a candid opinion. *For out of the abundance*—A proverbial

expression, implying that when men's minds are full of a subject they can scarcely help pouring it out in speech.

35. *A good man*,—Our translators overlook the article before "good man" and "evil man"—it gives definiteness to the idea—The good man, etc. *The good treasure*—Consisting of kind affections, which lead to candid opinions. *Evil treasure*,—Consisting of malignant affections, which are evinced by calumny. *Bringeth forth*—Uttereth.

36. *Idle word*—*Argos*, applied to persons, means idle, lazy; applied to words or actions, it means the words or actions of the idle; among which the Jews ranked lying and slander. 1 Tim. v. 13; Tit. i. 12. It here seems to refer to the calumny of the Pharisees. It does not mean the foolish talking condemned Eph. v. 4, or the unedifying talk which makes up so much of the conversation of common people. *In the day of judgment*,—When every act, word, and thought must be accounted for. (See on Matt. x. 15; xi. 22, 24.)

37. *For by thy words*—If they be good—*Thou shalt be justified*,—By good words, as well as by good thoughts and deeds, will a man be adjudged righteous in the final judgment. This is the meaning of "justified" here and in James ii. 21-25, not as in Rom. v. 1, pardoned, which is by faith. *And by thy words*—If they be evil—*Thou shalt be condemned*.—This opposes the sentiment of Phocylides: "Be discreet in your discourse, but much more in your actions: the first evaporates, the latter endure for ever."

38. *Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees*—It appears from Luke xi. 16, that they were not those who accused him of casting out demons by Beelzebub; but they belonged to the same class, though not quite so bad. *Answered*,—Though Luke notes this before the discourse concerning the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost, yet it was quite likely suggested by that discourse. Luke says they made the request tempting him—putting him to a test which they thought might embarrass him. *Master*,—Teacher: they did not call him by the more honorable and distinctive title, Rabbi. *We would see a sign from thee*.—A supernatural phenomenon, exhibited for the purpose of establishing a claim to divine authority: it is used frequently by John for miracle; though there seems to be a distinction between the power of healing and exorcism, inherent in Christ, and a sign from heaven in his favor. A demand for signs was common among the Jews. Matt. xvi. 1; Mark viii. 12; 1 Cor. i. 22. They had witnessed miracles wrought on the earth; they now wanted, as Luke says, a celestial miracle. According to Jewish superstition, demons could work other miracles, but they could not give signs from heaven, such as those recorded Josh. x. 12; 1 Sam. xii. 17; Neh. ix. 15; Jer. xiv. 22; cf. John vi. 30, 31. See also the Apocryphal Epistle of Jeremy, 67.

39. *To them*,—Particularly to the people, in reply to the scribes and Pharisees: cf. ver. 45, 46; Luke xi. 29. *Adulterous*—This seems to refer to their practical infidelity, which, as well as idolatry, was a breach of the covenant into which the Jews had entered with Jehovah, and which was set forth under a matrimonial figure. Ezek. xvi. 38; Hos. iii. 1; Jas. iv. 4. *Generation*—A people of the same race and time. *Seeketh*—The compound verb, in the original, is used to express their constantly seeking or demanding a sign: it is not used to express the particular instance, Mark viii. 11. *And there shall no sign be given to it*,—He had given them many miraculous signs, any of which were sufficient to convince them of the divinity of his mission, if they would candidly regard them; but no additional sign, such as they demanded, would answer for prejudice and malignity, hence he would give them none, *but the sign of the prophet Jonas*.—Not a new miracle to gratify their curiosity, or to humor their obstinacy, but an old one recorded in their sacred books; not a sign from the sky, but from the sea.

40. *Three days and three nights*—The Jews speak of a day as "evening and morning," which the Greeks called *nuchthemeron*; and according to the Hebrew mode of computation, any part of a *nuchthemeron* was counted as a day: thus a portion of Friday was one day; the succeeding night and day constituted another; and the succeeding night and a part of Sunday, a third. Gen. xl. 13, 20; 1 Sam. xxx. 12, 13; 2 Chron. x. 5, 12; Esth. iv. 16; v. 1; Dan. viii. 14, margin. *The whale's belly*:—In Jonah i. 17; ii. 1, 10, this animal is called "a great fish," and "the fish"; in the LXX., as in Matthew, *ketos*. Bishop Jebb thinks Jonah was taken into the cavity of a whale's mouth, which in the case of the great common whale, according to Capt. Scoresby, the great whale-fisher, is "as large as a room, and capable of containing a merchant-ship's jolly-boat full of men, being six or eight feet wide, ten or twelve feet high in front, and fifteen or sixteen feet long." Whales have been found cast up on the shores of the Mediterranean. But Bochart makes it the *squalus carcharias*, or white shark, called the *lamia*, from *laimos*, the throat, because of its voracity. The term *ketos*, denotes a sea-monster—a shark, for instance, as well as a whale; and as whales are not found in the Mediterranean, and have not throats large enough to swallow a man entire, and as sharks do abound there, and as they can swallow the largest man with ease, critics for the most part indorse the opinion of Bochart. The throat of the *carcharias* is sometimes large enough for a man to stand upright in it, and men have been found entire in its stomach. This opinion is, moreover, countenanced by the Grecian fable of Hercules: thus Aeneas Gazaeus says, "It is reputed of Hercules, that when he was shipwrecked, he was swallowed by a *ketos*, and yet was saved." Lycophron accordingly calls Hercules,

That famed three-nighted lion, whom of old
Triton's *carcharian dog* with horrid jaws
Devoured.

Three-nighted seems to allude to the time of Jonah's detention in the stomach of the *ketos*; and the rough dog seems to identify the monster with the shark called *canis carcharias*, because of his voracious appetite and his rough, sharp teeth. As it is not seemly to multiply unnecessary miracles, we may suppose that a "fish" common in the Mediterranean, and one that frequently swallows men alive, was that employed in the case of Jonah: a miracle, of course, was needed to keep him alive in the shark's stomach, although that organ has no power over substances endued with vitality. *The heart of the earth*.—A Hebraism for the inner part, meaning the grave. So Tyre is spoken of as being "in the heart of the sea," (Ezek. xxviii. 2,) being nearly surrounded by it, though adjoining the land. Cf. Jonah ii. 2, 3, 6. Of course, the reference is to the body of Christ—it is common to speak of the body or of the soul, in the separate state, as the man himself.

41. *The men of Nineveh*—Ninevites—those to whom Jonah was sent. The reference to Jonah suggested their case. *Shall rise in judgment*—Will stand up in the day of judgment, before the judgment-seat of Christ. Rom. xiv. 20; Rev. xx. 12. *With*—Together with. *This generation*,—The Jews of this age. *And shall condemn it*:—The repentance of the Ninevites will testify against the Jews for their impenitence. *At the preaching*—In accordance with the warning. Jonah iii. 2-5. (See on Matt. iii. 2.) *A greater*—Something greater: the neuter is used by way of delicacy. (See on ver. 6.) Christ's superiority embraced his person, office, credentials, and ministry.

42. *The queen of the south*—As the article is not before queen in the original, and as her kingdom is not specified, perhaps it should read, A queen of the south. In 1 Kings x. 1, she is called the queen of Sheba. Josephus says she was queen of Egypt and Ethiopia, i.e., Meroe, whose queens were usually called Candace. Abyssinian tradition calls her Maqueda, and supposes she embraced the Hebrew faith when in Jerusalem; and a form of Judaism is said to have existed there in ancient times. But it is generally considered Sabaea in Arabia Felix, on the borders of the Red Sea, near the present Aden, south-east of Judea: spice, gold, and precious stones abound there. The Koran calls this queen Balkis. *Shall rise up*—Shall be raised up from the dead. (See on ver. 41.) *The uttermost parts of the earth*—The ends of the earth—an hyperbole, common in many languages to express a great distance. Deut. xxviii. 49; Ps. ii. 8; xxii. 27; xlvi. 9; lxi. 2; lxxvii. 7; lxxii. 8; Heb. and LXX. It will apply to Arabia Felix, on the coast of the Red Sea, as well as to Abyssinia. *A greater than Solomon*—(See on v. 41.) Christ, as the Wisdom of God, came to solve the great problem of salvation, infinitely more important than all the "hard questions" with which the queen of Sheba "came to prove" the wisdom of Solomon.

43. *When*—Now whenever. *The unclean spirit*—(See on ver. 31.) The article does not probably allude to the particular demon he has just cast out, nor to that

by which the Pharisees said he was influenced, but it is used generally, as the man (our translators have *a man*, overlooking the article): so physicians say, the disease has left the patient. *He walketh through dry places*,—Goes through the deserts: the Jews thought that demons haunted such desolate places. *Rest*,—A place of abode.

44. *My house*—As if he had the original right to it. Luke iv. 6. *From whence I came out*;—As if he had not been cast out. *Empty*,—Unoccupied. *Garnished*.—Put in order, furnished. These figurative expressions seem merely designed to place the house, as a desirable residence, in contrast with the dreary and uninviting solitudes of the desert. Matt. viii. 31.

45. *Taketh with himself*—More emphatic than in Luke.—The Jews used seven, as the number of perfection, to indicate a great many. Prov. vii. 25; Luke viii. 2. *More wicked*—So that there are different degrees of depravity among demons as well as among men. *Is worse*—Becomes worse. 2 Peter ii. 20-22. *Even so shall*—Thus will it be also with this wicked people. This clause, as well as the connection in Luke, shows that the parable refers not merely to ver. 38-42, but to the whole narrative, (ver. 22-42,) which was occasioned by the miracle in ver. 22. Hence the allusion to demoniacal possession. It is quite likely that when the Jewish exorcists essayed to cast out demons, they pronounced the demon expelled when there was a temporary suspension of the demoniac's mania, and pretended that he had returned with a reinforcement when the mania again developed itself. This circumstance would afford Jesus a pertinent illustration of the case of the Jewish people, many of whom professed to be, and probably were, as all might have been, benefited by his ministry; but the most of them, through the sinister influences of the scribes and Pharisees, relapsed into their accustomed wickedness, and, of course, became all the more abandoned and culpable by reason of the light and grace which they had received and abused.

46. *While he yet talked to the people*,—The multitudes. Luke (viii. 19-21) places this after the explanation of the parable of the sower, but he does not say "while," (Matthew), or "then" (Mark), but *de*, which does not mean "then," but simply marks a transition, without necessarily indicating any chronological connection. *His mother and his brethren*—As there is no reference to his reputed father, who, indeed does not appear in the gospel history after the period of Christ's childhood, (Luke ii..) it is likely that Joseph was dead: this is corroborated by the fact that "the carpenter's son" (Matt. xiii. 55) is called in the parallel, (Mark vi. 3,) "the carpenter," as according to the Jewish custom, he had, in all likelihood, assumed the position of his reputed father, on the demise of the latter. (See on Matt. xiii. 55.) *Desiring to speak with him*.—They intended more than this: *cf.* Mark iii. 20, 21.

47. *Stand without*,—Probably outside the house in which he was speaking. Matt. xiii. 1.

48. *Who is my mother?*—This does not imply any disrespect toward his mother, nor should we infer from it that she did not believe in him, but it implies a gentle rebuke of her interference with the movements of her Son, which, of course, he could not allow.

49. *Disciples*,—All present who believed on him.

50. *Shall do*—Will do. *The will of my Father which is in heaven*,—Intimating that he was doing it. John vi. 38. He never mentions his reputed earthly father: his filial relation to God is finely adduced, as it throws all earthly relationships into the shade. *The same is my brother*,—My spiritual kindred. Rom. viii. 14-17. Homer (Il. vi. 429) makes Andromache say to Hector, "Thou art my father, my mother, and my brother." Epictetus says that a man's own welfare and advantage are to him brother, father, kindred, country, and God. Martial, speaking of the love of Gelia for her jewels, says, "These she calls her brothers and sisters." Ambrose says, "The claims of parents are not here disallowed: we are only taught that spiritual ties bind faster, and are more sacred, than mere carnal ones." It gives but little countenance to Mariolatry.

CHAPTER XIII.

3 *The parable of the sewer and the seed: 18 the exposition of it. 24 The parable of the tares, 31 of the mustard-seed, 33 of the leaven, 44 of the hidden treasure, 45 of the pearl, 47 of the draw net cast into the sea: 53 and how Christ is contemned of his own countrymen.*

XIII.—1. *Went out of the house*,—Which seems to have been near the shore of the Lake of Tiberias.

2. *A ship*,—The boat. (See on Matt. iv. 21; Mark iii. 9.) *Sat*;—(See on Matt. v. 1.)

3. *Parables*,—Parable comes from *para*, near, and *ballo*, to throw, or put, and conveys the idea of the juxtaposition of two things. Parkhurst defines it well enough: "A comparison, similitude, or simile, in which one thing is compared with another, (see Mark iv. 10,) and particularly spiritual things with natural, by which means such spiritual things are best understood, and make the deeper impression on the honest and attentive hearer, at the same time that they are concealed from the gross, carnal, and inattentive." In the New Testament, its meaning is extended, like the Hebrew *marshal*. Prov. i. 1, 6, LXX. It does not appear to be ever used in the sense of fable, but it sometimes means proverb, prediction, metaphor. Matthew, Mark, and Luke never use *paroima*, proverb, though our translators so render *parabole*, in Luke iv. 23; whereas John uses *paroima*, and never *parabole*. John x. 6; xvi. 25. In distinguishing between

parable and allegory, Campbell well remarks that in allegory every one of the principal words has, through the whole, two meanings, the literal and the figurative. Whatever is advanced should be pertinent, understood either way. It is not so in parable, where the scope is chiefly regarded, and not the words taken severally. That there be a resemblance in the principal incidents, is all that is required. Smaller matters are considered only as a sort of drapery. It is generally thought that the parables in this chapter, where they abound more than elsewhere, are the first of those recorded by the evangelists as spoken by Christ; and it is observable that he here gives us a specimen of the manner in which they are to be interpreted. *Saying*,—After "he spake," this word precedes the very language uttered. *Behold*,—A note of attention. *A sower*—The sower—indicating not an individual, but a class: so we say the farmer—whose business it is—sows his wheat.

4. *And when he sowed*,—And in sowing it. *By the way-side*,—The path which divided the fields, there being no fence—where they could not be covered with soil. *The fowls*—Luke says, "of the air"—the birds. Buckingham says he saw thousands of starlings laying a heavy contribution on the grain which the farmers were sowing in a field in Palestine. *Devoured them up*:—The word expresses the idea of swallowing them down with dispatch, as do birds that stop not to masticate.

5. *Stony places*,—The rocky parts of the field—where a thin coat of earth covered the rock, as Luke has it. *Forthwith*—Soon. *They sprung up*,—They were near the surface, and the rock, heated by the sun, forced their growth, which, as it could not proceed in the radicle, was developed in the plumule, of the plant. Soil interspersed with stones is not meant: that will allow of plants taking deep root.

6. *The sun*—Which has great power in Palestine, even in November. Jas. i. 11.

7. *Among thorns*;—Upon the thorns—i.e., the thorny parts of the field. Thorny shrubs abound in Palestine: the rabbins say there are twenty-two words in the Hebrew Bible designating plants of this sort—many species are small, but others grow to the height of six feet and more. As the plowing in the East is not deep, the roots of the thorns, are suffered to remain. Of course, the thorns spring up with the grain and choke it, so that it yields no fruit, being deprived of room, nourishment, sun, and air; though the soil is good and deep, and there is a fairer prospect of fruit than in the former cases. Wheat is sometimes choked with cockle—which word comes from the Anglo-Saxon *ceocan*, to choke.

8. *Into good ground*,—Upon the good ground—i.e., the good part of the field—soft, not like that by the highway-side; deep, not like that on the rock; purged, not thorny. *Brought forth fruit*,—Gave fruit, produced a crop—one portion, a hundred-fold; another portion, sixty-fold; and another portion,

thirty-fold. These large round numbers are used to convey the idea of an abundant harvest. Gen. xxvi. 12. Herodotus says that the region about Babylon was so fertile as constantly to produce two hundred-fold, and sometimes three hundredfold. Pliny speaks of wheat in Africa producing one hundred and fifty-fold. Niebuhr speaks of maize that yields four hundred-fold. There is a threefold distinction in the good, as well as in the bad ground.

9. *Who hath ears*—He who has. (See on Matt. xi. 15.)

10. *And the disciples came*,—When he was alone, during a pause in his teaching. Cf. ver. 36; Mark iv. 10, 34. *Why speakest thou unto them in parables?*—It seems, he had not previously used the parabolical style in his public discourses.

11. *Mysteries*—Secrets: the provisions and arrangements of the gospel dispensation; these are disclosed only to a few, the rest being unworthy to receive them and unable to comprehend them. State secrets are not for rebels and enemies, or even foreigners.

12. *For whosoever hath*,—This adage is called an oxymoron, i.e., an acute saying, which at first view seems to be foolish. The classical writers frequently speak of the rich and the poor as those who have something—i.e., considerable substance—and those who have nothing—i.e., very little. Thus Juvenal says, "Codrus had nothing, and yet he lost all that nothing." He tells us of what that "nothing" consisted, viz., a small bed, six little pitchers, a sideboard, a small jug, a marble Chiron, and an old box containing some Greek books. Mark and Luke place this passage after the interpretation of the parable, and in connection with other remarks which help to explain it. He who has acquired and retained a considerable amount of knowledge, is fit and capacitated to receive larger measures; but he who has not improved what little he had, will not only be incapacitated to receive any larger additions to his stock, but will lose even that which he has, for it will escape out of his memory, through his neglect. It does not follow from this, and the parable of the pounds, where the adage is again quoted, (Luke xix. 12-26,) that a small amount of knowledge (or grace) may not be improved, and so lead to the bestowment of larger measures. Rom. ii. 25, 26. This verse indicates what is called the double force of the parable—its revealing, and its concealing properties: it enlightens and guides the docile, but dazzles and bewilders the indocile.

13. *Therefore*—Because of this, i.e., because of their culpable non-improvement, (see on ver. 12,) he spoke to them in obscure, rather than explicit language. They saw the miracles and heard the teaching of Christ, but it was as though they neither saw nor heard, for they did not turn them to any profitable account. This is a proverbial form of expression. Jer. v. 21; Ezek. xii.

2. In Matthew the parabolic teaching seems to be occasioned by their want of discernment: in Mark and Luke their want of discernment seems to be occasioned by the parabolic teaching. Both are correct. "Whosoever hath not" corresponds with the clause, "because they seeing, see not"—there is the sin of non-improvement: "from him shall be taken away even that he hath," corresponds with the cause, "that they seeing, might not see"—there is the punishment of non-improvement.

14. *In them*—With regard to them. *Is fulfilled*—The obduracy of Isaiah's contemporaries was reproduced by the Jews of our Lord's time. It is referred to in John xii. 40; Acts xxviii. 26; Rom. xi. 8, as well as by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, in connection with this parable. Mark and Luke, as usual, merely allude to the prophecy; Matthew, as usual, quotes it. It is taken (as also in Acts) almost *verbatim* from the LXX. Our translators render the Hebrew in the imperative: others, in the indicative: "Ye shall hear, but not understand; and ye shall see, but not perceive. This people have made their heart fat, and have made their ears heavy, and shut their eyes"—which agrees with the LXX., the Syriac, and Arabic, Matthew and Acts. *By hearing ye shall hear*,—A Hebrew idiom, meaning, ye will surely hear, or ye shall indeed hear. *And not*,—And yet not.

15. *For this people's heart*—If the Hebrew be rendered imperatively, "Make the heart of this people fat," it must be construed as a Hebrew idiom, in which any one is said to do what he predicts or permits. Jer. i. 10; Ezek. xliii. 3. Isaiah was not sent to make the people stupid and obstinate: they made themselves so without his help. Their understanding is stupefied. *Their ears are dull of hearing*,—Literally, with their ears they have heard heavily; as we say, they were hard of hearing. Jerome says, "That we might not suspect this grossness of heart and heaviness of ears was the effect of nature, and not of choice, he subjoins the fault of the will. Their eyes they have closed." *Lest at any time*—They resist the light so that they might not perceive their evil condition, turn to God by repentance, and be delivered from the consequences of their sins. John iii. 19, 20.

16. *But blessed are your eyes*,—A spirited style of felicitation, common among all people. Luke xi. 27. The eyes and ears are introduced because of the preceding context. *They see—they hear*—I.e., to purpose: you profit by what you see and hear.

17. *For verily I say unto you*,—An emphatic formula. (See on Matt. v. 18, 20.) *Prophets and righteous men*—(See on Matt. x. 41; *cf.* Heb. xi. 13; 1 Pet. i. 10-12.) A similar passage in Luke x. 23, 24, spoken on a different occasion, instead of righteous men—as Abraham and the patriarchs—has kings: David is an illustrious example. Acts ii. 25-35.

18. *Hear ye*—As distinguished from others. *The parable*—I.e., the interpretation of it (*cf.* Gen. xl. 12); for according to Mark iv. 10, they asked him what it meant.

19. *The word of the kingdom*,—Instruction in regard to the gospel dispensation. Matt. iii. 2; iv. 23; Acts i. 3. *And understandeth it not*,—And yet does not lay it to heart, so as to understand it: so the word is used Ps. cvi. 7; Prov. xxi. 12., LXX.; Matt. xiv. 33; xv. 10. *Then cometh the wicked one*,—Mark says, "Satan cometh immediately." *And catcheth away*—Snatcheth away: the word expresses the haste, as well as the stealthy manner, in which birds pick up grain. *This is he which received seed by the way-side*.—There is nothing harsh in the metaphor which represents the man as sown with seed—he who is sown on the way-side—so the Vulgate—the careless hearer, who has not regarded the gracious influences which were designed to prepare his heart for the reception of the truth, but has made it a common thoroughfare, like a beaten path through a field, which not being plowed up, is not adapted to the reception of seed, which will not grow if allowed to stay there, but which will not stay there because the birds representing the evil one are hovering around ready to devour it.

20. *But he that received the seed into stony places*—Who is sown on the rocky places—the hearer being the ground thus sown. (See on ver. 5, 19.) *Anon*—Immediately. Junius and Horne Tooke say, *Anon* means "in one (*subauditur*) instant, moment, minute." *Receiveth it*;—*Lambanon*, receiving, having an active force, differs altogether from *spareis*, rendered "received" in this verse and 19, 22, 23, which has a passive force. All the varieties of the soil are sown; they all alike "receive seed," in this passive sense; but all do not alike receive it, in the active sense, that is, appropriate it. As some soil receives seed with little difficulty, so some minds readily lay hold of the truth, and apprehend its beauty and excellence: they are very different from those who carelessly or stubbornly reject it.

21. *Yet hath he not root in himself*,—The word, as the seed, takes root in the man, as the soil; but here by a figure called hypallage, that which belongs to the seed is transferred to the soil. Campbell's rendering is a very good paraphrase: "Yet not having it rooted in his mind, retaineth it but a while." *Cf.* Eph. iii. 17; Col. ii. 7. He is temporary—he is an unstable disciple. *Tribulation*—*Thlipseos*, from *thlibo*, to press, to bruise, very well rendered in the Vulgate, *tribulatio*, from *tribulum*, a machine for pressing out the grains of corn from the chaff: it well expresses the affliction (Mark) which tries the new convert. *Or persecution*—A particular and prominent form of tribulation. (See on Matt. v. 10, 11, 12; Acts viii. 1; 2 Tim. iii. 11.) It is implied that persecution may naturally be expected as consequent on the profession of Christ. John xv. 19; xvi. 33; Gal. iv. 29. *Because of the word*,—On account of the profession of the gospel. *By and*

by—Immediately; rendered "anon," ver. 20: the relapse is as sudden as the conversion. *Offended*.—Falls from his profession. (See on Matt. xi. 6; xvi. 23.) The trials which improve the piety of one in whose heart the gospel has taken a deep root, wither that of a superficial convert, even as the sun which develops the grain in a deep soil, scorches that on the rock. Ps. cxxi. 6; cxxix. 6-8; Hos. vi. 4; Jas. i. 6, 11.

22. *He also that received seed*—But he who is sown. (See on ver. 7, 19, 20.) *Care*—Anxious, distracting care. (See on Matt. vi. 25; Jas. i. 8.) *Of this world*,—Of this present life. Anxiety about worldly matters is peculiarly, though not exclusively, the besetting sin of the poor. *The deceitfulness of riches*—Wealth is said to be deceitful, because it promises what it never performs; besides, it is frequently procured, hoarded, and employed, in a deceitful manner. Luke xxi. 34; 1 Tim. vi. 9. *Choke the word*,—Their roots and shoots intermix with those of the grain, and suffocate it. Worldly anxieties and pleasures stifle, and crowd out of the mind every thing that pertains to the kingdom of heaven. *He becometh unfruitful*.—The original may refer to the man or to the word: our translators in Mark, refer it to the word, which seems proper, though the unfruitfulness of the seed results from the fault of the soil.

23. *But he that received seed into*—But he who is sown on. (See on ver. 8, 20, 22.) *Understandeth*—(See on ver. 19.) *Beareth fruit*,—The plural of the original is rendered "bring forth fruit" in Mark and Luke. *Bringeth forth*—Makes a crop—profits by the word. The difference in the yield does not result from the seed—the word of God is the same in all cases—but some who do receive it in good ground are not so capable of turning it to account or do not apply themselves so diligently to the task, as others; hence the difference. The soil, indeed, in all cases, is naturally bad; but the preventing grace of God, which is given to every man, if improved, will make the heart good—that is, fit for the production of "the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." Phil. i. 11; Jas. i. 18-25. Those whose hearts may be compared to the beaten, rocky, or thorny soil, may, if they will avail themselves of those gracious influences by which they may be prepared to receive the truth in the love thereof, and profit thereby. Those who have been thoughtless in childhood (way-side hearers) may become unstable professors (rocky-ground hearers) in youth; and worldly-minded (thorny-ground hearers) in more advanced life; yet after passing through all these states, they may receive seed in good and honest hearts, and bring forth fruit to perfection, though the prospect is very unpromising. As it is grace alone that enables any one of these several classes to receive the seed, so it is grace alone that enables those represented by the good ground to bring forth fruit; and as those represented by the first three kinds of soil would bring forth fruit but for their own fault, so those represented by the good ground would fail to bring forth fruit if they did not concur with the grace given them.

24. *Put he forth*—Proposed as a riddle for them to solve. *The kingdom of heaven*—The Church under the gospel dispensation. *Is likened unto a man which*—Is like the case of a man who. *Sowed good seed*—Of a serviceable species. John xii. 24.

25. *But while men slept*,—During the night, when the laborers were not in the field. *His enemy*—A man who had a grudge against him. *Sowed*—Oversowed. *Tares*—A leguminous plant, like vetches; but as these do not resemble wheat, and are sown for fodder, and so would not be burned up, (ver. 30), the *zizania* are generally identified with the *lolium temulentum*, so called because of the vertigo which it produces when eaten in bread. The Arabs call it *zuwan*, from *zan*, nausea; the French, *ivraie*; the English, darnel, which word has been generally adopted by critics since the days of Wesley, whose translation is the only one in which it was found by Campbell, when he admitted it into his own. He considers it a distinct species of grain, and not, as some, a degenerate variety of wheat. Shakspeare, in Lear, speaks of

Darnel and all the idle weeds that grow
In our sustaining corn.

Lardner (1734) in his *Credibility* (Part ii. c. xii.) so renders it in a passage of Eusebius, who quotes from Dionysius: "The apostles of the devil have filled them (his epistles) with darnel." *Went his way*—An old idiom for went away.

26. *Then appeared the tares also*.—The *lolium*, as says Jerome, who lived in Palestine, could not well be distinguished from the wheat until the latter began to ear. This appears to have been the "deceitful weed" which Hackett says he found in nearly every field in Palestine where he sought for it: "Except that the stalk was not so high, it appeared otherwise precisely like wheat, just as the ears begin to show themselves, and the kernels are swelling out into shape. On showing some specimens to friends, they have mistaken them invariably for grain, as wheat or barley."

27. *So*—And, or then. *The servants*—The slaves. *Of the house-holder*—Of the master of the house. (See on Matt. x. 25.) The farmer's servants. *Sir*,—Master. *Didst not thou*—Didst thou not: the question implies an affirmative—they knew the fact. *Whence then*—By what means: an expression of surprise and perplexity.

28. *An enemy hath done this*.—The readiness with which the master referred it to this cause intimates that such villainy was not unprecedented in those days. It is indeed spoken of in the Roman law. Roberts (*Oriental Illustrations*) speaks of it as still practiced in India: "See that lurking villain watching for the time when his neighbor shall plow his field: he carefully marks the period when the work has been finished, and goes in the night following, and casts in what the natives call *pandinella*, i.e., pig-paddy: this being of rapid growth, springs up before the good

seed, and scatters itself before the other can be reaped, so that the poor owner of the field will be for years before he can get rid of the troublesome weed. But there is another noisome plant which these wretches cast into the ground of those they hate, called *perum-pirandi*, which is more destructive to vegetation than any other plant. Has a man purchased a field out of the hands of another? the offended person says, 'I will plant the *perum-pirandi* in his grounds.'" Trench says he has known "in Ireland an outgoing tenant, in spite at his ejection, sow wild oats in the field which he was leaving." Alford says his field in Leicestershire was sown with charlock, and the tenant recovered heavy damages by a suit at law. *Wilt thou*—Dost thou command us to weed them out? From this question, it would seem that this was sometimes done while the grain was growing. Dr. Wilson saw in the plains of the upper Jordan, and Mr. Stanley in the great corn-fields of Samaria, "women and children employed in picking out from the wheat the tall green stalks still called by the Arabs *zuwan*, apparently the same word as *zizania*, which in the Vulgate is rendered *lollia*; and which, it can easily be imagined, if sowed designedly throughout the fields, would be inseparable from the wheat, from which, even when growing naturally, and by chance, they are at first hardly distinguishable."

29. *Ye root up also the wheat*—The darnel could be distinguished from the wheat when in ear, but being intermixed with it all over the field, the former could not be pulled up without rooting up the latter.

30. *Gather ye together*—Collect—a different word from that rendered *gather* in reference to the wheat. So ver. 40, 41.

31. *Put he forth*—(See on v. 24.) *Took, and sowed*—A pleonasm for sowed.

32. *The least of all seeds*:—It may have been literally the least of all the seeds known to the Jews, as it is not likely they knew any thing about tobacco, poppy, and fox-glove; but the phrase appears to have been a popular and proverbial one among the Jews. Matt. xvii. 20. *The greatest among herbs*,—Least and greatest here are comparatives in the original—and are so rendered in Mark—greater than the class of vegetables called herbs. *The birds lodge*—Sheltered and screened by its boughs and leaves, and regaled by its seed, of which they are very fond. Ps. civ. 12; Dan. iv. 10-12. The Jerusalem Talmud says, "There was a stalk of mustard in Sichem from which sprang out three boughs, one of which being broken off, served to cover the tent of a potter, and produced three cabs of mustard-seed." Rab. Simeon ben Chalapha said, "A stalk of mustard was in my field into which I was wont to climb, as men are wont to climb into a fig-tree." Alonzo de Avallo says, "The mustard-tree thrives so rapidly in Chili, that it is as big as one's arm, and so high and thick that it looks like a tree. I have traveled many leagues through mustard-groves, which were taller than horse and man; and the birds build their nests there, as the Gospel mentions." Maldonatus says he saw in Spain great

ovens heated with its branches: he saw also large flocks of birds lighting on the boughs, without breaking them, and feeding on the seed. The *sinapi* of the parable is generally identified with the *Salvadora Persica*, called in Syria and India *khardel*, which is the rendering in the Syriac version, and is the same word as the Talmudical Hebrew *chardal*. It grows abundantly on the banks of the Jordan, and on the borders of the Lake of Tiberias, where Christ spoke this parable, and in other parts of Palestine. Royle says, "We have in it a small seed, which, sown in cultivated ground, abounds in foliage. This being pungent, may, like the seed, have been used as a condiment, as mustard and cress is with us. The nature of the plant, however is to become arboreous; and thus it will form a large shrub or a tree, 25 feet high, under which a horseman may stand, where the soil and climate are favorable. It produces numerous branches and leaves among which birds may and do take shelter, as well as build their nests." The parable was designed to represent the wonderful development of Christianity from a very small and insignificant beginning. It may have been intended, as Chrysostom intimates, to show that though it would meet with hinderances, as set forth in the preceding parables, it would, nevertheless, prevail over all opposition. As the following parable of the leaven represents the internal development of Christianity, this sets forth the external. From being reputedly the smallest, it shall grow to be confessedly the greatest power on the earth; "every nation, and kindred and tongue, and people," coming under its influence, like the birds of the air flocking to the mustard-plant to lodge in the branches thereof. Ps. lxxx. 8-11; Ezek. xvii. 22-24; xxxi. 39.

33. *Leaven*,—Sour dough, used to ferment and lighten the mass of dough with which it is mixed. The properties of leaven which are intimated in this parable are heat, penetrating power, capacity to impart its own nature to a large mass with which it may come in contact, to make that which is once leavened become leaven to the rest, and the silent, secret, gradual manner in which it carries on its operations. The particular element of the gospel dispensation symbolized by the leaven may be principally, but not exclusively, "the word of the kingdom," like the seed in the first parable, for every thing in Christianity—including every Christian—partakes of the properties in question. Cf. Matt. v. 13-16. *A woman*—Making bread being the proper business of a woman. *Took, and hid*—Taking is a common pleonasm: it does not therefore intimate that the gospel comes from a foreign source, though it is not a philosophy, but a revelation. "Mingled" does not convey the full sense—it was so mingled with the mass as to be hid in it. Christ, his people, his gospel, were overlooked by Jews and Gentiles in the first ages of the Church; and Christianity, as an objective system of religion, was scarcely recognized by their historians, Josephus, Tacitus, etc.; John i. 5, 10; 1 Cor. i. 26-29; ii. 7-16; Col. iii. 3; 1 John iii. 1. *Three measures*—*Saton* is the Hebrew *seah*, a dry measure of 1½ peck. *Saton* is not found elsewhere in

Scripture; but Aquila and Symmachus use it for *seah* in Gen. xviii. 6, a passage which illustrates the present. "Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth." Gideon made ready cakes "of an ephah of flour." Jud. vi. 19: *cf.* 1 Sam. i. 24. An ephah was three seahs. As this appears to have been the ordinary amount of flour kneaded for a baking, it is not necessary to seek any mystical meaning in the number three. *Till the whole was leavened.*—An ellipsis: supply "which operated" till, etc. Christianity will not cease its action on the world till the whole of it shall be evangelized. Ps. lxxvii; Dan. ii. 35, 44; vii. 27; Rev. xi. 15.

34. *In parables;*—Jesus instructed the people in the principles of the gospel dispensation, as far as their intellectual and moral state would allow, shrouded in parables, because their carnal and dull perceptions, particularly respecting a temporal kingdom to be set up by the Messiah, precluded their profiting by the more explicit instructions which were reserved for his disciples. (See on v. 13.)

35. *That it might be fulfilled*—That what Asaph did might be done by Christ, only in a higher sense. Ps. lxxviii. 2; 1 Chron. xxv. 2; 2 Chron. xxix. 30. *I will open my mouth in parables;*—This agrees precisely with the LXX., and differs from the Hebrew, which has *mashal*, proverb or parable, in the singular: the next clause differs from both. *I will utter*—Pour out, as water from a fountain, the precise meaning of the Hebrew. *Things which have been kept secret*—The LXX. have problems, dark sayings, which is the meaning of the Hebrew. *The foundation of the world.*—The word means laying down, as the foundation of an edifice; the figure is derived from the notion of the ancients, that the world, like a house, rests on foundations. The LXX. have, "from the beginning," "of old;" the Hebrew has, "from antiquity." 2 Kings xix. 25. The language appears to have been a common formula, used in the introduction to a discourse couched in poetic and figurative style. Ps. xlix. 4; Prov. i. 6. There may be no necessity to seek a parabolic reference to the kingdom of heaven in Ps. lxxviii., as Matthew seems to refer merely to this formula to indicate that as Asaph conveyed lessons of religious instruction by referring to examples drawn from the history of Israel, and delivered in poetic style, so Christ dealt out his instructions in similitudes drawn from the ordinary occurrences of life. Asaph's "dark sayings of old" were the historical records of the nation laid up in the sacred archives. The secret things contained in Christ's parables were the mysteries of the gospel, "which from the beginning of the world had been hid in God." Eph. iii. 9. Thus the words of Asaph were, indeed, fulfilled in the teachings of Christ.

36. *The house:*—*Cf.* ver. 1. *Declare*—Explain. Neh. viii. 8. They did not ask for an explanation of the other two parables, either because they understood them, or were not so much struck with them.

37. *The Son of man;*—(See on Matt. viii. 20.)

38. *The field is the world;*—The kingdom of God in its earthly state, which in its catholic constitution and destiny is commensurate with the world: it does not, of course, mean the world apart from, much less in antagonism to, the Church. *The children of the kingdom;*—Subjects of the kingdom of grace: the phrase is borrowed from the theocracy: see on Matt. viii. 12, where the reference is to membership in the visible kingdom alone—here it embraces the invisible also. *The children of the wicked one;*—This is generally interpreted, "children of the devil;" (see on v. 19; John viii. 41, 44; Acts xiii. 10;) but according to a Hebrew idiom, it may mean wicked persons: thus a son of rebellion is a rebel, 1 Sam. xx. 30; a son of virtue is a virtuous man, 1 Kings i, 52; children of the light and of the day are persons spiritually enlightened, Luke xvi. 8; 1 Thess. v. 5; children of this world are worldly persons, Luke xvi. 8; children of disobedience are disobedient persons, Eph. ii. 2; v. 6. All the wicked are children of the devil, but as he is spoken of specifically in the next verse, *ponerou* may be the genitive of the neuter, as in many places, e.g., John xvii. 15; Matt. vi. 13. The children of evil are the subjects of it, as the children of the kingdom are the subjects thereof.

39. *The enemy*—As the mingling of the wicked with the good in the visible Church, by the malice of Satan, is symbolized by the sowing of the tares with the wheat, the parable gives no countenance to the absurd notion of the Manichees and others, that the wheat represents the elect who, emanating from the good principle, can never become reprobate, and the tares the reprobate, who, emanating from the evil principle, can never become elect; nor does the parable countenance the opinion, that because the tares are allowed to grow with the wheat, therefore sinners are not to be kept out of the visible Church, for the tares were not sown by the proprietor of the field, but by his enemy, and being sown, are allowed to remain until the harvest only because of the danger involved in rooting them up. Better let ten unworthy persons remain in the visible Church than involve the expulsion of one good Christian by their excommunication. The wheat-like tares do not symbolize manifestly immoral persons, who are not only not to be admitted into the Church, but must be excluded if they should ever be found within its pales (Matt. xviii. 15-17; 1 Cor. v.); but those who have the form, though not the power, of godliness. As the sphere of the parable is the world, only as it is identified with the visible Church—of which the servants are the ministers—the rooting up would seem to be merely excommunication; and the prohibition is limited to those who sustain the same relation to true Christians as the tares to the wheat: they are put there by the devil; they are in every part of the Church; they cannot for a time be distinguished from true Christians—imperfect believers may be mistaken for hypocrites; the excommunication of some that experienced ministers may feel sure are hypocrites may have a pernicious effect on those who think them genuine Christians; and the denunciation of hypocrites by ministers will show that they do not sinfully connive at their hypocrisy,

especially if they show due fidelity in enforcing discipline in the case of all notorious offenders. The parable is opposed to the Donatists and some others who deny that any society which has wicked persons in its communion, can be any part of the holy catholic Church. The field was a wheat field, notwithstanding tares were sown in it. *The end of the world*—Not *kosmos*, as in ver. 38, but *aion*, as in ver. 49 and Matt. xxviii. 20, and meaning, as there, the end of time. *The angels*.—A title of office appropriated to celestial intelligences, because they are employed by God as messengers, or ministers. Ps. ciii. 20; Heb. i. 7, 14.

40. *Gathered*—"In bundles," ver. 30, is not here repeated. It is perhaps a refinement to say, with Augustin and Isidore Sev., that the wicked will be punished like with like, robbers with robbers, etc., as in Dante's Hell.

41. *The Son of man*—(See on Matt. viii. 20; John v. 27.) *His angels*,—Being created, governed, and employed by him. Col. i. 16; 2 Thess. i. 7, 8; Heb. i. 6. *All things that offend*,—All the stumbling-blocks. As the word literally means the trickers of traps, it may refer to the deceitful children of evil, symbolized by the wheat-like tares. (See on Matt. xvi. 23.) *And them which do iniquity*;—From Zeph. i. 3, "I will consume the stumbling-blocks with the wicked," it may be inferred that those who do iniquity are not the same as those who offend; the latter being false professors—the tares among the wheat—the former open transgressors, thorns, thistles, etc., outside; but one and the same class may be here designated, as none can sustain a deceptive relation to the Church, without doing iniquity. Matt. vii. 21-23.

42. *A furnace of fire*:—The burning furnace, as ver. 50—not "oven," as in Ps. xxi. 10; Matt. vi. 30, in which dry weeds were sometimes burnt. The allusion is perhaps to Dan. iii. 6, *seq.* This mode of punishment was common in the East, (Jer. xxix. 22,) and has been perpetuated in Persia to modern times. It was not in use among the Jews, who stoned to death capital offenders before they burnt them in the Valley of Hinnom. Mark ix. 42-48. *There shall be wailing*—There shall they wail and gnash their teeth. Matt. viii. 12. The gnashing of teeth can hardly be attributed to cold—the fiery furnace excludes such an idea. It indicates the rage of the sufferers. Acts vii. 54.

43. *Then shall the righteous*—However hidden before, they shall be manifested then, as the sun reveals himself by his splendor. Jud. v. 31; Ps. xxxvii. 6; Dan. xii. 3; Rom. viii. 18; Col. iii. 3, 4. *In the kingdom of their Father*.—The heavenly state. 1 Cor. xv. 24. *Who hath ears*—(See on Matt. xi. 15.)

44. *Again*,—This and the following parable seem to have been spoken to the disciples alone. *Treasure hid*—On account of the revolutions of society, and the consequent insecurity of property in the East, it has been customary to secrete in the earth money and other valuables, denoted by the word treasure. (See on Matt.

vi. 19.) *The which*—Which. *When a man hath found*—Eastern tales abound in cases of this sort. Magicians profess to be able to tell where treasure is hidden. Men spend much time and labor in digging for hid treasures. Job iii. 21; Prov. ii. 4. Not unfrequently in plowing, excavating, etc., it is found unexpectedly, as appears to have been the case with the man in the parable. It was reported of Mardonius, after he had been conquered at Plataea, "that he had left great treasures under the ground where his tent had stood; Polycrates, a Theban, buying the field, sought long for the treasure, but not finding it, inquired at Delphi, and was told to turn every stone, which doing he found it." *He hideth*,—Covers it over as it was before. *And buyeth that field*.—The English law of *treasure-trove*, found treasure, made it the king's. The Jewish civil law adjudged all treasure thus found to belong to the owner of the field. There does not appear to be much force in Wakefield's remark, "There is no sense in the purchase of a field for a pot of money, which he might have carried away with him very readily, and as honestly too, as by overreaching the owner by an unjust purchase." There is no necessity of assuming that the man was a very honest person, or a very good casuist, any more than the unjust steward (Luke xvi. 1-12): prudence and earnestness, not honesty, are the points inculcated in both parables. Many a man in our day and country, if the law of treasure-trove were the same as that of the Jews, would let the discovery remain a secret until he had legally secured the field, especially if he thought, as he would be very apt to think, that more treasure might be found in other parts of it. By the treasure hid in the field may be denoted the blessings of the gospel dispensation, which are hidden from every man until revealed to him by the Spirit of God. The concealing of the treasure after finding it does not, of course, indicate that he who has found the truth will hide it to keep it from others. This part of the parable is not to be pressed farther than to set forth the concern of one awakened to his true interests—as Maldonatus says, he is not afraid lest others should find the treasure, but lest he should lose it himself. The joy which he manifests represents the gladness felt by the destitute sinner when he finds by what means he can become spiritually rich. Rom. vii. 22-25. By selling all that he hath to buy it, is to be understood renouncing every thing incompatible with the profession and practice of religion. Matt. xvi. 24-26; Phil. iii. 7-9. By buying the field is, of course, not to be understood procuring salvation by our own merits, which is absurd; (Prov. xxiii. 23; Isa. lii. 3; Luke xvii. 10; Rom. iii. 19-28; Rev. iii. 17, 18;) nor laying down, as the purchase-money, the merits of Christ, though they constitute the only ground of our acceptance with God; but the simple idea of securing a personal interest in the blessings of Christianity is all that is here intended: the terms on which this is done are included in selling all that he hath.

45. *Goodly*—Fine, excellent, costly. *Pearls*:—Hard, white, shining substances found in a shell-fish resembling an oyster. The Eastern pearls have a fine gloss, frequently tinged with a blush of red. *Penninim*, rendered rubies, Job xxviii. 18;

Prov. iii. 15; viii. 11; xx. 15; xxxi. 10; Lam. iv. 7, is supposed to mean pearls; and from the terms in which they are there spoken of, it appears that they were prized by the ancients beyond all other jewels. So also says Pliny; Matt. vii. 6; 1 Tim. ii. 9; Rev. xvii. 4; xviii. 12, 16; xxi. 21. The Hebrew *Peninnah*, like the Latin *Margarita*, (whence our *Margaret*,) was a female name, (1 Sam. i. 2,) which seems to have come into use as an epithet of endearment. Von Bohlen derives the Greek *margarites* from the Sanscrit *manarita*, the pure. Eastern merchants frequently travel doing business in pearls and other valuable articles. The adjacent coasts of the Red Sea made this article of traffic familiar to the Jews.

46. *One pearl of great price*,—Rendered "very costly," John xii. 3. This seems to represent, as in the preceding parable, the blessings of the gospel dispensation, but considered in their unity and exclusiveness—the religion of Christ experienced in the heart, and developed in the life. Rom. xiv. 17. The merchant represents a man inquiring after the supreme good. Matt. xix. 16. This he finds in the religion of Christ, which may well be called precious, or costly, considering its divine original, its exclusive claims, its intrinsic excellences, its valuable proceeds. Prov. iii. 13-18; Matt. xi. 28-30; Acts iv. 12; 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6. For the rest, see on v. 44.

47. *A net*,—*Sagene*—hence our word sear, or seine, a drag-net. Ezek. xxvi. 5, 14; Hab. i. 15-17. It is also called *verriculum*, from *verro*, to sweep, because it sweeps the bottom of the river or sea. It is sometimes half a mile long: it has leads to keep down the bottom, and corks to support the top. It is carried out so as to inclose a large space, the ends are then brought together, and it is drawn up on the shore, with all that it contains. *Cast*—There is no necessity of adding "that was," any more than in ver. 44. *Into the sea*,—The seine being quite likely in use on that lake near which the parable was spoken, called the Sea of Galilee. *Gathered*—Inclosed, brought together. *Of every kind*:—Of fish, as the Vulgate, not "all kinds of things," as the Geneva version.

48. *They*—The fishermen. *Sat down*,—This adds to the picture: the fishermen, tired with hauling the seine ashore, sit down to collect the fish. *The bad*—*Sapra* means old, putrid; but as it is here used in opposition to *good*, and as fish just caught are not stale, except as a dead one may by chance be drawn ashore, it may mean bad in a more general sense—(see on Matt. vii. 17)—including all the inedible kinds, such as were out of season, or too small, or those that Jewish fishermen would cast away as unclean, according to Lev. xi. 9-12: "All that have not fins and scales, shall be an abomination unto you."

49. *The end of the world*:—(See on v. 39.) *The angels*—As the sea represents the world, the net the visible Church, the fishermen ministers of the gospel by whose agency men are brought within the pales of the visible Church, (Ezek. xlvi. 10; Matt. iv. 19; Luke v. 10,) and as those who cast the net generally gather up the

fish after they are caught, Olshausen and others think the ministers are "the angels." It is, indeed, the province of ministers so to exercise discipline as to exclude unquestionably bad persons from the Church; but the complete, infallible, and final separation of the bad from the good will take place at the day of judgment; and as the heavenly angels are elsewhere spoken of as those who will be employed in this work, (ver. 41; Matt. xxv. 31, 32; 2 These. i. 7-10,) they are most likely "the angels spoken of here, especially as it is said they *shall come forth* to perform it. As no prominence is given to the fishermen in the parable, it would be improper so to force the simile as to make the ministers of the gospel the ministers of judgment. *Sever*—Distinguish, pick out. *From among*—Out of the midst. The words indicate the outward fellowship which false professors have with the righteous on earth, and which will end for ever at the judgment of the great day—which is the main point of the parable.

50. *And shall cast*—(See on v. 42.)

51. *Have ye understood*—This was asked, perhaps, because they did not elicit any explanation of the parables after Christ had interpreted the first. Mark iv. 13.

52. *Therefore*—Implying an inference: "Well, then." They had a general notion of what he meant, and by their simplicity and docility gave promise of farther improvement. *Scribe*—The word means teacher of the Jewish law. (See on Matt. ii. 4.) But here it is applied to a teacher of Christianity: the titles of the synagogue were transferred to the Church. Matt. xxiii. 34; Acts xiii. 1; xiv. 21, 23; Eph. iv. 11. *Instructed unto the kingdom*—Taught as a disciple in regard to the gospel dispensation. There is no need of the words *which is*. The apostles who were to be teachers of the Church, had first to be disciples of the Great Teacher, who instructed them for their future work. *A man that is an householder*,—Literally, man householder—the man being prefixed by pleonasm, as in Acts ii. 29; xxii. 1: it should be omitted in translating—a householder, or master of the house, as in Matt. x. 25. *Treasure*—The place where the stores are kept: (see on Matt. ii. 11.) *New and old*—*Things* is not in the original—perhaps provisions are meant, as every good householder not only keeps some provisions in his store-room, but procures fresh supplies from day to day—some being more valuable when new, others, as wine, when old. There may be an allusion to Lev. xxvi. 9, 10. *Cf.* Cant. vii. 13. A minister should have his mind stored with the principles of religion, which he ought to bring out with fresh arguments and illustrations, as circumstances may demand, after the example of Christ in this chapter. Matt. xxiv. 45.

53. *He departed thence*.—That is, from Capernaum.

54. *His own country*,—His paternal city, viz., Nazareth, where his reputed father resided, and where he himself was brought up. Matt. ii. 23; Luke iv. 16, 23,

24. In Matt. ix. 1, Capernaum is called "his own city"—there, however, *patrida* is not used, but *idian polin*, which may be said of any place in which a person lives, whether or not it be his native city. *Synagogue*.—Not synagogues, as in the Vulgate and Oriental versions: it is not likely that there was more than one synagogue in so small a place as Nazareth. *Insomuch*—He taught so as that they were astonished. He did so at what seems to have been a former visit. Luke iv. 16-32. *This—Man* is not in the original here or in the corresponding places in ver. 55, 56; *houtos*, when thus used, implies contempt, like *iste* in Latin—that fellow. *This wisdom*.—Shown in his teaching. *Mighty works?*—Miraculous powers.

55. *Is not this the carpenter's son?*—Joseph being the well-known carpenter of the village. According to the Jewish custom, Jesus appears to have been brought up to his reputed father's trade. (See on Mark vi. 3.) As Joseph is not mentioned, it is likely he was dead. *Is not his mother called Mary?*—Though she was of an humble family, yet she must have been known to nearly all the inhabitants of so small a place as Nazareth. *And his brethren*.—Are not his brethren called Joses, etc.? This name is written Joseph in some MSS. and versions.

56. *And his sisters*.—The insulting questions may be thus stated: Whence hath that fellow this wisdom and these miraculous powers? Is he not the carpenter, the son of the carpenter? Is not Mary his mother? and are not James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas, his brothers? and do not his sisters live among us? Whence then hath he all these things?—an insinuation, perhaps, that he was in compact with the devil. (See on Matt. x. 3; xii. 24, 46.) It appears from John xix. 25, that "there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene." Matthew (xxvii. 56) says, "among the women was Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joses." Mark (xv. 40) says, "Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joses, and Salome." And when Jesus was laid in the tomb, Matthew (xxvii. 61) says, "There was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre": according to Mark xv. 47, this "other Mary" was the mother of Joses. In Mark xvi. 1, she is called "the mother of James." Cf. Matt. xxviii. 1. To say that the other Mary must be the mother of Jesus, as from her maternal affection she would surely be last at the cross and first at the sepulcher, is to advance an *a priori* argument of no force. One can readily suppose that she would be so penetrated by the sword which pierced through her soul (Luke ii. 35), that she would not be able to manifest the officious sorrow of the other women. She, doubtless, remained in silent grief at the house of John, to whose filial care she was committed by Jesus. John xix. 27. "Mary, the mother of Jesus," could hardly be designated as "the other Mary"—"Mary, the mother of James and Joses." The latter was the wife of Cleophas, the sister of the Virgin Mary, and her sons and daughters were accordingly cousins of Jesus, and not his brothers and sisters, except in the

Hebrew extension of the term. Gen. xiii. 8; xxix. 12; Lev. x. 4. Ajax was the cousin of Achilles, and yet he calls him brother.

57. *And they were offended in him.*—They were scandalized at him, because of the meanness of his birth and education. (See on Matt. xi. 6; xvi. 23; John vii. 15, 52.) *His own country,*—(See on ver. 54.) *House.*—*Oikia*, household, including the domestics of the family, as well as the family itself: in Mark, the word seems to denote the domestics, as distinguished from the family. There is a similar English proverb, "No man is a hero to his own servant." Cf. 1 Sam. x. 11, 12. Of course, proverbs like this do not apply in every case. But circumstances of meanness connected with one's social position, family connections, etc., are frequently seized upon by the envious and those who are irritated by reproofs, etc., to bring him into contempt as a public teacher. Luke iv. 24.

58. *And he did not many mighty works there,*—Mark says he did a few. It would have been improper to work miracles before them, if they were determined not to believe; hence Mark says, *he could not* do so; that is, consistently: he had, of course, the power to cure all the sick persons in Nazareth, whether they believed on him or not; but this, in a moral point of view, would not have been a benefit, but perhaps an injury, to the parties thus healed and to all who beheld the miracles, if they were obstinately determined not to believe on him. They might have considered him a wonder-worker, in league with the devil. Matt. xii. 24; Luke xxiii. 8-12. Their persistence in unbelief, so long after his first visit to them, and his continued teaching and miracles, might well make him wonder, as Mark says it did. It does not appear how the events recorded in Matt. xiii. and Mark iv., v., which seem to have immediately preceded this rejection at Nazareth, could have preceded that recorded in Luke iv. 16-30; nor does it seem easy to put Matt. xiii. 54-58 between Matt. iv. 12, 13. Besides, the miracles recorded, Mark vi. 5, could hardly have been performed under the circumstances detailed in Luke iv.; not to say, there is no violence hinted in Matthew and Mark, as there is in Luke.

CHAPTER XIV.

1 *Herod's opinion of Christ.* 3 *Wherefore John Baptist was beheaded.* 13 *Jesus departeth into a desert place.* 15 *Where he feedeth five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes.* 22 *He walketh on the sea to his disciples:* 34 *and landing at Gennesaret, healeth the sick by the touch of the hem of his garment.*

XIV.—1. *At that time*—After the apostles had entered on their ministry—Mark vi. 7-14—so that *the fame* of Jesus was more generally extended. Herod had been so taken up with ambitious projects, war, and the pleasures of his court—in Rome, Arabia, and at Machaerus—that he had remained till now perhaps almost wholly ignorant of our Lord's movements. This was Herod Antipas, or Antipater, son of

Herod the Great and Malthace of Samaria. He was called *tetrarch* because he governed the fourth part of his father's kingdom. Josephus says, "Augustus gave one-half of the kingdom to Archelaus, and dividing the other half into two tetrarchies, he gave them to two other sons of Herod, Philip and Antipas: to the latter were subject Perea and Galilee, producing a revenue of 200 talents a year; and to Philip, Batanea with Trachonitis and Auranitis, with a part of what was called the patrimony of Zenodorus, yielding 100 talents." Ant. xvii. 1. 3, and 11. 4; Wars i. 28. 4.

2. *Servants*,—Attendants; probably the ministers of his court. *This is John*—Luke (ix. 7) says "he was perplexed:" the varying opinions of the people and his own guilty conscience were enough to perplex him. From a misunderstanding of Mal. iii. 5, the Jews expected the re-appearance of Elijah: some considered that Jesus was he. Some, by a false interpretation of Deut. xviii. 15-18, expected a prophet like unto Moses, distinct from the Messiah. John i. 21; vi. 14; vii. 40. The Jews too had a tradition that Jeremiah was to make his appearance in a human body to restore the ark, etc. 2 Esd. ii. 18; 2 Mac. ii. 5; Matt. xvi. 14. Herod would be more likely to think it was John than Elijah, Jeremiah, or any other prophet. He may have thought that the body of the Baptist was resuscitated; or he may have meant that the spirit of John was raised up like that of Samuel, (1 Sam. xxviii.,) making its appearance in another body, his own still lying in the tomb. Herod is well represented by Macbeth, who, after he had been urged on to murder by his wife, at the appearance of Banquo's ghost, exclaims,

The times have been,
That when the brains were out the man would die,
And there an end; but now they rise again,
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
And push us from our stools.

Mighty works—The miraculous powers operate in him, or by him. The article refers to the particular powers, the fame of which had reached Herod: it has the force of *these*. Though "John did no miracle" (John x. 41) before his martyrdom yet Herod would naturally think that he might perform miracles if he were raised from the dead.

3. *For Herod had laid hold on John*,—Herod having apprehended John, had bound him, and put him in prison. When John was put in prison, and how long he remained there, cannot be definitely ascertained: Newcome thinks about a year and four months. This episode, referring to events which had previously transpired, including ver. 3-12, may be read in a parenthesis. *For Herodias' sake*,—On account of Herodias, who was a daughter of Aristobulus, half-brother of Antipas and Berenice, granddaughter of Herod the Great, and wife of her uncle Herod Philip, by whom she had Salome, who became the wife of another son of

Herod the Great, (by Cleopatra of Jerusalem,) named Philip, the tetrarch, mentioned Luke iii. 1. Herodias left her husband, who had been disinherited by his father and cohabited with Herod Antipas, (half-brother of Philip,) who had for her repudiated his own wife, the daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia Petrea. Aretas resented this indignity by making war on Antipas, and being successful in the fight, Josephus attributed the defeat of Antipas to a divine judgment on him for the murder of John the Baptist. This was the Herod who "mocked" Jesus. Luke xxiii. 11. He was banished to Lyons, and then to Spain, where he and Herodias died. *His brother Philip's*—His half-brother, being the son of Herod the Great and Mariamne, the daughter of Simon the high-priest. This Philip was not a ruler. (See Josephus Ant. xvii., xviii.; Wars i., ii.)

4. *It is not lawful*—It appears from Josephus (Ant. xviii. 5. 4) that her husband was living at the time, as well as Herod's wife, so that it was adultery; and as she was the wife of his half-brother, it was also incest. Lev. xviii. 16. It appears from Luke iii. 19, 20, that John reprov'd Herod for other crimes. John was the true antitype of Elijah: as the one reprov'd Ahab and Jezebel, so the other reprov'd Herod and Herodias. Her grudge against him was, of course, because of his condemnation of her marriage with Herod. Mark vi. 18, 19.

5. *And when he would have put him to death,*—Being doubtless teased and urged to do so by Herodias. *He feared the multitude,*—He was intimidated by the people. *Because they counted him as a prophet.*—Considered him a prophet.

6. *Birth-day*—The ancients, both Jews and Gentiles, kept their birth-days with great rejoicings. Gen. xl. 20. The plural (rendered as a singular) indicates perhaps the variety of entertainments which obtained on one of those festivals; just as from the adjective natalitial we might form a plural noun: when Herod's *natalitials* were kept. *The daughter of Herodias*—Salome. (See on v. 3.) She was very young, so that her dancing might not have been contrary to ancient custom.

7. *Whereupon*—Wherefore. Herodotus reports a promise confirmed by an oath made by Xerxes to a female. Philip of Macedon promised Satyrus, the comedian, whatever he should ask.

8. *Before instructed*—Instigated by her mother before she asked. As there does not appear to have been a moment's delay, the plot was doubtless previously laid. It was customary for kings to grant any petition presented on a festal occasion of this sort: Herodias acted with this fact in view. *John Baptist's*—John the Baptist's: the article should not be omitted. *In a charger.*—On a dish or platter, as the word is rendered Luke xi. 39. *Pinaz* means a board or tablet, a flat dish or trencher called charger, from charge, a load, because, says Skinner, "it can hold heavier or weightier loads or quantities." It is likely Salome pointed to a dish on the supper-table; hence she says, *Give me here*—So, thus, or hither, as *hodie* is

rendered ver. 18, as if it was to be a part of the feast, and moreover not to be delayed. Mark Antony caused the heads of those he had proscribed to be brought to him while he was at table, and feasted his eyes a long time with that sad spectacle. He ordered Cicero's head to be put on the pulpit where he had made speeches against him. But before this was done, Fulvia, Antony's wife, took that head, spit upon it, and putting it in her lap, she drew its tongue, which she pricked several times with her bodkin, and at the same time she uttered a thousand bitter invectives against Cicero. The head of Ali Pacha was exposed, in Constantinople, on a dish.

9. *The king*—This title was applied to the tetrarch, because he reigned over a part of the kingdom of his father: it is applied to the emperor in 1 Pet. ii. 13, 17. *Was sorry*:—He was probably grieved on John's account, but principally on his own: he was perhaps mortified and angry in being thus overreached, fearful too, as he was, of the consequences that might result from the popular displeasure. (See on v. 5.) *For the oath's sake*,—Because of the oaths: he had probably sworn repeatedly to her. He does not seem to have been a good enough casuist to know that any one may "change" his word, if he has sworn to the "hurt" of an innocent party; and that a rash promise involving a crime, is more honored in the breach than in the observance. *Them which sat with him at meat*,—Those who reclined with him; alluding to the accumbent posture at table—his guests, before whom it would be considered rude to deny a request, or violate an oath. Xerxes thought the petition of his wife could not be denied on account of those at the banquet. It is quite likely that some of Herod's guests were enemies of John, and wished his death. If Salome had asked for the king's head, it is likely they would have suggested that the oath should not be considered binding, and Herod would have probably admitted the casuistry.

10. *And he sent, and beheaded*—Cicero, speaking of Lucius Flaminus, says, "When he was consul in Gaul, he was persuaded, at a banquet, by a harlot, to behead one of those persons who were then in prison under sentence of death." There is an instance of this summary mode of execution for the gratification of a favorite in the Life of Cato the Censor, in Plutarch. *In the prison*.—Josephus says it was in the castle of Machaerus—about six miles east of the Jordan, near its entrance into the Dead Sea. He suggests that Herod murdered John because, on account of his popularity, he had it in his power to cause a revolt among the people! Herod may have made this pretense as a cloak for his atrocity; but Josephus, who was not born until some years after this event, and was not concerned to inquire minutely into the subject, may have manufactured this season.

11. *She brought it to her mother.*—Jerome says she drew out the tongue, and thrust it through with her bodkin: the tradition might have come from the story of Fulvia. (See on v. 8.)

12. *Took up the body,*—Which was probably cast over the walls of the prison. *And buried it,*—The Jews paid great respect to the bodies of their deceased friends, (John xix. 38-42), and so did the primitive Christians (Acts viii. 2), for which they were commended by Julian the Apostate. *And went and told Jesus.*—The disciples of John were taught by him to look upon Jesus as his superior; and now in their bereavement and sorrow they would naturally repair to him for sympathy and counsel, as well as to apprise him of the perils to which he was exposed.

13. *When Jesus heard of it,*—And Jesus hearing—viz., of John's death, and perhaps of what Herod thought of himself. (See on v. 2, 3.) *He departed thence*—To escape from Herod, (see on Matt. xii. 15,) and perhaps to prevent being identified with any disturbances that might arise from the murder of John; besides, he was accustomed to retire at times from the multitude when they pressed upon him, particularly when he wanted a special interview with the apostles, as was the case on this occasion. Mark vi. 31. The *ploion* in which he crossed the lake was most likely a fishing-boat. (See on Matt. iv. 21.) *Apart:*—In private, or, in a private place, as in Matt. xiv. 23; xvii. 1, 19; Mark iv. 34; Luke ix. 10. Though he embarked privately, some of the people saw him depart. Mark vi. 33. The desert to which he retired was the uninhabited region east of the lake, near Bethsaida, which was situated on the east of the Jordan, near its entrance into the lake. (See on Matt. iv. 18; xi. 21; John vi. 1.) *And when the people had heard thereof,*—And the multitude hearing it, followed him by land—literally, *on foot*, or afoot; and doubtless, the most of them went on foot—but the word is used in opposition, not to riding, but to going by water. Acts xx. 13; Odyss. iii. 324. *Out of the cities.*—Capernaum, Chorazin, etc., at the head of the lake. It appears that some of the people saw Jesus depart, perhaps, after he was in the boat, and seeing the direction in which he was going, they ran around the head of the lake, crossed the Jordan near its mouth, and reached the other side before the boat landed.

14. *And Jesus went forth*—And going forth—viz., from his retreat. John vi. 3. *Saw—and was moved.* (See on Matt. ix. 36.) *And he healed their sick.*—The invalids among them: all who could get to him doubtless did so.

15. *And when it was evening,*—And evening being come. It was late in the day, but early in the evening, as it was still evening when the disciples embarked after the supper, which may have occupied an hour or two; cf. ver. 23, where there is the same phrase. The Jews reckoned two evenings: the first, at three o'clock; the second, at sunset, which was about six o'clock at the time of the passover. *Disciples*—Apostles. *The time is now past;*—The day is declining.

Villages,—Rendered towns in Luke, who with Mark adds "country round about"—i.e., farm-houses. *Victuals*.—*Bromata*, eatables, is plural, like victuals, but it is not, like victuals, (which comes from the Latin *victus*, food,) confined to human food, prepared for eating. 1 Cor. iii. 2.

16. *They need not depart*;—The disciples must have been very dull, or they would have apprehended the Lord's intention. They might have thought of 2 Kings iv. 42, 43. *Give ye them to eat*,—You give them food.

17, 18. See the fuller account in Mark and John.

19. *To sit down*—To recline, as the ancients did at meals. *Looking unto to heaven*,—An expressive act recognizing the divine source of all our blessings. Ps. cxxiii. 1; Jas. i. 17. *He blessed*,—Luke adds "them," i.e., the loaves and fishes—some suppose to miraculously multiply them; (Gen. i. 22, 28;) but John says, "having given thanks," which was of course to God—hence he looked up to heaven when he pronounced the blessing. The words are thus interchanged in the several narratives of the institution of the Lord's supper. This is the correct view, if our Lord used the forms of blessing common among the Jews. When the father of the family took bread into his hands before meat, he said, "Blessed art thou, our God, King of the universe, who bringest bread out of the earth!" And when he took the cup into his hands, after meat, he said, "Blessed be our God, King of the universe, the Creator of the fruit of the vine!" The clause in Luke may be elliptical: "he blessed God for them." 1 Sam. ix. 13. Hallet says it is a grace before meat, from *gratia*, thanks, and cites as parallels Acts xxvii. 35; Rom. xiv. 6; 1 Tim. iv. 3, 4, 5. *And brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples*,—And breaking the loaves, he gave them to the disciples. The Jewish loaves were thin, brittle cakes, which were divided, not by cutting, but by breaking.

20. *Were filled*:—Were satisfied. *Fragments*—From *frango*, to break: it well represents the original, and denotes the pieces made by the breaking of the loaves, ver 19. Christ's command to gather them up (John) was suggestive not only of the general principle that nothing should be wasted, but also that they must not depend upon the repetition of miracles for their daily supplies. *Twelve baskets full*.—The *kophinos* was a wicker basket, alluded to by Juvenal, who speaks of a *cophinus* with hay as a badge of the Jews, being used by them for peddling purposes. Baskets always constituted a part of domestic furniture. Deut. xxviii. 5, 17. The apostles would find it convenient to take some along with them to hold food and other things needed in their itinerancy—from the number, it would seem they had one apiece; and if so, the miracle is the more striking, as it extended to the supply of the multitude and the replenishing of the twelve baskets which were empty. (See on Matt. xv. 37.)

21. *Beside women and children.*—Who, in Eastern style, ate by themselves. All the evangelists say there were about 5,000 men, but Matthew alone states that there were also women and children, who had, doubtless, flocked together from the adjoining towns and hamlets from motives of curiosity.

22. *Straightway*—Immediately—the occasion is stated John vi. 15. *Constrained*—Implying an unwillingness on the part of the disciples to leave Jesus, which can be accounted for without supposing that they sympathized with the multitude in their ambitious, worldly views. John vi. 14. *A ship*,—The boat, viz., that in which they had that day crossed the lake. *The other side*,—Viz., to Capernaum, which was on the north-west shore, opposite Bethsaida, which was on the north-east. (See on Matt. xi. 21.)

23. *A mountain*—The mountain, viz., that which rises back of Bethsaida. *When the evening was come*,—(See on ver. 15.) *He was there alone*.—It seems, he remained there a considerable time, for his disciples embarked when he went to the mountain, and were crossing toward Capernaum—"and it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them" John vi. 16, 17—now already intimates that the twilight was closing; though it is likely that the moon was shining, as it appears to have been near the time of the passover, when the moon was full. John vi. 4. If Jesus had embarked with the disciples, the multitude would have tried to prevent him, or would have followed after him, as before, on foot: they allowed him to retire to the mountain, because they knew he was not far from them.

24. *But the ship*—But the boat was now half-way over the sea. The lake is only six miles wide, and probably it was not so far as that from the place where the disciples embarked for Capernaum, whither they went. *Tossed with waves*:—Tormented, violently tossed by the waves.

25. *And in*—Or, at—Mark says, about. *The fourth watch*,—The Old Testament mentions but three watches: "the beginning," Lam. ii. 19; "the middle," Jud. vii. 19; and "the morning watch," Exod. xiv. 24. So Homer: Iliad x. 252. The division of the night into four watches, seems to have been borrowed from the Romans: their first watch was from six to nine, and was called "the evening watch;" the second from nine to twelve, "the midnight watch;" the third from twelve to three, called *gallicinium*, "cock-crowing;" the fourth from three to six, called "the morning watch:" Mark xiii. 35; Luke xii. 38. This last was the watch, about the time of which, either before or after it had commenced, Jesus made his appearance. He postponed his interview until this time, probably to make the miracle the more signal and impressive. They had been perhaps nine hours rowing about three miles! *Walking on the sea*.—This is cited as a proof of our Lord's divinity, and Job ix. 8 is adduced to show that God alone "treadeth upon the waves of the sea;" but this is figurative language, meaning that God has the sea under his control, and it ought not to be quoted as parallel to the evangelists'

statement. The act of walking on the sea was no more superhuman than any other miracle which Christ performed, and was not a greater proof of divine omnipotence than the dividing of the sea by Moses, which no one will adduce as a proof that Moses was a divine person: it only shows that he was an instrument by which divine power was exerted. The Egyptian hieroglyphic for impossibility was feet walking on the sea. Jesus, as man, walked upon the sea, being enabled to do so by divine power—that this power was his own—in other words, that he was God, as well as man—appears from other portions of Scripture. John i. 1-3; Col. i. 16, 17.

26. *Troubled*,—Disturbed in mind, terrified. *It is a spirit*;—*Phantasma*, an apparition, or specter. The ancients, Jews and heathens, believed that the spirits of deceased persons sometimes made themselves visible on the earth, assuming bodily forms and proportions, though of an aerial substance. Thus Plato in his *Phaedon*, "Some shadowy *phantasmata*, or apparitions of souls, have been seen." The specter of Achilles appears twice in the *Hecuba* of Euripides, and is called *phantasma*. The Pharisees believed in the existence of spirits clad in human forms. *They cried out from fear*.—This being the passion almost universally excited by the supposed presence of a specter. Job. iv. 14, 15; Luke xxiv. 37. Hence in Ps. xci. 6, the LXX. read, "the fear of spirits that walk in darkness."

27. *Straightway*—Immediately. *Be of good cheer; it is I*;—Take courage; I am he whom you mistake for a specter. To hearten them, he adds, *Be not afraid*.—*Cf.* Luke v. 10.

28. *And Peter answered*—Characteristic of that forward disciple. *Lord, if it be thou, bid me*—He comprehended under the command the power to perform the act, as a proof that it was really Jesus. He may have wanted to show his faith, as superior to his brethren, and Christ allows it that he might discover its defect. *Cf.* Matt. xxvi. 33, 34. *On the water*.—Over the waters. The plural is used here and ver. 29, and is more graphic, as the sea was divided into waves.

29. *Come*.—Try if thou hast faith to enable thee to walk over the waters to me. *And when Peter*—And having descended from the boat, Peter walked over the waters.

30. *But when he saw*—But finding—having staked his safety on a miracle, his natural skill in swimming (John xxi. 7) avails him not.

31. *O thou of little faith*,—Distrustful one! Matt. vi. 30; viii. 26. He was not chidden for venturing out of the boat, but for not maintaining his confidence in the Saviour.

32. *And when they were come into the ship*,—Had come up into the boat. *The wind ceased*.—A proof of miraculous power, equal to the walking on the water.

33. *Then they that were in the ship*—Then those in the boat, viz., the disciples, as appears from Mark vi. 51, 52. *Worshipped*—(See on Matt. ii. 2, 11.) *The Son of God*.—This title in the singular is exclusively applied to Christ, unless Luke iii. 38 be an exception. The disciples were "slow of heart" to comprehend the character and mission of Jesus. When they reflected on the meanness of his state, they doubted his Messiahship, because they expected the Messiah to be a mighty temporal monarch; but when they saw his miracles, they felt sure that he must be the Messiah, as in the present case; hence they exclaimed, Thou art really the Son of God! But they will be found doubting again. Luke xxiv. 19-26.

34. *And when they were gone over*,—The storm being lulled, and the distance not being great, they could finish the voyage in a short time. They rowed to shore without farther obstruction. John vi. 21. *Gennesaret*.—This word seems to be formed from Chinnereth, Num. xxxiv. 11; Josh. xi. 2. Chinneroth is spoken of as a city, Josh. xix. 35; in 1 Kings xv. 20, as a country adjacent to the land of Naphtali. It is a small district of Galilee, extending along the north-western shore of the lake which bears its name. Josephus describes it as a fertile and pleasant region, 30 stadia in length and 20 in breadth. He says it is usually named Gennesar, from the Chaldee rendering of the Hebrew—then Gennesareth, "the valley of branches." Lightfoot says the Jews derived the name from *gani satim*, "gardens of princes," Herod's palace being at Tiberias; but agrees in the prior derivation from Chinnereth. Tiberias and Capernaum were situated in this tract on the lake. (See on Matt. iv. 18; xi. 22, 23.)

35. *And when the men*—And the men of that place recognizing him, sent out. They had been previously well acquainted with him.

36. *And besought him*—The construction seems to refer to those who brought the invalids, but it is likely the invalids themselves are meant. *Hem*—Border: (see on Matt. ix. 20.)

CHAPTER XV.

1 *Christ reproveth the scribes and Pharisees for transgressing God's commandments through their own traditions: 11 teacheth how that which goeth into the mouth doth not defile a man. 21 He healeth the daughter of the woman of Canaan, 30 and other great multitudes: 32 and with seven loaves and a few little fishes feedeth four thousand men, besides women and children.*

XV.—1. *Then*—After the passover spoken of in John vi. *Scribes and Pharisees*,—(See on Matt. ii. 4; iii. 7; v. 20.) *Which were of Jerusalem*,—It is likely they belonged there, being probably sent to Galilee, with sinister design, by

the chief of the Pharisees, as those of Jerusalem were the most learned, and their determinations were respected wherever they went.

2. *Tradition—Paradosis* means a doctrine or injunction handed over, or transmitted, whether by writing or oral communication, either divine and obligatory, (1 Cor. xi. 2; 2 Thess. ii. 15; iii. 6,) or human and of no binding force, (Gal. i. 14; Col. ii. 8.) Of this latter class was the tradition of the elders. Thus Josephus (Ant. xiii.) says, "The Pharisees have delivered to the people by tradition from the fathers many injunctions which are not written in the law of Moses; for which reason the sect of the Sadducees rejects them, saying, that what are written should be esteemed obligatory, but that they ought not to observe those which come by such tradition." These injunctions, the Jews say, were delivered by God to Moses on the Mount, and transmitted orally by him through Aaron and his sons, Joshua, the elders, and prophets, to the great synagogue, to Simeon, (who took Christ in his arms,) Gamaliel, (Paul's preceptor,) and finally to Rabbi Jehudah Hakkadosh, who in the second century digested them into a code, called the Mishna, or Repetition, to which a Gemara, or Commentary, was added, A.D. 300, and both together are called the Jerusalem Talmud, or Doctrine. In the sixth century another Gemara was compiled, which is held in higher esteem by the Jews: this with the Mishna is called the Babylonish Talmud. The Talmud says, "The words of the scribes are more lovely than those of the Law; for the words of the Law are weighty and light; but the words of the scribes are all weighty." "The words of the scribes are more desirable than the words of the prophets." *The elders?*—The most celebrated doctors of the law. *When they eat bread.*—Before meals. They ate dry fruits with unwashed hands.

3. *Why do ye also*—And why do ye—a fine retort. The Pharisees and scribes are placed in contrast with the disciples; the tradition of the elders with the command of God.

4. *For God commanded,*—Mark has, "Moses said"—because the precepts are contained in the Mosaic code: Ex. xx. 12; xxi. 17; Lev. xx. 9; Deut. xxvii. 16: *cf.* Prov. xx. 20; xxx. 17. *Honour*—This embraces support and care; thus, Eccles. iii. 8, 9: "by word and deed, honour thy father." *Cf.* Acts xxviii. 10; 1 Tim. v. 3, 16, 17. *Curseth*—Literally, speaks against. The Hebrew *kalal*, of which this is a rendering, is translated revile, Ex. xxii. 28: it is here used in opposition to honor, and seems to have an equal latitude of meaning: as he who gives his parents a support honors them, so he who fails to do so, and says to his parents, "I devote whatever of mine might profit you," dishonors them; such language—being in a high degree disrespectful—it is adding insult to injury. *Let him die the death.*—Literally, finish him by death—i.e., he shall be punished with death. Temporal death was not absolutely made the penalty of thus neglecting parents;

but our Lord shows that those who neglected their parents were virtually guilty of cursing them—as hatred is virtual murder. (See on Matt. v. 21, 22.)

5, 6. *Whosoever shall say*—If any one say to father or mother, Be it devoted, whatever of mine might profit thee, he even must not honor his father or his mother. He is not merely relieved from doing so, but laid under obligation not to do so. This agrees with Mark: Ye even allow him not afterward to do any thing for his father or his mother. The Pharisees sanctioned this casuistry, because as custodians of the treasury, they could reclaim for it all the property involved in the Corban vow if it were violated. Though the person vowing had the use of his property, there was an eventual dedication of it to the sacred treasury. By this interpretation there is no ellipsis recognized, so that there is no necessity of adding, *he shall be free*, or any thing else. *Thus have ye made*—Ye have even annulled the commandment of God. In ver. 3, they are charged with transgressing the law—here they are charged with even a greater sin, as their detestable casuistry was a virtual repeal of the law.

7. *Ye hypocrites*,—(See on Matt. vi. 2.) *Prophesy*—This seems to mean here, as in Matt. xxvi. 68; 1 Cor. xiv. 1, 3, to speak by divine inspiration, without any reference to future events. Thus Isa. xxix. 13 was spoken at the divine instance in reference to the Jews of the prophet's time; but being applicable to those of the time of Christ, he applies it to them accordingly. The parties were different; but their characters were the same. *Well*—Rightly, truly, aptly.

8. *This people*—Not my people any longer. The quotation is nearly word for word from the LXX. Cf. Matt. vii. 21-23. They made loud profession of religion, rendering lip-service to God, but they were not sincere.

9. *But in vain*—A paraphrastic rendering of the Hebrew. Matthew follows the LXX. except that the LXX. read, "teaching the commands and doctrines of men," while the evangelists have, *teaching for*, or as, *doctrines, the commandments of men*. Howsoever the Heb. LXX. and evangelists may differ in verbiage, the meaning is the same: Their religion is of merely human appointment, and is therefore worthless.

10. *And he called*—And having called. *The multitude*,—Who were kept at a distance by the scribes. *Hear, and understand*:—Hearken and apply your minds: lay my instructions to heart. (See on Mark vi. 52.) This was what the scribes would not do.

11. *Not that which goeth into the mouth*—Christ did not then abolish the ceremonial distinction between clean and unclean meats: he merely affirmed that no food, in itself considered, could defile the eater; therefore eating bread with unwashen hands did not do so, especially as there was no divine ordinance requiring the Pharisaic ablution. The article is used with man, as it is used with

mouth—the definiteness of a part *the* mouth, implying the definiteness of the whole, *the* man. *That which cometh out of the mouth*,—Perhaps alluding particularly to the case in hand—ver 5; but Mark makes it general. (See on ver. 18-20.)

12. *Offended*—Scandalized. (See on Matt. xvi. 23.) *This saying?*—The saying—viz., what he had been saying, ver. 3-11.

13. *Plant*,—Doctrine: cf. Matt. xiii. 19. All religious doctrines not of divine origination shall be destroyed. The traditions of the Pharisees should be extirpated, to make way for the gospel.

14. *Let them alone*:—Do not regard what they say against me. *They be blind*—They are blind guides of blind travelers. *And if the blind*—The singular without the article, as in Luke vi. 39, "Can a blind man guide a blind man?" *Ditch*.—Rendered "pit," Matt. xii. 11—such as was frequently dug to hold water for cattle. The application to the Pharisees and their followers is easy. Regard neither their traditions nor their censures, as ruin awaits such willfully ignorant teachers and their followers.

15. *Then answered Peter*—After they were in the house, apart from the multitude, (Mark vii. 17,) Peter, as spokesman of the disciples, took occasion to say. (See on Matt. xi. 25.) *Declare unto us this parable*.—(See on Matt. xiii. 3, 36.) The parable or saying of Christ, concerning the ceremonial observances in regard to food, was not hard to be understood, but it was shocking to the prejudices in which the disciples, in common with other Jews, had been trained. Acts xi. 1-18.

16. *Are ye also yet*—And are ye still. Mark has, "thus," or "so:" perhaps Jesus used both words: And are ye still so ignorant? There seems to be a tacit and somewhat upbraiding reference to the instructions which he had given them, particularly the parabolical lessons, Matt. xiii. Cf. Matt. xvi. 9; Mark xvi. 14; Luke xxiv. 25, 45. (See on v. 17.)

17. *Do not ye yet*—Perhaps it should read, as in Mark, "Do ye not know?" This seems to agree better with the scope of the passage, as it does not refer to the general dullness of the disciples, as in the last verse, but to their non-apprehension of the case in hand. *Entereth in at*—Enters into. *Draught?*—Privy.

19. *The heart*—The inward man. Mark vii. 21; Luke xi. 39; Rom. ii. 29; vii. 22; 2 Cor. iv. 16; 1 Pet. iii. 4: the soul, or mind, comprehending all the faculties and affections of our spiritual nature. (See on Matt. xii. 34, 35.) *Evil thoughts*,—In thinking, a man talks with himself. As the thought of foolishness is sin, (Prov. xxiv. 9; xv. 26; Isa. lv. 7; Acts viii. 22,) so it leads to the commission of the overt act. *False witness*,—False testimonies. Matt. xxvi. 59. *Blasphemies*:—Calumnies.

(See on Matt. xii. 31.) He specifies the most common sins of thought, overt action, and speech—particularly in Mark, who mentions seven things not noted by Matthew.

20. *A man*:—The man. (See on v. 11.)

21. *Departed*—Withdrew, retired; his object being privacy. Mark vii. 24. *Into the coasts*—The regions. It appears to have been the tract in which were situated the cities that Solomon gave to Hiram, and which, because they did not please him, Hiram restored to Solomon, who improved them for his subjects; though they afterward fell to Syria. Josh. xix. 27; 1 Kings x. 12, 13; 2 Chron. viii. 2. Tyre and Sidon were two Phenician cities situated on the Mediterranean, and the region to which they belonged adjoined the land of Israel on the south and east: it was, indeed, allotted to the tribe of Asher, but does not appear to have been entirely taken possession of by it: (Josh. xix. 24-31:) it was embraced in the Abrahamic grant; (Gen. x. 15-19; xv. 18-21;) and if Christ did really enter into Tyre and Sidon, he can scarcely be said to have left the land of Israel.

22. *A woman of Canaan*—A descendant of Canaan, (son of Ham, and father of Sidon, Gen. xi. 6, 15,) who gave name to that country. (See on ver. 21; cf. Ex. vi. 15; xvi. 35.) *Came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him*,—From those coasts, or parts, coming out of her place of residence, cried out to him. *Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David*:—(See on Matt. viii. 2; ix. 27.) It does not follow that she was a Jewish proselyte, because she used Jewish phraseology: many of the Gentiles who lived near Palestine, were monotheists, though they did not conform to the rites of Judaism. In after times many of the heathen adopted some of the phraseology of the Christians. *Grievously vexed with a devil*.—Badly demonized. The cure of the daughter would be a mercy to the mother.

23. *Send her away*:—Grant her request, and dismiss her. *For she crieth after us*.—And will draw the crowd, whereas Christ sought privacy. That they wished him to cure her may be inferred from his answer; but they were evidently annoyed with her importunity.

24. *I am not sent*—My personal ministry is restricted to Israelites. (See on Matt. x. 5, 6.) The new dispensation was to be opened first to them, (Acts xiii. 46,) for a reason adduced, Rom. xv. 8; though this did not debar Christ from taking occasional interest in Gentiles. Matt. viii. 5-13; John iv.

25. *Worshipped*—(See on Matt. viii. 2.) *Lord, help me*.—She drops the Jewish appellation, and addresses him as the mighty, universal Lord.

26. *Meet*—Good, right, becoming. *To dogs*.—To the puppies; but the diminutive is frequently used of domestic dogs to express familiarity. Dogs are always spoken of contemptuously in the Bible; and the Jews were accustomed to

call the Gentiles dogs, and the Gentiles reciprocated the compliment: the term is used in the same way by Mohammedans, in speaking of Christians.

27. *Truth, Lord:*—Yea, Lord; yet deny me not, for even the puppies do eat of the crumbs. Though dogs were not kept about houses among the Jews, as with us, yet puppies would sometimes be allowed this privilege, and they would naturally pick up the children's crumbs. *Which fall*—Falling; therefore not pieces of bread used for cleaning the hands, soiled by eating, and cast to the dogs. *Masters'*—The same title by which she addressed Jesus. She seems to insinuate that a privilege like that allowed the dogs might be extended to the Syro-phenicians in view of their proximity to the Jews.

28. *O woman,*—A dignified compellation, used by the best Greek writers. John ii. 4; xix. 26; xx. 15. *Great is thy faith:*—So he commended the faith of the Roman centurion. Matt. viii. 10. *Made whole*—Healed: the presence of the demon being the cause of her sickness, health would result from his removal. Luke ix. 42; Acts x. 38.

29. *Thence,*—From the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. Mark ix. 31. *A mountain,*—Either the high land on the eastern coast, skirting the lake, or the mountain that was near Bethsaida. Luke ix. 10, 11; John vi. 3, 15.

30. *Lame,*—Crippled in the feet. Mark ix. 45. *Maimed,*—Crooked or crippled limbs, particularly hands. Matt. xviii. 8. *And many others,*—Who were afflicted. *Cast them down*—Laid them down, as there was, of course, no violent action, though there may have been an emulous and officious haste.

31. *Insomuch*—So that. *When they saw*—Seeing the dumb speaking, maimed sound, lame walking, and blind seeing. The participles give life to the narrative. *They glorified the God of Israel.*—Many of them were probably heathen citizens of Decapolis, and as Jesus was a Jew, they naturally attributed his miracles to the power of Jehovah, the God of the Jews, though the formula frequently occurs in the Old Testament. Ex. xxxii. 27; xxxiv. 23.

32. *Then Jesus called his disciples unto him,*—Retiring a little for the purpose. *They faint in the way.*—Their strength fail on the road. (See on Matt. xiv. 14.)

33. *Fill*—Rendered "satisfy" in Mark. The slowness of the disciples to believe in Christ's power and willingness to repeat his miracles, finds a parallel in the case of their ancestors. Ex. xvi. 13; Num. xi. 21, 22.

35. *To sit down*—To lie down, as in the ancient eating posture. Luke xi. 37; John xxi. 20.

36. *And gave thanks,*—(See on Matt. xiv. 19.)

37. *Broken meat*—Fragments. *Baskets*—(See on Matt. xiv. 20;) Here the word is *spuridas*. The distinction between the *kophinos* and *spuris* is noted by both Matthew and Mark, when reference is made to the two miracles. Matt. xvi. 9, 10; Mark viii. 19, 20. The *spuris* is called *sargane* in 2 Cor. xi. 33; *cf.* Acts ix. 25; and this was a wicker basket or hamper. The number of the baskets in the former miracle answered to that of the disciples—in this to the number of the loaves.

39. *Took ship*—Went aboard the boat: the same, probably, in which he crossed the lake, ver. 29. *The coasts*—The borders, or outer parts—Mark says, "of Dalmanutha"—a place of which there is no other mention: it may have been a place near Magdala. Robinson identifies Magdala with el-Mejdel, "a miserable little Muslim village," about four miles north-west of Tiberias. It is probably the Migdal of Josh. xix. 38, and the native place of Mary Magdalene. (See note on Luke viii. 2.)

CHAPTER XVI.

1 *The Pharisees require a sign.* 6 *Jesus warneth his disciples of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.* 13 *The people's opinion of Christ,* 16 *and Peter's confession of him.* 21 *Jesus foresheweth his death,* 23 *reproving Peter for dissuading him from it.* 24 *And admonisheth those that will follow him, to bear the cross.*

XVI.—1. *The Pharisees also with the Sadducees*—Enemies to each other as they were, they could unite against Jesus: so Herod and Pilate, Luke xxiii. 12. *Tempting him*—Of course insidiously, though that is not in the word. *Shew*—Exhibit to view. *A sign from heaven.*—(See on Matt. xii. 38.)

2. *He answered and*—But he answering. *Evening*,—Perhaps the second evening. (See on Matt. xiv. 15.) *Fair weather*:—The substantive verb is not in the original—the conciseness expresses certainty: "A fine day to-morrow!" So ver. 3. "Rain to-day!" *Red*.—Assumes the color of fire, an aspect the sky frequently exhibits at a bright sunset.

3. *In the morning*,—Early in the morning. *Foul*—Rainy. *Lowering*.—Frowning, looking sad gloomy, as in Mark x. 22. Pliny speaks of the sadness of the sky. Shakspeare says, "The sky doth frown and lowre upon our army." *O ye hypocrites*,—They were justly chargeable with hypocrisy, because the signs of the times referring to the Messiah were plainer than any meteorological tokens. *Ye can discern*—Ye know how to distinguish, or can judge rightly concerning. *The face*—So called in allusion to the figure of sadness, or a lowering appearance. The Jews did not confine themselves to such signs—they published almanacs, prognosticating the rains of the coming year. *The signs of the times?*—Luke has

"this time"—the fullness of time when, according to the prophets, the Messiah should come. Gen. xlix. 12; Dan. ii. 44; ix. 24-27; Mark i. 15; Gal. iv. 4.

4. *A wicked*—(See on Matt. xii. 39.) *And he left them*,—As incorrigible.

5. *The other side*,—The eastern side of the Jordan and lake. *They had forgotten*—They ascertained that they had neglected to take bread aboard—having embarked in haste.

6. *Take heed and beware*—Both words mean the same, and are united to give force to the injunction: the former is literally rendered "see," Matt. viii. 4, and the latter "take heed," Matt. vi. 1.

7. *And they reasoned*—The Pharisees forbade their disciples to buy bread of heathens and Samaritans, which they considered partaking of their leaven. But the disciples did not expect to buy bread of Pharisees and Sadducees, and, indeed, had small chance of buying it from any one in that desert region. They may have thought that Jesus intended a proscription of the leaven of those parties, so as to cut them off from fellowship with them; and yet as he himself ate with them, they could not reconcile his teaching with his conduct; hence their nonplus. *Because*—He says this because.

8. *Which when Jesus perceived*,—But Jesus knowing their mistake, said. *O ye of little faith*,—(See on Matt. vi. 30.)

9-11. *Do ye not*—(See on Matt. xiii. 13-15; xiv. 15-21; xv. 34-38.)

12. *The doctrine*—The subject-matter of their teaching—that of *the Pharisees* consisting of traditions concerning puerile ceremonies and hypocritical observances; hence in Luke xii. 1, the leaven of the Pharisees is called "hypocrisy." This puffed up their minds, and pervaded and perverted their best actions. (See on Matt. iii. 7; v. 20; vi. 1-18.) Mark does not specify *the Sadducees*—but he speaks of the leaven of Herod, or of the Herodians. As the Sadducees were very loose in their opinions and practices, and belonged, for the most part, to the upper ranks of society, it is likely the Herodians belonged to this sect. They were so called because they sustained the government and policy of Herod, even in his complying with the pagan customs of the Romans. (See on Matt. xxii. 15-22.) Doctrine is called leaven because of its diffusive and assimilating power. (See on Matt. xiii. 33.) The Herodians doubtless had a casuistic teaching which agreed with their heathenish compliances.

13. *When Jesus came*—According to Mark viii. 22, he went by Bethsaida, this being the native place of some of his disciples, and one to which he frequently resorted, being conveniently situated at the north-east side of the lake. (See on Matt. xi. 21.) *The coasts*—The parts or district. Cf. Matt. ii. 22. Mark has the towns, or villages. *Cesarea Philippi*,—Located at the southern base of Mount

Hermon, about 120 miles north of Jerusalem, and four from Dan. Robinson identifies it with Baal-gad and Baal-hermon—Josh. xi. 17; xii. 7; xiii. 5; Jud. iii. 3—so called, because the Syrians there worshiped one of their Baals, viz., the god of fortune. This god gave way to the Grecian Pan, whence the name Panium, Paneas, the Arabic Baniyas, which it still bears. Herod the Great built a temple in honor of Augustus at the fountain of Paneas, which is one of the sources of the Jordan. Philip the tetrarch enlarged and beautified the town, and called it Cesarea, in honor of Tiberius, and Philippi, from his own name, to distinguish it from Cesarea Palestine. It was called Neronias by Agrippa. Titus caused the Jews to fight with one another, and with wild beasts, at this place. Coins of Cesarea-Paneas still exist. It was a bishopric of Phenicia in the fourth century, and was the scene of sanguinary conflicts during the Crusades. It is now a wretched village of fifty or sixty houses; but the remains of a citadel, etc., show that it was anciently a place of importance. *He asked his disciples*,—On the route. (See Mark and Luke.) *Whom do men*—The masses. *That I the Son of man, am?*—I call myself the Son of man; whom do the people take me to be? Cf. John xii. 34. He did not ask the question for information for he knew the opinions of men concerning himself; but he wanted to draw them out on the subject of his Messiahship, wishing to disabuse their minds in regard to the erroneous views which they themselves entertained.

14. *Some say John*:—From Mark and Luke, it would seem that the majority considered him John—not that they considered John, Elijah, Jeremiah, or some other prophet, to be the Son of man, but that Jesus himself was John or one of the old prophets, by a resurrection, not a metempsychosis, of which the people generally, in all probability, knew nothing, as the Sadducees, in particular, believed nothing. (See on Matt. xiv. 2.) Those who thought him to be Elijah, perhaps, considered him the forerunner of the Messiah, as the Jews expected Elijah to come in that capacity. They held, too, that the Messiah was to come not from the living, but from the dead.

16. *Simon Peter answered*—Speaking for the rest, as the question was propounded to all; though all were not prepared or prompt to answer—hence Christ does not continue to speak in the plural, but peculiarly directs his speech to Peter. *The Christ*,—The Messiah. *The Son of the living God*.—If some of the Jews thought the Messiah was to be an angel, or an inspired man, others of them expected him to be the Son of God: (see on Matt. xiv. 33; xxvi. 63; John i. 34, 49;) though perhaps few who embraced this view comprehended in it the miraculous conception of his humanity, or the eternal generation of his divinity. Perhaps Peter himself did not, yet his confession arose from a deep-seated conviction of the truth to which Nathanael and the apostles on the lake could not have attained. Son of God and Christ denote the same person; but the former respects his origin, the latter his office. The living God expresses the idea of

reality, as opposed to the "dead idols" and fictitious deities of the heathen, (Wis. xiv. 29,) called by a misnomer "immortal gods:" it may also express the idea of giving life, all life being from God. Matt. xxvi. 63; John vi. 57, 69; 1 Thess. i. 8.

17. *Blessed*—Happy, a felicitation, rather than a benediction. *Bar-jona*:—Son of Jonah; but *Bar* is here used as a part of the proper name. It was not unusual to mention the old name on bestowing the new. Gen. xvii. 5; xxii. 28. *Flesh and blood*—A circumlocution for man, found in Eccus. xiv. 18, but not in the LXX.: it is used with reference to our frail bodies, (1 Cor. xv. 50,) and to human nature, as a whole, in view of its infirmities, (Gal. i. 16; Eph. vi. 12; Heb. ii. 14,) and in contrast with spiritual natures, diabolical, Eph. vi. 12; angelic, Heb. ii. 14; divine, Gal. i. 16 and this place. *Hath not revealed it unto thee*,—Thou hast not received this knowledge from man, e.g., from the scribes. *But my Father*—In whose name I teach, by whose authority I perform the miracles which prove my Messiahship, and by whose providence thou hast been called to be my disciple, and hast thus been favored with facilities to acquire this knowledge. This does not exclude inward spiritual illumination, accompanying the external agencies, and which others might have received had they improved the means furnished as Peter had. (See on Matt. xi. 25-27.) By saying *my Father*, he indorses Peter's expression, Son of God.

18. *And I say also unto thee*,—And moreover I say to thee. This may correspond to the declaration which Peter had made to Jesus; but it also expresses the idea of an addition to the felicitation. *Thou art Peter*,—A translation of the Aramaean *Cephas*, a surname given him by Jesus when he first came to him, denoting his zeal and firmness—both words denote a rock, or foundation-stone. John i. 42. This kind of paranomasia was common among the Jews: thus another apostle was surnamed Zelotes; two others Boanerges. (See on Matt. x. 2-4; cf. Gen. xvii. 5; xxxii. 28.) "Thou art" may mean, "thy name denotes," or "thy name is Rock." *And upon this rock*—Papists refer this to Peter, as prince of the apostles, primate of the Church, and vicar of Christ, and to the popes as his successors; but Scripture and history know nothing of such a principality, primacy, and vicariate, except to oppose it. Matt. xx. 25; xxiii. 8; Gal. ii. 11; 1 Pet. v. 1-3. Many of the Fathers, together with leading divines of the Roman Communion before the Reformation, and many eminent Protestants, say, "The rock, if taken doctrinally, was Peter's confession; if personally, it was none other than Christ himself." Some think Jesus pointed to himself when he said, "On this rock." This interpretation is defended on the ground, first, that *petros* signifies nothing but a mere stone, and *petra*, a rock; but both words mean Cephas, a Rock—the former being masculine, is used appellatively, because of the masculine subject, Simon, son of Jona; the latter, as the common feminine, is used figuratively: there is a beautiful propriety in the change of the gender. It is thought, second, that it is impious to consider any one besides Christ the rock of the Church, and absurd to make a fallible mortal,

like Peter, who afterward denied Christ, that rock. But if Christ alone is considered the Rock in a primary sense, as the one Mediator, others may be rocks in a secondary sense, as his ministers. Though Peter denied Christ, yet he afterward proved a valuable support to the Church, sacrificed his life in maintaining its interest, and still edifies it by his inspired Epistles. As therefore Jesus is addressing Simon, and from his surname Peter, given him at his vocation, takes occasion to speak of the foundation of his Church, it is natural to consider him the rock in question. The copulative "and," with the demonstrative pronoun "this," as well as the phrase, "And moreover I say to thee," confines it to Peter. The honor thus conferred upon him is no greater than that involved in giving him the keys, in the next verse; and if the latter is not inconsistent with Christ's prerogative, (*cf.* Isa. xxii. 22; Heb. iii. 1-6; Rev. iii. 7,) or with Peter's fallibility, neither is the former. It was not Peter's person, but his apostleship, in which there is no succession. Peter was the first among the equals of the apostolic college. In recognition of his forwardness in confessing Christ, he was chosen to open the kingdom of heaven to the Jews, on the day of Pentecost, and to the Gentiles, in the case of Cornelius and his friends. Acts ii., x., xv. 7. In the foundation-work of the ministry, the other apostles were, indeed, associated with him; (Gal. ii. 9; Eph. ii. 20; Rev. xxi. 14:) as all the Levites are called stones of the temple—but Peter began the work. This interpretation embraces the doctrinal substance of that which refers the rock to Christ, and that without any forcing, as Peter's fundamental ministry consisted in preaching the Christ contained in his confession. Thus the Church is built on Peter, only as Peter builds on Christ, (1 Cor. iii. 10,) or is built on him, (1 Peter ii. 4-8.) The word Church occurs here for the first time: it occurs nowhere else in the Gospels, except in Matt. xviii. 17. The *ecclesia* of the Greeks was an assembly of the citizens *called out* to consider matters of public interest. Acts xix. 39. As terms are generally corrupted, it came to be used to designate any assembly, however convened, e.g., the mob at Ephesus, Acts xix. 32. The LXX. render *kahal* by *ecclesia* seventy times. Stephen uses it for the camp of Israel, Acts vii. 38. Elsewhere in the New Testament it is used of the Christian Church with a variety of applications. It means the Church triumphant, (Eph. v. 27;) a particular congregation, or society of Christians, worshiping stately in one place, (Matt. xviii. 17; Rom. xvi. 3, 5; 1 Cor. xvi. 19; Col. iv. 15; Phil. i. 2;) the aggregate of all the particular Churches in a city is called the Church of that city, (1 Cor. i. 2; xiv. 34;) it seems to mean the house in which a Church met in 1 Cor. xi. 18, 22; xiv. 23. Here it means the catholic Church, which is not an assembly, or congregation, (this is rather a property of it, in its subaltern constituencies,) but it is a society made up of all the particular Churches in the world, and by them made visible. Of this Church Christ is the architect, though in another sense he is the foundation: so Peter and the other apostles are in one sense stones resting on the foundation, though in another, they are the builders. 1 Cor. iii. 10-17. *My*—Is emphatic, distinguishing it from the Church of former dispensations; hence the

future, *I will build. And the gates of hell*—Alluding to Oriental sepulchers, which were closed with heavy bars, or gates of solid metal or stone. The Hebrews speak of death as the gates of *sheol*, for which the LXX. have *hades*, (Isa. xxxviii. 10; cf. Wis. xvi. 13;) in Ps. cvii. 18, they have "the gates of death," where the Hebrew is *moth*, death. *Hades* occurs eleven times in the New Testament, and except in 1 Cor. xv. 55, where it is rendered "grave," it is always rendered "hell," which word, in its original meaning, a concealed place, very well represents *hades*. (See on Matt. xi. 23.) *Hades*, therefore, is the state or place of the dead, without reference to pain or pleasure; and the gates of *hades* are death, by which the state or place of the dead is entered. When Christ says the gates of hell shall not prevail against his Church, he means that the Church shall be perpetual, immortal. Though the members thereof must die, yet the places of one generation shall be supplied by another, and thus the succession shall be perpetuated to the end of time, when death and *hades* shall surrender their prey, and the glorified Church shall live for ever. 1 Cor. xv. 54; Rev. xx. 13-15.

19. *And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.*—The Church viewed as a civil society Christ himself being King. As keys are used for opening and shutting, (Luke xi. 52; Rev. iii. 7,) this language explains the preceding. As a rock, or foundation-stone, Peter is built upon by others; as bearer of the keys he opens the door for the admission of both Jews and Gentiles, (Acts ii.; x.) In this respect, Peter's ministry was peculiar: he had none to share it with him. These keys are nowhere else spoken of in Scripture. But all other deputed authority which may be indicated by them, belonged as much to the other apostles as to Peter. Isa. xxii. 20-25. Binding and loosing are Hebrew idioms indicating forbidding and allowing. Rom. vii. 2; 1 Cor. vii. 27, 39. Whatever Peter by inspiration should forbid or allow in the Church, in reference to doctrines, duties, and discipline, should be ratified in heaven. In this respect, however Peter had no higher prerogative than the other apostles, except as he may have been foremost in its exercise, as may be seen in their common exercise of it, (Acts xv. ;) and with regard to it, they have no successors. Thus in Matt. xviii. 18, where the terms apply to Church discipline, all the apostles are embraced; so in John xx. 22, 23, where the designation of the terms on which sins are remitted is spoken of, the authority is common to the whole college of apostles.

20. *Tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.*—Fifty-four MSS., and many Fathers, versions and editors, omit "Jesus," apparently with reason. While Jesus was on earth, his words and works bore witness of his Messiahship. The worldly views which the Jews entertained of the Messiah and which were to some extent held by the apostles, until the day of Pentecost, (Luke xxiv. 21; Acts i. 6,) made this interdict necessary. (See on Matt. viii. 4.)

21. *From that time*—They were not previously prepared for more than an intimation of it. *He must go*—It was necessary in order to fulfill his mission that he should place himself in such circumstances, as, through the wickedness of men, would result in his crucifixion: it is not, however, to be supposed that he could not have made atonement for the world without the malice of Jews and the cruelty of Gentiles. Luke xiii. 33; xxiv. 26. *Elders*, etc.—Members of the Sanhedrim, which is called *presbytery*, (Luke xx. 66; Acts xxii. 5,) being composed principally of elderly men. (See on Matt. ii. 4.) *The third day*.—(See on Matt. xii. 40.)

22. *Then Peter took him*,—Then Peter taking him aside, reprov'd him—or gave him an affectionate chiding. *Be it far from thee, Lord*:—Literally, supplying the ellipsis, it is, "God be merciful to thee, O Lord!" Cf. 2 Chron. xi. 19; 2 Sam. xx. 20; xxiii. 17. It is a deprecation, like "God forbid!" "May it not be!" *This shall not be unto thee*.—This shall not befall thee. Peter seems to speak with an authoritative air, as if he knew better than Christ, and had it in his power to prevent the thing predicted: he speaks in the spirit of Clovis, who exclaimed in reference to the treatment of Christ by the Jews, "Had I been there with my Franks, they should not have done it." The *rock* becomes a stone of stumbling!

23. *But he turned*,—Looking on his disciples, wishing all of them to hear the rebuke. *Get thee behind me*,—Avaunt! Begone! Cf. Matt. iv. 10; Luke iv. 8. *Satan*;—Adversary: the word is frequently so used in the Old Testament. Christ does not call Peter by this name as it is an appellative of the devil, but as it implies Peter's opposition to Christ's redeeming work: in this opposition Peter was indeed unconsciously taking sides with the devil. *Thou art an offence unto me*:—*Skandalon* means the tricker of a trap, and is applied to a stake or a stumbling-block. Rom. xi. 9; Rev. ii. 14; cf. Lev. xix. 14, LXX. Judith v. 1. It is applied metaphorically to any thing that has a tendency to keep men from becoming Christians, or hindering Christians in the divine life. Matt. xviii. 7; Luke xvii. 1; Rom. ix. 33; xiv. 13; 1 Cor. i. 23; Gal. v. 11; 1 John ii. 10. It is applied to persons, Matt. xiii. 41, and this case of Peter. The verb is used in a similar way, Matt. v. 29, 30; xvii. 27; xviii. 6; John vi. 61; 1 Cor. viii. 13. So, in the passive sense, to be scandalized, offended, or stumbled. Matt. xiii. 21; xxiv. 10; xxvi. 31, 33. In Matt. xi. 6; xiii. 57, it means to be prejudiced against the person of Christ, or against his teaching, (xv. 12,) so as not to become his disciples, or to be led into sin, Rom. xiv. 21, (where, as in Rom. ix. 32 33, the noun and verb are used interchangeably with *proskomma*, a stumbling-block, and *proskopto*, to stumble,) 2 Cor. xi. 29. Christ did not mean that Peter offended him, in the sense of displeas'd, though Christ was displeas'd at what he said; much less that he caus'd Jesus to offend, or stumble; nor indeed does it appear that Jesus refer'd to Peter's "fostering that natural horror of his painful and ignominious death, which occasionally harass'd our Saviour;" but that Peter's opposition to his death tended to defeat the grand object of Christ's coming into the world.

Savourest not—Dost not affect, or relish. Peter viewed the subject from a human, not a divine stand-point: *cf.* 1 Cor. i. 23-25, and Peter's own remarkable language, (1 Pet. ii. 7, 8,) which seems to have this passage in view.

24. *Then said Jesus unto his disciples*,—Mark adds, "when he had called the people," (*cf.* Luke ix. 23,) it being a matter of universal concernment. *If any man will come after me*,—Resolve, or determine, to follow me—the idea is that of one person following behind another, treading in his footsteps: (*cf.* 1 Pet. ii. 21:) a beautiful representation of discipleship. *Let him deny himself*,—Renounce, forsake: the simple word is used in Titus ii. 12; here the compound, implying abnegation, such a renunciation as makes an utter breach between the parties renouncing and renounced. In this case, the parties are one and the same person: he who would be the disciple of Christ must renounce himself, not only his sinful propensities, but also his fancied right of self-proprietorship. He cannot be his own master, if he takes upon him the yoke of Christ: this unreserved and unconditional surrender to Christ is the first step toward discipleship: it, of course, comprehends the sacrifice of life itself when the cause of Christ demands it. Luke xiv. 26, 27. *And take up his cross*.—(See on Matt. x. 38.) These terms of discipleship are perfectly natural—the Jews recognized them in making proselytes: every heathen, to become a Jew, must become so voluntarily, compulsory profession being null; he must renounce his own views and opinions; he must assume the responsibilities of the religion he embraces; and follow his new guide.

25. *Will save*—Will to save—not a future tense. (See on v. 24.) *Will lose*—Not if any one will to lose, but should lose, as the term expressive of volition is not used in this case: the distinction is observed in all the Gospels. *For my sake*,—In laboring to promote his cause. *Shall find it*.—Save it, as in Mark and Luke. He who loses his life in this world shall find his life in the world to come: thus, as the loss is but a temporary one, a man may be said to save, or preserve his life.

26. *Shall gain*—Should gain. *And lose his own soul?*—His life. To suffer damage as to the life, is to forfeit it. The language is proverbial: it matters not how much one may gain, if it be at the expense of his life. *What shall a man*—What ransom will a man give for his life? (Ps. xlix. 8,) or, "what will he not give?" There seems to be an allusion to Job i. 4, LXX., which also seems to be proverbial: "All that belongs to a man will he pay as a ransom for his life." There appears to be no more paronomasia here than what is involved in applying the word in ver. 25 to the present and also to the future state of existence: in ver. 26 the proverb literally relates to the present life; its application is, of course, to the life to come. In John xi. 25, 26, there is a similar use of the terms living and dying—their meaning is indicated by the nature of the subject, and the scope of the passage, in both cases. The loss of the present life is, of course, temporal

death; the loss of the future life is death eternal: in what that consists is not here stated, as our Lord's hearers were advised on that point: they did not understand by it the literal extinction of life, but the forfeit of every thing that makes existence a blessing—everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. Rom. vi. 21, 23; Jas. v. 20; Rev. ii. 11; xxi. 8. This is what is generally understood by the common rendering, the loss of the soul.

27. *Shall come*—His second advent, at the end of time. *In the glory*—The supernatural brightness which surrounds and beams forth from God, and Christ, and the angels. Luke ii. 9; John xii. 41; Acts vii. 55; xxii. 11. The Jews called it the *shekinah*. It is only at the day of judgment that he will reward every man according to his works—which include the inward workings of the soul, as well as the outward actions.

28. *Taste of death*,—Die: so "see death"—experience it. Ps. xxxiv. 8; lxxxix. 48; John viii. 51, 53; Heb. ii. 9. The key to this passage is probably found in the sense in which the phrase, the kingdom of God, or of heaven, is used in the Gospels. It is taken from Dan. ii. 44: vii. 12, 13. This is the kingdom which John and Jesus proclaimed to be at hand. (See on Matt. iii. 2; iv. 17.) The time was fulfilled, as predicted by Daniel, and the reign of the Son of man was about to be ushered in. The throne, the clouds of heaven, attending angels, beaming glories, etc., are poetical representations of regal state. As Christ's reign is continuous from its inception to its consummation, events which take place at the beginning and at the ending, may be spoken of in the same connection, and Christ maybe said to come in his glory, or in his kingdom, (Luke xxiii. 42, 43,) when he enters upon it, or when he comes to resign it, at his last advent to judge the world. In this view of the case, our Lord seems to allude to his last advent in ver. 27: *cf.* 2 Thess. i. 7-11; Jude 14. In ver. 28, he seems to allude to the ushering in of that kingdom which shall be given up at the day of judgment. The way was prepared for its establishment by the personal ministry of John and that of Jesus himself; a scenic representation of it was made to three of the apostles in Christ's transfiguration, when "they saw his glory"—of which Peter says, "we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, being eye-witnesses of his majesty; for he received from God the Father power and glory." 2 Pet. i. 16-18. This is a description of regal splendor: the three disciples had a proleptical glimpse of the reign of Christ. The coming of the Son of man in his kingdom in Matthew, is called, therefore, in Mark, the coming of the kingdom of God, or the reign of the Messiah. It is observable that whereas Mark speaks of its coming with power, Peter, in the account of the transfiguration, speaks of it as the powerful coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is still farther observable, that the account of the transfiguration immediately follows this announcement in all three evangelists. But as there were several steps in the introduction of Christ's kingdom, he may have embraced them all in this coming: his transfiguration was his anticipated

enthronization; his crucifixion secured his title; (John xii. 22, 23; Col. ii. 14, 15; Heb. ii. 14;) his resurrection and ascension were his proclamation and coronation; (Rom. i. 4; Eph. iv. 8;) the pentecostal effusion of the Spirit was the demonstration of his regal power; (Luke xxiv. 49; Acts ii. 33-36;) the success of the apostolic ministry was a proof of his continued reign; (Mark xvi. 19, 20;) and the dissolution of the Jewish civil and ecclesiastical state, together with the conversion of the Gentile world, a proof of its establishment on the universal basis laid down in prophecy. Matt. xxii. 43; Rom. xv. 12. All these events connected with the coming of the kingdom, or the introduction of the reign of Christ, took place before the death of some of those who were standing by when Christ uttered this language, though perhaps the majority of them died before the destruction of Jerusalem. If he dated the introduction of his reign from the time of his ascension, and the mission of the Spirit, which is identified with it—this being the visible manifestation of his kingly power—there was no absurdity in his saying that some of them should not die until it took place; for though it was not a year off, yet he knew that some of them—Judas at least—would die in the interim: indeed, there would be no absurdity in solemnly affirming that the kingdom of God which had been indefinitely proclaimed as at hand, would be opened in their lifetime, even if the event were but a week in the future. It was not that Christ wished to state solemnly that they would not die within a given time, but that the Son of man would come in his kingdom within that time: it might therefore refer to, or at least embrace, the transfiguration, that being at once a manifestation and pledge of his regal glory. The meaning seems to be, Some standing here—viz., John—the plural used in a general sense—shall live to see the Messiah enter upon his reign—go to it in the ascension, come in it at Pentecost, as the reign, or Kingdom, may be said to come when he entered into his glory, of which the transfiguration was a pledge and pro-lusion, as the consummation of the Jewish state was an indication of its final and universal establishment; hence the last event may be chiefly intended: *cf.* John xxi. 22. Thus Whitby: "There is no cause why any man should fear to lose his life for my sake, or think himself wise in preserving it by denying me; for the Son of man will come in the glory of his Father, who hath made him Judge both of the quick and the dead; and then he will render a reward of eternal life to them who have suffered for his sake, and subject them to eternal death who have been ashamed of him and of his words; nor have you cause to doubt of his power thus to judge and inflict punishments on man, since he will shortly give a signal experiment of it, in inflicting the severest punishments on the unbelieving Jews." *Standing here*,—Present here, without any regard to the posture they might be in at the time.

CHAPTER XVII.

1 *The transfiguration of Christ.* 14 *He healeth the lunatic,* 22 *foretelleth his own passion,* 24 *and payeth tribute.*

XVII.—1. *And after six days*,—Luke says "about eight": it was perhaps a week after Matthew and Mark excluding the two terminal days, and Luke including them. Cf. John xx. 26. *Peter, James and John*—Three being a competent number to bear witness and these three as usual, because of their prominence. *Bringeth them up*—Rendered "leadeth" in Mark: conducteth. *Into an high mountain*—Luke "the mountain," which seems to mean some mountain belonging particularly to the place where he then was: as there is no mention of his having left Cesarea Philippi during these six days, it is supposed that Hermon, or a spur of it, perhaps the *Mons Paneum*, which runs out into the plain of the Jordan within six miles of Cesarea. But during the six days, Jesus may have traveled from Cesarea to Nazareth, or some other place in the neighborhood of Mount Tabor, the distance not being fifty miles, and this may have been the Mount of Transfiguration, agreeably to ancient tradition. Eusebius, indeed, who died A.D. 340, says nothing about this, though he describes this mountain; the first mention of it being by Cyril of Jerusalem a few years later. It has been suggested that as there is a Hermon near Tabor, that may have been confounded with the Hermon near Cesarea Philippi; and the rather, as the Psalmist says, "Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name;" (Ps. lxxxix. 12;) and as Tabor stands "apart" by itself, it was easy to transfer the scene from Little Hermon to Tabor. It is said that at the time of the transfiguration there was a fortified city on Tabor, which would render it unfit for that sacred scene: it might, however, have taken place in some sequestered part of the mountain. Neither Hermon nor Tabor is mentioned in the New Testament, and there is no way to settle the vexed question. *Apart*.—In a private place, privately. (See on Matt. xiv. 13, 23.)

2. *Transfigured*—In Rom. xii. 2, the word denotes an internal change; here it denotes a change as to external appearance. *His face did shine*—The change seems to have been more in the aspect than in the contour: his face became luminous, and the luminousness appears to have extended all over the person: thus while it shone with ineffable splendor in his uncovered face, it also beamed forth from those portions of his body which were covered.

3. *Moses*—By whom the law was given. *Elias*—By whom it was restored: Moses, the eminent type as well as foreteller of the great Prophet which the Lord should raise up, like unto himself, to whom the people should hearken; (Deut. xviii. 15;) Elijah, the great type of him who should prepare the way before the Lord. Cf. ver. 10-13. Moses, whose body was buried by God, no man knows where; (Deut. xxxiv. ;) Elijah, whose body was translated to heaven, not seeing corruption. 2 Kings ii. These two prophets being held in so great esteem by the

Jews, came to deliver up, as it were, the Jewish dispensation to Him who was to substitute for it his own.

4. *Then answered Peter*,—He might have noticed the reluctant departure of Moses and Elijah: he replied to what he saw and what he had heard in the discourse about Christ's decease, though nothing may have been addressed to him. (See on Matt. xi. 25.) *Lord*,—(See on Matt. viii. 25.) *It is good for us to be here*:—It would be profitable for us to stay here. *Tabernacles*;—Booths; made of branches of trees, for a temporary shelter, as those used at the feast of tabernacles. Hackett saw on the flat roofs of the houses at Deburieh, at the foot of Mount Tabor, small booths made of the branches and leaves of trees—a cool retreat in summer. Peter perhaps expected to be invited to share the Saviour's booth; James and John sharing the others.

5. *While he yet spake*,—While he was speaking. *A bright cloud*—This removes the difficulty in reconciling Peter's desire to stay there with the terror they experienced: he spoke in an ecstasy of delight when he said, "Lord, it is good for us to be here"; but just at this point the cloud overshadowed them, and they were affrighted. The shekinah cloud could both transmit light and cast a shade. Ex. xiv. 20; 1 Kings viii. 10-12. The light dazzled the disciples, and the shadow terrified them. Peter, however, bewildered as much as the rest, though probably not as much awe-struck as they, continued speaking though he did not know what to say, or the absurdity of the request which he made. *Behold, a voice*—Lo! as a voice cannot be seen. (See on Matt. iii. 17.) It calls attention to the wonderful oracle. *Which said*,—Saying. (See on Matt. iii. 17.) *Hear ye him*.—This confirmed his divine legation: the withdrawal of Moses and Elijah was suggestive; a greater than both remains. This was the second time a voice from the excellent glory had proclaimed in the hearing of men the Father's recognition of the Son: a third is yet to come; John xii. 28-30. As the luminous cloud corresponds to the Shekinah, so the voice corresponds to the divine oracle, which spoke from the most holy place. By these tokens God attested the old dispensation; by them he inaugurates the new. Though Peter did not seem to know what he said on this occasion, yet he never seems to have forgotten it. Thus, in connection with his account of it, he speaks of putting off his tabernacle, and of his decease—the same word, *exodos*—as in Luke ix. 31, in that magnificent passage, 2 Pet. i. 13-18: *cf.* Deut. xviii. 15.

6. *They fell on their faces*,—The posture of those who are overpowered by the presence of a supernatural being. Dan. viii. 17, 18; x. 5-11; Luke v. 8, 9. *Sore*—Greatly.

7. *Touched them, and said*,—The touch accompanying the address assured them that he was still in the body. Luke xxiv. 37-40.

9. *The vision*—Mark and Luke, "what they had seen;" *cf.* Acts vii. 31; Ex. iii. 3; Deut. xxviii. 34, LXX. The word is specially applied to a preternatural appearance. Acts ix. 10, 12; x. 3, 17, 19. The disciples were not yet prepared to announce the higher claims of their Master and his kingdom: they were first to be endued with power from on high, and this they could not be until after Christ's resurrection; then they were prepared to relate the prodigy without laying undue stress upon its imposing phenomena, but rather referring to it as a confirmation of their Lord's Messiahship and of their belief in a spiritual world, and of the intimate relations subsisting between the kingdoms of grace and of glory. The three were not to be vain of the preference shown them, nor excite the rest to envy; nor were the disciples to be scandalized by his sufferings after hearing of his transfiguration.

10. *Asked*—The question was suggested by what they had seen and heard. They seemed to have forgotten what Jesus said, (Matt. xi. 14,) having just seen Elijah, and calling to mind the prophecy of Mal. iv. 5, 6, and the teachings of the scribes based thereon. They were perplexed: Is this the predicted advent of Elijah? If so, why is he gone so soon, without doing what was prophesied of him? Why must we tell no man of his appearance? Is he to come again? And how is Elias John the Baptist? And if he restores all things that Christ may reign over the Jews, how can Christ suffer death?

11. *Shall first come*,—Is to come first—i.e., his coming is predicted. The future is used as in quotation of a prophecy. This is not an announcement that Elijah will come in person before the second advent of Christ. (See on v. 12; Matt. xi. 14.) *Restore*—In all other places of the New Testament the word means to restore, as Matt. xii. 13; Mark iii. 5; viii. 25; Luke vi. 10; Acts i. 6; Heb. xiii. 19. Our Lord had his eye on Mal. iv. 5, 6, where the LXX. use this word: "he will restore the heart of father to son, and the heart of a man to his neighbor." That this restoration had a deeper meaning may be seen in Luke i. 16, 17. That John did not bring about a universal reformation is no bar to this interpretation—that was the design of his mission, and it was in part accomplished.

12. *And they knew him not*,—Did not recognize John as the predicted Elijah. *Listed*:—Chose.

14. *Kneeling down to him*,—As an applicant for mercy.

15. *Lunatic*,—(See on Matt. iv. 24.) *Sore vexed*,—Grievously afflicted. In Matt. iv. 24, lunacy is distinguished from demoniacal possession, but they may both co-exist in the same subject, and the former may be produced by the latter. *He falleth*—Hence he is supposed to have been epileptic; but this too may have been the result of demoniacal influence: it is attributed by Mark to the malevolent design of the evil spirit.

16. *They could not cure him.*—As the faith of both parties, the father and the disciples, was needed for the miracle, and was found wanting.

17. *O faithless*—Unbelieving: cf. John xx. 27—alluding perhaps to the disciples and the father. *Perverse*—Crooked, as our wrong, twisted, turned aside from the right, alluding perhaps to the Jews, who perversely discredited the claims of Jesus. *Generation*,—A people of the same race and time. (See on Matt. xi. 16.) This seems to give the address a general bearing. *How long shall I be with you?*—How long is it necessary that I should be personally present with you?—a hint in regard to his prospective leaving of them. *How long shall I suffer you?*—How long must I bear with your unbelief and perverseness? This evinces powerful, yet holy emotion.

18. *Rebuked the devil*,—He sternly commanded the demon to come out of him.

19. *Apart*,—Mark: "into a house." *Why could not we*—They had cast out other demons. Mark vi. 13.

20. *A grain of mustard-seed*,—A proverbial expression among the rabbins for the smallest thing: (See on Matt. xiii. 32:) so the removing of mountains is a proverbial expression for that which is apparently impossible. Some think a great act of faith must be intended by the proverb, as Paul speaks of removing mountains by having all faith. 1 Cor. xiii. 2. But we must not be hypercritical in construing proverbial phrases: those, however, who wish to be minute in their interpretation, should bear in mind that Jesus was speaking of a specific miracle which could be wrought by a very little miracle-working faith—the quality rather than the quantity being considered; whereas Paul speaks in the plural ("remove mountains")—all kinds of miracles requiring all the diversified developments of miracle-working faith. *This mountain*,—Pointing perhaps to the Mount of Transfiguration. *Yonder place*;—Thither: pointing perhaps toward the basin of the lake. Matt. xxi. 21. *Nothing shall be impossible*—If not inconsistent with the will of God. The disciples could not cast out the demon without the concurrent faith of the father, but their faith might have removed his unbelief. They could not force him to believe: Christ did not; but he developed his faith.

21. *This kind*—Of demons. The disciples had cast out other demons, and the reason is assigned why they could not cast out this. A. Clarke cannot see why "a certain class, or genus, of demons cannot be expelled but by prayer and fasting, while others may be ejected without them." Perhaps not; and yet the fact may be so. The terrifying phenomena connected with this case may not have obtained in other cases where they had been successful in exorcism; hence in this case their minds may have been too much perturbed for the exercise of faith; and prayer and fasting would be necessary to put them in a proper mental condition for that exercise. Faith was the condition of exorcism; prayer and fasting were the

condition of the faith required. Of course, it is not implied that prayer and fasting were not needed as ordinary means of grace; but a special resort to them was needed for an extraordinary occasion. Alford thinks "this was for their after guidance, for they could not fast while he was with them." But this construction of Mark ii. 19 seems too rigid. The disciples doubtless observed the public fasts; and also fasted in reference to particular objects, while "the Bridegroom was with them," though they could not mourn and fast then as much as when he was taken from them. (See on Matt. ix. 14, 15.)

22. *And while they abode in Galilee*,—As they were traveling in Galilee. They had to pass through Galilee from the Mount of Transfiguration to Jerusalem, *via* Capernaum: *cf.* ver. 24; xvi. 21. It appears to have been just after the miracle, and as a sort of offset to it, that our Lord spoke these words. *The Son of man*—(See on Matt. viii. 20.) *Shall be betrayed*—Is to be betrayed—a hint of the nearness of the event. *Into the hands of men*:—The action implies what sort of men, *viz.*, his enemies, and also the fact that God would work no miracle to deliver him from their power. 2 Sam. xxiv. 14; Ps. cvi. 41, 42; Isa. xlvi. 6.

23. *They shall kill him*,—They will kill him. *Exceeding sorry*.—Grieved exceedingly, *viz.*, at the prospective sufferings and death of their Master, as they could not understand what he meant by rising again.

24. *And when they were come*—Matthew alone records this incident; he makes no explanation of the custom, because it was well known to the Jews, for whom he specially wrote. *Tribute-money*,—The double drachm, or half shekel. Every Israelite from twenty years old and upward had to pay a half shekel for the service of the tabernacle; (Ex. xxx. 12-16;) and afterward the same tax for the repair of the temple. 2 Chron. xxiv. 6-9. After the captivity it was reduced to the third of a shekel. Neh. x. 32. It was afterward raised to half a shekel: thus Josephus (*Ant.* xviii. 10. 1) speaks of "the *didrachmon* which it was the custom for each person to pay to God;" and, (*Wars* vii. 6. 6.) "Vespasian imposed a tribute on the Jews wherever residing, ordering each of them to pay two drachms annually into the capitol, as they formerly used to pay them into the temple at Jerusalem." The LXX. frequently render *shekel* by *didrachmon*; but Grotius says they meant the Alexandrian *drachmon*, which was double the Attic, or common *drachmon*. The half shekel was worth 15*d.* *Came to Peter*,—Jesus being most likely in Peter's house at Capernaum. *Your*—Referring to all the disciples. *Master*—Teacher. *Tribute?*—The double drachms: not that they mean that he paid more than one *didrachmon* for himself, but either referring to his paying for the disciples also, or else to the many persons from whom the tax was collected, each paying a double drachm. Whether they questioned if Jesus was exempt as a rabbi, or that the payment was voluntary, some declining it, or that his absence from

Capernaum made them uncertain, or that this was a polite way of asking for the tax, cannot be determined.

25. *When he was come*—When Peter had come into the house, and was going to ask Jesus for the money, or if he was correct in saying that he would pay it, Jesus anticipated him, knowing what he was going to say. *Prevented*—From *praevenio*, to come before. *Custom*—Taxes, levied on things. *Tribute?*—Census, assessment, poll-tax, levied on persons. *Children*—Sons. *Strangers?*—Others; but subjects, not foreigners. The royal family are usually exempted from paying tribute.

26. *Then*—The king's sons are under no obligation to pay tribute: as I am the Son of the great King, and you are my ministers, ought we not to be excused from paying for the service of the temple, the expenses of the palace, the support of the government? This shows that it was not the imperial tax, as Jerome thought. It was also a slight rebuke to Peter, who had hastily spoken as if his Master were not Lord of the temple.

27. *Notwithstanding*,—But that we might not cause them to stumble at me by this assertion of my prerogative, as they might construe it into a want of regard for the temple service. (See on Matt. xvi. 23; 1 Cor. viii. 9, 13.) In regard to money, as Bengel says, worldly-minded men have a peculiar facility in taking offense at the conduct of the godly. *The sea*—The Lake of Gennesaret, which was close by. *That first cometh up*:—The first that bites. *Opened his mouth*,—To take out the hook. *A piece of money*:—A stater: a Greek silver coin, worth four Attic drachms, or two *didrachma*, the exact amount required to pay the tribute for Peter and his Master. It is not said that Peter caught the fish, found the stater, and paid the tax; but it is presumed that he did. The silly tradition that the fish caught was a haddock, and that the black mark on each side of the neck of that fish, is a memento of the fact—Peter catching hold of it at that place when he opened its mouth—is a specimen of superstition which finds its offset in the sapient suggestions of the Rationalists that all Jesus meant was that Peter should catch a fish, open his mouth to cry it, and sell it for a stater! The haddock, by the way as a salt-water fish, is not found in the Lake of Tiberias. For the kinds of fish found in the lake, see Lynch's Exploration of the Jordan. (See on Matt. iv. 18.) It is folly to speculate on the miraculous phenomena involved in this transaction—whether the fish was created for the occasion, or was merely impelled toward Peter's hook, or came in a natural way; whether the stater had been dropped into the lake, and swallowed in a mistake by the fish, or was put into its mouth by divine agency; or—what not: it was a miracle of knowledge, if not of power, and no man can repeat it. It was wrought not merely to supply an outward necessity, but to prevent the payment of the tribute-money being considered a compromise of his prerogative as the Son of God, and Lord of the temple.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1 *Christ warneth his disciples to be humble and harmless: 7 to avoid offences and not to despise the little ones: 15 teacheth how we are to deal with our brethren, when they offend us: 21 and how oft to forgive them: 23 which he setteth forth by a parable of the king, that took account of his servants, 32 and punished him, who shewed no mercy to his fellow.*

XVIII.—1. *At the same time*—It is not said that Peter went immediately to the lake to catch the fish which should furnish the tribute-money. Luke passes over the visit to Capernaum, which is but incidentally noticed by Mark, and, indeed, by Matthew: as Jesus seems to have merely halted there a night or so on his journey to Judea. But that he was not "by the way," where they disputed, when he interrogated them about their dispute, but in the house (Mark) is implied by Luke when he says that "he took a child and set him by him." Having been cognizant of their dispute by the way, when they were together in the house he made them state the question. As might be expected, at first "they held their Peace," (Mark,) being ashamed of the affair; and when they did state it, it was in general terms. *Who is the greatest*—Not, which of us shall be the greatest? Yet, according to Luke, this was the bone of contention. *Ara*, omitted as expletive by our translators, rather refers to the dispute, and may be rendered "then," or "in truth;" q.d., "To settle the dispute, inform us who shall be the greatest." The occasion of the dispute may have been the special privilege granted to Peter, James, and John, in being exclusively permitted to witness the Transfiguration. Was the government of the new theocracy to be administered by them as a triumvirate? Why not by Simon II., James II., and Judas I., as the relatives of the King, members of the royal family? May not the supremacy be vested in the oldest and first-called disciple, say Andrew? or in the one best acquainted with political affairs, say Matthew? or in John, who was most in the confidence of the King, lying in his bosom? or in Peter, who had been recently designated by the King himself as the rock of his Church?

2. *A little child*—Nicephorus says this was Ignatius the martyr: it was more likely one of Peter's children, being in his house. The symbolic mode of conveying instruction was common in the East. It is likely the little boy came up with the apostles to hear what Jesus was about to say.

3. *Verily, I say unto you*,—A formula indicating the importance of what follows. *Converted*,—Turned, changed. *Become as little children*,—Free from ambition. *Ye shall not enter*—Ye shall not be subjects, much less senators, in my kingdom.

4. *Whosoever therefore*—To give the greater effect to the remark, he then took the child in his arms, or embraced him. The language refers to the state, not to the

effort to reach it—the child, as a symbol, not representing the latter. *Greatest*—The greatest. This answers the question, ver. 1: the greatest is the most humble, the least ambitious. Ps. cxxxi.; 1 Cor. xiv. 20.

5. *One such little child*—One of my humble, unpretending disciples. (See on Matt. x. 40-42.) *In my name*,—Because he belongs to me.

6. *Shall offend*—Cause to stumble. (See on Matt. xvi. 23; Luke xvii. 1, 2.) *One of these*—One of my disciples. *A millstone*—An ass's millstone—the upper millstone, turned by an ass, larger than that turned by hand. *Were hanged*—Should have been hanged before he did so. *Drowned*—A mode of punishment among the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, and apparently borrowed from them by the Jews, as Josephus (Ant. xiv. 15) says the Galileans drowned the partisans of Herod in the lake. Alix cites the Mishna to prove that execrable men were cast into the Dead Sea with a stone tied to them. The scholiast on Aristophanes (*Equit.* 1360) says, that when they drowned any person (in Greece) they hung a weight on his neck—Suidas says, a large stone. Suetonius (Life of Aug. 67) says, Augustus punished certain persons for their oppressions in a province by throwing them into a river with heavy weights about their necks. The proverb means that any one had better suffer the greatest temporal evil than be the occasion of moral evil to one of Christ's followers. *The depth of the sea*.—The main sea, as opposed to shallow water.

7. *Wo*—(See on Matt. xi. 21.) *Offences!*—Scandals, stumbling-blocks. *For it must needs be*—Considering the depraved state of society, there is a moral necessity—"a necessity of consequence." *But wo to that man*—This shows that he who persecutes or seduces a disciple, does so by the abuse of his own free agency, and not by any absolute necessity which would preclude his accountability, nor by any invincible force of circumstances, be society ever so depraved, as this also would relieve him of any responsibility in the matter: no one will be punished for what he cannot help. Chrysostom and Theophylact observe that Christ says this not to take away the freedom of our faculties, or the liberty of our election, or to subject the actions of our life to any necessity. Jerome says if it were necessary for a man to scandalize, he would be without blame in so doing. He notes the necessity of this caution to the apostles, who were contending for dignity; for, he says, had they continued in this vice they might have given scandal to those whom they called to the faith.

8. *Wherefore, if thy hand offend thee*,—This caution is to the disciples that they might not by ambition, or any other worldly feeling, throw a stumbling-block in their own way. (See on Matt. v. 29, 30.) *Halt*—Lame in the feet. Heb. xii. 13. *Maimed*,—Deficient in a limb, as a hand. (See on Matt. xv. 30, 31. The language is proverbial: a man had better suffer the loss of one of his members than be burned to death.

9. *With one eye*,—One-eyed. *Hell-fire*.—The fiery Gehenna, called "the everlasting fire," (Ver. 8,) as the fire was kept burning in the Valley of Hinnom to consume carcasses, etc. (See on Matt. v. 22.) Mark shows the application of the proverb by saying here "the kingdom of God," instead of *life*.

10. *Take heed*—See, beware. *Despise not*—Not only do not scandalize, but do not conceive or entertain an ill opinion of. *One of these little ones*:—Obscure disciples. *Their angels*—That the righteous are ministered to by angels appears from Scripture. Ps. xxxiv. 8; Heb. i. 14. *Behold the face*—A privilege granted by certain monarchs to their special favorites only. 1 Kings x. 8; Esth. i. 14; Ps. ciii. 20, 21; Luke i. 19; Tobit xii. 15. If those who are the special favorites of God wait upon the humble disciples of Christ, who will dare despise them? Those who understand by their angels the disembodied spirits of these little ones, say that they cannot be their guardian angels because they are "always in heaven," while ministering spirits are a part of the time on earth. But the meaning may be, that when in heaven, which is their home, they always behold, etc. It is not said their angels *shall* behold—i.e., in a future state—but *do* behold. It is not clear that departed spirits, though made like unto the angels, are ever styled angels in Scripture. Acts xii. 15 may be, and generally is, interpreted of a ministering angel—some say, a human messenger.

11. *For the Son of man*—As all were lost, Christ came to save all, including the poor and obscure, therefore let them not be despised. 1 Cor. viii. 11. These obscure ones, whom the proud scarcely think worth seeking, have been sought and found; and he who took so much pains to save them, will hold them in high esteem now they are saved. Take care that they be not lost again through your fault.

12. *How think ye?*—What do ye suppose? *Doth he not leave*—The ninety-nine on the mountains, and going, seeketh, i.e., goeth in quest of the stray sheep? Luke (xv. 4) has "wilderness," on the mountains of which the sheep were fed. No mystery is to be sought in 99, it being a number frequent in the Jewish writings.

13. *He rejoiceth more*—At the time. This does not intimate that God is better pleased with restored backsliders than with the righteous who never fell; but the joy of their recovery is proportioned to the grief of their loss: judge, then, how incensed God must be with those who cause the weakest saint to fall.

14. *It is not the will*—It is his will that not one should perish. Ezek. xxxiii. 11; 2 Pet. iii. 9. It has been suggested that when the dignity of the little ones was asserted, it was *my* Father; now that a motive directly acting on the conscience is urged, it is *your* Father.

15. *Moreover*,—Passing from this to a cognate point. *If thy brother*—A fellow-Christian. *Trespass against thee*,—Willfully injure thee. *Go and tell him*

his fault—Privately reprove or expostulate with him. Lev. xix. 17; Eccles. xix. 13. *Hear*—Regard. *Gained thy brother*.—Brought him to a right state of mind—"won him back to rectitude and fellowship"—"gained for God and thyself too." 1 Cor. ix. 19; 1 Pet. iii. 1. Not only do not injure thy brother, but if he should injure thee, try to bring him to a better mind.

16. *Two or three witnesses*—One or two beside thyself, (Deut. xvii. 6; xix. 15; John viii. 17, 18; 2 Cor. xiii. 1,) not as witnesses of the offense, but of the attempt to bring the offender to repentance, as well as to aid in the effort, increasing the chances of success; or if there be a failure, to bear testimony to the Church that the private effort has been duly made. *Word*—Charge or accusation; first, that the matter complained of is wrong, and second, that the offender refuses to repent of it.

17. *Tell it unto the church*:—The religious society of which both are members. This is done virtually when the officers of the Church are apprised of it. This course, as Maimonides says was pursued in the Jewish synagogues. The notion of a general council is absurd. Christ could hardly mean by the Church a court of scornful, persecuting Pharisees, especially in view of Matt. xvi. 18, and the scope of this chapter, which refers to what was to obtain in the kingdom of heaven, the Church which he was just erecting. The rebuker brings it before the Church, not as an injured private person, but as the first witness, for in and with him the Church is injured. *Let him be*—Have no religious communion with him: still be kind to him. 1 Cor. v. 11; 2 Cor. ii. 6, 7; 2 Thess. iii. 14, 15. *A heathen*—The heathen: the article is used, in the original, to denote the class—one of the heathens, outside the Church; one of the publicans, who though within, are classed with heathens. He who will not hear the Church, has no claim on it, except what any sinner may possess.

18. *Whatsoever ye shall bind*—Whatsoever ye shall order concerning such a man, whether his expulsion, being incorrigible or his retention or re-admission on repentance, shall be ratified by God. (See on Matt. xvi. 19.) It may relate primarily to what the apostles by divine inspiration, should determine in regard to Church-discipline; but the principle will obviously apply to all Christians following their directions in the premises.

19. *Again*—Connecting this with the preceding. *I say unto you*,—A formula indicating the great importance of what is said. Matt. xvi. 28. *If two of you shall agree*—Harmonize in feeling and aim. *As touching any thing*—Having special reference to Church-discipline. If infallible decisions were granted to the apostles, all necessary aid shall be afforded to ordinary Christians who thus implore it.

20. *Two or three*—The smallest congregation, not restricting it to councils, or to the universal Church representatively considered. The smallest particular

Church represents the Church catholic. Tertullian says, "Where two, even of the laity, are thus met, there is a Church." *Gathered together*—Convened. *In my name*,—On my account—attending to the business of my Church. The Jews say, "A synagogue to which the Shekinah of the Divine Presence and hearing descends, must consist of at least ten—a smaller number God despises and reproaches: Wherefore do I come when there is no one there." Yet they have this saying, "Wherever even two persons are sitting in discourse concerning the law, the Divine Presence is among them." *There am I*—The prophetic present. Christ is always present in his Church by his divine nature and his Spirit. Hence he can act as the Mediator through whom our prayers are offered, and also ratify our official acts.

21. *Then came Peter*—Induced by the foregoing discourse. *How oft*—"If my brother trespass against me repeatedly, how often must I forgive him? Must I as often as seven times?" The Jews, referring to Job xxxiii. 29, LXX., Amos i. 3, limited forgiveness to three times; Peter extends it to seven, that being the number of perfection, indicating frequency; though Peter may have used it definitely—perhaps joining the three and four in Amos, in the rabbinical spirit. Lev. xxvi. 18, 28; Prov. xxiv. 16; Luke xvii. 4.

22. *Seventy times seven*.—As often as the offender repents. Cf. Gen. iv. 24. It is not said for what space of time, as "a day," Luke xvii. 4—probably Peter here meant his whole life; but Christ ignores all numbering.

23. *Therefore*—Not a mere formula of transition, but, on this account, or because this is so—because unlimited forgiveness is the will of God. *The kingdom of heaven*—The gospel dispensation. *Take account*—Settle accents with. *His servants*.—Public ministers, who had to do with financial matters. Persian satraps are so called by Xenophon, An. i. 9, 29. The immediate application points therefore to the apostles, as officers of the crown.

24. *Begun to reckon*,—God wakens the conscience before the final account. *One was brought*—He would not have come of his own accord. *Ten thousand talents*.—The highest number in Greek notation being used to indicate an enormous debt. It is not likely that the gold talent is meant, because of the immense sum, £67,500,000 or £72,000,000, and because the silver talent is usually meant by ancient authors, where the kind of money is not specified. Esth. iii. 9. A myriad of silver talents is variously valued at £1,875,000; £2,400,000; £3,000,000; £4,500,000. A talent was not a coin, but first a scale, then a weight put in a scale. The Hebrew or Babylonish talent was 3,000 shekels, or 50 manehs, valued by some at £342. 3.9. The Attic talent was £243.15 (say \$1,170.) Plutarch says, Darius sought to buy off Alexander with this sum; and the Romans imposed the payment of it on Antiochus the Great. The sum is immense, to indicate man's great indebtedness to divine justice—yet God counts it.

25. *He had not to pay*,—Was unable to pay. *To be sold*,—A custom among the Jews. Lev. xxix. 39, 47; 2 Kings iv. 1; Neh. v. 5, 8; Isa. l. 1; also among the Greeks, Romans, Hindoos, and other nations.

26. *Worshipped*—(See on Matt. ii. 2.) *Have patience with me*,—Give me time. Heb. vi. 15; Jas. v. 7. *I will pay thee all*.—A futile promise, but it expresses earnestness. As the debtor was a public functionary, some think he might defray his indebtedness. This filling up of the parable is not to be explained as the voice of mistaken self-righteousness; though half-awakened sinners may sometimes purpose to atone for past sins by future obedience.

27. *Loosed him*,—Already bound for sale: released him from arrest. *Forgave him the debt*.—Not merely the interest, as the word sometimes imports, but, as in the Arabic, all that he was liable to. He asked forbearance, and got forgiveness: thus all penitent sinners are freely and fully forgiven.

28. *Went out*,—This is not to be understood as denoting the apostate's going away from God; nor is it to be understood that he went out immediately after being forgiven. It may refer to the time when the trial of our principles takes place, as Alford says; but he very inconsiderately adds, "forgiveness of sin does not imply a change of heart or principle in the sinner:" if he means forgiveness is not regeneration, the remark is true, but impertinent; if he means that one may be forgiven and yet remain unregenerate, it is not true, for forgiveness and regeneration are concomitant. *Found*—Happened to meet. *An hundred pence*:—The *denarius* (from the Latin *deni*, ten) contained ten *ases*. Before the time of Nero it was worth 8½*d.*, after that 7½*d.*: 100 of the former equals £3.10.10; of the latter, £3.2.6 (about \$15), a contemptible sum compared with the other, indicating the disparity between our offenses against one another and our sins against God. *And he laid hands on him*,—And laying hold of him, he throttled him. Cruel creditors sometimes twisted their debtors' necks behind them in dragging them to the magistrates. By laying hold of the upper part of the tunic, the throat would be painfully pressed. He does not state the amount of the debt, as it was so small.

29. *Besought*—Not worshipped, as in ver. 26—not being his lord, but fellow-servant. The yieldingness of the fellow-servant makes the severity of the other the more striking.

30. *Went and cast*—Immediately caused him to be imprisoned.

31. *Very sorry*,—The passion which became them: their lord was angry, ver. 34. Cf. Ps. cxix. 53, 136. *Told*—Declared fully. We are not to suppose, say some, that this circumstance has any precise interpretation: it is introduced to give interest, life, and effect. But we may fairly observe on it that the reasonable

judgment of men in regard to the conduct of each other, will be confirmed by the judgment of God.

32. *O thou wicked servant*,—Chrysostom and Bengel remark when the servant owed a myriad talents, his lord did not call him wicked, nor, indeed, reproach him, but pitied him. (See on Matt. xxv. 26.) *Because thou desiredst me*:—As soon as and because thou didst entreat me—and that not for forgiveness, but for forbearance, ver. 26.

33. *Compassion*—Pity, mercy.

34. *Wroth*,—(See on v. 31.) *Tormentors*,—Literally, examiners, particularly those who examined prisoners by torture; hence it means jailers, who had to torture debtors, who were at the disposal of creditors, to make them or their friends pay their debts. *Till he should pay*—I.e., for ever, for he never could discharge the debt.

35. *So likewise*—The act of divine clemency in the pardon of a sinner will be cancelled, if he does not imitate that clemency. Jas. ii. 13. *My heavenly Father*—Not yours, as in Matt. vi. 14, 15; but my Father, in whose name and commission I announce this; and who can see whether or not *from the heart* you forgive your brethren. Alford says "He who falls from a state of grace falls into a state of condemnation, and is overwhelmed with 'all that debt,' not of this or that actual sin formerly remitted, but of a whole state of enmity to God." Whitby says, "From this parable we learn the equity of unlimited forgiveness of our brother, because God hath forgiven us more numerous sins, and the cruelty of imprisonment for debt—also that God's pardons, as Hammond says, are not absolute in this life, but dependent upon the condition specified."

CHAPTER XIX.

2 *Christ healeth the sick; 3 answereth the Pharisees concerning divorcement. 10 Sheweth when marriage is necessary. 13 Receiveth little children. 16 Instructeth the young man how to attain eternal life, 20 and how to be perfect. 23 Telleth his disciples how hard it is for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God, 27 and promiseth reward to those that forsake any thing to follow him.*

XIX.—1. *These sayings*,—Those in ch. xviii. *He departed from Galilee*,—He left Galilee, and came into the coasts, or confines, of Judea, by the route the other side of Jordan—a longer route than that through Samaria. He never returned to Galilee till after his resurrection. Matthew passes over many events that occurred on this journey, and at Jerusalem. Luke ix. 51-xviii. 15; John vii.-xi.

3. *The Pharisees*—Those of that sect who lived in that region. *Tempting him*,—Designing to ensnare him—imagining, say Jerome and S. Clarke, that if he should say it was lawful, he must contradict his own doctrine; (Matt. v. 32;) and if he should say it was not, he must seem to deny the law of Moses. They probably wished also to embroil him in the disputes between the school of Schammai, who would not allow of divorces for any cause short of adultery, and the school of Hillel, who allowed them for any; and perhaps also to report him to Herod Antipas, who had put away his wife and married Herodias. *Every*—Any whatever—as in 1 Cor. x. 25. *Cause?*—Account, reason, not fault, crime.

4. *Have ye not read*,—By thus citing Gen. i. 27; ii. 24, he confirms the literal historic truth of these chapters, as well as the continuity of the Mosaic narrative, which some have questioned because of the different diction and repetition. *He which made them*—Have ye not read that the Creator from the beginning made them male and female, and said, etc. This implies an equal division of the sexes in all ages, which the history of the species proves; and it indicates the divine will that marriage should be in pairs and indissoluble, except by death. Gen. i. 27 anticipates Gen. ii. 21-24: cf. Gen. v. 1, 2.

5. *For this cause*—This seems to be a statement of the inspired historian. *Cleave*—The Greek, like the Hebrew word, means to solder or glue together. *Twain*—Two is not in the Hebrew, but was perhaps supplied in the LXX., Sam., Syr., Ar., and Vulg., as implied. *One flesh?*—A Hebraism for one body, or one person: the marriage therefore can be lawfully broken only by the death of the flesh. Union in spirit should never be wanting, but is not essential to the validity of the marriage contract. Hence second marriages are lawful—the first partner being dead. Rom. vii. 1-3.

6. *What*—The neuter seems to refer to *sex* implied ver. 4. *Joined*—Yoked. The ancients put yokes on the newly married to indicate that they must pull together. *Let no man*—The rendering in Mark, "let not man," is perhaps better.

7. *They say unto him*,—Suggested by his inquiry, Mark x. 3. *Why did Moses*—They wanted to put Christ's judgment in antagonism to the law of Moses. *Command*—In Mark they say *suffered*. Moses allowed them to divorce their wives, but commanded them when they did so to give a bill of divorcement. *A writing*—A bill: the Talmud says exactly twelve lines; cf. Deut. xxiv. 1; Jer. iii. 8, where the LXX. use *biblion* for Hebrew *sepher*. *Divorcement*,—Dismission.

8. *Moses*,—But it was a divine arrangement—the statutes of Moses are always spoken of as divine. Cf. Mark vii. 10, 13. *Because of*—In regard to, having in view. *Hardness of your hearts*,—Stubborn or unyielding spirit, incompatible with the conjugal state. (See on Matt. v. 31.) *From the beginning*—(See on v. 4, which Mark blends with this.) The permission of divorce or polygamy does not date back

as far as the creation, when marriage was instituted. The words *you* and *your* seem to intimate the particular and temporary character of the permission.

9. *And*—But, referring to the Mosaic license. Cf. Matt. v. 31. *I say unto you*,—If he said this to the Pharisees, he repeated it privately to the disciples. (See on Matt. v. 32.)

10. *If the case*—If this be the case: if the marriage tie be thus binding. *His wife*,—The wife, agreeing with "the man." *Not good*—Not advantageous, not advisable. The disciples evidently understood that the prohibition of divorce included also polygamy, else they might have remedied the matter by taking an additional wife. This is implied too in what follows.

11. *All men cannot*—All cannot assent to this statement—that it is not good to marry—so as to act upon it: ver. 12. *To whom it is given*.—Who have the gift of continence. 1 Cor. vii. 1, 2, 7.

12. *So born*—Who have no natural inclination to marriage or are impotent. *Made eunuchs of men*:—As by Oriental princes, to take charge of their women. Esth. ii.; Dan. i.; Isa. xxxix. 7; Jos. Ant. x. 2. 2. *Made themselves*—Not in a literal sense, as in the case of Origen, but metaphorically, in the sense of subduing natural inclinations, so as to be at liberty to promote the cause of the gospel in such a way as cannot be done in the married state. 1 Cor. vii. 26, 34; ix. 5, 15, 16. In the first instance, a man's will has nothing to do with the matter; in the second, it is against his will; in the third, it is with his will—concurring however with divine aid. *He that is able*—Implying that some cannot live in celibacy, but permitting those to do so, who can and who are willing to do it for the kingdom of heaven's sake; otherwise it seems to be the duty of all to marry. Heb. xiii. 4.

13. *Little children*,—Luke has "the babes"—i.e., their infant children. *Lay his hands*—Imposition of hands when praying or blessing any one was practiced in early times. Gen. xlviii. 14; Num. xxvii. 18, 23; 2 Kings v. 11; Acts vi. 6; viii. 17-19; xiii. 3; 1 Tim. iv. 14; v. 22; 2 Tim. i. 6; Heb. vi. 2. It was merely a sign indicating the party who was the subject of the prayer or benediction. It does not follow that by this act they recognized Jesus as the Messiah, but as a teacher sent from God, whose official blessing they considered of great efficacy. *Rebuked them*.—That is, as Mark has it, "those who brought them"—probably women who believed in him. The disciples, it may be, feared their Master would be annoyed by the infants, or that this business was beneath his dignity, or that it was an unseasonable interruption of an important discussion.

14. *Suffer little children*,—The little children. *And forbid them not*,—The positive and negative forms united give force to the injunction and reproof. *To come unto me*:—That is, to be brought. *For of such is*—To such belongs. *The kingdom of heaven*.—In the Gospels this generally means the Church on earth; and

as all who are brought to Christ do not die in infancy, and so, as children, enter the kingdom of glory, it must here have its usual meaning; though the kingdom of glory is theirs also in prospect, until (if they prove unfaithful in after life) they forfeit it. Our Lord thus ratifies the claims of children to membership in the Church, recognized under the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations.

15. *And he laid his hands on them*,—Mark is more specific and graphic. What is the effect of Christ's blessing upon an infant, immediate or remote, none can tell: the indirect influence of the dedication of children to God by their parents, is very salutary.

16. *One*—An individual. *Came*—Mark says it was just as Jesus was departing on the way from the place where he had blessed the children, on his route toward Jerusalem. *Master*,—Teacher. *What good thing*—It is likely he made the inquiry from the motive which influences all serious inquirers concerning the will of God. Luke iii. 10, 12, 14; Acts ii. 37; xvi. 30. *Eternal life*?—A phrase borrowed perhaps from Dan. xii. 2, the only place where it occurs in the Old Testament. It is found here and in the parallels, and Luke x. 25, and in only one other place in the first three Gospels, viz., Matt. xxv. 46. It is prominent in John and in the Epistles. It implies everlasting happiness.

17. *Why callest thou me good?*—Not, Why dost thou question me concerning that good thing? which is a corrupt reading. The ruler did not ask what is essentially good, but what good thing he must do. He imitated the disciples of the rabbins, who prefaced their inquiries by some adulatory compellations, which Christ rebukes. The ruler did not recognize Christ in his divine character, but merely as an eminent teacher, and our Lord meets him on his own ground. As Campbell says, "Nothing can be more pertinent than to say, 'If you believe that God alone is good, why do you call me so?' whereas nothing can appear less pertinent than, 'If you believe that God alone is good, why do you consult me concerning the good that you must do?'" *There is none good but one, that is, God*:—As Bishop Pearson says, "None originally, essentially, infinitely, independently good, but he." So Proclus: "God is the independent, original good?" Stier: "I should not be good as thou thinkest, if I were a man as thou supposest." This does not affect the claims of Christ in his human nature, as holy, harmless, and undefiled; and it has no negative bearing on the question of a trinity of persons in the unity of the Godhead, for Trinitarians are Unitarians so far as the Divine Essence is concerned: they are not Tritheists by believing that there are three persons, so called, in the Divine Essence. *If thou wilt*—Willest, desirest. (See on ver. 21.) *Life*,—The life, referring to ver. 16, "eternal life"; that life of which thou speakest. *Keep the commandments*.—Those who say Christ answered ironically appear to be greatly mistaken. Obedience to God's law, as the condition of eternal life, does not prejudice the doctrine of justification by faith; indeed,

obedience itself springs from faith. Lev. xviii. 5; Matt. vii. 21; Eph. ii. 8-10; Rev. xxii. 14. The commandments are the precepts of the Mosaic law generally, as Matt. xxii. 36-40; v. 19; but especially the decalogue, which is by eminence "the permanent kernel of legislation."

18. *Which?*—He may have referred to the two classes, written and traditional, or to the moral and ceremonial. *Jesus said*,—The article, omitted by our translators, may be rendered, these, to wit. Our Lord cites only the commandments of the second table, probably, as Bacon suggests, because obedience to them is not so easily counterfeited by hypocrites as those of the first; though the principle which secures obedience to the one will secure obedience to the other. 1 John iv. 20, 21; v. 1; Rom. xiii. 8; Jas. ii. 8-10. "The duties of the second table are more palpable," says Bengel. None of the evangelists cite the commandments in the order in which they stand in Ex. xx. 12-17, while all omit the tenth. The Jews were accustomed to cite the decalogue in substance rather than form, frequently reversing the order to show that they considered them as of equal importance; as they expressed it, "There is neither first nor last in the law."

19. *Thou shalt love*—Lev. xix. 18, cited as a summary of the commands of the second table. (See on Matt. xxii. 29.)

20. *Things*—Precepts. *Kept*—A different word from that in ver. 17—hence Campbell renders "observed." The distinction which A. Clarke notes that the young man used this word modestly, as referring to the letter, while the other embraces also the spirit, is not valid; as this word embraces both in all similar places. Luke xi. 28; Acts vii. 53; xvi. 4. *From my youth*—Though he was young to be a ruler, yet he may have been considerably removed from the period of youth. *What lack I yet?*—In what am I still deficient? He seemed to feel that his obedience was defective.

21. *If thou wilt*—Desirest. *Be perfect*,—Finished, have that which is lacking supplied. Christ seems to take the ruler on his own ground: it is all well thus far; but for the future do thus, and nothing shall be lacking: thy character shall be perfect. The requisition to give away all that he had was made probably in view of his becoming a preacher of the gospel. It does not appear that Christ would not have employed a ruler in this work as well as a fisherman, if he had developed the suitable disposition. The sacrifices which he would make for the gospel would be almost as marvelous as the ability displayed by unlettered men in its promulgation. (See the case of Saul.) Admitting that up to that time the ruler was under gracious influence and in the way of salvation, it is questionable whether he could continue therein after declining the call to the ministry under the influence of undue regard to his worldly possessions. Cornelius was in a state of acceptance before he was visited by Peter; but if he had refused to take the course indicated to him by the apostle, he would have forfeited his standing in the sight

of God. It is not sufficient to measure up to the old standard when we are called to a higher grade. *Go*—This implies present action; the command was a test of earnestness and promptitude, rather than of sincerity. (See on Matt. viii. 19-22.) *Thou shalt have treasure in heaven*:—This expresses the idea of indemnity: sacrifice worldly riches, and thou shalt have the heavenly, the true riches. Our Lord's disinterestedness is shown in his not wishing the ruler to put any of his riches into "the bag," which he and his disciples carried, but his entire estate was to be given to the poor. *And come and follow me*.—(See on Matt. xvi. 24.)

22. *Sorrowful*:—According to Mark, he showed his sorrow by the contraction of his countenance. *Great possessions*.—Properly, immovable possessions: cf. Acts ii. 45; v. 1; hence the command to sell.

23. *Shall*—Will. *Hardly*—With what difficulty. *Kingdom of heaven*.—This usually means the Church on earth: it is very hard to get the rich to bow their necks to the yoke of Christ, and thus to take rank among his lowly and despised followers. Some think it here means "eternal life," ver. 16; but the one implies the other; the kingdom of grace being developed in the kingdom of glory. As the disciples were astonished at this statement, it being so contrary to the notions which obtained among the Jews, our Lord, according to Mark, explained himself, as referring it to those who "trust in riches." This, indeed, does not much relieve the case; for it is next to impossible not to trust in riches if we have them: they are a standing temptation to independence of God, which is the great obstacle in the way of our salvation. Job xxxi. 24, 25; Ps. lxii. 10; 1 Tim. vi. 9, 17.

24. *Camel*—The transcribers who substituted cable, were not probably acquainted with the Jewish proverb, which is copied into the Koran. In Babylon the elephant was the largest animal; hence the Talmud: "Perhaps you are of Pomboditha, where they drive an elephant through the eye of a needle." A needle's eye being very small, and the camel being very large, the proverb well expresses an impossibility. Cf. Matt. xxiii. 24. Harmer thinks there is an allusion to the low gateways through which camels were forced on their knees; and it is said that an opening of this sort is called the eye of a needle. Coleridge says, "The distinguished and worldly-honored company of Christian mammonists appear to the eye of my imagination, as a drove of camels heavily laden, yet all at full speed, and each in the confident expectation of passing through the eye of the needle without stop or halt, both beast and burden."

25. *Exceedingly amazed*,—Intensely affected, as Matt. vii. 28. They were struck with astonishment to hear that rich men could hardly enter the kingdom, which they persisted in considering a temporal one. *Who then can be saved?*—In that case—if the way of life be so difficult—who can be saved? The disciples probably uttered this under the influence of the Jewish notion that rich men acquired merit

by alms-deeds and gifts to the temple: if they could not be saved, what would become of the poor?

26. *Beheld*—Looked on them, compassionating their anxiety. *With men*—As it regards mere human power salvation is impossible—really so in the case of every man, emphatically so in the case of the rich man; but the grace of God can enable even him to overcome the difficulties in the way of his salvation: it can enable even him to consecrate his wealth, though retaining the possession of it, to the glory of God, so that instead of hindering, it shall promote his salvation. *All things are possible*.—Not inconsistent with the perfections of God or the moral agency of man.

27. *Then answered Peter*,—As usual. *We have forsaken all*,—We have done all thou didst require of the ruler—their sacrifices were not so great, yet Peter, Andrew, James, John, and Matthew, appear to have been in comfortable circumstances. (See on Matt. iv. 22; ix. 9, 10.) *What shall we have therefore?*—If the ruler would comply with the terms specified, he should have a reward in heaven: we have in effect done so, what then is to be our reward?

28. *Verily I say unto you*,—His usual pregnant mode of introducing an important subject. *Ye which have followed me*—As my disciples, ver. 21, 27. *In the regeneration*.—These words are to be joined to what follows. It means perhaps the new dispensation, which was fully inaugurated after our Lord's ascension, when he was seated on the mediatorial throne, and the apostles were invested with authority to govern the Church, the Israel of God; which dispensation is consummated at the resurrection and final judgment. The word occurs but once more in the New Testament, viz., Titus iii. 5, where it indicates the entrance upon the new life, symbolized by baptism. *Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones*,—So far as the persons of the apostles were concerned, the promise was conditioned on their fidelity. Judas fell from his throne by transgression—or never properly occupied it, as he apostatized before the enthronization took place—and another took his throne. *Judging the twelve tribes of Israel*.—The Jews are spoken of according to the ancient style after the tribes were confounded; though there was some distinction of tribes perpetuated till the time of the final dispersion. Luke ii. 36; Acts xxvi. 7; Jas. i. 1; Rev. vii. 4-8. There may be an allusion to the heads of the tribes, who, it is said, sat near the throne, and assisted the king in his judgments; or to the seats of the Sanhedrim, there being no mention of the phylarchs after the time of Moses. The apostles were invested with authority over the true spiritual Israel, when they were endued with power from on high; (Luke xxiv. 49; Acts i., ii.; Gal. vi. 16;) and this they continue to exercise by their infallible writings. In the final judgment they will virtually judge the Jews who obstinately rejected the Messiah. 1 Cor. vi. 2; Rev. i. 7. This will be the consummation of their apostolic functions.

29. *And every one*—This principle holds good in every age. *For my name's sake*,—In laboring to promote his cause. *An hundredfold*,—Not in kind, as it is to be "with persecutions," but in value: a hundred-fold more happiness than any or all of these did or could afford. The early disciples during their persecution found recompensing substitutes for the friends and possessions which they surrendered for Christ, in the friendship and kindness of their brethren; and when put to death for their Master, they received the martyr's crown. Rom. xvi. 13; 1 Cor. iii. 22; 2 Cor. vi. 8-10; Phil. iv. 10-18; 1 Tim. v. 1, 2; Rev. ii. 10.

30. *But*—Referring to the foregoing subject. *Many*—Referring to "every one," ver. 29. *That are first*—This proverb may have been introduced as a caution to the apostles, who though first called as laborers in Christ's vineyard, would have to give place to others, if they were not faithful to their calling—a contingency which occurred in the case of one of them, Judas Iscariot. Hence the illustrative parable which follows in the next chapter, which is connected with this, as the phraseology in ver. 1, 16, indicates.

CHAPTER XX.

1 *Christ, by the similitude of the labourers in the vineyard, sheweth that God is debtor unto no man: 17 foretelleth his passion: 20 by answering the mother of Zebedee's children teacheth his disciples to be lowly; 30 and giveth two blind men their sight.*

XX.—1. *For*—This refers to the close of the last chapter, connecting with it the following illustrative parable. *The kingdom*—(See on Matt. xiii. 24.) *A man that is an householder*,—(See on Matt. xiii. 52.) *Early in the morning*—With the dawn—not "the first hour," which was seven, not six o'clock in the morning, else the eleventh hour would be four, whereas it was five, in the evening. He went to hire laborers at the beginning of the day. *Vineyard*—(See on Matt. xxi. 33.)

2. *And when he had agreed*—And having agreed. *With the labourers*—Some laborers, the first he found. *For a penny a day*,—At the rate of a *denarius* the day, which was nearly equal to the Greek *drachma*, about 15 cents, the usual wages of a laborer and the pay of a soldier: it was considered liberal wages, (Tobit v. 14,) money being much more valuable then than now.

3. *The third hour*,—Nine o'clock, when the market-place was full; laborers frequenting such places of public resort in order to get employment. *Idle*—Unemployed.

4. *Also*—"Speaking from his own consciousness of having hired others, and implying as much for their information." *Right*,—Just, reasonable, proportioned to the hours employed in labor. *And they went their way*.—Agreed to the proposal,

and went to work. Trench notes that the first laborers did not go till an agreement was made as to the terms (like Peter's, "What shall we have?"); but the rest went in a simpler spirit, trusting to the equity of their employer. If this be noteworthy, then Paul contrasts favorably with Peter, in this respect. Gal. i. 15, 16; Eph. iii. 8.

5. *Sixth and ninth*—Twelve and three o'clock. *And did likewise*.—Found other laborers, made the same proposal, with like result.

6. *The eleventh*—Five o'clock. *Why stand ye here*—Morier, speaking of the market-place at Hamadan, says, "Here we observed every morning, before the sun rose, that a numerous band of peasants were collected with spades in their hands, waiting to be hired for the day, to work in the surrounding fields. This custom struck me as a most happy illustration of our Saviour's parable, particularly when passing by the same place late in the day, we still found others standing idle and remembered his words, 'Why stand ye here all the day idle?' as most applicable to their situation; for on putting the same question to them, they answered us, 'Because no man hath hired us.'"

8. *So when even*—Now when evening was come: the twelfth hour, or sunset. (See on Matt. xiv. 15.) *Steward*,—Bailiff, or overseer, to whom the management of the household was committed. Luke viii. 3. *Give them their hire*.—Lev. xix. 13; Deut. xxiv. 14, 15; Job vii. 2.

9. *Every man a penny*.—A *denarius* apiece.

11. *Murmured*—Grumbled. *Good man of the house*,—The master of the house. (See on ver. 1; Matt. x. 25.)

12. *Wrought but one hour*,—Labored: literally, made but one hour—performed but one hour's work. *Equal*—In wages. *Heat*—The LXX. call the hot, scorching east wind *kauson*, (the word here used,) Ezek. xvii. 10; xix. 12; Hos. xiii. 15; Jonah iv. 8. "Not the heat of the noonday sun," say Webster and Wilkinson, "but the scorching wind of the desert at sunrise." The eleventh-hour laborers had worked but one hour, and that in the cool of the evening.

13. *One of them*,—Probably the spokesman of the company. *Friend*,—Rather, companion, fellow, the word used in addressing inferiors, indifferent persons, etc., as Matt. xxii. 12; xxvi. 50. *I do thee no wrong*:—I do not injure, or defraud thee.

14. *Take that thine is*,—Take what is thine. *I will give*—I choose to give.

15. *Is it not lawful*—May I not do what I choose with my money? *Eye evil*—Envy is spoken of as expressed by the eye. Deut. xv. 9; 1 Sam. xviii. 9; Prov. xxiii. 6; xxviii. 22; Mark vii. 22. There is a general belief that the eye can inflict mischief. Tobit iv. 7; Eccclus. xiv. 8, 10; xxxi. 13. So the good, or liberal

eye, Eccles. xxxv. 8, 10. *Good?*—Liberal, not merely just. Rom. v. 7. (See on Matt. xxv. 26.)

16. *So*—Thus, in like manner as in the case of the laborers. This refers back to xix. 30, and shows that the parable was introduced to illustrate the preceding case. This is a key to the meaning of the parable. The kingdom of heaven is the gospel Church; the householder is God; the hired laborers are those employed in his service; the various hours at which they are hired are the different times when men are called by his providence and Spirit to labor, when doors of usefulness are opened to them; the evening when they are paid is the close of life; the penny is the gracious reward for their services, one and the same for all the laborers, as it was not the fault of the last hired that they had not labored all day, which they would have done had they been called at the same hour with the first: in the spiritual application, the penny to each suggests that there is the same heaven, objectively considered, for all Christ's servants, as their services, not having any merit in them, are all graciously rewarded. This is a hint to Peter, in view of his somewhat self-complacent language (xix. 27), "Behold we have forsaken all and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?"—intimating that they were entitled to a great reward, which, indeed, they should receive, as Christ told him; but he now hints to them that that reward will be of grace, not of debt. Rom. iv. 4. It does not follow from this that there are no distinctions in heaven. There will be one heaven for all, but the enjoyment of it will be according to each man's qualification and capacity—a point with which the parable has nothing to do. As to paying the last-hired laborers first, that is a part of the machinery of the parable necessary to bring out the temper of the others, which would not have been developed if they had been paid off first. The murmurers do not represent any of Christ's servants who will be rewarded in heaven; but this part of the parable shows the hatefulness of such a spirit as they displayed, the very same which the disciples were in danger of imbibing, and which the parable was designed to check. No murmurer, says Gregory, can enter the kingdom of heaven, and none can murmur who enter there. As between man and man, indeed, the first-hired laborers were entitled to their penny, and received it, though it may not have done them much good. But between man and God the case is different: "Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor"; but those who give way to a proud, grudging, envious spirit, cancel their claim to any reward, and fail to get it after all their labor; realizing the proverb in all its fullness of import: The last shall be first, and the first last. Hence it is added, *For many be called, but few chosen.*—Many are called to labor for Christ, but few obey the call, and persevere to the end in that spirit of humble love which will secure the final approval of their gracious Employer. John seems to have this in view, when he says, "Look to yourselves that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward." 2 John 8: cf. Ezek. xxxiii. 12, 13; Esdras viii. 3. The hint

thus originally designed for Peter and the other apostles may be of service to all who are called to labor in the vineyard of the Lord: none can consistently plume themselves on their superiority to any others, as it is a "grace given" them to be thus employed, as well as to be rewarded for their services. 1 Cor. iv. 6, 7. Some think there is a reference to the different periods in life at which men become religious; as if it were designed to show the equality of rewards in heaven. But this does not suit the connection, and is liable to serious abuse; for on this ground some advance the absurd and impious idea that there is a specific time in a man's life when he is called into the vineyard—"God's good time"—so that he is not held responsible for postponing repentance to the eleventh hour, if he should not repent till then; and a death-bed repentance will secure as bright a crown as a whole life of service and suffering in the cause of Christ! The heathen, it is true, will not be held responsible for not entering the vineyard before their were called, as they can say with truth, "No man hath hired us"; and howsoever late in life a heathen may receive the call, it would be churlish for those who were "in Christ before" him to murmur at his being allowed to work during the short remainder of his life, and to enter heaven at its close, as he gives evidence that he would have begun to work before if he had been hired. But what has this to do with the figment of "effectual calling"? or with the case of one who after resisting a thousand gracious calls, the very first of which would have been effectual but for his own fault, finally yields to the importunity of grace, and performs a little service in the vineyard? Such a man may, indeed, get to the same heaven with others; but as Augustin says, though the heaven will be in common, the splendor will be different, as one star differeth from another star in glory. The notion that the last-hired laborers did more than the first, is gratuitous, and does not illustrate the point in hand, which is to show, that after doing the most service men may make themselves less acceptable to God than those who have done the least. It will not do, however, to understand by the language, "Take that thine is," "Receive the punishment of thy pride and discontent." If the rewards of heaven were in all respects like the wages of a hireling, then this part of the parable might find its analogy in the future state, and murmurers might be found in heaven; but as this cannot be, it is obviously designed to admonish the disciples not to cherish a self-complacent, grudging spirit which would bring upon them the displeasure of their Master, and render them incapable of the heavenly reward. Thus, as Bengel says, it is in respect to the apostles, not a prophecy, but a warning. In future retribution to "be last" is equivalent to be not "chosen": there is a heaven for all, but few are found qualified for its enjoyment. (See on Matt. xxii. 14.)

17. *Going up*—Jerusalem being on an elevated region. Ps. cxxii. 3, 4. *Apart*—Privately, as he did not wish others to hear the announcement, as the effect on them might have been productive of evil. (See on Matt. xvi. 21; xvii. 22, 23.)

18. *Shall*—Will. *Condemn him to death*,—They condemned him under the charge of blasphemy, though their sentence had to be confirmed and executed by the Roman governor. Matt. xxvii. 65, 66; xxvii. 1, 2; John xviii. 31, 32; xix. 6, 7.

19. *Deliver*—The same word as betray in ver. 18; but here it means to hand over to the Roman soldiers for execution. *Gentiles*—The Romans, who bore rule in Judea: he was not to be assassinated, though the Jews would have been glad to dispatch him in this way, if they could have done so, but to be put to death by forms of law; and not stoned to death, the punishment awarded by the Jewish law to blasphemers, but by the Roman mode of execution, crucifixion. This is the first time Jesus mentioned the kind of death he should suffer, and that Gentiles would unite with Jews in his execution. Mark and Luke have "kill," but not crucify: Matthew, writing specially for Jews, notes the mode of punishment most repugnant to Jewish feelings.

20. *The mother of Zebedee's children*,—Salome. Matt. xxvii. 56; Mark xv. 40; xvi. 1. *Sons*,—The same word rendered children before. Zebedee does not appear on the scene after the call of his sons; perhaps he was at this time dead. Salome seems to have been a stated follower of Jesus. *Desiring*—Prompted not only by maternal vanity, but also by the wishes of her sons; hence Mark represents James and John as making the request, and that not in the most modest terms.

21. *May sit*,—Alluding to the Oriental custom of placing favorites near the throne the place of highest dignity under the king. 1 Kings ii. 19; Ps. xlv. 9; Jos. Ant. vi. 11. 9; xi. 4. The rabbins have a saying, "God will seat the King Messiah at his right hand and Abraham at his left." Let us be highest in authority in thy kingdom. Four MSS. of Mark have "the kingdom of thy glory," which is a very good gloss; though James and John expected that glorious kingdom to be of an earthly character. They had in view the promise of Matt. xix. 28; and from Christ's predicting his resurrection, ver. 19, thought that he would soon establish his glorious kingdom on the earth.

22. *Ye know not what*—Not comprehending the nature of my kingdom, ye do not know that the highest places in it involve the greatest sufferings, instead of worldly honors. *The cup*—This among both sacred and profane writers denotes the portion of good or ill allotted men by Providence. The master of the feast gave to each of his guests a cup—*cf.* Ps. xi. 6; xvi. 5; xxiii. 5. It denotes bitter sufferings here and in Matt. xxvi. 39, 42; John xviii. 11: *cf.* Isa. li. 17; Jer. xlix. 12; Rev. xiv. 10; xvi. 19; xviii. 6. *The baptism*—Of blood: *cf.* Isa. lxiii. 3; Rev. xix. 13-15, where the word rendered "dipped" means stained with blood, as in Isaiah: "Their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." The Greek writers speak of being baptized with debt, taxes, calamities, etc.: so Christ was overwhelmed with sufferings, baptized with his own blood. The cup referred to his sufferings, and the baptism to the fatal, bloody issue. The present passive

may be used for the future, "I am to be baptized." Luke xii. 50; Heb. ii. 9. *We are able*,—A self-sufficient reply, indicating their ignorance.

23. *Ye shall drink*—All sufferings for the cause of Christ are considered a participation of his sufferings, as they further the ends for which they were endured, (Phil. iii. 10; Col. i. 24,) though no sufferings but his are atoning in their virtue. Heb. ix. 14; 1 Pet. ii. 24; iii. 18. James drank the cup, and underwent the baptism, when he was killed by Herod, Acts xii. 2; and John when he was banished to Patmos, and virtually, if not, as Chrysostom affirms, actually killed by the sword. *Is not mine to give, but*—The words, *it shall be given*, supplied in our version, seem to imply that this was a prerogative belonging exclusively to the Father; but this is gratuitous, and inconsistent with Matt. xi. 27; xxv. 34; xxviii. 18; Luke xxii. 29, 30; John v. 22; Rev. iii. 21, etc. The meaning is, "I cannot give unless to those"—not to men of any class, as by favoritism, but it is mine to give to those for whom it is prepared. Christ assigns all the offices and rewards of his kingdom in conformity to the will of the Father.

24. *Moved with indignation*—Resented it deeply—perhaps with some ambition and envy, not wishing James and John preferred before them. This gives force to the next verse.

25. *But Jesus called them*—All the twelve, designing to correct the spirit of worldliness and ambition which they evinced. It implies deliberation and gentleness. *Ye know*—Are acquainted with the custom which obtains, e.g., among the Romans. *The princes*—The chief men. *They that are great*—The great ones ("benefactors" in Luke xxii. 25) are the same as the princes, and the repetition is for emphasis—dominion and authority both referring to civil rule. There is a government in the Church, but it is not modeled after that in the State, in spirit, form, or end. John xviii. 36; Heb. xiii. 7, 17; 1 Pet. v. 1-5.

26. *Will be great*—Wishes to be raised above the rest. *Let him be*—He must be your *minister*—servant, like a footman or waiter; usually a freeman. (See on Matt. xviii. 1.)

27. *Will be chief*—Wishes to be first, or principal. *Let him be*—He must be your *servant*—slave. Minister, or servant, is opposed to great: servant, or slave, is opposed to chief. Luke xxii. 27; Phil. ii. 7.

28. *Even as*—If the Son of man came to be a servant and to suffer for the world, how can his followers affect to be lords? He rose to true dignity by humility; so must his followers rise. *Ministered unto*,—Served. *Minister*—Serve—do the work of the servant. (See on ver. 26, 27; John xiii. 14.) *Ransom*—The price paid for redeeming captives, or for deliverance from any evil. Ex. xxx. 12; xxxi. 30; Lev. xxv. 24, 51; Num. xxxv. 31. This idea of substitution is common among Jews, Greeks, Romans, and other nations. Christ gives his life a ransom, an atoning

sacrifice for the redemption of the world. The satisfaction is made to the law of God, which man has violated. Dan. ix. 24; Matt. xxvi. 28; John xi. 52; Eph. v. 2; 1 Tim. ii. 6; Heb. ix. 14, 28; 1 Pet. i. 18, 19; iii. 18. *For many*.—In the place of mankind—many is used for all for the sake of contrast: one for many: how many the case in point determines: he "gave himself a ransom for all." 1 Tim. ii. 6; 2 Cor. v. 14, 15; Heb. ii. 9; 1 John ii. 2: *cf.* Dan. xii. 2; John v. 28; Rom. v. 12, 15, 18, 19. The *many* ultimately saved by him would be the *all* for whom he died, if some did not "deny the Lord that bought them," so that in their case he may be said to "die in vain." 2 Pet. ii. 1.

29. *Departed from Jericho*.—They were journeying from Galilee to Jerusalem, on the east side of the Jordan, which they crossed near Jericho. (See on Matt. xix. 1.) Jericho was situated about 17 miles north-east of Jerusalem, and seven west of the Jordan. Josh. xviii. 21. Moses calls it "the city of palm trees," Deut. xxxiv. 3. It was in a fertile region, though surrounded with barren mountains. Eccus. xxiv. 14; Josh. Ant. iv. 6. 1. It was destroyed by Joshua, (Josh. vi.,) and rebuilt by Hiel; though there was a city near the old site before the days of Hiel. Jud. iii. 13; 2 Sam. x. 5; 1 Kings xvi. 34. A school of the prophets was located there. 2 Kings ii. 5, 18. It is spoken of after the captivity. Ezra ii. 34; 1 Mac. ix. 50. Herod the Great died there, where he had a palace. Jos. Ant. xvi. 5. 2. It was a respectable Levitical city in the days of Christ. Luke x. 30; xix. 1-10. It was sacked by Vespasian, rebuilt by Adrian, nearly demolished by the Saracens, repaired by the Christians, who made it a bishop's see, but was destroyed by the Turks in the twelfth century. Nothing but a miserable hamlet, called Riha, now occupies the site of Jericho.

30. *Two blind men*—Luke says it was "a certain blind man," and Mark calls him "Bartimeus"—he being better known and more prominent than the other; though both cried to Jesus. As Jesus drew nigh Jericho, (Luke,) hearing the crowd pass by, Bartimeus inquired what it meant. On learning that Jesus passed by, he joined the crowd, following Jesus through the city, on emerging from which, the other blind man having joined him, the cure was effected. This reconciles the three evangelists. *Son of David*.—They had doubtless heard of the Prophet of Galilee, and recognized his Messianic character. (See on Matt. ix. 27.)

31. *Rebuked them, because*—Charged them to be silent: they did this probably in a chiding tone. They did not object to their calling Jesus the Son of David, for they called him so themselves immediately after, but they thought the clamor would annoy him. *The more*.—More vehemently.

32. *What will ye that*—What do ye desire that I should do for you? He thus elicited their faith, and made the miracle the more obvious. This shows his readiness to *serve* even beggars, according to ver. 28.

33. *Lord*,—Mark has *Rabbouni*, doctor, teacher, master. (See on Matt. viii. 25.) *Rab*, Master, is said to be the lowest degree of honor; *Rabbi*, my Master, the next higher; *Rabban*, and with the suffix, *Rabboni*, my great Master, the most honorable: which last title was publicly given to only seven men, all eminent doctors of the school of Hillel. When the title *Rabbi* was introduced is unknown. (See on Matt. xxiii. 10.) *That our eyes may be opened*.—That we may receive our sight—as in Mark.

34. *Touched their eyes*:—His common method. Mark viii. 22-25.

CHAPTER XXI.

1 *Christ rideth into Jerusalem upon an ass*, 12 *driveth the buyers and sellers out of the temple*, 17 *curseth the fig-tree*, 23 *putteth to silence the priests and elders*, 28 *and rebuketh them by the similitude of the two sons*, 35 *and the husbandmen, who slew such as were sent unto them*.

XXI.—1. *Bethphage*,—House of figs—probably on the Jerusalem side of Mount Olivet, where figs were sold, quite likely in a garden where they grew. The name would naturally be applied to all that part of the mountain from the valley to the summit. Jerome says, "Bethphage was a little village of the priests, situated in Mount Olivet." The Talmud says it was a place out of Jerusalem, near the mountain of the temple, where they boiled their offerings. Olivet is a part of a ridge of limestone hills divided from Jerusalem by the brook Kidron and the Valley of Jehoshaphat. Its name is derived from the olive-trees that grew on it—a few of which still remain. A portion of it was called the Mount of Corruption, because Solomon built "high-places" on it to the gods of the Ammonites. 1 Kings xi. 7; 2 Kings xxiii. 13. Olivet is called by the Arabs, *Jebel-et-Tur*: its central peak is 175 Paris feet above the highest point of Zion, 416 above the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and 2,556 feet above the level of the sea. The district of Bethany joined that of Bethphage on the top of the mountain. (See on Mark xi. 1.)

2. *The village*—Perhaps Bethphage. *And a colt*—Mark and Luke mention only the colt; John, a young ass. The dam was probably brought because they would go better in company. *With her*:—Bound with her: *cf.* Mark and Luke, who both say the colt was bound.

3. *Say aught*—As in Mark, "Why do ye this?" *The Lord*—The Master, Jesus. (See John xiii. 13, 14.) *Straightway*—Immediately *He will send them*.—The owner will let you have them. He who knew that the beasts were there, knew that their owner would lend them for his use—perhaps he was a disciple, and then he would willingly lend them to the Master—who here assumes the royal style; not merely "the Son of man."

4. *That it might be fulfilled*—Zechariah predicted this because he foresaw that it would take place; and it took place that Jesus might publicly assert his Messiahship, but in such a way as tacitly to correct the false views which obtained among the people; and also to secure such a popular demonstration in his favor as would so far restrain his enemies as to allow him an opportunity to finish his mission to them, which he did in that week's ministry. (See on Matt. i. 22.)

5. *Tell ye the daughter of Zion*,—This preamble is taken literally from Isa. lxii. 11, LXX. Zech. ix. 9, has, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion"—which John (xii. 15) seems to have had in view: "Fear not." Mark and Luke refer not to the prophecy. Jerusalem is poetically personified as the daughter of Zion, being built on and around the mountain. The evangelist does not cite the words, "Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem," which may refer to the temple, as being in the city, or to the suburban region; but both expressions seem to denote the city in Lam. ii. 13, 15; Mic. iv. 8; Zeph. iii. 14. Matthew follows the LXX. in rendering "meek." The Hebrew comes from a root meaning humble, poor, afflicted. Matthew agrees with the Hebrew—"riding upon a *chamor*, and upon *ayir*, the son of *athonoth*"—i.e., the foal of the asses; a Hebraism, by which the young of an animal is called the offspring of that kind of animals. *Sitting*—Going, or mounted upon. *Colt*—*Polon*, whence some derive the Latin *pullus*, Gothic *fula*, German *fullin*, Anglo-Saxon *fola*. *The foal*—Son. *Of an ass*.—Any beast of burden, subject to the yoke, particularly an ass—*hupozugion* is not masculine, but neuter, and represents the female ass as well as the male. The LXX. have, "an ass and a young foal." Some render Matthew "even a colt," lest it should be thought that Jesus rode on both, though he actually rode on but one. Some think he rode on an ass, because the kings of Israel were forbidden to multiply horses; (Deut. xvii. 16;) but this implies that they were not to trust in cavalry for war, so as to be tempted to invade other countries, or to be drawn off from their trust in God for the defense of their own land from all invaders; (Ps. xx. 7; Hos. xiv. 3;) otherwise they could ride on horses. In ancient times great men rode on asses. Jud. x. 4; xii. 14; 1 Sam. xxv. 20. Some of the Eastern asses are very handsome, sprightly animals, and are still used by persons of distinction: (Prov. xxvi. 3;) so the Egyptian proverb, "as brisk as an ass"—though others of them are mean and sluggish, like ours, and are ridden by only the lower classes. That which Christ rode, a *hupozugion*, borrowed from an obscure villager, was probably of the latter class. Humility and grandeur were thus, as in other instances, combined in this action of our Lord: he rode into his capital in a triumphant procession; but not on a horse, a warlike animal, but an ass, to indicate that his kingdom was not of this world, nor to be promoted by the usual appliances of worldly power and pomp; hence it follows in Zechariah, "And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off; and he shall speak peace unto the heathen; and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the

earth." It is clear from this language that the prediction did not refer to Zerubbabel, (after whose time, by the way, it was written,) or Nehemiah, or Judas Maccabeus as some of the modern Jews pretend; but as Rabbi Solomon says, "It cannot be interpreted of any one but of the Messiah, because it is said of him, 'And his dominion shall be from sea to sea.'" As no Jewish king ever came to Jerusalem in this way, or performed these exploits, some of the modern Jews refer the passage to a Messiah yet to come. Thus Saadias Gaon: "Is it not written in Zechariah, of Messiah, 'lowly and riding on an ass?' Shall he not rather come with humility than with grandeur and equipage?" So Kimchi: "He shall ride upon an ass, not through any want, because the whole world shall be under his dominion, but through his humility, and to acquaint the Jews that there was no farther need of horses and chariots; for the prophet adds, 'I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem.'" Strange that they do not see that these characteristics of a lowly and exalted Messiah appear in Jesus! So that there is no necessity of feigning, as many of them do feign, two Messiahs yet to come—one lowly and the other exalted. John (xii. 16) says the disciples themselves did not see the application of this prophecy to Jesus till after his ascension; but then, doubtless by the teaching of the Spirit, they understood the matter.

6. *And the disciples went*—Mark goes into detail.

7. *Put on them*—On both—not merely because they did not know which he would ride, but because both were in his service: it was a recognition of his regal character. 2 Kings ix. 13. *Their clothes*—Mantles. (See on Matt. v. 40.) *And they set him thereon*.—Some read, "he sat upon," which agrees with Mark, and is favored by John. Luke, however, has "they set Jesus on it"—viz., the colt. These verbal differences in the evangelists, with their substantial agreement, show their credibility. The disciples spread their mantles on both beasts, placed Jesus on the colt, and he rode upon it. (See on v. 5.)

8. *A very great multitude*—The most of the crowd. *The feast*—Of the passover; which accounts for their presence: they went out from Jerusalem, and joined those who had accompanied Jesus from Bethany. *Garments*—Mantles. *Branches from the trees*,—John says "of palm-trees"—anciently borne in triumphal procession: it is likely that they not only spread them on the ground, but also bore them aloft in their hands. Rev. vii. 9. The Orientals, Greeks, and Romans strewed clothes, branches of trees, and flowers before kings and conquerors in their triumphant marches. Thus, as Plutarch says, the soldiers put their garments beneath the feet of Cato the Younger; and, according to Herodotus, the way was strewed with myrtle branches before Xerxes. It is still done in the East. Robinson's Bib. Res. ii.; cf. 2 Kings ix. 13; 1 Mac. xiii. 51; 2 Mac. x. 7. So the Athenian feasts *oschophoria*.

9. *And the multitudes*—Luke says, "of the disciples"—all those who were escorting him, ver. 8. The article prefixed to those that went before and also to those that followed, in the original, marks two parties—one coming from Jerusalem met him, and turning back took the lead; the other followed in the train. *Hosanna*—From the Hebrew of Ps. cxviii. 25: the word means, "Save now," or "Save, we pray thee;" like the English, "God save the king!" It was originally a prayer, but was afterward used as a gratulation, hence it is followed by a dative. *Son of David*:—The Messiah. (See on Matt. ix. 27.) *Blessed is he*—Let him be prosperous in his reign, *That cometh*—(See on Matt. xi. 3.) The rendering, "Blessed, in the name of the Lord," is countenanced by Ps. cxxix. 8: *cf.* Num. vi. 27: the rendering, "he that cometh in the name," is countenanced by John v. 43: *cf.* 1 Sam. xvii. 45. To bless in the name of the Lord, is to bless by his authority; or it is a prayer for the divine blessing. To come in the name of the Lord, is to come on his authority, to execute his will: this seems to be here meant. *In the highest*.—Heaven. The Jews reckoned three heavens, the highest being God's peculiar abode. The plural is used in the original, because the Hebrew uses the plural for heaven. Job xvi. 20; (19 Eng. ;) Ps. cxlviii. 1; Luke ii. 14. It is likely that all the exclamations recorded by the evangelists were uttered by the multitude, some saying, as in Matthew, "Hosanna to the Son of David: God save the heir of David's throne!" Others, as in Mark, "Blessed be the kingdom of our father David: Let the Messiah's reign be prosperously established!" Others, as in Luke, "Blessed be the king!"—or, as in John, "the King of Israel!" All recognized Jesus as the predicted Messiah. Luke alone, writing principally for Gentiles, does not use the Hebrew Hosanna. Matthew alone quotes *verbatim* from the LXX. of Ps. cxviii. 26: "Blessed *be* he that cometh," etc.

10. *All the city was moved*—The citizens of Jerusalem were agitated with conflicting emotions—wonder, joy, hope, fear, anger.

11. *The multitude*—The foremost of his escort. *The prophet*—They called him king in the procession, but now prophet—perhaps fearing the authorities. In John vi. 14, 15, the kingly character of the Messiah is associated with the prophetic. *Cf.* John i. 20, 21; Deut. xviii. 15. *Nazareth*—Where he had been brought up, overlooking or not being aware of his birth at Bethlehem. Matt. ii. 23; John i. 47. *Galilee*—Where he had principally exercised his ministry. Luke xxiii. 5-7; John vii. 52.

12. *Temple*—Sacred place, including all the inclosure, as well as the temple proper. *Cast out*—According to Mark, this was not done the first day, for he says that Jesus looked round upon all in the temple, and then retired to Bethany, as the evening had come: the traders were not probably there at that time. Matthew does not here seem to regard the chronological order of events as minutely as Mark; e.g., the case of the fig-tree: Matthew does not, like Mark, note that it was the day

after it was cursed that the disciples wondered at its withering. Still, Matthew does not contradict Mark. *Sold and bought*—Animals for sacrifice. *Money-changers*,—Lightfoot says it was called *kolbon*, the stated fee received for exchanging money into half shekels, paid to the temple annually in the month of Adar. They exchanged foreign coin into Jewish, which alone was paid into the temple; (Ex. xxx. 13;) or large coin into small for the convenience of traders. The Old Testament says nothing about this business, which seems to have originated after the captivity, when the Jews and proselytes flocked to the temple from foreign lands. Jesus did not condemn the exchanging, but the doing of it in the temple. *Doves*,—Offered by the poor, many of whom attended the passover. In John ii. 14, "sheep and oxen" are also mentioned: they were doubtless there on this occasion too. According to Mark, he forbade the bringing of any article into the courts of the temple by the traders. It is likely they submitted to Christ's summary course, not only because the multitude were on his side, (which does not appear to have been the case when he first cleansed the temple, John ii.,) but because the rabbins themselves, in their exposition of Lev. xix. 30; Deut. xii. 5, taught that none should go into even the outer court of the temple with staff, shoes, purse, or dusty feet, and that it should not be made a thoroughfare. According to Josephus, the proximity of the castle of Antonia occasioned the passage of people through the temple—the priests being interested parties, connived at the profanity. Selden says, "They had a law that whosoever did profane the holiness of God or of the temple, before ten persons, it was lawful for any of them to kill him, or to do any thing this side killing him, as whipping him, or the like."

13. *It is written*,—Mark quotes *verbatim* from the LXX. of Isa. lvi. 7. *Shall be called*—Luke gives the sense, "is." The court of the Gentiles, in the southern part of which the scene is laid, shows the pertinency of the quotation. The Jews displayed their insolence and bigotry, as well as profanity, by desecrating that part of the temple which was allotted to proselytes, those "sons of the stranger," whom God said by the prophet he would "make joyful in his house of prayer." On the low wall which separated the court of the Jews from that of the Gentiles, was this inscription, "No alien shall enter into the holy place." Jos. Wars, v. 14. This implied that the court of the Gentiles was not holy; but our Lord rectified that misapprehension. *Ye*—Emphatic—who ought to guard the sanctity of the temple. *A den of thieves*—Of robbers. Caves, or dens, abounded in Judea, and were places of retreat for robbers. Herod had great difficulty in extirpating them. Jos. Ant. xiv. 15. 5. The extortioners and covetous traders of the temple were no better than robbers—in some respects they were worse, as they covered their covetousness with the guise of religion. Jos. Wars, v. 9. 4. There seems to be an allusion to Jer. vii. 11, "Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes?" where the LXX. have as in Matthew. It is hardly probable that either

Jeremiah or Jesus had any reference to the custom of robbers, who drove the sheep and oxen that they stole into caves to conceal them, (Virgil, *AEn.* viii. 193,) as if it was suggested by the selling of those animals in the temple.

14. *Temple*—Outer court. (See on v. 12, 13.)

15. *Wonderful things*—The wonders, referring apparently to the miracles, ver. 14; though the authority he exercised (ver. 12) may be included. *Sore displeased*.—Very indignant. Their wrath was excited by witnessing his miracles and the jubilant recognition of his Messiahship, (which was asserted by his pompous entry into Jerusalem and the temple, and his authoritative actions there: cf. Mal. iii. 1,) while they persisted in branding him as an impostor in league with the devil. Alford thinks "the circumstance that the children were crying Hosanna in the temple fixes this event on the day of the triumphant entry," which he suggests is related "a day too soon" by Mark; Christ's first entry being private. But it is easy to conceive that at his visit to the temple on the second day, there would be a fresh acclamation, especially when he asserted his Messiahship by cleansing the temple, (doubtless overawing the intruders with his supernatural power,) and proved it by his miracles.

16. *Have ye never read*,—A common form of introducing a quotation when addressing those who were familiar with the Scriptures Matt. xxi. 42; Mark xii. 10; John v. 39. *Babes and sucklings*—Quoted literally from Ps. viii. 2, LXX., which agrees with the Hebrew, except that instead of "ordained," founded, or prepared, "strength," Matthew has *perfected praise*—or "prepared," as the word is rendered Heb. x. 5—Tyndale and Cranmer have "ordained." As the "strength" is ordained out of the mouth, it means the ability to praise God. The Psalmist may have referred to the acclamations of the people, doubtless including the children, when David slew Goliath. Children are everywhere ready to join in celebrations of this sort. The providence of God gave them an opportunity to celebrate the wonderful works of David's greater Son. Christ's ministers, though in themselves "weak as helpless infancy," are enabled to praise him, in the power which they have over his great enemy. Luke x. 17-22; 1 Cor. i. 18-31. That Ps. viii. is Messianic appears from 1 Cor. xv. 27; Heb. ii. 8. So in Zohar, the rabbins say, "Babes and sucklings shall give strength to the King Messiah." If those who might be expected to praise him will not, on account of envy and malice, he will enable children—or the very "stones" (Luke xix. 40) to do it.

17. *And went out of the city*—Mark says, "the evening-tide was come"—apparently Sunday evening in the week of his passion—every night of which till his crucifixion he spent in or near the Mount of Olives, viz., in Gethsemane, at the village of Bethany, or elsewhere. He would not stay in the city, as it was so full of people, and his presence might occasion an outbreak; besides, he wanted retirement for meditation and prayer to prepare himself for the fearful

scenes that were just before him. *Lodged*—Spent the night—perhaps at the house of Martha and Mary.

18. *In the morning*,—Monday morning. *He hungered*.—From this it has been suggested that he could not have spent the night in the village, or his friends would have provided him an early breakfast; but the Jews were not in the habit of eating before 9 A.M.; and it is likely that he did not tell them that he was going to return so soon, not wishing to give them trouble.

19. *A fig-tree*—One fig-tree—i.e., standing alone; probably of voluntary growth, belonging to no one. *He came to it*,—Knowing it was fruitless; symbolical instruction being his design. The parable of the barren fig-tree (Luke xiii. 6-9) intimates the moral of this incident. The cursing of the tree was not a splenetic outburst of passion, but it prophetically symbolized the fate of the Jewish nation, which failed to bring forth the fruits of righteousness, showing nothing but the leaves of a hypocritical profession. The only miracles of severity wrought by the Saviour had for their objects inanimate and irrational beings. Matt. viii. 32. *Presently*—Instantly; rendered "soon," ver. 20.

20. *And when the disciples saw it*,—This does not contradict Mark xi. 20, which says that they noticed next morning, in returning to the city, that the tree was dried up from the roots: it began to wither from the moment it was cursed, and in one day it was utterly dead. If they passed by it on the previous evening, it may not have been so far withered as that its blasted condition was observable from the road or it may have been too dark to see it.

21. *If ye have faith, and doubt not*,—Expressed positively and negatively for emphasis. *This mountain*,—Pointing probably to Olivet. *The sea*;—Pointing probably to the Dead Sea, visible to the south. (See on Matt. xvii. 20.)

22. *And all things*—Though this may have special reference to such miracles as were necessary to confirm their mission, yet the principle here laid down is of universal and perpetual application, provided what we ask for be agreeable to the will of God—indeed, we cannot have such a faith as this in regard to any thing contrary to his will. 1 John v. 14, 15.

23. *Chief priests and elders*—Mark and Luke add "scribes": the authorized teachers—all these constituted the Sanhedrim. (See on Matt. ii. 4; xvi. 21.) *By what authority*—In virtue of what right. As he was not empowered by them, who claimed the exclusive prerogative of determining who should teach, and of showing who exhibited the characteristics of the Messiah, they expected him to say he was authorized by God: they would then endeavor to refute his claims, and secure his punishment as an impostor. In a rabbinical work, called "Sanhedrim," it is said, "A tribe, a false prophet, or a high-priest, is only amenable to the council of 71 judges." John i. 19. They wanted him to state whether he acted in the

character of a prophet, or of the Messiah, or some other character; and also whether or not he claimed divine authority. *These things?*—Teaching in the temple (Luke xx. 1, 2): of course, all his other official acts are comprehended.

24. *One thing*.—One question. The Jews allowed captious questions to be answered in this way. Jesus was not afraid to answer them directly, but he wished to hold them up as self-refuted. *These things*.—Entering the city as a King, cleansing the temple as a Priest, and teaching like a Prophet.

25. *The baptism of John*.—His ministry, baptism being its prominent feature, symbolizing the repentance and reformation which he inculcated. Whence had John his authority? From God, or from man? *Heaven*;—God; or perhaps the place of God's residence, as Acts vii. 49, "Heaven is my throne"; hence "from the throne"—"from the king." *They reasoned with themselves*.—Stepped aside, and discussed the matter, so as to agree on some reply. *Why did ye not then believe him?*—For he bore testimony of me, whom ye reject. John i. 6, 7, 29-36; iii. 27-36; v. 32-35.

26. *We fear the people*.—If we say that John had no authority besides what he assumed himself and his followers conceded, we have reason to fear all the people—the people in a body—will stone us (Luke)—for they all believe that John was a prophet. They had so high an opinion of John that they thought the defeat of Herod in his war with Aretas was a signal judgment on him for the murder of John. Jos. Ant. xviii. 5. 2.

27. *We cannot tell*.—Evading the dilemma by a falsehood. *Neither tell I you*—He does not say he could not. It was not necessary to charge them with lying: out of their own mouth they were convicted of unfitness to decide upon his claims, having said that they could not decide upon the claims of his forerunner: of course, he would not recognize the inquisitorial prerogatives of such a clique.

28. *But what think ye?*—As they would not answer his former question, referring to a matter of fact, he asks their opinion concerning a case put in the style of a parable. Cf. Luke xv. 11. "Give me your opinion." *Son*.—A term expressing affection and implying obligation. *Go work*—The two imperatives give emphasis to the order.

29. *He*—But he. *I will not*;—I do not choose to do so. *Repented*.—Regretted his refusal.

30. *I go, sir*.—Literally, "I, sir." "The Hebrews answer by pronouns where the Latins use verbs and adverbs, as *Etiam, Domine*." So our *ay* (*ya* and *ja* of the Northern languages) is supposed to be cognate with *ego*, and was sometimes written "I": thus in Lear: "To say I and No to every thing that that I said: I and No too was no good divinity."

31. *Whether of these twain*—Which of the two. They durst not say, as in the other case, that they could not answer the question; so they said, *The first*.—Not of course that he did his father's will perfectly, for he delayed in doing it, but in comparison with the other, who did it not at all. *Go before you*.—Are preceding you, who ought to have preceded them; intimating that the way was open for them to follow if they would. *The kingdom of God*—The new dispensation, which was entered by repentance.

32. *In the way of righteousness*,—That strict conformity to the law, on which the Pharisees plumed themselves, which John practiced himself, and which was developed by the repentance he preached. 2 Pet. ii. 5. *When ye had seen it*,—After witnessing the effect of John's ministry on open transgressors, they refused to repent. The original word is not so expressive of a change from sin to righteousness as that commonly rendered repent: it does not necessarily imply more than regret, as in the case of Judas—Matt. xxvii. 3: it is here used because it had been employed in the parable ver. 29, and implies such regret for having rejected John as would lead them to become his disciples, or to accredit his mission, and by consequence that of Jesus. Thus the certain man refers to God; the two sons, two classes of persons, the first, open sinners, (not Gentiles,) characterized as publicans and harlots, who broke the law without reserve—put first in the parable for convenience; the second, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, who pretended to keep the law, but did not: the former repented at the preaching of John, and set themselves to do the will of God; the latter, refusing to do so, developed the hypocrisy of their previous profession.

33. *Hear another parable*;—He wished to enforce the lesson he had given them in the preceding, which is recorded by Matthew alone. According to Luke xx. 9, this parable was spoken "to the people," but they included the chief priests and scribes, ver. 19, against whom it was chiefly leveled. *A certain householder*—A master of a house. (See on Matt. xiii. 52.) *Hedged*—Put a fence round it: some think the *phragmos* was a stone-wall. Num. xxii. 24; Prov. xxiv. 31; Isa. v. 5, LXX. But we have "hedge" in Isa. v. 5, where the LXX. have *phragmos*: they have *toichos* for "wall," and in ver. 2 they have the very terms quoted by our Lord, rendered, "he fenced it." Cf. Ps. lxxx. 13; Cant. ii. 15. Virgil (Georg. ii. 371) illustrates: "Fences should be woven, and all the cattle kept out; especially while the leaves are tender, which are injured by wild bulls and persecuting goats, and browsed by sheep and greedy heifers." Homer (Il. xviii. 561) in describing the shield which Vulcan made for Achilles, says, "On it he placed a vineyard, heavily laden with grapes, beautiful, golden; but all the clusters were black, and it was supported throughout by silver poles. Around it he drew an azure trench, and about it a hedge of tin." This metal could be so placed as to represent the thorns, wild aloes, etc., of which impenetrable fences were constructed in the East. *A wine-press*—The vat in which the grapes are pressed; Rev. xiv. 19, 20; xix. 15. it

was sometimes hewn in a rock, with an opening at the bottom, through which the juice flowed into the "wine-fat"—the lower vat; when this was hollowed out of the earth, it was lined with masonry—in this receptacle the liquor was kept cool. *A tower*,—Probably occupied by the keepers, or those who watched the vineyard to preserve it from the devastation of animals and the depredation of thieves. Jerome says that which we render "lodge," Isa. i. 8, and "cottage," Isa. xxiv. 20, was a *specula*, or watch-tower, for the keepers employed by the husbandman. Lightfoot cites Kilaim, v. 3: "Let the watch-house in the vineyard be ten cubits high, and four broad." Hackett says, "These towers first caught my attention as I was approaching Bethlehem from the south-east. They appeared in almost every field within sight from that direction: they were circular in shape, 15 or 20 feet high, and, being built of stone, looked, at a distance, like a little forest of obelisks. Those which I examined had a small door near the ground, and a level space on the top, where a man could sit and command a view of the plantation." He says they are sometimes 40 or 50 feet high, and serve for houses. Trees, scaffolds, etc., are used in the East for the same purpose. *Let it out*—Leased it. *Husbandmen*,—Farmers. *Went into a far country*:—Went to reside elsewhere—nothing is added as in Luke xv. 13 to intimate that it was afar off. Matt. xxv. 14.

34. *The time of the fruit*—The vintage. *Servants*—One after another: *cf.* Mark and Luke. *The fruits of it*.—His fruits; the part of the produce which came to his share, as the farmers probably paid the landlord in kind—a mode of paying rents which has obtained in many countries.

35. *Beat*—Literally, flayed, or skinned. 2 Chron. xxix. 34; II. i. 459: here it means scourged severely, as in Mark xiii. 9; Luke xxii. 63; Acts v. 40; xvi. 37: we use skin, or flay, in the same sense. *Stoned*—Drove away with stones.

36. *More*—More, and more honorable—as Num. xxii. 15. The evangelists do not contradict one another in regard to the sending of the servants, though Luke mentions only three—perhaps each of them being the principal man of a company: the first "they beat and sent him away empty"—i.e., without the fruit that was due; the second they served the same way, and, in addition, "entreated him shamefully;" so the third, whom they "cast out," perhaps mortally wounded. It does not follow from this that some were not killed on each occasion, so that Trench might have spared the remark, "In St. Luke's narrative it is perhaps preferable, that this last and worst outrage is reserved for the son himself."

37. *But last of all*,—As the last resource. *He sent unto them his son*—One, in contrast with the many already sent; a son, in contrast with a servant; and heightened by the character of the son, implied in the word beloved. (See Mark.) *Cf.* Matt. iii. 17. *They will reverence my son*—It is reasonable to expect they will do so.

38. *Come, let us kill him*,—Cf. Gen. xxxvii. 20, LXX. *Seize*—Take in possession, instead of occupying as tenants.

40. *The lord of the vineyard*—The proprietor.

41. *He will miserably destroy those wicked men*,—Campbell preserves the paronomasia: "He will put these wretches to a wretched death." Raphelius says, "What can be more beautiful and significant than this expression! The word *kakous* shows the cause of their destruction; *kakos*, the grievousness of it, and the repetition of almost the same word points out the correspondence of the punishment with the greatness of the offense. This manner of speaking is of the purest Greek, being used by the most elegant writers." In Luke, Christ himself describes the fate of the husbandmen—perhaps he first drew the answer from the priests and elders, (making them, as in the case of Nathan and David, pass sentence on themselves,) and then emphasized it, "Yes, he will wretchedly destroy these wretches." *In their seasons*.—The plural may indicate different payments at different times, according to the crop and the seasons. Luke xvi. 6, 7.

42. *Did ye never read*—(See on v. 16.) *The stone*—A stone: one which they had cast aside as not fit to go into the building. *The head of the corner*:—The foundation corner-stone—the chief corner-stone of Isa. xxviii. 16; Eph. ii. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 6. Robinson says it refers to the head or point where two walls meet, not to the highest point, or coping; as explained by others, who refer it to the honorable position assigned to a stone which the builders had rejected as worthless, but which has been worked into the edifice as the upper corner-stone, which unites, strengthens, and adorns the walls. Zech. iv. 7. 9. The citation is from the same Messianic Psalm from which the Hosanna of ver. 9 is taken: it is cited by Matthew and Mark (and by Luke too, as far as he goes—also 1 Pet. ii. 7) *verbatim* from the LXX. of Ps. cxvii. (cxviii.) 22: a Psalm which some refer primarily to David, who was first rejected by the chiefs of Israel, but afterward exalted to the throne; others, to Israel, who was rejected by Babylon with proud contempt, but afterward rose to a position of national renown; (Ezra iii; Ps. cxxvi.;) but in either case as typical of Christ. It is strange that the rabbins who referred this to the Messiah did not see that it was fulfilled in the case of Jesus, who was rejected by "the foolish builders, scribe and priest," as Peter showed. Acts iv. 11. Some think the corner-stone indicates the junction of the Jews and Gentiles in Christ; but Grotius says, as the prophecy is said by Peter to have been fulfilled before the calling of the Gentiles, it probably indicates only the strength of a corner-stone in supporting the edifice. The chiefs of the people are so called by the Hellenists. 1 Sam. xiv. 38, LXX. *This is the Lord's doing*,—This thing has been done by Jehovah, and we look on it with wonder.

43. *Therefore*—On this account—because you have rejected me, you shall be rejected—the moral of the parable: the plainest statement he uttered in regard to

the rejection of the unbelieving Jews and of the call of the Gentiles. *A nation*—Not the Gentiles, as some render, for it is singular, and without the article: it means the "holy nation" of 1 Pet. ii. 9, a spiritual race comprehending believers in Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles, though chiefly the latter, because the former, as a body, dispossessed themselves of the kingdom. Acts xiii. 46; Rom. xi.

44. *And whosoever shall fall*—The reference seems to be to the quotation from Ps. cxviii., together with Isa. viii. 14, 15; *cf.* Dan. ii. 44, 45, LXX. *Broken*:—Dashed to pieces. *Grind him to powder*.—As chaff and straw, crushed in threshing and dissipated by the wind in winnowing—a stronger word than "broken." The reference seems properly to the scribes and Pharisees, who were then stumbling at Christ, and injuring themselves in a fearful manner, and were warned by him that if they persisted in their course, a more fearful doom awaited them: the Messiah whom they rejected would return to be their Judge, when their ruin would be inevitable and complete, verifying the Greek proverb, "The mill of God grinds late, but grinds to dust." "In the first punishment, the corner-stone appears at rest, and as it were passive; in the second, it is active and in motion." There seems to be no reference to the stones used in stoning, or to the top-stone as well as the foundation, or to the buttress-stone at the corner.

45, 46. *Parables*—This and the preceding. *Of them*.—With reference to them—the emissaries from the Sanhedrim, and, of course, those who sent them. They could hardly fail to see the drift of this parable, as Jesus gave them a clue to its solution: the householder is God; the vineyard, the kingdom of God, viewed as the Jewish Church; (Isa. v. 1-7; Ex. xv. 17; Ps. lxxx. 7-16;) the hedge, wine-press, and tower represent all the provisions made by God for his people, without perhaps referring severally to the ceremonial law, (Eph. ii. 14-16,) the prophetic institution, and the temple, or the like; the husbandmen, the authorized teachers and governors under the theocracy; the servants sent to receive the fruits were the prophets; (Neh. ix. 26; Jer. xlv. 4; Matt. xxiii. 31, 37; Acts vii. 52; 1 Thess. ii. 15;) the son is Jesus, who in his Messianic character has a right to the inheritance; (Ps. ii.; Phil. ii. 9-11; Heb. i. 1-5;) his treatment by the husbandmen, that of Christ by the Jews, through whose malice he was delivered to Gentiles and "suffered without the gate;" (Heb. xiii. 12;) the destruction of the husbandmen, the fate of the Jews, who were dispossessed of the kingdom of God, which was taken from them and given to the Gentiles, while they themselves were fearfully punished for their wickedness. It is no wonder that when they saw the scope of the parable the chief priests and Pharisees would have killed Jesus for spite, had they not apprehended that the multitude who were in attendance preparing for the passover, and who regarded him as a prophet, would have interposed to prevent his murder or to resent it. (See on v. 26.) The Babylonian Talmud acknowledges that "because it was said, that Jesus of Nazareth was near to the kingdom, therefore they put him to death." Hilary: "The Jews entertained the vain hope of

reserving to themselves the glory of the Lord, after they had slain Christ." Lightfoot: "I could easily believe that the fathers of the Sanhedrim had either a knowledge, or at least some suspicion, that Jesus was the true Messiah—and it was come to this, in the struggle between them, either he will inherit with his retinue, or we will with ours. Come, therefore, let us kill him."

CHAPTER XXII.

1 *The parable of the marriage of the king's son.* 9 *The vocation of the Gentiles.* 12 *The punishment of him that wanted the wedding garment.* 15 *Tribute ought to be paid to Cesar.* 23 *Christ confuteth the Sadducees for the resurrection:* 34 *answereth the lawyer, which is the first and great commandment:* 41 *and poseth the Pharisees about the Messias.*

XXII.—1. *Answered*—Spoke in reply to the thoughts of the Pharisees. (See on Matt. xi. 25.) As Mark does not record this parable, his statement concerning the departure of the Pharisees may come in after this as well as after the preceding parable. There may have been a break in the conversation of Christ with the Pharisees, so that this parable may not have immediately succeeded that of the vineyard, though it was near enough to make the reference to it pertinent and plain.

2. *The kingdom of heaven is like*—The Church under the gospel dispensation is like the case of. (See on Matt. xiii. 24.) *Made a marriage*—The plural in the original seems to refer to the continuance of the wedding or spousal festivities for several days—seven or fourteen. Gen. xxix. 22, 27; Jud. xiv. 12; Tobit viii. 19, 20, LXX. In Esth. ix. 22, *gamoï* means simply feasting. Some understand in this place an inauguration feast, kings being considered as married to their country. 1 Kings i. 5, 9.

3. *His servants*—The *vocatores*, corresponding to the "maidens" of Prov. ix. 3, were sent to summon those who had been previously invited—a custom among the Orientals. Esth. v. 8; vi. 14. *To the wedding*:—To the feast, as ver. 2, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12; xxv. 10. *Would not*—Will is implied—they did not choose to come—they refused.

4. *Them which are bidden*,—(See on v. 3.) *Dinner*:—The *ariston*, when there were but two meals a day, was both breakfast and dinner. From ver. 13 it seems to have been continued into the night, though there may have been an interval—the *ariston* having been taken first, and the *deipnon*, supper, the principal part of the entertainment, taking place in the evening, when the king came in in solemn state to see the guests. *Oxen*—The beeves, distinguished from the *fatlings*—properly grain-fed beasts, sheep, calves, etc., as the beeves were the

ornament of the feast. *Killed*,—Literally, sacrificed, but the word is used for slaughtered, when the animals were to be eaten, as here. Prov. ix. 2, LXX. The particulars are specified to show that there was to be no delay, and to impress the parties invited with the abundance of the preparation.

5. *Made light*—Neglected, gave themselves no concern about the invitation. *Farm*,—Field, or his work in the field—the antithesis of *merchandise*.—Trade, commerce, carried on in an emporium, or mart.

6. *Entreated them spitefully*,—Treated them with insolence, or contumelious injury. Luke xviii. 32; 2 Chron. xxx. 10.

7. *Armies*,—Soldiers—a military force, not necessarily an army. The vengeance of the king was not only called for on account of their constructive rebellion, but because they had murdered his officers. Dan. ix. 26.

8. *Not worthy*.—Not disposed to come. No idea of merit is involved, but merely fitness, congruity, or willingness to accept the invitation. Acts xiii. 46.

9. *Highways*,—Outlets from the city. People congregated in the squares and moved about in the thoroughfares and at the outlets, as small streets terminated in the large ones, at the ends of which were the city gates. The city is that in which the feast is supposed to be held—not that of the murderers, which was burnt up, ver. 7; though there is no violence in supposing the order to gather in people from the outlets of the city given before the order to destroy the city was executed.

10. *Highways*,—The ways, the outlets, ver. 9. *Both bad and good*:—This may anticipate the sequel; cf. Matt. xiii. 47, 48; though nothing more may be implied than the freeness and extent of the invitation. *The wedding*—The feast, in the singular, referring perhaps, to the *ariston* of that particular day. (See on ver. 4.) *Furnished*—Literally, filled, but used with feast it may mean supplied—in a popular way of speaking, the room was filled.

11. *To see the guests*,—Those who made great feasts entered the banqueting room to look at those who were invited, after they were arranged at table. The dignity of the king forbade his entering before. *Wedding-garment*:—Not the robe of the bridegroom or of the bride; but a festival robe, such as was worn by a guest at any great entertainment. It was white and splendid, symbolical of joy. Eccl. ix. 8; Rev. vi. 11; xix. 8.

12. *Friend*,—Comrade, companion. (See on Matt. xx. 13.) *How camest*—How didst thou dare thus to insult me and my guests? *Not having*—The subjective particle of negation (*me*)—not having, and being conscious of the lack of it. Cicero, in his charges against Vatinius, speaking of his appearing at a festival in black clothes, exclaims, "Who ever, even in a time of domestic grief, appeared at a supper thus arrayed in black?" As the guests had been suddenly called in from

the outlets of the city, it may be asked why the king was so severe on this man for not having on a festal robe. To which it may be sufficient to reply that he had as much time to furnish himself with one as the other guests. Chrysostom, Euthymius, and others, think they all furnished their own robes. It is, however, generally thought that the modern Oriental custom of furnishing them by the host obtained in those times; or, at least, that they were always furnished to strangers and others who had not the means of furnishing them for themselves, so that there was no excuse for any appearing without them. Homer (Ody. iv. 50) speaking of the arrival of Telemachus and Pisistratus at Sparta when Menelaus, the king, was making a marriage-feast for his son and daughter, says that the guests were immediately supplied with suitable cloaks and mantles for the occasion. Horace says, Lucullus had 5,000 mantles in his wardrobe—enough for any emergency. 2 Kings x. 22; Job xxvii. 16; Is. iii. 6; Jas. v. 2. Costly dresses were frequently given as honorable presents. Gen. xlv. 22; Jud. xiv. 13; 1 Sam. xviii. 4; 2 Kings v. 5, 22; Esth. vi. 8; Dan. v. 7; 1 Mac. x. 20. It may be supposed that such would be presented at royal entertainments, when costly gifts were distributed to the guests. 2 Sam. vi. 19; Esth. ii. 18. Of course, the refusal to wear a robe thus presented would be an insult to the donor; and if he were a king, it would be constructive treason or rebellion, which the monarch would resent. Chardin speaks of a vizier who lost his life by a failure of this sort. The officer by whom the royal robe was sent, out of spite forwarded a plain habit instead. The vizier not wishing to appear in this, lest he should be considered in disgrace, put on a robe given him by the late king, and so entered the city. The courtiers declared him a dog for disdainfully throwing away the royal apparel, as if he had no need of Sha Shefi's robes, and the king incensed had him put to death. Olearius, who was invited to the table of the Persian King, says, "It was told us by the mehmander that we, according to their usage, must hang the splendid vests that were sent us from the king over our dresses, and so appear in his presence. The ambassadors at first refused; but the mehmander urged it so earnestly, alleging, as also did others, that the omission would greatly displease the king, since all other envoys observed such a custom, that at last they consented, and hanged, as did we also, the splendid vests over their shoulders." There was not, therefore, necessarily any change of apparel. Schulz describes the *caftan* given to him as "a long robe with loose sleeves, which hang down, (for the arm is not put into them,) the white ground of which is goats' hair, mixed with some silver, but the flowers woven in are of gold-colored silk." He says it was necessary to put it on in order to appear in the presence of the Sultan. Indeed, this etiquette obtains to some extent in Europe. *Speechless*.—Literally, gagged, muzzled, as in 1 Cor. ix. 9. Lucian and Josephus use the word in the sense of being struck dumb. Chrysostom: "self-condemned." Gags, however, were put in the mouths of slaves and criminals on their way to execution.

13. *Servants*,—Attendants, of whom there are always some standing by an Eastern monarch, ready to execute his orders; though as *diakonois* is used, the reference may be to those who serve at table: they are not the *douloi* of ver. 3-10. (See on Matt. xx. 26.) *Bind him*—So that he may not defend himself or return. *Take him away*,—This denotes the loss of all good. *Cast him into outer darkness*:—The presence of all evil. (See on Matt. viii. 12.)

14. *For many are called*,—Some think this shows that the unworthy guest—but one in the parable—represents a large class of hypocrites in the Church—a fact too obvious; but the many may include those who refused the invitation. *But few are chosen*.—Approved as worthy guests. This gnome intimates the drift of the parable. The king, of course, represents God; the festival for his Son, the ushering in of the kingdom of Christ, or the gospel dispensation, viewed under the notion of a marriage, or rather espousal, the marriage itself to be solemnized at the end of the dispensation, Rev. xix. 7; the parties who had been bidden were the Jews, who had "before been admonished by the coming of the Messiah and the Baptist;" the first servants were the apostles during the life of Christ, including perhaps John the Baptist and Jesus himself in his ministerial character, as the parable concerns the gospel dispensation. The second class of servants were the apostles and their associates who were sent forth after the ascension of Christ, when the great atoning work was finished, and all things in the new economy were fully adjusted. Though some of these servants were the same persons as before, yet they repeated the invitation under different circumstances. The treatment of the servants represents the contempt and persecution which Christ's ministers received from the Jews. Acts iv. 1-3; v. 18, 40; vii. 58; viii. 3; xiv. 5; xvii. 5; 1 Thess. ii. 14-16. It is perhaps a refinement to consider the one who went to his farm as the landed proprietor who went to his estate to enjoy what he already possessed, and the one who went to his merchandise as the man who would acquire what as yet is his only in anticipation; thereby noting the distinction between having and getting this world's goods, and the danger there is in both. The point intended seems to be that those invited preferred their own temporal good to the spiritual and eternal good offered them by Christ, "We perish," says Sir M. Hale, "by things lawful." The wrath of the king represents the displeasure of God against those who slight and persecute his ambassadors; the military force sent forth to avenge the insult, seems to be the Roman power, (Dan. ix. 26,) which may be called God's armies; (Isa. x. 5; xiii. 5; Jer. xxv. 9; Ezek. xvi. 41;) though the host of heaven, the angels, may be included. The city burnt up is Jerusalem, their city—God's no longer. Ex. xxxii. 7; Matt. xxiii. 34-38. The unworthiness spoken of consisted in the Jews' rejecting the invitation of the gospel, not feeling their need of Christ. Acts xiii. 46. They were not well disposed toward the gospel or its ministers—preferring the world, and thus were not worthy of Christ. Matt. x. 11, 13, 14, 37, 38. Those in the highways are the Gentiles, who were invited when the

Jews declined to come. Rom. xi. The bad and good indicate universality; though the bad may represent those who were far gone in moral depravity, like the Corinthians; (1 Cor. vi. 9-11;) and the good, those who in a measure lived up to the light of their dispensation, as Cornelius. Acts x.; xvii. 11, 12; Rom. ii. 14. The inspection of the guests by the king refers principally to the grand scrutiny in the day of judgment, but it may embrace all those occasions in which hypocrites are unmasked and punished; the wedding-garment is holiness of heart and life, the *habit* of righteousness with which true Christians are invested; as it is the gift of God through Christ, they are said to put on Christ: (Rom. xiii. 12, 14; Gal. iii. 27; Eph. iv. 22; vi. 13-16; Col. iii. 10:) this is agreeable to the Hebrew style. Isa. lxi. 10; Ezek. xvi. 10; Zeph. i. 7, 8; Eccles. vi. 22, 31. Those alone who put on grace here will be allowed to put on glory hereafter. Heb. xii. 14; Rev. iii. 5; vii. 9; xix. 7-9. The Jews say that the angels strip off the grave-clothes from those who enter paradise, and clothe them with white and glistening raiment. As the garment of holiness, of faith and love, is provided for every one, and may be had for asking, he who is without it will be self-condemned in the day of judgment. The attendants who will bind him are the angels: *cf.* Matt. xiii. 41, 49. The binding shows the helplessness of the wretch—the taking away, his exclusion from the society of the blessed. Matt. xiii. 48; 2 Thess. i. 9. The outer darkness into which he is cast is hell, which lies outside of the kingdom of light and joy. Only one delinquent guest was specified, because of the machinery of the parable, for if many had been thrust out, the festivities would have been marred; and being only one, it brings the matter home to every man's bosom—"so exact will be the scrutiny that not one shall escape the eye of the Judge." Calvin and some others consider this parable a different version of that in Luke xiv.; but that was spoken by Jesus at a meal in Perea, or Galilee, on his way to Jerusalem; this in the temple two or three days before his death: that, when the Pharisees were not openly hostile, as he was at the table of a chief Pharisee when it was spoken; this, when their hostility had reached nearly its highest point: in that, the parties civilly decline the invitation; in this, they are insolent in the greatest degree: in that, the festival is not described as a royal one, as it is here, making the solemnity greater and the contempt more aggravated, being in fact rebellion; consequently, the retribution in this is far more severe than in that. In Luke the bearing of the parable was on the scribes and Pharisees as distinguished from the publicans and sinners (Luke xv.), with only a slight reference to the calling of the Gentiles; but in Matthew this seems to be the main scope of the parable. The conclusion is a warning to all who are called. Theophylact says, "God calls many, or rather all, but there are few chosen; for there are few saved and fit to be chosen by God: so that it is God's part to call, but to become elect or not is ours." So far as the call by the preaching of the gospel is concerned—the point brought out in the parable—many are thus called, but few obey the call, and are numbered among the elect, approved; but it does not follow that the millions who are not thus called

are excluded from the benefits of the atonement: there is a dispensation of grace to them, and they will be judged accordingly. (See on Matt. xx. 16, 28; Rom. ii. 11-15.)

15. *The Pharisees*,—Feeling that they were principally aimed at in the parables. *Took counsel how*—Consulted in order that they might ensnare him—they plotted his destruction. *In his talk*.—In speech—induce him to say something which would involve him in a charge of treason or sedition, so that, as Luke says, they might betray him to the procurator, Pilate. They probably wished to identify him, being of Galilee, with the party of Judas the Galilean, who proclaimed the unlawfulness of submitting to a heathen power.

16. *Their disciples*,—Persons of their school—leaders of their party. *Herodians*,—Probably partisans of Herod: they were supporters of the Roman government in Judea, and complimented the Romans by conforming to many pagan customs; they appear to have been generally Sadducees. (See on Matt. xvi. 12.) For these reasons they were hated by the Pharisees; yet the malice and enmity of both parties against Jesus were so great that they united in plotting his ruin: so Herod and Pilate afterward. Luke xxiii. 12. Luke says they were sent as spies to personate conscientious men—who were fearful of impinging on the law of Moses by recognizing a foreign power. *Master*,—Teacher. *True*,—Upright, sincere. *The way of God*—The will of God, called a way, because being followed it leads to God. Ps. cxix. 27, 32, 33; Acts xiii. 10; xviii. 25, 26. (See on Matt. vii. 14.) *In truth*,—Sincerely. *Neither carest thou for any man*:—In the sense of fear. *Regardest not the person of men*.—Face, outward appearance: literally, "thou look-est not into the face"—a Hebraism expressive of impartiality. To accept the person (Luke) of any one, is a phrase used of a king or judge who receives or admits the visits of those who bring him presents and salutations, and favors their cause. Job xiii. 10; Ps. lxxxii. 2. The deputation told the truth when they said that Jesus was not influenced by cowardice or partiality; but they did it in the spirit of the most insidious flattery.

17. *What thinkest thou?*—What is thy opinion on this vexed question? *Is it lawful*—Is submission to a foreign and idolatrous government agreeable to the law of God? They probably referred to Deut. xvii. 15, which, indeed, only forbids the Israelites choosing a foreign king—not, as some of the Jews contended, submitting to him when brought under his dominion. *Tribute*—Vulgate, *censum*. The Syriac renders "poll-tax," which is the meaning of the word used by Luke—this the Romans imposed on the provinces.

18. *Wickedness*,—Mark, "hypocrisy;" Luke, "craftiness," denoting the character of those who are ready for any thing. *Why tempt ye me*,—Why do ye try to ensnare me? *Hypocrites?*—(See on Matt. vi. 2.) Luther: "I am more afraid of the white than of the black devil."

19. *Tribute-money*.—The legal coin in which the tax was usually paid. *Penny*.—(See on Matt. xx. 2.)

20. *Image, and superscription?*—Adolphus Occo says, "The denarius paid by the Jews as tribute-money, had around the head of Cesar this inscription, [in Greek,] 'Caesar Augustus, Judges being subdued.'" It was probably a denarius of Tiberius, who was then emperor—not perhaps the exact sum paid for each head.

21. *Render therefore*—It was admitted among the Jews that "he whose likeness is borne by the coin, is lord of the land." Jesus did not settle the question whether or not the Jewish nation should rise against the Roman government, and throw it off—into political questions of that sort he never entered. But the exhibition of the coin showed, on their own grounds, that they were under that government, and while under it they were, of course, in their individual capacity, bound to submit to it and support it. Our Lord's answer was a two-edged sword—it cut the Pharisees, who were turbulent and seditious, resisting the claims of Cesar, and also the Herodians, who were licentious time-servers, neglecting the claims of God. Yet the answer was so framed that the Pharisees could not make a handle of it to damage him with the people, who hated their Roman masters, and wanted the nation to throw off their galling yoke; or, on the other hand, the Herodians, to bring him under a charge of treason and sedition against the government, though this was attempted. Luke xxiii. 2. The answer shows that we are to support the government under which we live, in all respects compatible with our duty to God, Cesar having no right to invade the prerogative of any man's conscience. The Jews might have known that this principle was recognized and acted upon by their own prophets. Jer. xxvii.; xxix.; Dan. i.-vi. So Rom. xiii. 1-7; 1 Pet. ii. 13-17. Thus we are to serve God in serving Cesar. It was certainly lawful for the Jews to pay the legal penalty of their unfaithfulness to their divine Sovereign, by which they had been brought under the heathen rod.

22. *They marvelled*,—The wondered at his prudence, and finding, as Luke says, that they could not pervert his language to any sinister sense, they left him, being confounded by his answer. Jerome says, "They who should have believed on the exhibition of such great wisdom, only marvelled that their own cleverness should have failed in catching him."

23. *Sadducees*,—(See on Matt. iii. 7.) *Is*—Is to be. *Resurrection*,—*Anastasis* means rising again, and is applied to a return to activity from inactivity, and when spoken of the dead means a renewal of life; and as the Sadducees not only denied the resurrection of the body, but also all existence after death, Campbell renders "future life," which may do for a gloss; but *anastasis* is properly rendered resurrection, comprehending the reunion of soul and body in a future state. Cf. ver. 28, 30.

24. *Master*,—Teacher. *Moses said*,—The substance of Deut. xxv. 5. *Having no children*,—Leaving none. *Marry his wife*,—The word means to marry a widow by right of affinity, as in Gen. xxxviii. 8, LXX. The marriage ceremony in this case consisted merely of an acknowledgment before two witnesses, the brother giving a piece of money to the widow—the nuptial blessing was added, and a writing to secure the wife's dower. After the captivity, the distinction of inheritances being confounded, the custom declined—it is rarely practiced now. *Seed*—Offspring: in Scripture it generally means more than one child—in the classics generally only one—though sometimes more. The children thus produced were to be counted in the genealogy of the deceased brother, and were to inherit his property—being, as Lange says, "so to speak, his after-growth out of his grave."

25. *Now*—The adversative particle *de* indicates a difficulty. *Seven brethren*:—Cicero says, C. Antonius was qualified to be *Septemvir*, because he was *septimus vir uxoris suae*. *Deceased*:—From the Latin *decado*, to go away, viz., out of life—a very good rendering of the Greek, which means ended (his life, by an ellipsis.) Matt. ii. 15, 19; ix. 18. *Issue*,—Offspring.

27. *Last of all*—So that there was no surviving husband of whom she might be considered the wife.

28. *In the resurrection*,—*Anastasis* does not seem to be used here in a different sense from that in ver. 23, 30, 31; there is perhaps an ellipsis, which may be supplied, in the state of existence following the resurrection. The question might be asked, as Stier says, in the case of every second marriage; but they put it in an extreme form, referring to the levirate law, q.d.: Did Moses, when he made such rules for this life, believe in another life, and prepare for such confusion in that life? *Wife*—The predicate—of whom of the seven shall she be wife?

29. *Ye do err*,—You mistake the matter, being ignorant of the true sense of *the scriptures*—Which speak of the resurrection, and of *the power of God*—By which it can be so effected as that the dead may be raised up to newness of life, without the propensities of the present state.

30. *In the resurrection*—In the state of life consequent on the resurrection. Some of the rabbins held that the dead will be raised in their old bodies, or in others, and that they will perform the functions of life as in the present state; others, that they will be raised with no bodies; though some of them seemed to entertain the rational and scriptural views inculcated by our Lord. *As the angels*—Like angels, viz. in the point in question: similar to them in not being subject to the conditions of the present life. So Philo: "Abraham, leaving the world, was gathered to the people of God, having obtained incorruptibility, being made like to angels." They are immortal, and need not marriage; hence it is assigned, in Luke, as a reason for the remark, "for neither can they die any more."

It does not mean that they shall possess an exclusively immaterial nature; for the resurrection-body will be material, though "spiritual"—pneumatic—in the sense of refined, freed from gross, sensual properties. 1 Cor. vi. 13; xv. 44, 50. Indeed, some argue from the words in Luke, that the angels possess "a heavenly corporality," as it is in the resurrection state that we are to be made like angels. The reference to posterity perhaps suggested the remark that they "are the sons of God"—as the angels are styled, Job xxxviii. 7—"being the sons of the resurrection"—a Hebraism for partakers of it, destined to it: so the contrary, "a son of death," 2 Sam. xii. 5, margin. (See on Matt. viii. 12.) They are sons of God, as they are like him in immortality—they will constitute with the angels the family in heaven, which will never be broken into by death, and will not need to be supplied with new members, as on earth. Rom. viii. 23; 1 John iii. 1. They are contrasted with the sons of this world—those who live in the present state of existence. They are "accounted worthy to obtain that world"—adjudged by God fit to inherit the future state of purity and permanent joy. Col. i. 12; 2 Thess. i. 5. "To obtain the resurrection from the dead" implies to secure it as a boon; so Phil. iii. 11, where the figure seems to be, to come up to it and gain it as a prize. The resurrection of the righteous to eternal life is here alone spoken of; but there is a "resurrection of damnation." John v. 29; Acts xxiv. 15. In the emphatic sense, the righteous alone are said to be inheritors of the resurrection, as in their case it will not be followed by death in any sense, whereas in the case of the wicked, though they will be made equal to the fallen angels in immortality, yet that very immortality is described as "the second death," the subjects of it not being united to God, the source of life and happiness. Bengel says properly, "He glances at the altered condition of the saints, when they arise from the state of death, and does not gainsay a universal resurrection."

31. As *touching*—As to. *Have ye not read*—(See on Matt. xxi. 16.) *That which was spoken unto you by God*,—The continuity of the Jewish race, and the permanent divine authority of Scripture, are here implied. The Sadducees had special veneration for the Pentateuch, from which this is quoted.

32. *I am the God*—As far as it goes, this quotation agrees with the Hebrew and LXX. of Ex. iii. 6. "Am" has no verb to correspond with it in the Hebrew, which, however, cannot mean, according to some, "I was"; for where the personal pronoun is immediately joined to what is affirmed, the present tense of the substantive verb must be supplied as a copula in the translation. This implies an existing covenant relation; but there can be no relation between God and the patriarchs if they are extinct. Luke adds, "for all live to him"—though dead in our estimation, they are living in his. The reference to marriage shows that this refers to the prospective life of the body—its resurrection by the power of God. Acts xxvi. 8; Eph. i. 19, 20; Phil. iii. 21; Heb. xi. 19. This is the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body, which belongs to the sons of God. Rom. viii. 23: *cf.* 2

Mac. vii. 9-36; xii. 43-45. *Anastasis* is opposed to *ptosis*, *the falling of the body*. If it comprehends the raising up of the whole man at the last day, this passage does not, as Priestley and others say, oppose the doctrine of the conscious existence of the soul in a separate state, though it may not, as Stier and others think, directly and of itself, prove that doctrine. Pearson says, "Under the name of God was understood a great benefactor, a God of promise, and to be their God was to bless them and to reward them; as in them to be his servants and his people, was to believe in him, and to obey him. Now, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had not received the promise which they expected, and therefore God after their death, desiring still to be called their God, he thereby acknowledgeth that he hath a blessing and a reward for them still, and consequently that he will raise them to another life in which they may receive it." So Paul argues: Heb. xi. 13-16. As the bodies of the patriarchs had the seal of the covenant upon them, Bengel acutely suggests that they must be included in it. Our Lord's mode of reasoning in this case is peculiarly Jewish, but it is pertinent and forcible. A more glorious proof of the *anastasis* was however in reserve. 1 Cor. xv.

33. *Astonished*—Exceedingly struck, as Matt. vii. 28. *Doctrine*.—His manner of explaining and proving the doctrine of the resurrection; they were not astonished at the doctrine itself, for it was currently believed, though encumbered with much error.

34. *The Pharisees*—Some of whom had heard the conversation with the Sadducees, and were pleased that Jesus had put them to silence—muzzled them. (See on ver. 12.) Hence their approval in Luke, "Teacher, thou hast spoken well."

35. *One of them*—Of the Pharisees. *Lawyer*,—Mark says "one of the scribes": scribes may have been a term of wider designation, including lawyers; but the distinction is not obvious. (See on Matt. ii. 4; xxiii. 4.) *Tempting him*,—The word is frequently used in a bad sense—(see on Matt. xvi. 1)—and the lawyer may have insidiously tried to embarrass our Lord, seeing that he was rising so high in the estimation of the people; but it may be rendered "trying him," to test his skill in answering curious questions, the design being good—at least, not insidious: the good character given of him in Mark favors this view. A case similar to this is placed by Luke (x. 25) at an earlier period in Christ's ministry. There the lawyer asks what he should do to inherit eternal life, and Jesus directs him to the law, with which he is supposed to be familiar; then the lawyer cites the two commandments, and Christ indorses the quotation as pertinent. In Mark, after Christ has recited the two commandments, the scribe repeats them with approbation, and Jesus commends his answer as discreet; this favors the view of Trench that the three evangelists record but one instance. However, as the parable of the Good Samaritan, which follows in Luke, is not in Matthew and Mark, and

would hardly seem to be in place (see ver. 34 in Mark), the common opinion, which makes Luke's case distinct, seems to be correct. (See on Luke x. 25.)

36. *Master*,—Teacher. *Which is the great*—Which of all the precepts is the greatest? The Jews divided the law into 613 precepts—some of these they called great and some small, some weighty and some light; the ceremonial generally having precedence of the moral; and among the former, some preferring that of the Sabbath, which has a moral element in it; some circumcision; some sacrifices; some the wearing of phylacteries. Perhaps the lawyer wanted to know whether the particular commandment which Jesus considered the greatest was of the moral or of the ceremonial class, he himself preferring the former, as appears from ver. 32, Mark.

37. *Jesus said*—The answer is fuller in Mark, the quotation from Deut. vi. 4, 5 being more largely quoted than in Matthew, though neither evangelist corresponds precisely with the Hebrew or LXX. *With*—Matthew has *en*, with datives; Mark, with the LXX., *ex*, with genitives; but the sense is the same. The Hebrew has heart, soul, might; the LXX. (Vat.), intellect, soul, power—(Alex.) heart, soul, power; Mark, heart, soul, intellect, strength; Luke x. 27, heart, soul, strength, intellect. From this diversity it would seem that the various terms are united for the sake of intensity, and not to designate separate and particular attributes and functions of our nature; as spirit, soul, and body, according to the Trichotomists; or heart, that which desires; soul, that which feels; intellect, that which reflects; strength, the expression of the will. As the Hebrew *maod* is properly rendered might, or strength, Matthew may mean the same by mind, or intellect, as mental strength is meant—intellect therefore means "the full bent and purpose of the soul"; and accordingly Mark and Luke add strength to intellect. The whole sentence, as Grotius says, only imports by the repetition a strong resolution. Thus it occurs indifferently in the same sense, sometimes once and sometimes repeated. 1 Kings xiv. 8; Deut. iv. 29, etc. It is not found in Exodus, but in Deuteronomy—this *epinomos*, as Philo calls it, having more traces of evangelical piety in it. The precept implies that we are to love God intensely, constantly, above all things, and that we are to love nothing only in relation and subordination to him.

38. *The first and great*—Most MSS. and versions have "great and first." As there are two precepts which have precedence of all others, this, prescribing our duty to God, is called the first, as well as the great; i.e., the greatest: ver. 28, 29, 31, Mark. The lawyer may have used the ambiguous word "first," meaning greatest; but our Lord calls it the first in this sense, and in the ordinal sense also, as it embraces the duties of the first table, as the other commandment embraces those of the second table. Lightfoot says Christ thus directed those who repeated the phylacteries to their essence and import, by enforcing the great commandment

which was the first in their course of reciting them. The first is the greatest, because God to whom it immediately relates is infinitely greater than man; yet as it is called the first, the second may be inferred, as inseparable from it.

39. *The second is like unto it*,—Similar in nature, though inferior in grade—both requiring love. The quotation is *verbatim* from the LXX.; Lev. xix. 18. *Thy neighbour*—Any man with whom we may have to do, not merely our friend, the Jewish gloss. (See on Matt. v. 43.) *As thyself*.—Similarity in kind, not equality in degree—though Barrow says it imports both conformity, or similitude, and commensuration, or equality. (See his sermon on this text.) A man must love himself first, securing his own temporal and spiritual welfare, in order to know how to love his neighbor: he is then to do unto others, as in reason he would wish to be done by. (See on Matt. vii. 12; Rom. xiii. 8-10; 1 John iv. 20.) This law of love is called (Jas. ii. 8) "the royal law," not merely because it is the law of a king, or because it inspires him who observes it with royal sentiments, but because it is itself royal, kingly, governing, the supreme law from which all others receive their tone, character, and fulfillment.

40. *On these two*—As mere outward works of morality and ceremonial observances are of no worth in the estimation of God, all the precepts which make it our duty to perform them, derive their importance from their connection with the law of love. This is the root and trunk—all others are the branches. Their fulfillment depends upon these two. Our duty to ourselves cannot be performed in the neglect of these.

41. *While*—(See ver. 34.) *Jesus asked them*,—Having answered all their questions.

42. *What think ye of Christ?*—What is your opinion concerning the Messiah? The force of the question will be felt when it is considered that the Jews generally expected him to be a mere human conqueror and king. *Whose son is he?*—According to the prophecies, whose son should he be? *The son of David*.—They doubtless referred to such passages as Isa. xi. 1; Mic. v. 2. (See on Matt. i. 1; ii. 4-6.)

43. *How then*—Upon what principle? So ver. 45. *David in spirit*—Mark has "the Holy Ghost"—the meaning is, inspired by the Holy Spirit. Luke has, "in the book of Psalms"—Ps. cx. 1. This settles the question concerning the inspiration of that book. Bishop Reynolds calls Ps. cx. *symbolicum Davidicum*.

44. *The Lord said*—*Verbatim* from the LXX., which agrees with the Hebrew, only *Kurios*, Lord, stands for both *Jehovah* and *Adon*, the latter meaning governor, or master. *Sit thou*—The heir was seated on the right side of the king, to show that he participated in the regal authority. *Footstool?*—The metaphor is drawn from the ancient custom of conquerors' putting their feet on the necks of conquered

enemies, to show their subjugation. The Messianic application of the passage is found also in Acts ii. 34-36; 1 Cor. xv. 25; Heb. i. 13. As Messiah, Jesus reigns by the authority of the Father, to whom the mediatorial kingdom will be given up after all enemies shall be subdued. 1 Cor. xv. 24.

45. *Call him Lord*,—As Campbell says, an independent monarch like David acknowledged no lord, or master, but God—a son called his father lord, but never *vice versa*. *How*—On what principle—as ver. 43.

46. *And no man was able*—Referring the Psalm to the Messiah, they could not tell how he could be a descendant of David, and yet his Lord, not knowing that besides his human nature which descended from David, (Rev. xxii. 16,) he possessed a divine nature as the Son of God. Rom. i. 3, 4. As he had silenced the Herodians and Sadducees, as well as the Pharisees, it seems none of any party after this proposed to him any captious questions. Luke makes this remark before his account of our Lord's asking them about the Messiah's being David's Son and Lord; but then Luke omits the question of the lawyer, probably because he had recorded a similar case before. It seems that the body of the Pharisees and Sadducees retired from the field, but one of the former ventured to ask a question on a mooted subject—after which there was no more questioning on the part of the Jews—they gave over, as Lake says, playing the serpent, and turned lions—compassing the death of Christ. Whitby paraphrases, "No man was able to answer him a word to that inquiry," and argues "that the artifices which the Jews now use to evade this place, by saying these words belong to Abraham, or David, or Ezekiel, had not then obtained; for if it had not then been the received opinion that this Psalm belonged to the Messiah, Christ would not have alleged it to this end, much less would he have put the scribes and Pharisees to silence by so doing." Grotius says, "The LXX. render the title of the Psalm 'to David,' but the other interpreters, and the Jews themselves, render here, as in other places, in the genitive—else no Psalms would be attributed to David, not even those which the LXX. allow to be his. The titles of the Psalms are very ancient." Hase and others think that by the foregoing question, Jesus merely intended to silence and confound his enemies, and show what incompetent teachers they were; but he did this, and more than this; for he suggested ideas concerning the true character of the Messiah and his kingdom, which, duly considered, would lead to an acknowledgment of his claims. *To answer him a word*,—This shows the completeness of their refutation. *Ask him any more questions*.—Question him any more. No longer did the adversaries of our Lord endeavor to entrap him by questions: they now betake themselves to other means. Mark makes this note after Christ had answered the scribe's question.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1 *Christ admonisheth the people to follow the good doctrine, not the evil examples, of the scribes and Pharisees. 5 His disciples must beware of their ambition. 13 He denounceth eight woes against their hypocrisy and blindness; 34 and prophesieth of the destruction of Jerusalem.*

XXIII.—1. *Then*—After what precedes, xxii. *Spake Jesus*—Mark (xii. 38) says "in his doctrine," or teaching: he gives a mere summary, as also does Luke, who says the address was to the disciples, but in the hearing of all the people, which agrees with Matthew and Mark.

2. *The scribes and the Pharisees*—(See on Matt. ii. 4; iii. 7.) *Sit in Moses' seat*:—The posture of judges as well as teachers. The chair of Moses, says Lightfoot, was the office of lawgiver and judge, Ex. xviii. 13-26; Deut. xvii. 8-13. It was, as Olshausen says, the symbol of the collective theocratic authority, which was united in Moses, and after him vested in the body of theocratic representatives, which had the high-priest at its head. The aorist expresses the fact of their having placed themselves in the seat, and implies continuous sitting. Grotius says, "These scribes were the rabbis, or doctors, who were assessors, or judicial assistants, in the Sanhedrim, and interpreters of the law in the synagogues and schools. They stood at the reading of the law, and sat in expounding it." Matt. v. 1; Luke iv. 16, 19.

3. *All therefore*—As the law of Moses was in Hebrew, which the people generally did not understand, it was the office of the scribes to give the sense of it in the vernacular language; whenever they did this, whether in the Sanhedrim, synagogue, or elsewhere, they were to be regarded, as there were no other authorized expounders of the law, until they were superseded by the Christian ministry. When they inculcated traditions which are not in the written law, nor consistent with it, Christ does not tell the people to obey them, but the reverse. Matt. vii. 15; xv. 1-14; xvi. 12; xxiii. 23. The pulpit in the synagogues was the seat for the interpreters of the law, who were Pharisaic scribes. The word "therefore" limits the teaching to such as is conformable to that of Moses.

4. *They bind*—Together in a bundle, as goods are bound up in order to be put on the back of a beast of burden. *Grievous to be borne*,—The Mosaic law might well be so described. Acts xv. 10; Gal. v. 1. The scribes and Pharisees, for the most part, confined themselves to the letter of the law, in the enforcement of which, so far as the people were concerned, they were very rigorous, except when their own selfish interests might be promoted by granting indulgences, according to their detestable casuistry. Mark vii. 8-13. *Will not*—Do not choose. *With one of their fingers*.—A proverbial expression, denoting the smallest effort: they will not do themselves what they rigidly enforce on others. John vii. 19; viii. 3-11;

Rom. ii. 17-25. They lay on the load, but will not put forth a finger to steady it. Instead of that, they increase the burden by their own traditions.

5. *But all their works*—But what they do perform—according to God's commandment and their own invention—they do from a motive of ostentation. (See on Matt. vi. 1, 2, 5, 16.) *Phylacteries*,—Slips of parchment on which were written portions of the law. From a literal and unwarranted interpretation of Deut. vi. 8, (*cf.* Ex. xiii. 9; Prov. iii. 3; vi. 21; vii. 3,) the Jews wore them on their foreheads and wrists. Jos. Ant. iv. 8, 13. A. Clarke describes one in his possession: "It is a piece of fine vellum, about 18 inches long and 1¼ inch broad. It is divided into four unequal compartments: in the first is written, in a very fine character, with many *apices*, after the mode of the German Jews, the first ten verses of Ex. xiii.; in the second compartment is written from the 11th to the 16th verse of the same chapter, inclusive; in the third, from the 4th to the 9th verse, inclusive, of Deut. vii., beginning with 'Hear, O Israel,' etc.; in the fourth, from the 13th to the 21st verse, inclusive, of Deut. xi." The rabbins call them Tephillin, Prayers; the Hellenistic Jews, Phylacteries, from *phylasso*, to keep, because they reminded the wearer of his duty to keep the law. Plutarch speaks of the *bullæ*, which was suspended from the necks of the more noble Roman boys, as perhaps a preservative (*phylacterion*) of good order, and, as it were, a bridle on incontinence. Parkhurst says, "It is not improbable that some of the Jews in our Saviour's time, as they certainly did afterward, regarded their phylacteries as amulets or charms, which would *keep* or *preserve* them from evil; in which sense the word *phylacterion* is sometimes used by the Greek writers. There is a remarkable passage in the Rabbinical Targum on Cant. viii. 3, (written about 500 years after Christ,) which may both serve to illustrate what our Lord says, (Matt. xxiii. 5,) and to show what was the notion of the more modern Jews concerning their phylacteries. It runs thus: 'The congregation of Israel hath said, I am chosen above all people, because I bind the phylacteries on my left hand and on my head, and the scroll is fixed on the right side of my door, the third part of which is opposite to my bed-chamber, that the evil spirits may not have power to hurt me.'" The Pharisees made broad their phylacteries (perhaps to put more sentences of the law into them) as an ostentatious display of their greater veneration for the law; and for a similar reason enlarged the tassels of their mantles. (See on Matt. ix. 20.)

6. *The uppermost rooms*—The first reclining place—the head of the table. Three couches were set thus [graphic...upside...down "U"], the table was placed in the middle—the lower end was left open for servants to wait on the guests; the other three sides were inclosed by the couches—hence the name *triclinium*: the middle couch at the upper end was the *protoclisia*, which the Pharisees affected as the most honorable place. 1 Sam. ix. 22. *The chief seated*—Seats of the elders and doctors, near the ark, or chest, which contained the sacred books. Maimonides says, "The faces of all the people were toward the elders and the ark." It was on

the side of the building nearest Jerusalem. Anciently, the Jews sat in the synagogue according to age; afterward those who had the highest character for learning sat in the places of greatest honor.

7. *Greetings*—Salutations, flattering compellations, as wise and holy rabbis. *Markets*,—Including other places of public concourse. Mark (xii. 38) and Luke (xx. 46) give this in the form of a caveat. *Rabbi, Rabbi*.—The repetition shows the delight they took in the sound of the title, and the obsequiousness of the people in giving it.

8. *Rabbi*:—My Master: a title which, as assumed by the scribes, expressed unlimited veneration and implicit obedience, inconsistent with fealty to Christ (John xiii. 13); hence it is added *for one is your Master*,—instead of *kathegetes*, many MSS., editors, and versions, have *didaskalos*, teacher, which corresponds better to the Hebrew *rabbi*. (See on Matt. viii. 25; xx. 33; John i. 39.) The former may have been brought by mistake from ver. 10, and this supposition is the more probable, as *even Christ* is supposed to be taken by mistake from the same verse; it is not in the best MSS., versions, Fathers, and editors: it seems, however, to be implied, as the reference of this verse to the Holy Spirit—ver. 9 to the Father, ver. 10 to the Son—is singularly forced. *All ye are brethren*.—Christ's disciples are on a perfect equality in regard to faith and morals. 1 Cor. iii. 5-7; 2 Cor. i. 24; 1 Pet. v. 3.

9. *Father*—Maimonides says, "A Rabbi was also called Abba: he that will be holy must perform the words of the fathers." The Jews say the traditions of the fathers were equal to the words of the law, and more to be regarded than the words of the prophets—a prophet was not to be believed without a miracle; the elders, or fathers, were. Deut. xvii. 11. Christ seems to mean, You must not, in matters of religion, have that implicit faith in any mere man which young children are apt to have in their fathers and which the Jews gave to their rabbis, whom they called fathers. The Targum expounds 2 Kings ii. 12, "Rabbi Rabbi." *For one is your Father*,—God alone is entitled to your implicit confidence and obedience.

10. *Masters*:—*Kathegetai*, guides, leaders: *cf.* ver. 16—used nowhere else in the New Testament. (See on ver. 8: *cf.* Ezek. xlv. 8, LXX.) It seems to be nearly synonymous with *didaskaloi*, though the latter may possibly refer more to doctrine than practice, and the former *vice versa*. In Babylon *mar* signified one who in Judea was called *rab*, a guide and leader. Rom. ii. 17-19. His decisions were considered infallible—equal to those of the law, and were to be received even where they were contradictory! *One is your Master*,—Christ is the only infallible guide. John xiv. 6. His word and Spirit exclusively challenge our implicit confidence and obedience. One essential idea is repeated in various forms, for the sake of emphasis, in ver. 8, 9, 10. The interdict does not imply that those titles must never be assumed by Christians, or be applied to them in any sense; for the

apostles call Christian ministers "pastors and teachers." Acts xiii. 1; Eph. iv. 11; 1 Tim. ii. 7; 2 Tim. i. 11. The Hebrew *rabbi* is not used, but its equivalent, *didaskalos*. The apostles call themselves "fathers" in regard to those whom they had begotten through the gospel. 1 Cor. iv. 15-17; Phil. ii. 22; 1 Thess. ii. 11; 1 Tim. i. 2: *cf.* 2 Kings ii. 12; not to say that it is the title by which the male parent is recognized. Ministers are also styled rulers, or leaders, (*hegoumenoi*, a stronger word than *kathegetai*.) Heb. xiii. 7, 17, 24: *cf.* 1 Thess. v. 12, 13; 1 Tim. iii. 2, 4; v. 17. In thus sanctioning the use of those titles, the apostles did not impinge upon this interdict; nor did they invade the prerogatives of God and Christ, any more than when they called believers "holy," though the Psalmist, speaking of God, says, "Holy and reverend is thy name": *cf.* 1 Sam. ii. 2. So the apostles could be foundation-stones of the Church, and yet Christ be the chief corner-stone. The interdict has reference not to the mere titles, but to the sense in which they are awarded and assumed. The Jews employed them as exponents of absolute domination on the one side, and servile, implicit submission on the other. They sometimes gave all three, with a repetition, (see ver. 8,) as flattering titles to one whom they wished specially to honor. Thus they say "When King Jehoshaphat saw a disciple of the wise men, he rose up out of his throne, and embraced him and said, Abbi, Abbi! Rabbi Rabbi! Mori, Mori! My Father, my Father! My Master, my Master! My Teacher, my Teacher!" It does not appear that the prophets were styled Rabbi; (see on Matt. xx. 33;) though they were called Father. 2 Kings ii. 12, 15; xiii. 14. The Pharisees would, of course, affect all these titles. Christians should take care lest some of their spirit be indulged in the use of such titles as Doctor, Right Reverend Father in God, Pope, and Patriarch, which obtain among them. Stier notes the twice-occurring "suffer not yourselves to be called" between the charge "call no man," intimating that they are not to yield to the like assumption in others. Lange sees in the change of expression Christ's foreknowledge that not many would claim the title Father, but that many might wish improperly to ascribe it to others. *Even Christ*.—Jesus seldom called himself Christ—he seems here and in Mark ix. 41 to anticipate the time when he should not be with them in his visible presence. *Cf.* John xvii. 3.

11. *But he that is greatest*—Placed for the sake of order in the highest office, let him render all needed service even to the lowest. (See on Matt. xx. 26, 27.)

12. *Whosoever shall exalt*—Wesley says, "No one sentence of our Lord's is so often repeated as this: it occurs, with scarce any variation, at least ten times in the evangelists." Campbell renders, "Whosoever will exalt himself, shall be humbled; and whosoever will humble himself, shall be exalted." This accords with the modern use of shall and will—by translating *tapeinoo* in both cases "humble," the antithesis is better preserved. For such a voluntary humiliation God will raise a man to honor, by his friendship here, and eternal glory hereafter. There may be a reference to the speedy humiliation of the lofty Pharisees. Ezek. xxi. 26, 27.

Grotius says it is "a usual temporal maxim with the Hebrews. Prov. xv. 33; xvi. 18; xxix. 22. So the Talmudists. But Christ raises the mind to heaven, and his words are explained, 1 Pet. v. 6." AEsop being asked what Jupiter was doing, answered, that he was humbling the exalted, and exalting the humble.

13. *But wo unto you*,—Wesley says, "Our Lord pronounced eight blessings upon the mount; he pronounces eight woes here; not as imprecations, but solemn, compassionate declarations of the misery which these stubborn sinners were bringing upon themselves." (See on Matt. xi. 21; xxiv. 19.) *Hypocrites!*—(See on Matt. vi. 2.) *Ye shut up*—Ye shut the door in men's faces. In Luke xi. 52, the figure is slightly varied: there is in that place an allusion to locking up a house and carrying away the key: the key is not that which admits to knowledge, but it is the knowledge which opens up the mysteries of the kingdom. In both places the metaphor refers to the scribes' hindering men from embracing Christianity by their false glosses on the Scripture and by other means. They locked the door by substituting tradition for Scripture. It is said that authority to explain the Scripture was given by the delivery of a key. When Rab. Samuel died, they put his key and tablets into his coffin, because he had no son to whom he might leave the ensigns of his office. *For ye neither*—Literally, "for ye neither enter yourselves, nor suffer those who are entering to enter." They stand at the door of the kingdom, the new dispensation, and thrust back those who are in the very act of entering; thus they dogged the steps of the Saviour, misrepresenting his doctrine and impugning his authority. They shut the kingdom by their example, John vii. 48; by their doctrine, caviling at all that he said, Matt. xii. 24; John ix. 13-41; xii. 42; 1 Thess. ii. 14-16; and by their authority, John ix. 22.

14. *Ye devour widows' houses*—Goods, substance, necessaries of life, the support of a house; or the rapacity of these hypocrites may have taken in the very houses in which the widows lived—gulping the whole down. A similar metaphor is found in Homer, (Ody. ii. 237, 238.) Priests in all ages have taken advantage of their female devotees. These hypocrites may have caballed with children to deprive their widowed mothers of their dowry. *For a pretence*—Outward show, rendered "cloak," 1 Thess. ii. 5; ("a cloak over covetousness," Macknight;) a pretext for villainy. Maimonides says, "The ancient holy men used to stay an hour before prayer, and an hour after prayer, and spent an hour in prayer: those who would be accounted the holiest used to do this three times a day, thus occupying nine hours a day." The Talmud says, "For one to be long in his prayer, is an excellence." (See on Matt. vi. 7.) They disguised their avarice and promoted its ends by the show of devotion. They despoiled widows whom the law ordered them to defend. *The greater damnation*.—More abundant punishment, far heavier judgment; being punishment for their hypocrisy as well as their rapacity. Many MSS., Fathers, and editors, transpose ver. 13 and 14—perhaps correctly, as the wo in ver. 14 is the only one recorded in the parallels of Mark and Luke, and as they

in immediate connection record the case of the widow's contribution, which Matthew omits, but which may have suggested the reference to the devouring of widows' houses.

15. *Compass*—Go about. The proverb, common among Greeks and Romans, implies the greatest exertion. 1 Mac. viii. 32. The Jews at that time were notorious for their zeal in making converts to Judaism; thus Horace (Book. i. Sat. iv.) says, "Like the Jews, we will force you to come over to our company." Josephus (Wars vii. 3. 3) says, "The Jews of Antioch made proselytes of a great many of the Greeks perpetually, and thereby, after a sort, brought them to be a portion of their own body." The rabbins speak of "proselytes of righteousness," who embraced Judaism in its full extent, and also of "proselytes of the gate," foreigners, who, without circumcision, dwelt among the Jews and conformed to certain laws and customs, particularly what they call the seven precepts of Noah, viz., to avoid blasphemy against God, idolatry, homicide, incest, robbery, resistance to magistrates, and the eating of blood or things strangled. But Lardner says, "A proselyte is a man circumcised according to the law of Moses, or a Jew by religion. This is the sense of the word in all the texts of the New Testament. Matt. xxiii. 15; Acts ii. 10; vi. 5; xiii. 43. There never was any doubt about preaching to these and receiving them into the Church. Such were among St. Peter's hearers of his first sermon; and one such at least was among the seven deacons in the Church of Jerusalem. In this sense the word is always understood by ancient Christian writers. Said Bede on Acts ii., 'They called those proselytes, that is, strangers, who being of Gentile original, had embraced circumcision and Judaism.' To the like purpose another Latin writer, of the ninth century, in his comment on Matthew (Christian Druthmar.) So Theodoret and Euthymius. Nor do I believe that the notion of two sorts of Jewish proselytes can be found in any Christian writer before the 14th century or later." Proselyte means "one who comes," i.e., to another country or people. *When he is made*,—When he is become so. *Two-fold more*—Doubly more. *The child of hell*—A son of Gehenna—a Hebraism for deserving of, or doomed to, death: so a son of death. 1 Sam. xx. 31; xxvi. 16; 2 Sam. xii. 5, LXX.: cf. John xvii. 12; 2 Thess. ii. 3. Whether *Gehenna* here stands for punishment, such as was inflicted in the Valley of Hinnom, (see on Matt. v. 22,) or for punishment in the world to come, two-fold more the child of hell means twice as wicked. As they grafted the hypocrisy and other evils of the Pharisees upon the old stock of heathen depravity, they were worse than the Pharisees themselves. The reference is not to such proselytes as those mentioned Acts ii. 10; xiii. 43, but to those whom the Pharisees brought over to their party. Of such Justin Martyr speaks when he says they "not only disbelieved the doctrine of Christ, but were abundantly more blasphemous against him than the Jews themselves, endeavoring to torment and cut off the Christians wherever they could, they being in this the instruments of the scribes and Pharisees." Such

proselytes would push the principles they adopted to their practical results, from which the more astute scribes and Pharisees would keep back; nevertheless, the latter would have a reversionary interest in all the consequences of their evil influence. The Jews complained that the proselytes were "scabs of the Church," and hindered the coming of the Messiah, as being ignorant of the law, and bringing in revenge. Stier says, "Here our Lord condemns all that false proselyte-making of the pseudo-Church, which strives only after the outward increase of its body to catch people without being able or willing to convert them; for every change of religion, without a felt necessity, or conviction of the heart, is only a hurt and a loss."

16. *Blind guides!*—They plumed themselves on being leaders of the people, ver. 10—hence this was a withering sarcasm. *It is nothing;*—It is not binding. *The gold of the temple,*—The gold which adorned the temple; or, that of which its utensils were made; or, that which was set apart as money for sacred purposes, which seems to correspond with the "gift," ver. 18, 19—all may be meant. *He is a debtor.*—He is bound to fulfill his oath. The ministers of religion among the Greeks and Romans, who were generally avaricious, like these scribes, inculcated the notion that a peculiar sanctity attached to the *anathemata* and *donaria*, as they called the gifts and offerings to the temple, which they exhibited in conspicuous situations, thus inducing devotees to multiply their presents. It was a species of *corban*. (See on ver. 18, and Matt. xv. 5.)

17. *Fools,*—*Moroi* may be here used in the Hebrew sense of wicked; (2 Sam. xiii. 13; Ps. xiv. 1; see on Matt. v. 22;) but their judgment, as well as moral feelings, seems to be impeached: they must have been besotted if they could not see that the gifts and offerings derived their sanctity from the temple and altar, as these derived theirs from the Divinity to whose worship they were set apart. *Whether is greater,*—Which is more sacred. *Sanctifieth*—The gold is made holy in a relative, ceremonial sense, by its connection with the temple, that being holy, or set apart to a sacred use.

18. *And*—Ye farther say. *It is nothing;*—His oath is not binding. *The gift*—(See on Matt. v. 23.) *He is guilty.*—He is bound to fulfill his oath—*opheilei*, as in ver. 16: in the Syriac, sinners are called debtors, as in Matt. vi. 12; hence some explain, "he is guilty if he does not perform his oath"—which is implied.

19. *Whether is greater,*—Which is more sacred. (See on v. 17.) William swore Harold over the relics, upon the principle here exposed.

20. *And by all things*—And also by the offerings on it. Constructively they swear by Him to whom they are dedicated, though they may not design to do so.

21. *By the temple,*—A common oath among both Jews and Gentiles. *Him that dwelleth*—As the principal MSS. and editions have "who dwelt," A. Clarke (so

Alford) thinks the use of the past tense is an intimation that God who dwelt in the first temple did not dwell in the second; the shekinah, or symbol of the divine presence, being one of the five things which the second temple lacked. He says it was put into the human nature of Christ (John i. 14) instead of the temple which God had forsaken. This seems too refined. God still claimed the temple, recognized its sacredness, accepted the worship there celebrated, and Jesus called it "my Father's house," (John ii. 16,) and the prophets called it "his temple," Mal. iii. 1. It was, indeed, soon to be abandoned by both God and Christ. If *katoikesanti* be the true reading, it may express the idea that the temple was the place of God's habitual residence; there being probably an allusion to the etymology of *naos*, which is derived from *naio*, to inhabit, the temple being the house of God. The sense requires the word to be understood in the present tense, as the present sacredness of the temple does not result from the past but from the present abode of God in it. Of course, his residence merely implies the manifestation of his perfections, not the limitation of his essence. 1 Chron. vi. 18-21, 40, 41; Ps. cxxxii. 5-14; Acts vii. 46-50; xvii. 24.

22. (See on Matt. v. 33-37.)

23. *Ye pay tithes*—The word is used by the LXX. for paying the tenth to God; (Gen. xxviii. 22; Deut. xiv. 22: cf. Luke xi. 42; xviii. 12;) though it is used of receiving the tithes: 1 Sam. viii. 15, 17; Heb. vii. 5. *Mint*,—*Heduosmon*, sweet-smelling; so called from its fragrance: *mentha viridis*. The Greeks and Romans made great use of mint in flavoring dishes: in the cookery-book of Apicius, green as well as dried mint is alluded to in nearly every page. Dioscorides speaks of it as a stomachic. The Jews strewed it on the floors of synagogues. *Anise*,—Vulgate *anethum*: dill, a fragrant herb mentioned by Virgil, (Ec. ii. 48,) "the flower of the sweet-smelling *anethum*." It is distinguished by Pliny from *anisum*, anise. The *anethum graveolens* is an annual, resembling fennel: it grows to the height of two or three feet: it has yellow flowers and aromatic seeds, which are used in carminative medicines, and for the purposes for which we use the caraway. It grows in Southern Europe, as well as in Egypt and Palestine. The rabbins made it tithable, green and ripe, herb and seed. *Cummin*,—Vulgate *cuminum*—Hebrew *cammon*: Isa. xxviii. 25, 27—an annual, like fennel, though smaller and less branched. It has white or reddish flowers, growing in clusters; the seeds are aromatic and pungent, and being distilled, yield a volatile oil. It grows wild in Egypt and Syria, but it is also cultivated, as of old. The Greeks use *kuminon* for any trumpery thing: a carelessness of cummin proverbially denoted a miserly person. *A cumino pristes*, splitter of cummin—a skinflint. The article in the original before the mint, the dill, and the cummin, marks the contrast—the judgment, the mercy, and the faith. Instead of anise and cummin, Luke (xi. 42) has "rue and all manner of herbs"—*peganon*, Vulgate *ruta (ruta graveolens)* was used by the ancients as a medicine, and for seasoning dishes. It has a bitter flavor, and

is a powerful stimulant: it has yellow flowers and sea-green leaves, which applied to the skin, produce a blister. The old herbalists call it the "herb of grace." Pliny says it was anciently in special reckoning above other herbs. Rosenmuller says, "The Talmudical law was that every thing eatable, which is taken care of, cultivated, and nursed in gardens, or in plowed fields, and which has its growth in the earth, is subject to tithes." He says the rue was declared free of tithe because, though a kitchen herb, it was not originally cultivated in the garden; but he infers from its mention by Christ that in his days it was cultivated, as it is with us. *Lackanon*, in Luke, means herbs cultivated for culinary purposes. It does not appear that Lev. xxvii. 30 embraced these trifling things: indeed, the Talmud says, "The tithing of corn is from the law; the tithing of herbs from the rabbis." *Omitted*—Neglected. Luke, "pass by." *Weightier*—More important—a hint, perhaps, at their distinguishing of legal matters into weighty and light. *Judgment*,—Justice. *Mercy*,—Active pity. *Faith*:—Trust, or confidence in God, this being the basis of love. Luke has "the love of God." The article implies, the justice, the mercy, the faith, which God requires. Micah vi. 8. *These ought ye to have done*,—Ye ought to have practiced these, without neglecting those, if you are conscientious about such trifles. They are not censured for tithing herbs, but for the hypocrisy of doing this as a cloak for gross violations of the law. Our Lord does not indorse the rabbinical construction of the law which makes it necessary to pay tithes of herbs; while at the same time, he admits the lawfulness of paying such tithes, provided the motive be not impure.

24. *Which strain at*—Who straining out the gnat, swallow the camel. It means to pass through a strainer. The allusion is to a custom of the Jews (and also of the Hindoos) of filtering their wine lest they should swallow any insect forbidden by the law. Lev. xi. 20, 23, 41-44; xvii. 10. The Talmud says, "One that eats a flea or a gnat is an apostate." Maimonides says, "He who strains wine or vinegar, or strong drink, and eats the gnats, or flies, or worms, which he hath strained off, is whipped." Filtered wine is spoken of, Amos vi. 6, LXX. Bochart shows from Aristotle, Plutarch, and others, that the *conops* is an insect bred in the lees of wine, and that lives in acids. The Vulgate has "straining out a *culex*"—Spanish *colais el mosquito*. Campbell renders; "who strain your liquor to avoid swallowing a gnat"—he thinks "strain out a gnat" sounds very oddly, and questions "whether any good English authority can be produced for such a manner of construing the verb." It however gives the force of *diulizo*, which means to pass liquor through a strainer, to separate it from the *hule*, material particles, dregs, gnats, etc., that they may be passed out and off. In our version *at* seems to be a typographical error for "out," which is the reading of the older English versions. Bowyer says, "Our version is the only wrong one, which carries *diulizo* to a false metaphor, and is from the first edition strain at a gnat. It is generally corrected *strain out*, and in some of our Oxford and London Bibles it is now so read. *Dia* cannot signify *out*,

nor in this place *per*, but *dis*—therefore should be undoubtedly read *strain off a gnat*. The Vulgate translates well *excolantes*, as *excorio*, to strip off the skin; Beza, ill, *percolantes*. It is *dis-substantiating*, if there was such a word. To say, strain or force out a gnat from entering with the liquor, is to me a contradiction in terms." But that is not the idea: the gnat is supposed to be *in* the liquor, and is gotten *out* by straining it through a strainer. *Camel*.—Not a beetle, or a cable, as some suggest, but camel, which being a large animal is used as in Matt. xix. 24, to express something great; like the Arabian proverb, "He eats an elephant, and is choked by a gnat." As a large, unclean beast, the camel is compared with a small, unclean insect. Markland says, "The expression alludes to some proverb or fable well known to Jesus's hearers, as Matt. vii. 4. So that verse in Athenaeus, 'I cannot bear the weight of the goat; please to put the ox on my shoulders.'" The proverb applies to those who are hypocritically scrupulous in observing such matters, while they are flagrantly neglectful of important duties. The priests who bribed Judas to betray Christ for thirty pieces of silver, and yet refused to put the money afterward into the treasury, because it was the price of blood, and who scrupled to enter the judgment-hall lest they should be defiled, but not to shed innocent blood, are pointed to by Whitby as illustrations of this passage.

25. *Ye make clean*—The mention of drinking seems to have occasioned the reference to the ceremonial cleansing of vessels. *Cup*—The *poterion* was a vessel to drink out of. *Platter*,—The *paropsis* was properly the viand; here it means the dish in which it was served up: we use dish in the same twofold sense. Luke (xi. 38) has *pinax*. (See on Matt. xiv. 8.) *Within they are full of*—Grotius says, "The cups and platters cannot be full of extortion, but of dregs and improper viands. The metaphor is broken through conciseness." Olshausen says, "By *within* we are to understand the contents of the dish, as acquired by acts of wickedness; the words 'give alms,' (Luke xi. 41,) plainly speak to this effect." But Luke xi. 49, "your inward part is full of," seems to refer it to the vessels, viz., the Pharisees themselves, who were full of, not filled by, *extortion*—Ravens, rapacity. *Excess*.—Inabstinence, undue indulgence of the appetites.

26. *Thou blind Pharisee*,—The use of the vocative singular makes it pointed. *That which is within the cup*—The inside of the cup, contrasted with *the outside*—S. Clarke says, "The inside of pots and dishes ought always first to be cleansed; and then a proportionate care to keep their outsides clean, may look decent and neat." *That the outside may be*—If *hina* be telic in its force—marking the end of the action—then the meaning may be, Cleanse your hearts in order that your lives may be clean: if ecbatic—simply denoting the result—it may be, Cleanse your hearts, and thus your lives will be made clean. In a literal sense, the cleansing of the inside of a cup will not make the outside clean; but the metaphor is overruled by the spiritual idea, as when the cups and dishes are said to be full of rapine and injustice. It is like the proverb, "Make the tree good, and its fruit

good," (Matt. xii. 33,) where, however, the metaphor, drawn from nature, represents in a more lively manner the moral action. An anti-Pharisaic discourse resembling this is recorded by Luke (xi. 37) as having been delivered on another occasion.

27, 28. *Whited sepulchres*,—Whitewashed tombs. The Jews annually, on Adar 15, whitewashed their tombs, and the surface of the ground as far as the vaults extended underneath, so that the pollution of touching them might be avoided. Num. xix. 16. Niehbur says the mosques and *kubbets*, or little buildings, erected over the tombs of Mohammedan saints at Zebid, at that time, when Ramadan—the Mohammedan Lent—was near approaching, had been almost all whitewashed, on which Harmer remarks, "The Passover was at hand when our Lord made this comparison, and therefore it is likely they were just then whited afresh when the season for such rainy and bad weather as was wont to wash off these decorations was just over, and the time was at hand when Israel was about to assemble at Jerusalem at their national solemnities. We may believe it was often done, since to this day the people of those countries have not discovered any way of so whitening these buildings, as to make it durable." Speaking of the customs of the Moors, Dr. Shaw says, "As all the tombs and inclosures are constantly kept clean, whitewashed, and beautified, they continue to illustrate those expressions of our Saviour, where he mentions the garnishing of the sepulchres." Luke (xi. 44) has, "ye are as graves which appear not:" it has been suggested that the graves near Capernaum, where Christ then was, were not probably adorned like those near Jerusalem, where he was in Matthew. Such "deep graves"—as the Jews call them—unmarked tombs—might be walked over by persons without their being aware that there were graves beneath them: so the corruption of the Pharisees was not seen by the common people, because it was concealed by their sanctimonious appearance. Webster and Wilkinson think it probable that some ancient tombs of the prophets which had fallen into decay, or were otherwise obliterated, had very recently been rebuilt and beautified. The comparison in Matthew strikingly illustrates the superficial and deceptive character of the religion of the Pharisees.

29. *Ye build the tombs*—Mohammedans and heathens, as well as Jews and Christians, build, repair, and beautify, the tombs of their illustrious dead, a custom which our Lord does not censure: he condemns the hypocrisy of the Pharisees in thus pretending respect for the prophets when they did not obey their precepts, or imitate their piety. *Tombs*—Rendered sepulchres, v. 27. *Sepulchres*—Properly, monuments, the domes, columns, etc., put over the graves. (See on Matt. viii. 28.) *Garnish*—Adorn. The Greeks used *kosmeo* in this sense: thus Jos. Ant. xiv. 11. 4, "Phasaël adorned a tomb for his father." Harmer suggests that this adorning was not the whitewashing, ver. 27, but the furnishing of them with carpets, lamps, flowers, etc., after the manner of the Mohammedans of the present day. Great honors were paid by the Jews to the tombs of Mordecai and Esther; Herod

repaired the tomb of David with great splendor; and a rabbi is eulogized for adorning the tombs of Adam and Abraham. They said, "All tombs might be removed but those of kings and prophets." *The righteous*,—(See on Matt. x. 41.)

30. *And say*,—Their language being hypocritical, like their deeds: they were pursuing the very course their fathers pursued and yet said they would not have been their accomplices in the slaughter of the prophets.

31. *Wherefore*—While ye display the murderous spirit of your fathers, the monuments which you erect to the prophets whom they killed, testify concerning you that ye are the sons of those murderers: they murdered them, and ye perpetuate the memory of the fact. As children imitate their parents, ye prove your filial relation to those ancient persecutors by imitating their conduct. Matt. v. 45; John viii. 44; Eph. v. 1.

32. *Fill ye up*—An ironical concession, q.d.—Go on in your evil course, and finish the diabolical work which your fathers began. There seems to be an allusion to Gen. xv. 16. God permits nations and individuals to proceed to a certain length in depravity, but when that measure is full, the wrath comes upon them to the uttermost. 1 Thess. ii. 16.

33. *Ye serpents*,—Hypocritical, cruel persecutors—wretched sons of wretched sires—how is it possible for you to avert the awful fate that awaits you? (See on v. 15, and Matt. iii. 7.) Our Lord closes his ministry to them nearly in the terms in which John began his; thereby intimating that they were incorrigible; particularly, as he changed the style from "Who hath warned you to escape?" to "How can ye escape?" *The damnation of hell?*—In the Talmud and Midrash, this means eternal punishment.

34. *Wherefore*,—This connects with ver. 32. Therefore, that ye may have an opportunity of filling up the measure of sin, if ye will not avail yourselves of the blessings offered. *Behold, I send*—*Cf.* Luke xi. 49; 2 Chron. xxiv. 18-22. *Prophets*,—Inspired interpreters of the divine will. Acts xiii. 1; 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29; Eph. iv. 11. *Wise men, and scribes*;—Corresponding to the Hebrew *chachkemim* and *sepharim*—men whose business it was to study and expound the word of God. Our Lord here applies to the apostles—which appellation Luke employs instead of wise men and scribes—and his other ministers, (1 Cor. xii. 4-11, 28,) the titles given by the Jews to their doctors—a suggestion in regard to the importance and dignity of their office, which was so much despised by the Jewish teachers who so unworthily bore those titles. *Ye shall kill*—Ye will put to death by your own hands, as Stephen and James. Acts vii. 59; xii. 2. *Crucify*,—By betraying them to the Roman power, as in the case of Jesus, though he may not have included himself, as some think he did: we have no evidence of the crucifixion of any Christian minister before the destruction of Jerusalem; but the silence of history

does not prove that none were thus put to death. Eusebius says that Simon was crucified after that event. *Scourge*—(See on Matt. x. 17.)

35. *That*—Telic in form, ecclastic in force, indicating the event, not the design. Bishop Pearce parallels it with Luke ix. 45; xiv. 10; John x. 17; Rom. v. 20; xi. 11; 1 Cor. i. 15, 31. (See on Matt. i. 22; xiii. 15.) Webster and Wilkinson, "in such a way that—the malignity of the Jews was such as to show the righteousness of God in sending wrath upon them to the uttermost." *All the righteous blood*—Luke has "of all the prophets"—both terms imply messengers of Heaven, (See on Matt. x. 41.) Campbell renders "innocent blood;" cf. 2 Kings xxi. 16; xxiv. 4. Jer. xxvi. 15; and especially Lam. iv. 13, which Jesus may have had in view. *Shed*—The present participle being used to connect the past with the present. *Righteous Abel*,—Who possessed a personal righteousness, the fruit of his faith, which testified against his wicked brother who slew him. Gen. iv. 8-11; Heb. xi. 4; xii. 24; 1 John iii. 12. *Zacharias*,—Hammond suggests that our Lord refers predictively to the murder of Zacharias, son of Baruch, who was killed by the Zealots in the middle of the temple, because he was rich, a lover of liberty, and a hater of wickedness. Jos. Wars, iv. 5. 5. But he was no prophet. Others think the reference is to Zechariah the prophet, who may have been thus murdered. But it is nowhere said in Scripture that he was martyred; and the temple was not standing in his day. The Targum of Jonathan, probably a contemporary of Christ, contains a tradition of the Jews concerning the murder of Zechariah the prophet, who was son of Barachias, and grandson of Iddo (Zech. i. 1; Ezra v. 1; vi. 14): "Was it well of you to kill a prophet, as you did Zechariah, the son of Iddo, in the house of the sanctuary of the Eternal, because he endeavored to reclaim you from your evil ways?" A Church legend refers it to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, and says he was thus slain for refusing to betray his son when Herod slew the Innocents. It is, however, generally referred to Zechariah, son of Jehoiada the priest. 2 Chron. xxiv. 17-22. Some transcriber may have put Barachias into the text of Matthew (it is not in Luke), having his eye on Zechariah the prophet, whose father was named Barachiah; or Jehoiada may have been also named Barachiah, as it was common for persons to have two or more names—not to say, that both names mean the praise, or blessing of the Lord: so Jekoiakim is called Eliakim. 2 Kings xxiii. 34. The cause of his death; the place where he died; his dying language, apparently referred to in Luke, "shall be required;" and the result, so parallel to the case of the Jews whom our Lord addressed, favor this view. The Jews considered this murder as a fearful example: hence they have a legend that his blood bubbled up and flowed, and would not be stayed for 252 years, when Nebuzaradan burned the temple, and killed 940,000 priests, prophets, and chiefs of the people, with their children. Zechariah is probably mentioned because he is the last martyr mentioned in the Hebrew canon, which ends with Chronicles; though chronologically Urijah the martyr was later than he. Jer. xxvi. 23. There

is no scriptural proof that Isaiah was martyred by Manasseh; but if he was, he was not slain by consent of the Jews. The reputed tomb of Zacharias the martyr is still shown in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, near the eastern limits of Jerusalem. *Between the temple and the altar*.—The altar for burnt sacrifices was in the court of the priests, outside of the temple, *naos*, (Luke, *oikos*,) the fane, consisting of the holy place and the holy of holies.

36. *This generation*.—Some say "the Jews, viewed as a race, or nation, which reached the culmination of its wickedness when it killed the Messiah: it was then capitally punished, the punishment having reference to all the crimes specified in ver. 35. But the entire race could not be punished in the destruction of Jerusalem, nor would it be just to punish the living for the crimes of the dead; besides, Abel belonged no more to the Jews than to the Gentiles. Persecutors in every age were punished in their own persons for their crimes: thus Cain, who killed Abel, experienced a terrible vengeance; his brother's blood calling for it from the ground, to which there seems to be an allusion in Luke, "the blood shall be required"—i.e., exacted in the sense of retribution: so LXX., Gen. ix. 5; 2 Sam. iv. 11; Ezek. iii. 18; so also in the case of Joash, who caused Zechariah to be killed: he was killed for that very murder—"for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest." 2 Chron. xxiv. 17-25. It is not true, then, that the guilt of all the murders alluded to in ver. 35 was charged upon the Jewish nation and avenged on the persons of those who represented that nation in our Lord's time. The sins of the fathers are not thus visited upon the children. "This generation" means the people of that race then living. (See on Matt. xi. 16; xxiv. 33.) A generation was used by the ancients to denote about 30 years. Homer (Il. i.) says, "Nestor has seen two generations." Herod. ii.: "Three hundred generations" are equivalent to 10,000 years." Clem. Alex., Strom. ii.: "Three generations amount to 100 years." The destruction of Jerusalem was within 40 years; Euseb. Ec. His. iii. 7; and within the space of the life of some then alive, as was said by Christ. Mark xvi. 28; Luke xviii. 7. The account of this destruction in Matt. xxiv. arose from the present speech of our Lord. So Hammond. W. and W. say, "the people of this age, or dispensation: cf. xxvii. 25." Instead of taking warning by the crimes and punishments of their predecessors, they had imitated the former, and of course should realize the latter; and as there was a culmination of wickedness in the murder of Christ, so there should be a culmination of punishment in the unparalleled vengeance which came upon that wretched race. Cf. Rev. xviii. 24.

37. *O Jerusalem*.—Nothing can exceed the pathos and beauty of this apostrophe and *prosopeia*: the repetition of *Jerusalem* is emphatic. *Thou that killest*—The present participle indicates the continuity of the action. In Luke xiii. 33-35, where on a different occasion our Lord utters this language, it follows the pregnant remark, "for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem"—the killing of the prophets was almost a monopoly of the metropolis. *Them which are*

sent—Divine messengers: still alluding apparently to 2 Chron. xxiv. 21. *How often would I*—An expression of the divine will which could not be carried into effect by omnipotence, as it is not the part of divine power to compel moral action, that being an inconsistency, which cannot be predicated of God. *Have gathered thy children together*,—The word implies, to gather or collect together in one place to any one. *A hen*—*Ornis* means a bird of any kind; here it seems to mean the domestic fowl—*gallina*, Vulgate. So in the Greek Anthology, rendered by Merrick:

Behold the hen (*ornis*) that, white with falling snows,
Around her brood her fostering pinions throws,
And combats in their aid the wintry skies,
Till pierced by cold, she droops the head and dies.

Instead of *chickens*, (Luke, "brood,") the epigram has "children," the word by which our Lord, by a common figure, designates the inhabitants of Jerusalem. This does not refer exclusively to our Lord's personal ministry, but to that also of all his messengers under the theocracy. 1 Cor. x. 4, 9; Heb. xi. 26. The similitude is of frequent occurrence. Ps. xvii. 8; xxxvi. 7; lvii. 1; lxi. 4. *And ye would not!*—Ye willed to the contrary—and the will cannot be forced: Jesus willed their good, they willed otherwise, and their will prevailed. Isa. xxviii. 12; xxx. 15; John v. 40. The plural refers to the inhabitants of Jerusalem implied.

38. *Behold*,—Implying both attention and wonder. *Your house*—Some restrict this to the temple, which was God's house, but is now abandoned by him, and is therefore styled *your house*; others extend the meaning to the city, or to the nation, as *domus* is used for *patria*. The former view is favored by the circumstance that Jesus was just leaving the temple, never to visit it again. But he said this also in Galilee long before. Luke xiii. 35. The latter view is favored by the proverbial character of the language. Cf. Lev. xxvi. 31, 32; Ps. lxxix. 25; Acts i. 20; Isa. i. 7; Jer. ix. 11; x. 25; xii. 7; xxii. 5; xlix. 20; Dan. ix. 27; Mic. iii. 12; 2 Esdras i. 33. The allusion seems to be to land or territory thrown up, as no longer worth cultivating. *Is left*—The prophetic present put for the future, intimating certainty and propinquity. *Desolate*.—Literally, desert—uncultivated, and so uninhabited.

39. *Ye shall not see me*—Ye who see me now shall not see me again until I come to destroy Jerusalem, when you will have reason to hail me as the Messiah. As the exclamation, "Blessed is he that cometh," etc., was a popular formula, borrowed from Ps. cxviii., to indicate the Messiah's advent, it does not seem strained to use it in reference to his coming, though "not as a Saviour, but a severe avenger." Many who had refused to recognize his claims during his personal sojourn among them—which was shortly to terminate—should live to witness his coming in providential retribution, as he expressly states. Matt. xxiv. 27-34: cf. Matt. xxvi. 64; Rev. i. 7. It seems strained to refer "Ye shall not see me" to "the

late posterity of this generation." (See on Matt. xvi. 27, 28; xxi. 9.) There may be a touch of sorrowful irony in the use of this Messianic formula, occasioned by the rebuking of the Pharisees when the disciples used it as our Lord rode into Jerusalem; and this is countenanced by the fact, that on that occasion our Lord predicted the destruction of their city, because they knew not the time of their visitation. Luke xix. 37-44.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1 Christ foretelleth the destruction of the temple. 3 What and how great calamities shall be before it. 29 The signs of his coming to judgment. 36 And because that day and hour is unknown, 42 we ought to watch like good servants, expecting every moment our master's coming.

XXIV.—1. *Departed*—Was proceeding. *To show*—To point out—probably from some good view on the ascent of Olivet. Mark (xiii. 1) states "one of his disciples said, Teacher, see what prodigious stones and what massive structures!" Josephus furnishes a luminous comment on this chapter, and especially on this passage. Speaking of the rebuilding of the temple by Herod, he says, "The temple was built of stones that were white and strong, and their length was 25 cubits, height 8, and breadth about 12 each; and the whole structure, as also the structure of the royal cloister, was on each side much lower, but the middle was much higher, till they were visible to those that dwelt in the country for a great many furlongs, but chiefly to such as lived over against them and those that approached to them. He also encompassed the entire temple with very large cloisters, contriving them to be in a due proportion thereto; and he laid out larger sums of money upon them than had been done before him, till it seemed that no one else had so greatly adorned the temple as he had done. There was a large wall to both the cloisters; which wall was itself the most prodigious work that was ever heard of by man." Ant. xv. 11. 3. "It was covered all over with plates of gold of great weight, and at the first rising of the sun, reflected back a very fiery splendor, and made those who forced themselves to look upon it to turn their eyes away, just as they would have done at the sun's own rays. But this temple appeared to strangers, when they were at a distance, like a mountain covered with snow; for as to those parts of it that were not gilt, they were exceeding white. Of its stones, some of them were 45 cubits in length, 5 in height, and 6 in breadth." Wars v. 5. 6. Allowing for the extravagance of Josephus, we need not be astonished at the exclamation of the disciples. Tacitus and Philo speak of the temple in terms of great admiration; and the rabbins said, "They who never saw the temple of Herod, never saw a beautiful work." Robinson measured some of the stones now forming the inclosure on the site of the temple, and found one block 7½ feet thick; another 24 feet long, 3 feet high, 6 broad; another 30 feet 10 inches long, 6 feet 6 inches

broad. Huge blocks varying from 20 to 30 feet and upward, were measured by Catherwood in the western wall. These may have formed a part of the building, and some of them may be now lying where they were placed by Herod. One of the stones from which it is supposed sprung the arch of the bridge that formerly spanned the Tyropoeon, is 20 feet 6 inches long, another 24 feet 6 inches: one is 5 feet 4 inches thick, and the rest in proportion. The disciples, alluding perhaps to Matt. xxiii. 38, indirectly suggested, as their were leaving the temple, that a building so large, massive, beautiful, and holy, could not be laid in ruins.

2. *See ye not*—You see all these magnificent structures now, but I tell you they will soon be destroyed. *There shall not be left*—It shall be utterly ruined. *That shall not be thrown down*.—Added for emphasis. Some have contended that this prediction has not been fulfilled, because some of the sub-structures of the temple are supposed to be still remaining. Whether they are or not, the prophecy has been fulfilled. As the erection of the temple is spoken of as the laying of stone upon stone, (Hag. ii. 15,) so its demolition is described in the proverbial and figurative style adopted by the evangelists. The destruction of the city is predicted in the same terms, in Luke xix. 44. The utter ruin of the city and temple, though every stone had not been upturned, would have been the fulfillment of the prophecy. In this case, however, the words were almost literally fulfilled. Titus made great efforts to save the temple, but it was burnt by the soldiers; afterward he ordered them to dig up the foundations of the city and temple. The Talmud and Maimonides say that Terentius Rufus, who was left to command the army at Jerusalem, plowed up the foundations of the temple, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Micah iii. 12, "Therefore shall Zion for your sakes be plowed as a field." Eusebius says it was plowed up by the Romans, and he saw it lying in ruins. They burnt the extreme parts of the city and demolished the walls, leaving a part of one wall and three towers for the encamping of the soldiers, and to show what a strong city they had taken. They dug up the ruins in search of treasures. Eleazar said, God delivered his most holy city to be burnt and subverted by their enemies, and he wished they had all died before they saw that holy city demolished by the hands of their enemies, and the holy temple so wickedly dug up from the foundations. (See Jos. Wars, v.-vii.)

3. *As he sat upon the mount of Olives*,—Mark adds, "over against the temple"—opposite, there being but a narrow valley between. *The disciples*—Four of them, according to Mark—Peter, James, John, and Andrew. *Privately*,—Justly supposing that he would not make such disclosures to a promiscuous multitude. *These things*—The destruction of the temple and concomitant events. *The sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?*—Mark and Luke, "the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled." They associated the coming of Christ and the end of the Jewish state with the destruction of the temple, as synchronous events: the sign, or token, of the approaching destruction of the temple would be the sign also

of the coming of Christ and of the end of the Jewish age. Matthew does not here use *oikoumene*, the habitable world, as ver. 14; nor *kosmos*, this mundane globe, as ver. 21; nor *ge*, the earth, as distinguished from the heavens, as ver. 35; but *aión*, an age, cycle, or state: the Jews spoke of two ages, the one under the law, and the other under the Messiah: the disciples alluded to the conclusion of the former age and the beginning of the latter. This would, of course, take place, in their estimation—whatever worldly ideas they may have cherished—when the Jewish state was dissolved at the time of the destruction of the city and temple—these being the bond of union to the Jews and the scene of their solemnities. The disciples seem to have looked for a personal, visible advent of the Messiah to effect this revolution. Lightfoot: "The rabbins taught that at the coming of the Messiah there should be a resurrection of the just; this world should be wasted or ended, and a new one introduced for a thousand years; and after that eternity should succeed. The disciples ask when Christ will come, not finally to judgment, but in the demonstration of the Messiah, to produce this change." Whitby: "Nor is it to be wondered that the apostles, who had learned that the coming of the Messiah, and the end of the then present world, should be together, should thus inquire of them together; or that this should be styled the end of the Jewish age, Christ being styled, 'the Father of the age to come,' (Isa. ix. 6,) the age of Christianity, 'the age to come,' (Heb. vi. 5,) and 'the end of the ages;' 1 Cor. x. 11." Hammond: "As 'when all these things shall be fulfilled,' ver. 4, Mark, refers to the preceding verses, and is parallel to ver. 3, Matthew, 'what is the sign of his coming,' it clearly follows that the coming of Christ relates to the destruction of the temple. So also it is observable, that ver. 26, Mark, speaking throughout the chapter of this destruction of the Jewish nation, instead of 'then shall appear the sign of the Son of man,' ver. 30, Matthew, i.e., this signal punishment on the crucifiers, from Christ reigning in heaven, hath these plain words: 'then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds, in power and great glory.'"

4. *Take heed*—This earnest caution against being seduced by impostors was the more necessary as the disciples had vague views of the kingdom of Christ, and strong national prejudices; and as many pretenders would arise personating the Messiah, they would be deceived by some of them, if they were not on their guard.

5. *In my name*,—Not, on my authority, or, on my account, as in Luke ix. 49, but usurping my title—not asserting that they were the person Jesus. There have been many—some reckon 15—false Messiahs among the Jews from the 1st to the 17th century; but as Luke says "the time draweth near," it seems that the reference is to those impostors who appeared before the destruction of Jerusalem. Irenaeus and Theodoret say that Simon Magus told the Jews that he came as the Son of God. Josephus says that "while Fadus was procurator, (A.D. 45 or 46,) a certain magician, whose name was Theudas, persuaded many to follow him to the river Jordan; for he told them that he was a prophet, and that he would by his own

command divide the river, and afford them an easy passage; and many were deluded by his words." "The country was again filled with robbers and impostors, who deluded the multitude; yet did Felix catch and put to death many of these impostors every day." "These impostors and deceivers persuaded the multitude to follow them into the wilderness, and pretended that they would exhibit manifest wonders and signs that should be performed by the providence of God. There came out of Egypt about this time one who said he was a prophet, and advised the multitude to go along with him to Mount Olivet, which lay over against the city, at the distance of five furlongs. He said he would show them from thence how at his command the walls of Jerusalem would fall down. Felix slew 400 of them, and took 200 alive; but the Egyptian escaped." Ant. xx. "Another body of wicked men deceived and deluded the people under pretense of divine inspiration, but were for procuring innovations and changes of the government, and these prevailed with the multitude to act like madmen, and went before them into the wilderness, pretending that God would there show them the signals of liberty. But there was an Egyptian false prophet who did the Jews more mischief than the former, for he was a cheat, and pretended to be a prophet also, and got together 30,000 men who were deluded by him. These he led round about from the wilderness to the Mount of Olives," etc. Wars, ii. 13. At the time of the destruction of the temple, "a false prophet made a public proclamation in the city, that very day, that God commanded them to get up upon the temple, and that there they should receive miraculous signs of their deliverance. A great number of false prophets was suborned by the tyrants to impose upon the people. The miserable people were persuaded by these deceivers." Wars, vi. 5. How many of these impostors pretended to be the Messiah, Josephus does not say; but he says that they assumed the character of a national deliverer, which was that which the Jews considered characteristic of the Messiah. Dositheus, the Samaritan, pretended that he was the Messiah predicted by Moses—Jonathan, a weaver, persuaded many poor people to follow him into the desert, promising them that he would show them signs and apparitions: some of them were slain, others imprisoned, and he was burned alive by order of Vespasian.

6. *Ye shall hear*—Ye will have to hear. *Wars*,—Josephus has detailed many of them, Ant. xviii. 9. Wars, ii. 10; Tacitus His. v. 9. *Rumours of wars*:—As when Caligula ordered his statue to be set up in the temple, and the Jews opposing it, they were so apprehensive of a war that they omitted the cultivation of their lands. *See that*—Beware, Be not agitated with anxious thoughts concerning the issue, because these calamities must happen before the conclusion of the Jewish state, which will not be immediately. This is an assertion of the foreseen certainty of the events that shall precede the end, which is delayed till the gospel shall have been preached in all the world, (ver. 14,) and not of their necessity, as if they were to

take place by the pre-ordination of God. *The end*—(See on v. 3.) Cf. Ezek. vii. 2, 3, 6; 1 Thess. ii. 16; 1 Pet. iv. 7.

7. *Nation shall rise*—At Cesarea the Jews and Syrians contended about the right of the city, and 20,000 Jews were slain, and the rest banished. The whole nation of the Jews in retaliation plundered the cities and villages of the Syrians, and made an immense slaughter of the people, which was avenged by the Syrians in an equal slaughter of the Jews. Josephus says every city was divided into two armies. In Alexandria the Jews and Gentiles had fearful conflicts, many fell on both sides, the slain of the Jews amounting to 50,000. *Kingdom against kingdom*:—The Jews in Perea against the Philadelphians concerning their bounds; the Jews and Galileans against the Samaritans for the murder of some Galileans going up to the feast; the Jews against the Romans and Agrippa and other allies of the Romans; besides seditions and civil wars in Judea and in Italy, Otho and Vitellius contending for the empire. Rab. Eliezer said, "When ye see kingdom rising against Kingdom, then expect the immediate appearance of the Messiah." The prophecy seems to refer especially to intestine commotions in Palestine, or wars between the tetrarchies, as 2 Chron. xv. 5, 6, LXX. *Famines*,—One is mentioned, Acts xi. 28, and by Suetonius and Tacitus, of which Eusebius says, (Ec. His. ii. 8,) "In the reign of Claudius a famine prevailed over the whole earth." Jos. (Ant. xx. 2. 6) says many died in Jerusalem for want of food. *Pestilences*,—Which usually result from war and famine: so the adage, *meta limon loimos*, a similarity of sound and a natural connection. Josephus says, (Wars iv. 6. 1,) "When Niger was killed by the Zealots, he imprecated, besides other calamities, famine and pestilence, upon them, all which God ratified and brought to pass against the ungodly:" he uses the words of Matthew, *limon te kai loimon*. *Earthquakes*—Philostratus mentions earthquakes as taking place during that period in Crete Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, and Samos, where there were Jews. Tacitus mentions some at Rome and Laodicea, which also overthrew Hierapolis and Colosse. Seneca mentions one in Campania; Suetonius one in Rome; Josephus one in Judea: "There broke out a prodigious storm in the night, with the utmost violence, and very strong winds, with the largest showers of rain, with continual lightnings, terrible thunderings, and amazing concussions and bellowings of the earth that was in an earthquake. These things were a manifest indication that some destruction was coming upon men, when the system of the world was put into this disorder; and any one would guess that these wonders foreshadowed some great calamities that were coming." Wars, iv. 4. 5. Luke adds "fearful sights and great signs from heaven." (See Jos. Wars, vi. 5. 3; Tac. His. v. 13.)

8. *The beginning of sorrows*.—Literally, laboring pains, throes. Ps. xlvi. 6, (xlvi. LXX.) These first pangs are light, compared with the hard labor which is to follow. Le Clerc says, "The first calamities of the Jews under Caligula and

Claudius were not comparable to those from Nero to Adrian." The rabbins call the sufferings and disturbances that will precede the advent of the Lord, "the birth-pangs of the Messiah."

9. *Then*—At the time before "the end." Luke xxi. 12. *To be afflicted*,—To grievous affliction. Mark introduces it with the usual caution, that they might not be surprised or moved from the hope of the gospel, when the persecutions should come. The Christians were maltreated on account of those calamities, as if they were the occasion of them. *Shall kill you*:—I.e., some of you. Acts iv. 3; vii. 59; xii. 2; xvi. 23; xviii. 12; xxiv.-xxvi. (See on Matt. x. 17-19.) Eusebius says, Peter and Paul were martyred under Nero. Tertullian says it was *nominis proelium*, a war against the name: it was crime enough for a man, though possessed of every virtue, to be a Christian. Thus they were hated by all nations on account of his name. 1 Pet. iv. 12-19.

10. *Offended*,—Stumbled, ensnared, caused to apostatize. (See on Matt. xvi. 23.) *Betray*—The apostates would deliver up their former friends to their persecutors. *Hate*—Apostates generally prove the bitterest persecutors. 2 Tim. i. 15; iv. 16. Tacitus says, (Ann. xv. 44,) "At first several were seized who confessed, and then by their discovery, a great number of others were convicted and barbarously executed."

11. *Many false prophets*—The immediate connection, some think, indicates false apostles and teachers; (Acts viii. 9-11; 2 Cor. xi. 13; Gal. i. 7; 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18; 1 John iv. 1;) but the proper meaning of the terms seems to be favored by the part which those Jewish impostors acted in this great tragedy. (See on v. 5.) They pretended to a divine commission to proclaim deliverance from the Roman power.

12. *Iniquity*—Lawlessness: *cf.* Ezek. ix. 6. Because of the persecutions from without and the apostasies from within—the general prevalence of evil—the love of the greater part will be cooled. Gal. iii. 1; iv. 15; v. 7; 2 Tim. i. 15; iv. 10, 16; Heb. x. 25; Jas. *passim*; Rev. ii. 4; iii. 1-4, 15-19. It has been questioned whether this love refers to God or to the brethren: the Epistles show that many of the early converts cooled in their love to both God and their brethren. Horsley makes it "a devout attachment of affection to the religion of Christ, and a zeal for its interests"—which suits the place. Mark and Luke repeat the predictions and directions in Matt. x. 19, 21.

13. *But he that shall endure*—A proverbial form of expression applicable to any course of trial and service. Here it seems to refer to fidelity in the Christian profession amid all the persecutions and apostasies which should precede the final destruction of the Jewish state. In this sense, the prediction was strikingly verified, as none of the Christians perished in the destruction of Jerusalem. Christ told them in Luke, (ver. 17, 18,) that though they should be hated by all "yet for all that there

shall not a hair of your head perish"—a proverbial expression, meaning, none of you shall suffer in the general destruction. 1 Sam. xiv. 45; 2 Sam. xiv. 11; Matt. x. 30; Acts xxvii. 34. Though many of them, at other times, should die as martyrs, (ver 16, Luke,) yet none of them should perish with the wicked Jews in the destruction of Jerusalem. (See on v. 16.) This verse is parallel with Luke, ver. 19—"By your persevering endurance ye will preserve your lives."

14. *This gospel*—(See on Matt. iii. 2.) *Preached*—Proclaimed. *In all the world*,—In all the inhabited part of the earth. *For a witness*—The testimony concerning Christ as the Saviour of the world: so the word is used 1 Cor. i. 6; 1 Tim. ii. 6, 7; 2 Tim. i. 8. The Gentiles who embraced the testimony would of course testify against the Jews who rejected it; but that does not seem to be the point involved. *And then shall the end come*.—The article is used, perhaps, because *telos* is spoken of in the preceding verse; so the phrase in ver. 6 refers to the end of the Jewish state, ver. 3. By Nero's time the Christians had become so numerous at Rome as to raise the jealousy of the government and to elicit a bloody persecution. Clement, the fellow-laborer of Paul, says, "that apostle was a preacher both in the east and west—that he taught the whole world righteousness, and went as far as the utmost bounds of the west." By him and his brethren the gospel was preached in Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy; as far north as Scythia; south, to Ethiopia; east, to Parthia and India; west to Spain. Eusebius says the apostles "preached the gospel in all the world:" he says, "some of them passed beyond the ocean to the British isles." So Theodoret. By a common hyperbole, Paul says, (Col. i. 6, 23,) "the gospel is come unto you, as it is in all the world—which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature under heaven." In Rom. x. 18, as Bishop Newton says, "he very elegantly applies to the lights of the Church what the Psalmist said of the lights of heaven, 'their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.'" How unlikely was the fulfillment of this prediction when it was uttered!

15. *When ye, therefore, shall see*—Here is a sign for them: *cf.* ver. 3. The "therefore" refers to ver. 13, 14, and shows that these verses refer to the period preceding the fall of Jerusalem. *The abomination of desolation*,—Dan. ix. 27; xii. 11: the former we render, "for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate"—margin—"upon the battlements shall be the idols of the desolater." Theodotion (in LXX.): "and upon the temple abomination of desolations"—*bdelugma* is the common rendering in the LXX. of *toebah*, abomination, as in 2 Kings xxiii. 13, where it is used for an idol; and of *shikkutz*, in Daniel. *Cf.* Dan. xi. 31; Rev. xvii. 4, 5; xxi. 27. It means something very loathsome and detestable: "the abominable desolation," or "the desolating abomination." In Maccabees it is interpreted of the temple desecrated by order of Antiochus: "They set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar." 1 Macc. i. 54; vi. 7; 2 Macc. vi. 1-5. Josephus (Ant. x. 11. 7) alludes to the spoiling of the

temple by Antiochus, and says, "In the very same manner Daniel also wrote concerning the Roman government, and that our country should be made desolate by them." Lardner says, "As the Roman ensigns, especially the eagle which was carried at the head of every legion, were objects of worship, they are, according to the usual style of Scripture, called an abomination." As idolaters, the Romans were abominable; as conquerors, they desolated the temple and city. *Stand in the holy place*,—The environs of Jerusalem, "the holy city," several furlongs around which were considered holy. The parallel in Luke reads, "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, know that the desolation thereof is nigh." Josephus (Ant. xviii. 5. 3) says, when Vitellius was about marching his army through Judea against the Arabians, "the principal men met him, and desired that he would not thus march through their land; for that the laws of their country would not permit them to overlook those images which were brought into it, of which there were a great many in their ensigns; so he was persuaded by what they said, and changed his resolution." This was about the time of Christ; and it seems to imply that the Romans were not accustomed to set up their ensigns to be worshipped in Judea, as they did elsewhere. As the holy place is used for the temple, (Isa. lx. 13; LXX.; and also apparently in Acts vi. 13; xxi. 28, though without the article,) and as the LXX. in Daniel have the temple, some think this is intended—the article may have been omitted in view of the contrast, q.d., "an unholy thing in a holy place." Josephus says, "After the city was taken, the Romans brought their ensigns into the temple, and placed them over against the eastern gate, and sacrificed to them there." But when this took place, flight was impossible; so that it seems best to take the phrase in a larger sense. The abomination began to show itself when the idolatrous standards were set up around the city, and reached its consummation when they were exhibited in the temple. *Daniel the prophet*,—By so designating him, Christ confirms the prophetic claims of Daniel, which were questioned by many, whence he is placed in the *Hagiographa*. (*Whoso readeth, let him understand*,)—A N.B. of Christ's, like, "He that hath ears," etc.—Apply the mind, ponder, consider—perhaps suggested by Daniel's, "Know, therefore, and understand." The abruptness of the admonition gives it force.

16. *Then*—This favors the view which makes the holy place the city, and not the temple, as our Lord doubtless intended them to flee before the siege began, and not when Titus put the ensigns on the temple after the taking of the city. *Let them which be in Judea*—The inhabitants of Judea as distinguished from those of Jerusalem, the latter being specified by Luke—"Let those in the city make their escape; and let not those in the country enter the city." Josephus (Wars, ii. 19. 6; 20. 1) says, "When Cestius Gallus came with his army against Jerusalem, many fled from the city as if it would be taken presently, and after his retreat many of the noble Jews departed out of the city, as out of a sinking ship; and a few years

afterward, when Vespasian was drawing his forces toward Jerusalem, a great multitude fled from Jericho into the mountainous country for their security." That some of these were Christians, appears from Eusebius, (Ecc. His. iii. 5,) who says, "The whole body of the Church at Jerusalem having been commanded by a divine revelation, removed from the city, and dwelt at a certain town beyond the Jordan, called Pella. Here those who believed in Christ, having removed from Jerusalem, as if holy men had entirely abandoned the royal city itself, and the whole land of Judea, the divine justice, for their crimes against Christ and his apostles, finally overtook the Jews," etc. Alford thinks Eusebius did not allude to this passage, because Pella is not on the mountains, but beyond them! He answers his own objection by adding, "But in order to reach it, would they not have to fly exactly *epi*, over, along, across the mountains?" Pella, according to Josephus, (Wars, iii. 3. 3,) was the northern boundary of Perea—now Fahil. Doubtless, many tarried in the mountains, as they afforded places of refuge, as natural strongholds, caves, etc. Grotius and Le Clerc say these mountains were north-east, toward the source of the Jordan, in the territories of Agrippa, who continued faithful to the Romans.

17. *The house-top*—The flat roof of the house being a place of resort, for retirement and observation. Dr. Shaw says the stairs which lead to the roof are never placed on the outside of the house in the street, but usually at the gateway, or passage-room in the court; sometimes at the entrance within the court. In making a hasty escape, a man would rush down the stairs to the gateway into the street, and not enter into any of the rooms of the house. Some suggest that the fugitive would run along the tops of the houses, which formed continued terraces, and descend a stairway at the city gate: he would be quite likely to do so, if there were such arrangements. *Any thing*—The best reading is perhaps "the things"—let him not stop to remove his furniture. So Luke xvii. 31.

18. *Return back*—Let not the laborer return from the field to get his outer garments, which were left at home, as he worked in the field without them. (See on Matt. v. 40.) Whitby renders *arai* here (though not in ver. 17) "to take up," which favors the notion that the clothes were such as were laid off at the entrance of the field. Both views may be embraced. *Cf.* Hesiod, Op. ii. 9; Virg. Georg. i. 299.

19. *Wo unto them*—Alas! for those: such persons not being in a condition to flee or to endure the hardships of the siege. Josephus (Wars, v. 10; v. 12; vi. 3; vi. 9) says the houses were full of women and children who perished by famine; mothers snatched the food out of their infants' mouths; and Mary, daughter of Eleazar, of a rich and illustrious family, boiled her child and ate him! Deut. xxviii. 56, 57; Luke xxiii. 28-30.

20. *In the winter*,—When the season is severe, the days short, and the roads bad. *Sabbath-day*:—As day is not in the original, some think the sabbatical year

is meant; but this was not then so regarded as to allow of this interpretation. The weekly Sabbath was regarded by both Jews and Christians; and though the latter were not bound to observe the superstitious refinements of the Jews, as, e.g., not to travel more than five furlongs on the Sabbath, yet some think this was spoken in condescension to Jewish prejudices; or that they might not excite the indignation of the Jews, but not thereby to establish the Jewish Sabbath. It is sufficient, however, to know that the gates of all Jewish towns were closed on the Sabbath, which would hinder their movements. Neh. xiii. 19. On Christ's own principles they might lawfully save their lives by flight on the Sabbath. Matt. xii. 10-12. This is added by Matthew only, who wrote principally for Jewish readers. It may be supposed that our Lord's instructions were regarded by the Christians—that they did thus pray; and if they did, they obtained that for which they prayed. This shows the power of prayer—that on it are suspended important contingencies. The movements of the Roman army were thus controlled by the prayers of a few obscure Christians. Jesus told them to flee when Jerusalem should be encompassed with armies. In the 12th year of Nero, Cestius Gallus came against Jerusalem with a powerful army. Josephus (Wars, ii. 19. 4) says he could have readily taken it, but without any just reason, and contrary to all expectations, he raised the siege and departed. Vespasian coming in his room, (iv. 9. 1, 2,) having subdued all the country, prepared to besiege Jerusalem, and inclosed the city on every side; but the disturbances consequent on the death of Nero and Galba, caused him to postpone the prosecution of the war; so that the siege was not carried on till Vespasian came to the throne and Titus took command of the forces in Judea. The Christians availed themselves of these delays by providing for their own safety. It would have been too late if they had remained till Titus cast the trench about the city, spoken of in Luke xix. 43; Jos. Wars, v. 12. 1, 2. The evacuation of Judea by Cestius, when the Christians probably retired to Pella, was in November: the season called winter, *cheimon*, by our Lord, was probably February.

21. *For then shall be great tribulation*,—Hyperboles of this sort are proverbial. Ex. x. 14; Dan. xii. 1; Joel ii. 2. But if taken literally, the statement seems to be true; for what people ever suffered such miseries as Josephus says the Jews experienced during the war? Indeed, in describing them, he naturally uses the very language of Christ's prophecy, Wars, Pref. and v. 10. 5: "Of all the cities which were subjected to the Romans, ours was advanced to the highest felicity, and was thrust down again to the extremest misery; for if the misfortunes of all from the beginning of the world were compared with those of the Jews, they would appear much inferior. No other city ever suffered such things, as no other generation from the beginning of the world was ever more fruitful of wickedness." *No, nor ever shall be*.—The triple negative in the Greek is very emphatic.

22. *And except those days*—The times of tribulation which preceded the final stroke of the Romans. Hence Bishop Newton interprets, "If these wars and desolations were to continue, none of the Jews would escape destruction. But for the sake of the Christian Jews those days shall be shortened. *The elect* is a well-known appellation in Scripture and antiquity for the Christians; and the Christian Jews, partly through the fury of the Zealots on the one hand, and the hatred of the Romans on the other, and partly through the difficulty of subsisting in the mountains without houses or provisions, would in all probability have been almost all destroyed either by the sword or by famine, if the days had not been shortened. But providentially the days were shortened. Titus himself was desirous of putting a speedy end to the siege. The besieged too helped to shorten the days by their divisions and mutual slaughters; by burning their provisions, which would have sufficed for many years; and by fatally deserting their strongest holds, where they never could have been taken by force, but by famine alone. By these means the days were shortened. Titus himself could not but ascribe his successes to God, as he was viewing the fortifications after the city was taken. 'We have fought,' said he, 'with God on our side; and it is God who hath pulled the Jews out of these strongholds; for what could the hands of men or machines do against these towers?' God, therefore, in the opinion of Titus, shortened the days. After the destruction of Jerusalem, too, God inclined the heart of Titus to take some pity upon the remnant of the Jews, and to restrain the nations from exercising the cruelty that they would have exercised toward them. At Antioch, particularly, the senate and people earnestly importuned him to expel the Jews out of the city; but he prudently answered, that their country whither they should return being laid waste, there was no place that could receive them. Thus for the elect's sake those days of persecution were shortened." Christians are styled the elect, Matt. xxii. 16; Luke xviii. 7; 1 Pet. ii. 9; Clem. Rom. ad Cor. i.; Ignatius ad Eph. 29. Grotius says "his elect whom he hath chosen"—in Mark—is a pleonasm familiar to the Hebrews. But it is not exactly a pleonasm, as it states by whom they were chosen, or considered worthy. Le Clerc says, "The elect are the *chosen* in opposition to the *called*, those to whom the gospel was preached and by whom it was rejected." By the elect some understand the Jews, they being a chosen race; but they are rather understood by "flesh"—men—as we say nobody would have been saved, or every soul would have been destroyed, meaning no person would have been spared. That a community or nation may be saved by a few pious persons in it, is clear from Scripture. Gen. xviii. That this was so in regard to the Jews is sufficiently obvious, though Olshausen says, "In the fall of Jerusalem this principle was but imperfectly realized." He forgets that the whole country, as well as the capital, was involved in the miseries of the war; and that the Christian Jews could have no rest while it lasted—hence for their sake it was speedily brought to a close.

23. *Then if any man*—He had predicted that false Christs and false prophets would arise, but now he intimates that they would be in special danger of being deceived by them, about the time of the siege. (See on v. 5, 11.)

24. *Shall shew*—Exhibit. *Great signs and wonders*;—Feats of pretended magic, like those of Simon Magus, (Acts viii. 9-11,) and those of Barchochebas, the false Messiah, who pretended to vomit flames. Jerome Adv. Ruf. iii. Grotius says he was so called, from Chochaba, a town in Galilee. He was besieged by Adrian in Bither—the city raised around the few towers left by Titus at Jerusalem. On his being slain, the Jews called him Barchozbas, the son of falsehood. Grotius applies our Lord's words to him, Jonathan of Cyrene, and others who appeared after the fall of the city; but the reference is more likely to those impostors that Josephus says appeared during the siege. (See on v. 5, 11.) Grotius says that the false prophets were those who explained the prophecies in favor of the false Messiahs—not unlikely. Augustin says these were wonders, not miracles—there is a difference between the miracles of a magician and those of a saint; their aim is different; their authority is different.—Yes, and their character is different—the former being pretended, the latter real. *If it were possible*,—Bloomfield, after Origen, Theophylact, Le Clerc, Grotius, Whitby, says, "This does not imply impossibility, but only extreme difficulty in the performance of what is possible: so Matt. xxvi. 39; Acts xx. 16; Rom. xii. 18; and therefore this text ought never to have been adduced to prove the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints." It must have been certainly a moral impossibility, if not a philosophical one, for such mountebanks to deceive true Christians, who knew very well that Jesus Christ was in heaven, and that the events that were then transpiring were fulfillments of his prophecies, and so proofs of his Messiahship. It is no marvel that the unbelieving Jews were deceived thereby; for none are so gullible as stubborn infidels. Though as Jews the Christians were exposed to great danger from this source, as their patriotism, as well as hereditary national prejudices and the like, would naturally incline them to look for such a deliverance as these pretenders promised, yet their experience of the truth and power of Christianity seems to have borne them safely through all those trials.

25. *Behold*,—See, I have forewarned you. This emphatic caution implies danger. (See on v. 4.)

26. *Behold, he is*—The dupes of a false Messiah would thus use the pronoun for the appellative, as this style was common in speaking of the Messiah. *In the desert*;—Where these impostors frequently appeared, as they could there more readily rally their adherents. *In the secret chambers*;—In one or other of the secret apartments, as, e.g., in the temple. (See on v. 5.) Le Clerc: "Believe not if false Messiahs, or those who pretend to deliver Israel from the yoke of the Romans, appear in public, as Simon, who had an army of 40,000 in the desert; or are said

to be in concealment in secret places, ready to appear. *Tameion* is the treasury of a city, or the storehouse of a private dwelling—hence any private chamber. Gen. xliii. 30; Ex. viii. 3, LXX. The Christians might have supposed that Christ himself had returned, and was ready to rescue his country from the Romans."

27. *For as the lightning*—Whitby says well, "You will then need none to instruct you where Christ is, or to say to you, He is here, or there; for by the Roman army which shall pass through the territories of the Jews like lightning, his coming shall be manifest." Bishop Newton: "His coming will not be in this or that particular place, but like the lightning will be sudden and universal." Bishop Pearce: "The Roman army entered Judea on the east side of it, and carried on their conquests westward, as if not only the extensiveness of the ruin, but the very route which the army would take, was intended in the comparison of the lightning coming out of the east, and shining over into the west." Thus he would not come secretly, but publicly, and suddenly—not as a deliverer of the nation, but as a Judge, to be known "by the judgment which he should execute." Lucan says of Alexander:

———Fulmenque, quod omnes
Percuteret pariter populos.

28. *For wheresoever the carcass is*,—The Jewish nation, which was morally and judicially dead. The proverb is taken apparently from Job xxxix. 40, and expresses the certainty and extent of the destruction. So Bishop Newton: "Wheresoever the Jews are, there will be Christ, taking vengeance upon them by the Romans, who are properly compared to eagles, as the fiercest birds of prey, and whose ensign was the eagle." Deut. xxviii. 49; Isa. xlvi. 11; Jer. iv. 13; xlviii. 40; xlix. 22; Lam. iv. 19; Hos. viii. 1. Homer says (Il. xvii. 675) the eagle has the sharpest sight among the birds of heaven. So Horace, Sat. iii. Isidore. says, When floating above the reach of the human eye, he can discern a little fish swimming below. Damir, a famous Arabian writer, says the eagle can discover a carcass at the distance of 400 parasangs—and that he will eat it. Pliny says the eagle is the only bird that is not hurt by lightning, and so it can instantly seize on animals killed thereby; and in view of ver. 27, some suggest there is an allusion to this. As eagles rarely feed on carrion, the bird here meant is thought to be the *gupactos*, (*vultur percnopterus*,) which the ancients referred to the eagle genus. But eagles will eat animals newly killed—proverbs, however, are not to be rigidly analyzed. Josephus says there was no part of Judea which did not partake of the calamities of the capital; and when Judea was totally subdued, those who dwelt in other places became victims—many were slain in Egypt, where their temple was shut up; 3,000 of the richest Jews in Cyrene were put to death.

29. *Immediately after the tribulation of those days*,—The tribulation spoken of ver. 21, connected with the destruction of Jerusalem. It is useless to try to make

these words yield any other sense. The imagery refers to the destruction of the Jewish state. It is the common style of prophecy, the same symbolism being employed to depict the ruin of Babylon, Isa. xiii. 9, 10; Egypt, Ezek. xxxii. 7, 8; of the Jews by Antiochus, Dan. viii. 10; and of this very catastrophe, Joel ii. 30, 31. *The powers of the heavens shall be shaken*:—*Dunameis* stands for the hosts of heaven in the LXX. Isa. xxxiv. 4; Dan. viii. 10: the heavenly bodies shall be shaken and shall fall from their orbits. Some think there is a reference to the obscuration of the heavenly bodies which Josephus says took place during the siege of Jerusalem, and which frequently attends earthquakes; but it seems best to understand it of the rulers of the Jewish Church and state, agreeably to the prophetic style. "Immediately" cannot mean suddenly; nor does it belong to ver. 28. There is no force in the objection of Olshausen, that "the destruction itself, the so-called invisible coming of Christ, is the tribulation:" the tribulation continued for some time; and after "the tribulation of those days" (not including the future ill fortunes of the Jews, alluded to Luke xxi. 24) the Jewish state was dissolved by this "invisible coming of Christ." The powers of the heaven were then indeed shaken; for no fewer than 1,200 of the Jewish nobility perished at that time; and since then darkness has covered "the heaven of that state which once glowed so richly with the bright lights of the various orders of dignified and holy men." Hag. ii. 6 and Heb. xii. 26 sanction this view. Olshausen's objection that the reference cannot be to "political or ecclesiastical relations and their dissolution, for political disturbances have already been spoken of ver. 7," is of no force, because the political disturbance in ver. 7 are those which preceded the dissolution of the Jewish state spoken of in this verse. Bishop Warburton says (Div. Leg. iv. 4), "This prophecy doth not respect Christ's second coming to judgment, but his first, in the abolition of the Jewish policy and the establishment of the Christian, that kingdom of Christ which commenced on the total ceasing of the theocracy. As in the hieroglyphic writing, the sun, moon, and stars, were used to represent states and empires, kings, queens, and nobility, their eclipse and extinction, temporary disaster, or entire overthrow, so in like manner the holy prophets call kings and empires by the names of the heavenly luminaries, their misfortunes and overthrow are represented by eclipses and extinction; stars falling from the firmament are employed to denote the destruction of the nobility, and, in a word, the prophetic style seems to be a speaking hieroglyphic." The Talmud uses these figures in describing the ruin of a great family. Maimonides says, "This metaphor imports that men, who for their state and dignity, might be compared to the sun, moon, and stars, shall suddenly fall down as a leaf from the vine and fig-tree." This happened before the destruction of Jerusalem, when the nobility and priests were destroyed. Jos. Wars, iv., v. Joel said it was to happen at that time—it cannot therefore be referred to any thing subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem.

30. *The sign of the Son of man*—Olshausen's notion that this sign is a star, in allusion to Num. xxiv. 17, is only less absurd than that of Jerome, Alford, and others, that it is the cross; or of others, the clouds—the star of the magicians—the spread of the gospel—the *sound* of the trumpet—the first resurrection—the appearance of a son of man at that time in the holy of holies—the prodigies seen in the sky, according to Jos. Wars, vii. 31: which happened before the revolt from the Romans and the beginning of the war. Wetstein's suggestion that it is the smoke of the burning city obscuring the sun and moon, is inadmissible. Buxtorf shows that as the sign of Jonas is the sign which is Jonas, so the sign of the Son of man is the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven; and this is confirmed by the parallels in Mark and Luke, where instead of the sign of the Son of man, it is, they shall see the Son of man. So Matt. xxvi. 64. Whitby paraphrases, "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man, *who is* in heaven." Bishop Newton well observes, "The plain meaning is, that the destruction of Jerusalem will be such a remarkable instance of divine vengeance, such a signal manifestation of Christ's power and glory, that all the Jewish tribes shall mourn; and many will thence be led to acknowledge Christ and the Christian religion. In the ancient prophets God is frequently described as coming in the clouds upon any remarkable interposition and manifestation of his power; and the same description is here applied to Christ. The destruction of Jerusalem will be as ample a manifestation of Christ's power and glory as if he were himself to come visibly in the clouds of heaven." That these figures may be used to describe the last advent of Christ is clear; but they are generally used in prophecy to set forth special interpositions of Providence, as in this case. There seems to be particular reference to Dan. vii. 13; Zech. xii. 12, *cf.* Isa. xix. 1; Nah. i. 3. By the tribes of the earth, Chrysostom and the best modern critics understand the inhabitants of Judea: *cf.* ver. 23 in Luke, where *ge* is rendered "land." *Power and great glory*.—Regal majesty—not the less powerful and glorious for his being personally invisible.

31. *And he shall send his angels*—The prophetic style is still preserved. Newton says, "It meaneth only that after the destruction of Jerusalem, Christ, by his angels, or ministers, will gather to himself a glorious Church out of all the nations under heaven. The Jews shall be thrust out; (Luke xiii. 28, 29;) and they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. Hardly any thing contributed more to this success of the gospel than the destruction of Jerusalem falling out as foretold by our Saviour." *A great sound of a trumpet*,—Parkhurst says, "It denotes the preaching of the gospel, in allusion to the assembling of the Israelitish people by the sound of trumpets." Num. x; Isa. xxvii. 13; lviii. 1; Jer. vi. 17; Rom. x. 8. The approach of great men was announced by sound of trumpet. Matthew, writing for Jews alone, has this. *Elect*—Those who on their faith in Christ are chosen by God to the inheritance of the peculiar privileges of his people, as the Israelites were of old.

Ex. xix. 5, 6; Isa. xli. 8, 9; 1 Pet. i. 2; ii. 9, 10. The trumpet of the gospel not only awakens sinners, but also musters "the sacramental host of Gods elect." *The four winds*—The four cardinal points. Isa. xliii. 5, 6; Dan. vii. 2; viii. 8; xi. 4; Zech. ii. 6; Rev. vii. 1: all quarters of the globe, repeated by emphasis. *From one end of heaven to the other*.—The horizon, where the heaven and earth seem to meet. There appears no necessity of limiting this to Jewish believers in all parts of Judea, or scattered through the world—they, of course, are included.

32. *Now learn a parable*—Note the illustration of this subject which the fig-tree affords. *When his branch is yet tender*,—When its branch shoots forth in its tender state. *Leaves*,—The leaves, e.g., suited to the season. The fig-tree cursed (Matt. xxi. 19) may have suggested the allusion; but Luke adds, "and all the trees." *Summer*—The warm season, which among the Jews embraced a part of the spring, as the winter embraced a part of the autumn; the year being divided into summer and winter.

33. *All these things*,—The events which were to precede the destruction of Jerusalem, described in the preceding verses. Mark and Luke have "coming to pass"—"in process of fulfillment." *It is near*,—Cranmer and others, "he is nigh:" if rendered as a neuter, it means the coming of the Son of man, or "the kingdom of God," (Luke xxi. 31,) which is the same thing. *Even at the doors*.—A metaphor denoting the closest proximity. Jas. v. 8, 9. This answers the question (ver. 3) as to the time.

34. *This generation*—Mede and others say the Jews, who as a race should continue till all the counsels of God relating to them shall be fulfilled. But what has this to do with the proximity of the event in question? Stier and others fail in the attempt to prove that it means a nation, or stock. It means a race of men of common origin living at the same time. (See on Matt. xxiii. 36; Num. xxxii. 13.) *All these things* were fulfilled before the men of that generation had passed away: a great many of them were living when the predicted events began to transpire, and some of them were alive when the city was destroyed, which was about forty years after the death of Christ. (See on Matt. xvi. 28.) "These words," says Whitby, "afford a full demonstration that all which Christ had mentioned hitherto was to be accomplished, not at the time of the conversion of the Jews, or at the final day of judgment, but in that very age, or whilst some of that generation of men lived; for 'this generation' never bears any other sense in the New Testament than the men of this age. So Matt. xi. 16; xii. 42, 43; xxiii. 36; Mark viii. 12; Luke vii. 31; xi. 29, 32, 50, 51; xvi. 8; Acts ii. 40. This is farther evident, because the kingdom of God was then instant, and at the door. Luke xxi. 29, 31."

35. *Heaven and earth*—(See on Matt. v. 18.) Schleusner: "None of my predictions concerning Jerusalem shall be unfulfilled."

36. *But of that day*—Some interpret: "The destruction of the Jews shall be presently, but the last day of judgment is known to none"—S. Clarke adds, "Yet the sense may be carried on entire, without the opposition." It must be—there is no ground for this opposition. The period referred to by that day and hour is obviously the precise time when the events in question should take place. Our Lord could tell them that it should be in that generation, but he could not tell them the precise time. Hence in Mark "the Son" is included, as well as men and angels. Hammond on Heb. x. 25 refers to Zech. xiv. 1; Luke xvii. 24, 30; xix. 43; and many other passages to show that "that day" refers to the destruction of Jerusalem. Whitby and Lightfoot: "The foreknowledge of things to come of which the discourse here is, is to be numbered among those things which flowed from the anointing of the Holy Ghost, and from his immediate revelation; not from the hypostatic union of the natures; so that those things which were revealed by Christ to his Church he had them from the revelation of the Spirit, not from that union. Nor is it any derogation or detraction from the dignity of his person that he saith he knew not that day and hour of the destruction of Jerusalem; yea, it excellently agrees with his office and deputation, who being the Father's servant, messenger, and minister, followed the orders of the Father and obeyed him in all things. John xii. 49; vii. 16; xiv. 10; v. 20; iii. 34, 35." Some think because Jesus speaks of God as the Father, that therefore he does not recognize the tripersonality of the Godhead; but as God was commonly styled the Father when there was no occasion to recognize any personal distinctions, this is not incompatible with such distinctions, or their recognition in other places. So Christ may deny of himself in his human, or his mediatorial capacity, what he predicates of himself in his divine character. Matt. xxviii. 20; John xiv. 23; Luke ii. 52; John xvi. 30; Acts i. 7. *Angels of heaven*,—Thus distinguished from the angels of ver. 31.

37. *But as the days of Noe*—As sudden and unexpected as was Noah's flood, so shall be the destruction of Jerusalem to the Jews.

38. *Eating and drinking*,—They were engaged in the usual occupations of life; though from ver. 49 and Luke xxi. 34, it is likely the sensuality of the antediluvians is implied—including the intemperate use of wine, which was not therefore first used by Noah. Gen. ix. This allusion is found in another connection in Luke xvii. 26, where the ruin of the Jewish nation is the topic. In that place there is also a reference to the destruction of Sodom, whose inhabitants are represented as eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, until the day of their destruction. The reference to this catastrophe suggested an admonition to a hasty retreat from the city, enforced by the example of Lot's wife, whose temporizing cost her her life.

39. *Knew not*—Did not regard the judgment, though it had been threatened. Jackson: "Generally, when the fullness of any national iniquity is come, (wherein

their decrepit age consisteth,) they grow more and more incredulous, so as to verify the Latin proverb concerning old men, *Nullus senex veneratur Jovem.*"

40. *Then shall two be in the field;*—Two men at work. *Shall be taken,*—Rescued from the calamity to which the other is left.

41. *Two women*—The participle *grinding* being feminine in the original, the rendering is proper. The *mulon* was a hand-mill with two stones, turned by hand, sometimes by two persons, generally females. Ex. xi. 5.

42. *Therefore;*—This shows that the watching refers to what precedes. *For ye know not*—Seeing that ye know not—alluding to ver. 36.

43. *Know this,*—Ye know this. *Good man of the house*—House-holder. (See on Matt. x. 25.) *Watch*—(See on Matt. xiv. 25.) Here a knowledge of the time is a motive to watchfulness, while the want of that knowledge is the motive in the case illustrated; but the moment of the burglar's coming sustains a relation to the watch, of three hours' length, like that the day and the hour sustained to the period of that generation, ver. 34, 36. Any one notified that his house was in danger of being robbed during a certain watch, would stand on guard all the three hours to prevent it. Whitby says "The metaphor of Christ's coming as a thief, i.e., unexpectedly, doth not prove that these words must respect Christ's coming to the final judgment only, they being used touching his coming unexpectedly, to execute any judgment on a Church or nation. Rev. iii. 3. Some probably conjecture they are used 1 Thess. v. 2 with a relation to this judgment on the Jews, which being the most signal prelude to and proof of that final judgment, may well be represented in a similitude used 2 Pet. iii. 10, Luke xii. 32, 40 with relation to it." Rev. xvi. 15. *Broken up.*—(See on Matt. vi. 19, 20.)

44. *Therefore*—As the householder would watch if he knew the time when the thief would come, much more should you be prepared, that is, always watching, since you are certain the Son of man will come in this generation, but you know not the precise time. Seneca cites a Greek fragment: "So dine, as if you were to sup in hades."

45. *Who*—Chrysostom says the "who" is meant to express how rare and valuable such servants are: as a question, it leads to self-examination, "Am I such?" *Then*—In view of the foregoing. *Wise*—Prudent, attentive—it is the part of prudence to be *faithful*. *Whom his lord*—Whom his master has placed over his house-servants. *Meat*—Food—an allotted portion of grain (Luke) distributed for food at set times to the slaves of a family. Terence speaks of the *demensum* of Geta, a slave: on which Donatus says this was the allowance of corn to a slave for a month—about 6 pecks. *In due season?*—Dispense to them regularly their allowance. A trusty servant—*doulos*, slave, not a hired servant—was frequently made overseer of his fellow-servants—the custom still obtains. He is called

oikonomos, house-manager, or steward, who had authority over the other servants and general management of the household. Thus was Eliezer, Abraham's slave. Gen. xv. 2; xxiv. 2. So Joseph, Potiphar's slave.

46. *Blessed*—It will be well with that servant whom his master at his return shall find thus employed.

47. *He shall make him ruler*—He will intrust him with the management of all his estate—so Campbell: *cf.* Matt. xxv. 20-23.

48. *But and if*—But if. *That*—Implying definiteness. Campbell: "But as to the vicious servant." (See on Matt. xxv. 26.) It supposes the case of a wicked servant, in opposition to the good servant, ver. 45. *Say in his heart*,—A Hebraism for think. Ps. xiv. 1. *My lord*—My master delays to come.

49. *And shall begin to smite*—Campbell, as usual, considers "begin" pleonastic, and renders, "and shall beat." Stier and others think it denotes that he began well, but fell away from his truth and faithfulness. Whitby: "The evil servant seems to be the apostatizing Jew, who, having deserted the faith himself, was instrumental to smite his fellow-servants, and to betray them to the enemies of Christianity, as our Lord foretold, Matt. x. 21; xxiv. 10; and that which induced them to apostatize, was this very imagination, that our Lord delayed his coming to deliver them." *Eat and drink*—Feast and carouse. Luke xii. 45. *With the drunken*;—So out of place and character for a steward.

50. *The lord of that servant*—That servant's master. *Shall come*—Will arrive. *The day and hour* refer to ver. 36. *Aware of*,—Knows.

51. *Cut him asunder*,—Severely scourge him—the punishment inflicted on bad servants: the metaphor is common, cutting to pieces meaning whipping severely. (See on Matt. xxi. 35; Luke xii. 47.) *Hypocrites*:—In Luke, "faithless." Campbell renders "perfidious," and says, "It appears to denote sometimes in the LXX. an unprincipled person, one unworthy of trust. In the New Testament it commonly, not always, refers to religious dissimulation; but in a parable, whose literal sense regards secular affairs, the term ought not to be so much limited." Macknight says that as slaves were made stewards because of their good qualities, these must have been counterfeited in this case, and by consequence he was a hypocrite. Le Clerc: "With those servants who deceived their master with false pretenses to frugality and probity. The idea of appointing a portion seems taken from the division of booty amongst soldiers. Job xx. 29; Ps. xi. 6. Slaves who were grievous offenders were often condemned to work in the mines or quarries, where the groans and lamentations were excessive. Josephus (Wars, vi. 44) says this happened at this time to many of the Jews. In a higher and second sense, it relates to a future life." (See on Matt. viii. 12.) Caryl: "Hypocrites are as the free-holders of hell; other sinners are but as inmates, and have but a portion of their misery."

CHAPTER XXV.

1 *The parable of the ten virgins, 14 and of the talents.* 31 *Also the description of the last judgment.*

XXV.—1. *Then shall the kingdom of heaven*—The contents of this chapter are peculiar to Matthew, though Luke (xix. 11) records a parable much like that of the talents, ver. 14. The two parables and the description of the last judgment may have been spoken on a different occasion from that of the discourse in chap. xxiv.; but the *tote*, then, seems to connect the parables with that chapter, as illustrative of it. The primary reference would therefore seem to be to the circumstances connected with the introduction of the gospel dispensation and the abolition of the Jewish state as predicted in chap. xxiv. As parables, these discourses are susceptible of various applications, though they may have been primarily designed to illustrate the preceding predictions. *Ten virgins*,—Ten was a favorite number with the Jews. 1 Sam. i. 8; Ecc. vii. 19; Luke xv. 8; xix. 13. Ten formed a congregation; and a rabbinical writer says ten was the usual number on wedding occasions—the seven blessings of the bridegroom were not said but in the presence of ten. *Lamps*,—Harmer says, "Lamps, wax-candles, torches, lanterns, and cresset-lights, are all made use of among the Eastern people. There are only three words in the New Testament to express these things by, of which *luchnos* seems to signify the common lamps used in ordinary life, Luke xv. 8 [see on Matt. v. 15]; which, according to Norden, affords but little light [but *cf.* Luke xii. 35; John v. 35; Rev. xxi. 23]; *lampas*, John xviii. 3, ["torches": English version,] seems to mean any sort of light that shines brighter than common, whether torches, blazing resinous pieces of wood, or hemsps that are supplied with more than ordinary quantities of oil, or other unctuous substances. Such, I presume, were the lamps in the parable of the virgins, which were something of the nature of common lamps, for they were supplied with oil, but then were supposed to be sufficient for enlightening the company they were to meet, on a very joyful occasion, which required the most vigorous lights. Sir J. Chardin in his MS. note on Matt. xxv. 4, informs us that in many parts of the East, instead of torches and flambeaux, they carry a pot of oil in one hand, and a lamp full of oily rags in the other. This seems to be a very happy illustration of this part of the parable. The other word [*phanos*,] John xviii. 3, is nowhere else in the New Testament; and whether it specially means the lanterns, as our translators render the word, I do not certainly know. If it doth, I conclude that it signifies such linen lanterns as Dr. Pococke gives an account of; and if so, perhaps they came with such lanterns as people were wont to make use of when abroad in the night; but lest the weakness of the light should give an opportunity to Jesus to escape, many of them had torches, or such large and bright burning lamps as were made use of on nuptial solemnities, the more effectually to secure him." *To meet the bridegroom*.—The Cambridge and some other MSS., followed by the Syriac, Armenian, Vulgate, and

Saxon, add, "and the bride." Campbell says, "The internal evidence arising from the customs is clearly against the addition. The virgins conducted the bride as her companions from her father's house. The bridegroom went out from his own house to meet them, and to bring her home with joy and festivity." Wesley differs: "The bridesmaids on the wedding night were wont to go to the house where the bride was, with burning lamps and torches in their hands, to wait for the bridegroom's coming. When he drew near, they went to meet him with their lamps, and to conduct him to the bride." Trench differs from both: "The bridegroom, accompanied by his friends, ('the children of the bride-chamber,' Matt. ix. 15; 'the friends of the bridegroom,' John iii. 29; see Judg. xiv. 11,) goes to the house of the bride, and brings her with pomp and gladness (1 Macc. ix. 37-39) to his own house, or occasionally, should that be too mean, to some larger apartment provided for the occasion. She is accompanied from her father's house by her young friends and companions, (Ps. xlv. 15; Pindar, Pyth. 3,) while other of them, the virgins of the parable, at some convenient place meet and join the procession, and enter with the rest of the bridal company into the hall of feasting." This was probably the usual order; but it may not have been always followed in all places. Lightfoot says, "Marriages were called by the rabbins, 'the introducing of the bride' into the house of her husband. The virgins who were relations and friends of the husband met her rejoicing." So in Persia, India, Sicily, Greece. Homer, Il., xviii.

2. *And five*—But five. *Wise*,—Prudent, provident. *And five were foolish*.—The other five: this is the force of the article.

3. *They that were*—Such as were.

4. *Vessels*—Elphinstone says, "The true Hindoo way of lighting up is by torches held by men, who feed the flames with oil from a sort of bottle constructed for the purpose." (See on ver. 1.)

5. *Slumbered and slept*.—Nodded and fell asleep.

6. *At midnight*—Ward (View of the Hindoos, ii. 29) says, "After waiting two or three hours, at length near midnight, it was announced, as if in the very words of Scripture, 'Behold the bridegroom cometh! go ye out to meet him.' All the persons employed now lighted their lamps and ran with them in their hands to fill up their stations in the procession. Some of them had lost their lights, and were unprepared; but it was then too late to seek them, and the cavalcade moved forward to the house of the bride; at which place the company entered a large and splendidly illuminated area, before the house covered with an awning, where a great multitude of friends, dressed in their best apparel, were seated upon mats. The bridegroom was carried in the arms of a friend, and placed on a superb seat in the midst of the company, where he sat a short time, and then went into the

house, the door of which was immediately shut, and guarded by sapoys. I and others expostulated with the door-keepers, but in vain." *Go ye out*—From their waiting-place, to which they had previously come, ver. 1.

7. *Trimmed*—Literally, adorned—this was done by removing the snuffs around the wick and supplying fresh oil. In old sepulchres lamps are found, with instruments chained to them, pointed and hooked for the purpose of removing the snuffs, and drawing up the wick.

8. *Gone out*.—Going out; hence they did not seek to rekindle them.

9. *Not so*;—These words are not in the original, but they seem to be implied. The answer is elliptical and abrupt, expressing haste and earnestness.

10. *The marriage*:—(See on Matt. xxii. 2, 3.)

11. *Lord*,—Master, claiming a relation to him; the repetition implies earnestness, not unmingled with misgiving.

12. *I know you not*.—I do not recognize you as guests. (See on Matt. vii. 23.)

13. *Watch therefore*,—The call to watchfulness before the call to judgment. Tertullian: *Tuba ante tubam*. This verse seems to connect the parable with chap. xxiv. 36, 42, et seq.—it is a key to the parable. S. Clarke applies it to the coming of Christ to establish his kingdom, in place of the Jewish state, as in chap. xxiv.: "At that time the state of the gospel, and the method of God's dealing with men, will be such, as may fitly be represented to you by this similitude." He then paraphrases it so as to refer it primarily to those events, including also a reference to death and the judgment. The wise virgins are Christians, who, though in the interval before the destruction of Jerusalem, they were "somewhat secure," as well as the Jews, nevertheless availed themselves of the Saviour's warnings and promises, procured their deliverance, and were accepted of him; while the unbelieving Jews neglected them and were destroyed. The popular interpretation makes the bridegroom Christ; the virgins, his professed followers; the lamps, their profession; the vessels, their hearts; the oil, the principle of religion in the soul. Some who refer the parable to death and the judgment, make the slumbering and sleeping, to be sickening and dying—Augustin, "they all died"—but it may mean, as Trench says, "that all having taken such measures as they counted needful to enable them to meet the bridegroom as they could wish, calmly and securely waited his approach." This suits the parabolic conditions; as it is no marvel that they became sleepy, toward midnight. The warning cry refers to the premonitions of the Saviour's advent in the signs of the times, as in chap. xxiv. The trimming of the lamps implies such final preparation as might be found necessary to welcome Christ, and to be welcomed by him. The shutting of the door, as in the case of the ark, not only secured those that were within, but excluded those that

were without. Gen. vii. 16; Rev. iii. 12. The unsuccessful efforts of the foolish virgins to procure oil, intimate that God alone can give grace, and that it must be sought within a limited time, or the failure will be irremediable; the reply of the wise virgins shows that there are no works of supererogation, or transfers of piety, but every man must appear in his own character; the selling and buying are parabolic terms: (see on Matt. xiii. 44-46)—"oil," like the field, and pearl, gold, and white raiment, (Rev. iii. 18,) wine and milk, must be bought "without money and without price." Isa. lv. 1. Those who sell are scarcely ministers, who are paid for their services, as Alford explains it—the reference may be to prophets and apostles who teach us our duty; but there is no necessity of so interpreting it.

14. *For*—This connects the following parable with the preceding, being a farther illustration of the subject: indeed, it is a parabolic expansion of Matt. xxiv. 42-57: cf. Mark xiii. 34-37, which shows traces of both parables. Maldonatus and others identify the parable of the talents with that of the pounds, (Luke xix. 11,) but, besides the numerous variations in them, they were obviously spoken on different occasions: both refer to the interval which should elapse before Christ would put down his enemies and establish his kingdom, and to the manner in which those who expected his return, should prepare for it; but that of the talents being addressed exclusively to the apostles, says nothing about avowed enemies and rebels, like that of the pounds, which was addressed to the multitude, who, with some exceptions, never became his disciples. Grotius says, "It is not the same as that in Luke. There the gifts are equal, the general assistance to every Christian of the Holy Spirit; here they are various, implying the extraordinary powers bestowed on the apostles, or seventy disciples, or other teachers. As Christ drew near the end of his course, he more naturally referred to these. (See Rom. xii. 6; 1 Cor. xii. 8, 11, 29; Eph. iv. 11.)" Whitby refers this, as well as that in Luke, "to the Jewish nation, and therefore it is here mentioned after Christ's prediction of the judgments which should befall that nation for murdering their Messiah, and not improving the day of their visitation"—a good note. *The kingdom of heaven is*—This apodosis is wanting in the original, as in Mark xiii. 34: the *usus loquendi*, as well as the connection with ver. 1-13, favors the common version. *A man travelling into a far country*,—Intending to travel—going abroad. (See on Matt. xxi. 33.) *His own*—His. *Servants*,—Many slaves anciently were artisans, and money was intrusted to them by their master, with which to do business on his account. The custom has obtained to some extent in this country, and also in Russia and the East. Maimonides says, "when a master left the land of Israel, he could not take his servants with him, unless they chose;" hence he would employ them during his absence in trading. *Goods*.—Property.

15. *He gave*—Committed, intrusted. *Talents*,—(See on Matt. xviii. 24.) *His several ability*;—His particular capacity. *Straightway took his journey*.—Immediately left home.

16. *Traded*—Acquired by traffic five more talents.

18. *Digged*—The hiding of money in the East was common. (See on Matt. xiii. 44; Eccclus. xx. 30, 31.) *Money*.—Literally, silver—put for money, because silver money seems to have been the most ancient. (See on Matt. x. 9.)

19. *Reckoneth*—(See on Matt. xviii. 23.)

20. *Besides them*—Importing increase, produce: the source of the capital by which it was gained has been acknowledged, "Thou deliveredst." The terms are the same in ver. 22, though differently rendered.

21. *Lord*—Master. *Well done*,—*Eu!* Well! for *Euge!* Bravo!—An exclamation used at the public games by way of applause. It is not so much a felicitation for success in trade as it is a commendation for fidelity. *Good and faithful*—Stronger than xxiv. 45. *Over a few things*,—Thou hast been faithful in managing a small matter, I will give thee a more important trust. Five talents was a respectable sum, but small compared with the master's possessions, and with what he rewarded the servant. *Enter thou into the joy of thy lord*.—As the master celebrated his return by a feast, the faithful servants were invited to it: in some cases this act was the token of manumission: cf. Luke xii. 37; John xv. 15. As there is an easy connection between joy and feasting, Le Clerc, Whitby, and others, say *chara* here means a feast, as Esth. ix. 17. The master invites the freedman to feast with him, as a distinction for his good conduct. Demetrius, Pompey's freedman, was admitted to his table.

23. *Well done*,—As ver. 21. Such repetitions are common in Scripture and other ancient writings.

24. *Hard*—Close, griping—in Luke xix. 21, "austere"—though, as Trench says, "*skleros* is stronger than *austeros*, which is sometimes used in a good sense, but *skleros* never: *austeros* is applied to fruit or wine, which is crude, unripe, sour, wanting in mellowness, and would find its opposite in *chrestos*, Luke v. 39; so the Latin *austerus*, continually, which is opposed to the *dulcis*, But *skleros* is an epithet given to a surface which is at once dry and hard, as through drought, involving alike the *asper* and the *durus*, and is opposed to *malakos* and *hurgos*. Nabal is *skleros*, churlish and evil. 1 Sam. xxv. 3, LXX. Terence (Adelph. v. 4) unfolds the *skleros* when he describes one as *tristis*, *parcus*, *truculentus*, *tenax*. The words are discriminated in Titmann's Synonyms, c. 10." *Reaping*—Cutting the corn where thou hast not sown the seed, and gathering the crop into the barn from which the seed was not taken to be scattered, or sown, on the ground.

25. *Afraid*,—To run the risks of trade. *Lo, there*—See, thou hast what is thine: curt, morose, false. He was satisfied, and thought his master should be, as if he

had no right to expect more, whereas his time and labor belonged to his master. Matt. xx. 14.

26. *Wicked*—Evil, remiss. Eccclus. xlii. 5. His slothfulness was wicked. *Thou knewest*—Granted that I am severe—an admission for the sake of what follows, not an indorsement of it as truth. His master reasons with him on his own ground.

27. *Thou oughtest therefore*—For the very reason that I am, as thou sayest, exacting, if thou wouldst not make a more profitable investment of it; at least, thou shouldst have put my money to the exchangers. The *trapezites* was a banker, who took up money on small interest and let it out on a large, and also exchanged money. The word comes from *trapeza*, a table, as banker comes from the French *banc*, the bench at which the banker does business. From this verse it is thought originated the saying among the Fathers, referred to Christ and the apostles, "Be ye skillful money-changers." *Mine own*—The repetition impresses the important idea. *Usury*,—*Tokos* means increase, the interest which the principal yields. Great force is given to the passage by remembering that the rate of interest in those times was very great. Our word "usury" originally meant interest, money paid for the use of money. This is its meaning in our version of the Bible. Interest was forbidden to the Jews in their dealings with one another, for theocratical reasons; though they were allowed to take interest of Gentiles, and this became quite common in later times, when their intercourse with Gentiles was extended. Deut. xxiii. 19, 20.

28. *Take therefore*—The servant who will make good use of his master's money shall have the management of that which the thriftless will not improve.

29. *For unto every one*—(See on Matt. xiii. 12.)

30. *Unprofitable*—Useless, good for nothing. *Outer*—The outer darkness, contrasted with the light and joy in the banqueting-room, where the master's return is celebrated. (See on Matt. viii. 12.) The interpretation of this parable is not difficult: The man is Christ; his journey is his ascension to heaven; his servants are his professed followers, who are not their own, being bought with a price; the talents are all those spiritual endowments which may be profitably employed in his service, the word itself having acquired that import; the diversity corresponds to the variety of capacity observable among men, which may be increased or diminished, as men prove faithful or unfaithful; the trading of the first two servants illustrates the fidelity and success of those who engage in the service of Christ, and the default of the other, while it is not as criminal as the positive wickedness of the prodigal son, unjust steward, or unmerciful servant, illustrates the indolence of those who have a name to live but are dead; the return, reckoning, and retributive results, illustrate the cognizance which Christ takes of his servants, the responsibility to which they are held, and the reward and punishment which

await them, according to their improvement or non-improvement of their respective talents. This principle of the divine government is constantly unfolding itself, so that it obtains in the daily life of every man. He who improves his talents has more intrusted to him, and he who does not improve them (for he who received five talents, can, if he choose, hide them in the earth) will lose them; and that too by the operation of a law similar to that by which the strength of a muscle is lost by its not being employed. It is frequently the case that the opportunity and capacity of usefulness which were afforded to one man and were not improved by him, are made over to another who will make good use of them: he thus may be said to take the other's crown. Rev. iii. 11. But there are certain special epochs at which this retribution signally takes effect. Thus in the establishment of the kingdom of heaven, or the Christian dispensation, on the dissolution of the Jewish state, those of Christ's disciples, and especially his ministers, who were faithful in his service, were exalted to posts of honor and felicity, while those who were not were rejected by him. This retribution takes place in the case of every individual at death, and will be publicly administered in the final judgment. It is not unlikely that the parable makes him who had received but one talent the unprofitable servant, to teach us that limited capacity is no excuse for indolence: thus, while he who receives but one talent was not held accountable for the improvement of five, he was held to as rigid accountability for the use of his one talent as the others were for the improvement of their five or two. And there is no *hardness* on the part of our divine Master in exacting the improvement, but rather generosity as well as justice, as our advantage is the end which he has in view, as much as his own glory. It is a base slander to insinuate that he exacts a service of any man which he does not give him the capacity to render, as well as the promise of a gracious and munificent reward when it is performed. The *fear* of failure is a reflection on Christ, whose grace is sufficient for every man. It is a beautiful suggestion, though perhaps not intended in the reference to the putting of the money to the exchangers, that those who are not suited to independent labor are here counseled to attach themselves to persons of greater strength, under whose leading they may lay out their gifts to the service of the Church. In the parable of the pounds, (Luke xix. 17-19,) all the servants had an equal sum, but they had a different improvement, and were therefore differently rewarded. Not so here. While the parable of the virgins cautions us against underrating the service which Christ requires of us, so as to generate a false confidence in regard to our spiritual state, this of the unprofitable servant cautions us against an overestimate of that service, leading to a despairing neglect of it as impracticable, as if God's commandments could be grievous to any man.

31. *When the Son of man*—This is sometimes called the parable of the sheep and the goats; but it does not appear to be a parable, the pastoral reference being a mere illustrative metaphor. It is a judicial scene, and may be referred to the

Saviour's invisible advent at the establishment of his kingdom, after the dissolution of the Jewish theocracy, thus, with the preceding parables, constituting a pregnant sequence to chap. xxiv. Some consider this incompatible with certain terms employed, as the *de*, by which the paragraph is separated from the preceding—omitted in our version—"But when the Son of man"—though that may be merely continuative, as Campbell renders, "Now." They construe it of the summoning of all nations to judgment—though the reference may be to the discrimination made between those in all nations who received and those who rejected the ministers of Christ at the period when he inaugurated his dispensation. The judicial process and solemn sentence seem to refer to the last judgment; yet, as the scene is obviously figurative, this too may have reference to what took place at the establishment of the Christian dispensation, agreeably to Mark xvi. 15, 16: those who believed and were baptized, and showed the genuineness of their faith and the sincerity of their profession by works of piety and mercy were saved, and those who believed not were damned—the sentence being suspended during their lives, taking effect at death, and to be fully and finally ratified at the last judgment. Whatever may have been the primary reference, the paragraph corresponds with the scriptural representation of the last great assize. *In his glory*,—The usual style in describing his coming. (See on Matt. xxiv. 30.) *All the holy angels*—"Holy" is omitted in some MSS.: it occurs Mark viii. 38; Luke ix. 26; Rev. xiv. 10: it describes their moral purity. *The throne of his glory*:—His glorious throne. The imagery seems to have been borrowed from Dan. vii. 9-14.

32. *All nations*:—The nations, all mankind. *Sheep from the goats*:—Shepherds kept those animals distinct.

33. *His right hand*,—His right side, the place of honor. In Jewish tribunals those who were to be absolved were placed on the right side of the judge, and those to be condemned on the left.

34. *The King*—The executive, legislative, and judicial functions were anciently united in the king. Isa. xxxiii. 22. Jesus calls himself a king only here, and John xviii. 37. *Ye blessed*—Some supply "children"; but the participle has the force of a noun, as in the converse case, ver. 41. *Of my Father*,—This is added to show the source of their blessedness; it is not added in ver. 41, because men's misery is not of God, but of themselves. *Inherit*—An allusion perhaps to the possessing of Canaan by lot. Num. xxvi. 52-56; xxxiii. 54. (See on Matt. v. 5.) *The kingdom*—Which took the place of the Jewish theocracy—a spiritual Canaan, recognized as the kingdom of grace on earth and the kingdom of glory in heaven. In their essential features, "the kingdoms are but one." (See on Matt. iii. 2.) *Prepared for you*—All the blessings of the kingdom of grace and glory are provided exclusively for true believers, who prove their faith by their works. *Foundation of the world*:—(See on Matt. xiii. 35.)

35. *I was an hungered*,—I hungered, or was hungry, and ye gave me food to eat. *I was thirsty*,—Or, I thirsted. *Ye took me in*.—Sc. to a house, as in Judg. xix. 15, 18, where the full phrase is used for the Hebrew *asaph*, to gather: in the classics it is used of more than one; in the Hellenistic idiom it is also used of one only, as by C. Wesley: "Come, then, my Lord, and gather me."

36. *Naked*,—Partially clothed: so *gumnos* is used (John xxi. 17) where it implies, divested of the upper garment. *Visited*—To afford sympathy and aid. Jas. i. 27. The principal cases in which kindness may be manifested are stated—perhaps cases of persecution are chiefly intended. Of course good works of every kind will be rewarded by Christ, but he could not say, I was ignorant and wicked, and ye instructed and converted me.

37. *Then shall the righteous answer him*,—Astonished; as they had not done these things to Christ himself. The language is so framed as to give an opportunity to show that what is done to Christ's followers is considered by him as done to himself.

38. *When*—Our translators omit the *de*, rendered "or," ver. 39: it is simply continuative—again, farther. The righteous seem to be oppressed with the commendation.

40. *Verily*—The asseveration adds great force. *Inasmuch*—To the same extent as ye have done it to one such for my sake. Matt. x. 41; Mark ix. 41. *My brethren*,—Christ calls his disciples his brethren (Matt. xii. 48-50; Mark iii. 35; Heb. ii. 11, 12): the special reference may be to his ministers, who may be imagined as standing nearest to him, on the right hand, and pointed to by him. It was not the design of Christ to specify all the works of the righteous, whether of piety or mercy, for which they shall be rewarded. (See on ver. 36.) *Ye have done it unto me*.—They being his representatives. (See on Matt. x. 40-42; xviii. 5, 10; Acts ix. 4, 5; and Montgomery's hymn, "A poor wayfaring man of grief.")

41. *Then shall he say*—Then shall he also address those of the left. *Into everlasting fire*,—Into the eternal fire. As fire was an instrument of punishment, divine and human, it is here used as a symbol of the punishment inflicted in the other world: as it is endured by fallen angels and the disembodied spirits of wicked men, it probably consists in a sense of the wrath of God. (See on Matt. v. 22; xviii. 8, 9; Luke xvi. 23, 24; 2 Pet. ii. 4, 6; Jude 6, 7; Rev. xxii. 14, 15.) *Aionion* means always existing, eternal. Those to whom our Lord spoke could hardly understand the term in any other sense, when applied to future punishment. *The devil*—(See on Matt. iv. 1.) *His angels*:—"The angels who kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation," under the lead of the devil, by whom they are now employed in his nefarious work, though within prison-bounds, being "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great

day." As wicked men imitate fallen angels in rebellion against God, so they will share with them their punishment.

42-45. (See on ver. 35-40.) The lack of mercy to Christ's afflicted followers argues a want of love to him, and this argues a depraved nature. 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

46. *Everlasting*—As *aionion* is used of both punishment and life, the duration of both must be equal; but the life of the righteous will never cease: therefore the punishment of the wicked will never cease. Life here does not mean mere existence, but a holy and happy being; hence punishment, and not annihilation, is its antithesis.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1 *The rulers conspire against Christ.* 6 *The woman anointeth his head.* 14 *Judas selleth him.* 17 *Christ eateth the passover.* 26 *instituteth his holy supper:* 36 *prayeth in the garden:* 47 *and being betrayed with a kiss,* 57 *is carried to Caiaphas* 69 *and denied of Peter.*

XXVI.—1. *All these sayings,*—The discourses in chaps. xxiv., xxv.

2. *After two days*—On the next day but one the feast of the passover begins. *Is*—The present for the future expresses the certainty and nearness of the event: a style common in many languages. *Passover,*—*Pascha*, from the Hebrew *pasach*, passed over, because the blood-besprinkled houses of the Israelites were passed over, when those of the Egyptians were visited by the destroying angel. Popularly, the passover meant the paschal lamb, which was eaten on the first day, viz., Nisan 14, with unleavened bread, which was eaten for seven days; hence the other name, "feast of unleavened bread." Ex. xii., xiii.; Num. xxviii. 16-25. *And the Son of man*—When the Son of man is to be perfidiously delivered up to his enemies. *To be crucified.*—This does not indicate the purpose of Judas, but the result of his perfidy, as known to Jesus.

3. *Then*—Two days before the passover. As Jesus was then at Jerusalem, the Sanhedrim (see on Matt. ii. 5) was convened just before the passover to concert measures how he might be put to death so as not to excite any tumult or opposition among the people; many of whom, as appeared from his triumphal march into the city on the Sunday previous, were favorably affected toward him. *Chief priests,*—Probably including the high-priest, his deputy, all who had held the office, and the heads of the 24 courses. Luke i. 5. (See on Matt. ii. 4.) *Palace*—Hall, court, residence of a ruler: *palais* in French means a court of justice. *The high priest,*—Properly so styled. *Called*—Surnamed. *Caiaphas,*—Joseph Caiaphas, son-in-law of Annas, was made high-priest A.D. 26, and held the office till A.D. 35.

4. *Consulted*—Ps. ii. 2. *Subtily*,—Craft, guile. *Kill*—Luke's word means to take off, assassinate.

5. *Not on the feast-day*,—Not during the festival week, when multitudes from Galilee and elsewhere, many of whom believed on him, were present. Maimonides says, "Great criminals were generally executed at the three feasts, for the sake of example." But who considered Jesus a criminal? *Uproar*—Tumult, as Matt. xxvii. 24. Jesus was secretly betrayed into their hands; and yet the providence of God secured him a public trial, which, though it resulted in his death, demonstrated his innocence. Thus the purpose of the Sanhedrim was frustrated—this thing was not done in a corner.

6. *Now when Jesus was in Bethany*,—Viz., six days before the passover. John xii. 1. It is inserted here not as the sequel of the preceding, but as connected with the treachery of Judas. *Simon the leper*,—So called, perhaps, because he had been a leper, though it is likely Jesus had healed him. He appears to have been a neighbor, perhaps a relative of the Bethany family. It is therefore very naturally said by John that "Martha served" on the occasion, and also that Lazarus was one of the party; and the rather, as Lazarus had recently been raised from the dead, and this event proved that his resuscitation was real and complete.

7. *A woman*—John says it was Mary—that was in keeping with her character, as the serving was with that of Martha. Luke x. 38-42. "Having before him," as Lardner says, "the history of the resurrection of Lazarus, it was very natural for him, when he came to relate this anointing of our Lord, to say by whom it was done. But the two former evangelists, having never mentioned Lazarus, or his sisters, in their Gospels, when they came to relate this action, forbear to mention any name." *Alabaster*—A valuable marble, or compact gypsum—having the color of the human nail, it is sometimes called *onyx*, of which Pliny says, "This some call the alabaster stone, of which they make vessels to hold ointments, which it is said to preserve fresh from corruption." Ointment vessels made of other materials were called alabasters, as we speak of golden candlesticks, etc. Thus Plutarch speaks of alabasters all curiously wrought of gold, and Theocritus, of golden alabasters full of Syrian ointment. Herodotus mentions an alabaster of ointment as a present sent by Cambyses to the King of Ethiopia; and Cicero speaks of an alabaster full of ointment. Grotius thinks Mary's may have been of glass, as she broke the vessel, but this may have been done if it was of thin marble—the narrow neck of the vial, where the opening was sealed, may have been stricken off. *Very precious ointment*,—Galen says *myron* is oil in which any aromatic is mixed. The word seems to come from the Hebrew *mur*, (*myrrh*), a principal ingredient in it. Ps. xxiii. 5; xcii. 10; cxxxiii. 2; Prov. xxvii. 9; Cant. i. 2, 12, LXX. Pliny describes the Indian nard as a shrub, with a heavy and thick, but short, and black, and brittle root, and a small, thick, and close-growing leaf. The top produces ears like wheat;

so that both the leaves and spikes are valuable. The ointment is made of the leaves or spikes bruised and mixed with oil and other aromatics. The plant is called *narda spicata*. The *unguentum spicatum* is the *pura nardus* of Tibullus. Dr. Royle and others identify the plant as the *Valeriana jatamansi*, or *Nardostachys jatamansi*. It grows on the cold mountains of India. The Arabs compare it to the tail of an ermine—an appearance owing to its woody fibers and its footstalk not being decomposed in the cold and dry climate. *Very precious*—Literally, of heavy price. *Head*—John says "feet." She doubtless anointed both. Matthew and Mark note the anointing of the head, which was more common. John speaks of the additional mark of affection, the anointing of the feet and wiping them with her hair. Verse 12 implies that it was a general unction, beginning, of course, at the head. Mary would not be outdone by the "sinner" in Luke vii. *Sat at meat*.—Reclined at table. (See on Matt. ix. 10; Luke vii. 38; John xii. 2.) Resting on the couch, his feet would be accessible behind.

8. *His disciples*—According to John, it was Judas that objected, but some of the rest indorsed his objections because of the pretext of charity. *To what purpose*—Why this loss?

9. *Much*,—Sc. money: \$45 or \$50, according to John. Horace speaks of the nard unguent as being so valuable that a small box of it was considered equivalent to a large vessel of wine.

10. *When Jesus*—But Jesus knowing it—I.e., the real purport of the objection. *Why trouble*—By raising objections which might make it questionable to her, whether or not she had done right. *Good*—Beneficial, or becoming. *Upon me*.—For me, or on my behalf.

11. *For ye have the poor*—This and the addition in Mark show that works of piety are not to supersede those of mercy. There seems to be an allusion to Deut. xv. 11. *Me ye have not always*—His bodily presence would soon be removed from them, when they would not be able to show him such a token of regard.

12. *For*—This explains "me ye have not always." *Burial*—Funeral; comprising all the preparations for the burial, washing, anointing, etc. Grotius and others refer it not to the intention of the woman, but of Providence, in the Hebrew style. The words suggest the nearness of his death, and justify Mary's act; for if she had expended this on his dead body, they who used such unctions (2 Chron. xvi. 14; John xix. 40) could not object to it: why then should they do so now, as he was so near his burial? One can hardly think that Mary, who was so observant of our Lord's words, could fail to see that his end was approaching: might not she then have had reference to his burial? She might have apprehended that his sacred body might not be accessible to her after his crucifixion. This view gives force to the

language in Mark: "She hath done what she could; she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying."

13. *This gospel*—This seems to be an abridgment of the formula, "the gospel of the kingdom." *A memorial*—An honorable memento. Thus the odor of her piety survives that of her balsam. Ps. cxii. 6. Christ's assurance repudiated the insinuation that Mary wished to make herself prominent: she sought only a gracious glance, but she receives the meed of praise in all succeeding generations. The notion that this unction is identical with that in Luke vii. 36-50, might be considered preposterous were it not sanctioned by such names as Grotius, Schleiermacher, and others. They urge that it took place at a feast in both narratives; but anointing was common at feasts: that in both the host is Simon; but that was a very common name among the Jews—there were two Simons among the twelve apostles: that in both the ointment was in an alabaster-box; but unguents were usually kept in a vessel of this sort, at least, of this name: that the feet of Jesus were anointed; this was done on extraordinary occasions among the Jews, and may well have been prompted by penitential love in the one case and pious friendship in the other: that the reference to Mary in John xi. 2 identifies it with the anointing in Luke; but that is rather an anticipation of the narrative in John xii. The anointing in Luke was in Galilee, a year or two before our Lord's death; this took place in Bethany, less than a week before that event: the former was by a woman that was "a sinner"—a very different character than that given to Mary Magdalene, (Luke viii. 2, 3,) a reputable woman with whom she has been gratuitously confounded, or to Mary, the gentle and virtuous sister of Lazarus and Martha. Origen and others strangely make this account differ from that in John xii.

14. *Then*—After the anointing. (See on v. 6.) *One of the twelve*,—John, who identifies Judas as the murmurer on the occasion of the anointing, does not mention this visit to the priests; but it agrees with John xiii. 26-30; xviii. 3. Matthew and Mark not having specified Judas as the murmurer, now speak of him in descriptive terms. His being of the twelve aggravates his crime, him fulfills the prophecy, Ps. xli. 9. *Iscariot*,—Distinguishing him from Judas Lebbeus. This nefarious business seems to have originated with Judas—not with the priests.

15. *Covenanted*—Literally, placed, sc. on the balance, alluding to the ancient custom of weighing money in making payments—it is thus used for the Hebrew *shakal*, Ezra viii. 25, 26, 29, 33; Jer. xxxii. 9, 10; Zech. xi. 12, LXX., and in the classics. Judas did receive the thirty pieces of silver; but when does not appear. Mark says they promised, which agrees with Luke, bargained, hence Luke adds, Judas promised, agreed to the terms. They may have agreed with him then, and paid him the money after the betrayal. (See on Matt. xxvii. 3-10.) Mark and Luke say "they were glad"—which may be readily believed, though doubtless they despised the traitor.

16. *Opportunity*—Convenient season. (See on Mark vi. 31.) His dark designs were carried out in the convenient season of darkness. Luke adds, "in the absence of the multitude."

17. *Now the first*—On the first day of unleavened bread. This was Nisan 14, for Mark and Luke say it was when they killed the passover. In Ex. xii. 6, it is said that on the 14th of the first month, Abib, or Nisan, the passover must be killed, in the evening, and it was to be eaten that night, ver. 8—the night following the evening of the 14th. The Jews ate the passover at the time when Christ did, but some of the leaders in the movement against him, it appears, postponed eating it till the morning. John xviii. 28. Lightfoot says, "The lambs were killed only in the court of the temple, Nisan 14, after the daily sacrifice in the afternoon. The Israelites bring the lambs on their shoulders; the assembly is divided into three companies; the first enters and fills the court—the doors are locked, and the trumpets sound. The priests stand in order; the people kill each a lamb; a priest receives the blood in a silver or golden phial, and gives it to the next, who returns him an empty one. Thus the blood is handed to the altar, and sprinkled or poured out against the foot of it. The lamb is flayed; the fat burnt on the altar; the body carried back and eaten where they sup. The skin is given to the owner of the house."

18. *And he said*.—To Peter and John—(see Luke.) *Go into the city*—They were then probably at Bethany. *To such a man*—An abridgment of the fuller statement in Luke; Matthew did not think it necessary to give his name. Theophylact thinks Jesus spoke thus indefinitely because he did not want Judas to know where the feast was to be celebrated, lest he should lead the priests to the house to arrest Jesus, who wished to eat the passover in quietness, and institute the eucharist, before his apprehension. *The Master saith*,—This seems to imply that the man was a disciple of the great Teacher. *My time*—The time of his passion. John xvii. 1. *Keep*—Celebrate. So Acts xviii. 21.

19. *And the disciples did*—This case suggests that in Matt. xxi. 1-7. *Made ready*—Procured, examined, killed, and roasted the lamb, searched for leaven in order to its removal, procured water and wine, and prepared all the other things necessary for the paschal supper.

20. *When the even was come*,—The usual time of eating the paschal supper, on Thursday evening, after sundown. (See on Matt. xiv. 15.) *He sat down*—Reclined at the table. (See on Matt. xv. 35.) According to Ex. xii. 11, the passover was to be eaten standing, with girt loins, as going on a journey; but the Jewish doctors introduced reclining, the usual posture at meals, as it symbolized the rest which they sought in leaving Egypt, and found in Canaan. Our Lord did not lay much stress on mere ceremonies. *With the twelve*—Ten persons constituted the ordinary and minimum number for a paschal company.

21. *Verily*—The solemn preface to a serious announcement. *Shall betray*—Will betray. (See on Matt. x. 4.; John xiii. 21.)

22. *Exceeding sorrowful*,—Because he was to be betrayed, and because one of them was to betray him. (See on Matt. xvii. 23.) *Is it I?*—"What! am I he that shall betray thee?" It seems to be an expression of horror and surprise.

23. *He that dippeth*—Alluding to the custom of several persons, taking food with the hand from the same dish. The tense, implying a single momentary act, seems to indicate that Judas was at that instant dipping his hand into the dish.

24. *The Son of man*—(See on Matt. viii. 20.) *Goeth*,—The present tense intimates emergency: is just going out of the world—a common euphemism for death. *As it is written of him*:—Referring, perhaps, to the special prediction of his betrayal, as cited by John, hence it is added *wo*, etc. The prophecy neither necessitates nor excuses his wickedness. *It had been good*—A common proverb to express the most miserable fate. Job iii. 1-3; Ecc. vi. 3; Jer. xx. 14.

25. *Then Judas*,—He said this to save appearances; and perhaps he wished to know whether or not Jesus was aware of his bargain with the priests; yet it seems strange that he could have any doubt on this point: he was, however, blinded by diabolical influence. *Master*,—Rabbi. Judas never called him *Kurios*. But the interchange of titles was common. (See on Matt. viii. 25.) *Thou hast said*.—An affirmative answer. This colloquy between Jesus and Judas may have been unheard by the rest: it may have taken place while they were inquiring among themselves who should do it. Luke xxii. 23.

26. *And as they were eating*,—While they were eating the paschal supper, just before they finished. *Bread*,—The loaf—one of the loaves, or cakes, prepared for the passover—of course, unleavened. *And blessed it*,—And blessing—"it" is supplied by our translators. Some read "having given thanks," as in Luke and 1 Cor. xi. 24, and also in Matthew and Mark in the account of the cup. From this word, in the Greek, the Lord's Supper was called Eucharist by Justin Martyr and other Fathers, as the service is one of thanksgiving. Mark, however, has "blessed," (ver. 22,) and the term is implied in 1 Cor. x. 16, "The cup of blessing which we bless"—in which there is an allusion to the *cos habberacha* of the passover: the cup on account of which, or over which, we bless God—thus blessing and giving thanks mean the same. The terms do not imply any consecration of the bread and wine: in a certain sense, the elements were sanctified, as is our ordinary food, by prayer and thanksgiving, without which the Jews never partook of a meal. Matt. xiv. 19; 1 Tim. iv. 5. The order of the passover, according to Maimonides, was this: 1. They mingled a cup of wine with water, and gave thanks. 2. They washed their hands. 3. The table was furnished with two cakes of unleavened bread, with bitter herbs, and with the lamb roasted whole, and other meats, with a thick sauce

made of dates, figs, raisins, vinegar, etc., called *charoseth*, designed to represent the clay of which the Israelites made bricks in Egypt. 4. They then ate a little of the bitter herbs, and explained to the children the nature of the feast. 5. They then took a second cup of wine, repeating Ps. cxiii., cxiv., being the first part of the hallel, which comprised six psalms, e.g., Ps. cxiii.-cxviii. 6. They washed their hands again, and the head of the family proceeded to bless and break a cake of the unleavened bread, reserving a part of it under a napkin for the last morsel. 7. The rest of the cake they ate with the sauce and herbs. 8. They then ate the lamb and the accompanying peace-offerings. 9. They then washed their hands again. 10. They then filled a third cup of wine, "the cup of blessing," over which they gave thanks, and drank it. 11. They then sung the remainder of the hallel. 12. Then followed the fourth cup, and sometimes the reciting of Ps. cxx.—cxxvii., including the "Songs of Degrees." with a fifth cup, finishing with a portion of the paschal bread. It is not certain that in our Lord's day all these ceremonies were observed in this order. It is possible that after the passover had been eaten according to the law, our Lord dispensed with the additional ceremonies, and took the bread which was reserved for the last morsel and the third cup for his own institution. Whether he repeated the usual blessing before this distribution of the bread, or another suited to the new institution, does not appear—most probably the latter. *Brake*—Not only according to custom, but specially to symbolize his crucifixion. *Take, eat;*—These acts being symbolical of a voluntary, personal reception and appropriation of the merits of Christ. *This is my body.*—I.e., represents, or signifies, my body—a common idiom in the Hebrew and Syriac which employ the substantive verb instead of a more distinctive term. Gen. xl. 12; xli. 26; Dan. vii. 23; viii. 21; 1 Cor. x. 4; Gal. iv. 24. This is common in most languages. Thus any one would say, "This is John C. Calhoun," when pointing to the statue of the great statesman. Wetstein remarks, "While Christ was distributing the bread and wine, the thought could not but arise in the minds of the disciples, What can this mean? and what does it denote? They did not inquire whether the bread which they saw were really bread, or whether another body lay unconsciously hid in the interstices of the bread, but what this action signified—of what was it a representation or memorial?" Buxtorf gives many passages from Jewish writings in which the paschal lamb is called "the body of the passover," and the bread, "the bread of affliction which our fathers ate in Egypt," because it represented it.

27. *And he took the cup,*—This is generally considered the third cup, "the cup of blessing," which was the most important. Luke and Paul say he took the cup after supper, i.e., the paschal supper; hence "the cup of blessing" may have been that mentioned by Luke, ver. 17, and this may have been the fourth, or a supplemental cup, to be henceforth "the cup of blessing which we bless." As nothing is said in Scripture of the admixture of water with the wine, it is unnecessary to refer to Jewish or Christian traditions to *prove* that this obtained

in the celebration of the passover, and of the Lord's Supper in early times. To say that the ordinance is vitiated either by the admixture or non-admixture is alike erroneous. *And gave thanks,—*(See on ver. 26.) *Drink ye all of it;—*The participation of the cup is essential to communion: its denial to the laity is an impious innovation, which has no scriptural warranty, or indeed patristic authority.

28. *For*—The reason here assigned shows that all should partake of the cup, since Christ's blood was shed for all. *This is*—This represents. *My blood of the New Testament,*—As the blood of animals ratified the old dispensation, so the blood of Christ ratifies the new. Ex. xxiv. 7, 8; Jer. xxxi. 31; Heb. ix. 13-23. Barbarous nations drank the blood of covenant-sacrifices; the civilized drank wine instead, the color representing blood, and wine is called "the blood of the grape." The rabbins say the wine used in the passover should be red—"there should be in it taste and look." *Diatheke* means not testament, but covenant, or rather dispensation, as the terms of the compact are authoritatively laid down by God, and must be submissively acquiesced in by man: some employ the term economy, which conveys the idea of law as well as of promise. The Hebrew *berith* is rendered more than 260 times *diatheke* in the LXX.—usually *pactum* in the Vulgate—covenant, (English,) never testament. *Which is shed*—Present for proximate future—to be poured out very soon—the offering being both piacular and federal. *For*—In behalf of. *Many*—(See on Matt. xx. 28.) *For the remission*—In order to constitute the ground of pardon for every penitent, believing sinner. Matthew alone has "for the remission of sins"—a phrase, says Owen, never strictly used in the Old Testament, and therefore peculiar to the New. It means a sending away—a discharge of sin from the conscience.

29. *I will not drink*—Christ was just about to be taken from them, and he would not enjoy another feast with them till they met in heaven. (See on Matt. viii. 11.) Thus C. Wesley:

The fruit of the vine—The joy it implies—
Again we shall join To drink in the skies,
Exult in his favor, Our triumph renew,
And I, saith the Saviour, Will drink it with you.

It may include that spiritual feasting, which Christ has with his disciples here in the kingdom of grace, (Rev. iii. 20,) which is fully developed and perpetuated in the kingdom of glory. Ps. xvi. 11; Rev. xix. 9. From this passage, Chrysostom and others suppose that Jesus partook of the Eucharistic bread and wine with his disciples; and Gill supports this by the fact that at the passover, "none might eat till he that blessed and brake the bread had tasted of it." But Christ would hardly be governed by that rule in this case. He may have partaken of the bread and wine which closed the paschal feast, and which he then used to institute the new rite;

and hence took occasion to repeat what he had said in substance before, (Luke, ver. 16, 18,) the purport of which was that after that evening he would not commemorate with them the Jewish passover, nor administer to them the elements of his own Supper. *Fruit*—Produce, viz., wine. *New*—Spiritual, heavenly, as the New Jerusalem. The rabbins speak of future blessedness as "the wine of the world to come."

30. *And when they had sung an hymn*,—Literally, and having hymned. Some think they sung a hymn adapted to the Lord's Supper; but it is generally thought the reference is to a part of the hallel, as the six Psalms are called, the first of them, Ps. cxiii., beginning with Hallelujah. The Jews understood portions of these psalms to refer to the sorrows of the Messiah and the resurrection of the dead. (See on ver. 26, and Wesleyan Psalter.) They sometimes said the *great* hallel (Ps. cxxxvi.) over a fifth cup. *Mount of Olives*.—The western slope of which was just across the Kidron, east of the city. (See on v. 36.) Before they left the table, however, several things occurred, the precise order of which cannot be determined. Thus Luke (xxii. 24-30) gives account of "a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest"—the old bone of contention. (See on Matt. xviii. 1; xix. 28; xx. 25-28.) In this instance they may have disputed for precedency at the table—a point of great interest to Orientals—hence the allusion ver. 27, 30, and the lesson of humility in the washing of their feet, John xiii. The prediction of the denial by Peter, etc., (Luke, ver. 31-38,) seem to have taken place before they left the house: cf. ver. 39; though some think on the way to Olivet. Christ did not consider himself obliged to regard the Jewish canon (if it was then in existence) which made it unlawful to leave the city the night of the passover.

31. *All ye shall be offended*—Will be scandalized, stumbled, fall away from me: their faith in his Messiahship would be shaken, because he was delivered over to the power of his enemies. Luke xxiv. 20, 21. (See on Matt. xvi. 23.) *For it is written*,—This refers to the certainty of the event, not involving any precedent necessity. (See on Matt. i. 22.) The quotation differs from the Hebrew of Zech. xiii. 7, in putting the first verb in the first person future, instead of the imperative, and adding *of the flock* (omitted in Mark): the action is thus referred to God, and the sheep are pointedly described as his peculiar people. The shepherd in Zechariah was rejected, sold, pierced, and smitten: he was a man and yet Jehovah's "fellow:" who answers to this description? When the shepherd is killed, the flock is dispersed; so when Jesus is seized by his enemies, "all the disciples forsook him and fled." Ver. 56.

32. *I will go before you*—A continuation of the pastoral metaphor, the shepherd in the East going before his sheep. John x. 4. He would be raised to life, and precede them into Galilee; where, following him, they found him. Matt. xxviii. 7,

10, 16. This general meeting of the disciples in Galilee was appointed, because there they most abounded.

33. *Peter answered*—In his usual style. The Geneva properly retains the *de*, "But."

34. *Before the cock crow*,—The Talmud says, "There were no cocks kept in Jerusalem because of the holy things;" but if the Jews, at that time, did not keep them in the city, the Gentiles who resided there would hardly scruple to keep them. Reland suggests that cocks kept outside the city could be heard in the stillness of the night at the house of Caiaphas near the city walls. The technical time of cock-crowing was at 3 A.M.—which is called the second crowing by the Romans, to distinguish it from a crowing at midnight, which is heard by few—hence the second is what is generally meant. *Cf.* Mark xiii. 35; xiv. 30; John xiii. 38.

35. *Though I should die with thee*,—If I should have to die with thee.

36. *Then*—After the supper and the discourses, John xiii.-xvii. *A place called Gethsemane*,—From the Hebrew, meaning a place of oil-presses. "The garden of Gethsemane," says Olin, "occupies a level place between the brook Kidron and the foot of the Mount of Olives. It is about fifty paces square, and is inclosed by a wall of no great height, formed of rough, loose stones. Eight very ancient olive-trees now occupy this inclosure, some of which are of very large size, and all exhibiting symptoms of decay that denote their great age. There can be no reasonable doubt that this is the real garden of Gethsemane. It was probably once more extensive than at present, but it must have occupied this situation. The nature of the ground sufficiently determines the route which must have always been pursued in passing from the temple to the Mount of Olives. The path now used has every appearance of great antiquity, and this is the only place where the descent to the channel of Kidron could be effected with any tolerable convenience." *Chorion*, a field, (John, "a garden,") not, as some think, a village in which the produce of the Mount of Olives was prepared. Lightfoot says, "As no gardens were allowed in the holy city, on account of the pollution of the weeds and manure, many were formed near the walls and the Mount of Olives." *Sit ye here*,—Stay here. *While I go and pray yonder*.—In a more retired part of the garden, probably in the shade of the olive-trees. *Cf.* Gen. xxii. 5.

37. *Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee*,—Peter, James, and John had just witnessed his transfiguration. *Sorrowful and very heavy*.—The latter is a stronger word than the former, and means to faint, to be overwhelmed with grief or mental affliction.

38. *Exceeding sorrowful*.—Surrounded with sorrow. *Even unto death*.—This expresses extreme anguish. Jonah iv. 9, LXX.; Ps. cxvi. 3.

39. *A little further*,—Luke says, "a stone's cast"—a common expression for a short distance. *Fell on his face*,—The posture of intense sorrow and passionate supplication. *If it be possible*,—If it be consistent with thy purposes in regard to the salvation of the world. *Let this cup pass from me*:—Alluding to the carrying of a cup past any one. Jesus is said to taste death for every man. Heb. ii. 9. (See on Matt. xx. 22.) Mark (ver. 35) makes the cup "the hour," viz., of his passion. Cf. John xii. 27-33; xvii. 1; xviii. 11. It could not have been simply physical suffering ending in death, for the martyrs were not terrified at death in its most dreadful forms; nor was it merely a severe conflict with Satan, for he had calmly and accurately estimated the power of his old enemy, and knew that there was nothing so terrible to be apprehended from that quarter; (John xii. 31; xiv. 30;) nor was it the punishment in kind and degree due for the sins of the world, as that idea is preposterous, impious, impossible; but it was a suffering which resulted from a perfect conception of the sin of the world, which in some mysterious manner he expiated by his passion and death. Isa. liii.; John i. 29; Heb. x. 8-14; 1 Pet. ii. 24; 1 John ii. 2; Rev. i. 5. All the evangelists note Christ's perfect submission to his Father's will. Heb. x. 5-10. Though the Father, who "was able to save him from death," was not "willing" to do so, as the world could not in any other way that we know of be redeemed, yet he gave him all the assistance which "his flesh," his humanity, required, in order that he might finish his atoning work—thus saving him from fear, though not from death. Heb. v. 7.

40. *Unto Peter*,—In view of his recent protestations of regard; but through him to the rest. *What?*—So you could not watch with me one hour! an expression of mingled wonder and reproof. *One hour?*—The short period of their stay in the garden: the term *one* shows that it cannot allude to "the time of our Lord's trial, so often called by that name," hour.

41. *Watch*—The watching here may mean the same as in ver. 40: So S. Clarke: "Be upon your guard and pray also to God for his assistance that ye may be delivered from the danger which is just ready to come upon you." *That ye enter not*—Their watchfulness and prayer would keep them from rashly throwing themselves in the way of danger, and their neglect of the duty and the consequences of the neglect show the pertinency of the exhortation. (See on Matt. vi. 13.) *The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak*.—An excuse for their frailty and an incentive to vigilance and prayer. They had made sincere professions of attachment to Christ, but they had not sufficient strength to surmount the frailty of their bodies. That there is an excuse mingled with the reproof and incentive is clear from ver. 43, where the reason for their being asleep is given, *their eyes were heavy*—not merely because it was late in the night, or because they had eaten a hearty supper, but as Luke says, (ver. 45,) "for sorrow"—excessive grief having frequently a stupefying tendency. At the second

time of his coming to them, they were so sleepy that they could give him no answer. Mark, ver. 40.

42. *Again the second time*,—A pleonasm, as in John iv. 54; xxi. 16. Matthew alone repeats the prayer, and affirms that Christ offered it a third time. The first time he prayed explicitly for deliverance, with submission of his will to his Father's: now he does not pray explicitly for deliverance, but supposes its impossibility, and prays that his Father's will might be done, without referring to his own, as in ver. 39.

44. *The same words*.—It is singular in the original. Rhemish: "the self-same word": the same speech, or prayer, as the second time.

45. *Sleep on now*,—I no longer desire you to watch—you can now render me no service: the time of my suffering is come, and I am just going to be betrayed into the hands of sinners—including all who were about to take part in his apprehension, trial, and crucifixion—not Gentiles alone.

46. *Rise, let us be going*:—Let us return to the other disciples, and prepare to meet the traitor and his company. This seems to imply that he did not really mean for them to continue asleep. (See on ver. 45.) *He is at hand*—Jesus would not name the traitor—a delicate sensibility may have prevented his doing so. When he addressed him by name, (Luke xxii. 48,) it may have been to rouse his sensibility, if he had any left.

47. *One of the twelve*,—All three evangelists make this note, thus marking the turpitude of the act. *Came*,—Luke says he "went before"; probably to prevent the escape of Jesus, when the multitude was approaching. He would engage him in salutation and conversation. *A great multitude*—John says "the band"—probably the Roman troop which garrisoned the castle of Antonia, or the detachment of it which the governor sent to attend on the Sanhedrim at the great festivals, to keep order. *Chief priests and elders of the people*.—(See on Matt. ii. 4.) *Staves*,—Clubs, which were probably used by those who were not soldiers, who had swords.

48. *A sign*,—A token agreed upon between two parties. Jud. xx. 38; Isa. v. 26, LXX. The Roman soldiers and the servants of the priests were probably not acquainted with the person of Jesus. *Kiss*,—A common mode of salutation with men in the East. *Hold him fast*.—As if there were danger that he should want to escape, or that if he did, that they could prevent it! Judas surely knew his Lord better than this! He was acting a part, wanting to secure his pay!

49. *And forthwith*—Apparently implying that Judas kissed Jesus before what took place in John xviii. 4-9, as the signal would be of no use after Jesus had made himself known to the band. *Hail, Master*;—A most respectful address. Judas always, so far as appears, called Jesus, Rabbi. *And kissed him*.—A most friendly

salutation. Lardner: "He comes with the usual tokens of respect, after some time of absence."

50. *Friend*,—Companion. (See on Matt. xx. 13.) *Wherefore art thou come?*—For what purpose art thou here? Jesus knew very well, and Judas knew that he did; but the question was one of sorrowful rebuke and gracious warning. Cf. Luke.

51. *One of them*—All the evangelists relate this circumstance, but John alone gives the name of the apostle, Simon Peter—the act being characteristic of that impulsive disciple—and of the servant, Malchus—John, it seems, being acquainted with the high-priest, and apparently intimate in his family. John xviii. 15, 16. According to Luke, ver. 49, the disciples asked Jesus if they should smite with the sword, agreeably to their mistake, ver. 38, Luke. The sword used by Peter was doubtless one of the two there mentioned. *A servant*—The servant, viz., who acted as leader, and perhaps had the charge of the arrest. *Smote off his ear*.—The entire ear seems to have been cut completely off, as the stroke was with a sword in the hand of an excited man. Luke alone, a physician, notes the cure of the ear.

52. *Put up again*—Return, put back. *Thy sword*—Not the kind to be employed in my service. *His place*:—Its sheath. *For all they that take the sword*,—A proverbial expression in regard to repelling force by force, implying that those who do so will be liable to be killed, and admonishing the disciples that his kingdom was not thus to be promoted.

53. *Thinkest thou*—Dost thou suppose that I cannot *now*—while in the hands of mine enemies—call upon my Father, and he would furnish me *more than twelve legions of angels?*—(See on Matt. viii. 29; 2 Kings vi. 17.)—A definite for an indefinite number—legion being perhaps suggested by the presence of Roman soldiers, and twelve by the number of his apostles and himself.

54. *But*—This is not in the original. *How then*—How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say that thus it must be?

55. *To the multitudes*,—Including their leaders. (See Luke, ver. 52.) *Thief*—Robber. *Staves*—Clubs. *I sat daily*—During the week he had done so, as well as on former occasions. The words indicate a course the opposite of that of a robber—one peaceful and unmolested.

56. *But all this was done*,—Has happened—the language of Christ. *That the scriptures*—(See on Matt. i. 22; Isa. liii; Dan. ix. 26; Zech. xiii. 7; John xix. 28-30.) *Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled*.—Probably just as the officers laid hold on Jesus, verifying the prophecy, ver. 31. They saw that they could not cope with an armed band, and that if they could, Jesus would not allow them to

do so, and fearing for their own personal safety, they fled, though Peter and John followed him at a distance. (See ver. 58; John xviii. 15.)

57. *And*—Now, or then, they who apprehended Jesus, *led him away*—i.e., to trial. *To Caiaphas*—At whose house were assembled the scribes, and the elders, and all the chief priests (Mark), who constituted the Sanhedrim, where they met on special occasions, though their stated place of meeting was the temple. Of this court the high-priest was president. John xi. 49-53.

58. *Followed*—Was following. *Afar off*,—At a distance—not where he might have been expected, close by the side of Jesus; still he appears to have kept within sight, as he and John *went unto the high priest's palace*, and entered into the inclosed quadrangular court (called by the same name, ver. 69), from which they could probably see what was done with their Master in the room where the council was held. *Sat with the servants*—So Mark and Luke; but John says he "stood with them"; but it was natural for them to sit, or crouch, and stand around the fire, varying their positions according to circumstances. All the evangelists, except Matthew, mention the fire in the court. *To see the end*.—The result of the proceeding.

59. *All the council*,—The Sanhedrim, as a body. There were several members of it "who were not consenting to the counsel and deed of them." Luke xxiii. 51. *Sought false witness*—They sought testimony against Jesus, and as there was no true testimony that could prove him guilty, they admitted false witnesses. They seem to have acted on the lax principle recognized by Maimonides: "The judgment of a deceiver is not as the rest of capital punishments: his witnesses are hid, and he has no warning as the rest of those who are put to death; and if he goes out of the Sanhedrim acquitted, and one says, I can prove the charge against him, they turn him back; but if he goes out condemned, and one says, I can prove him innocent, they do not put him again on his trial."

60. *Yet found they none*.—Probably repeated for emphasis. It seems they could not for a long time, out of many perjured villains, find as many as two whose testimony agreed, so as to convict him of a capital offense. While they were in search of this testimony, it is probable that what is recorded by John, ver. 19-23, took place: then appeared *two false witnesses*—who ransacked their memory and taxed their ingenuity to bring a malicious charge against him. They produced the lowest number prescribed by the law. Deut. xix. 15.

61. *This fellow*—He, or this man, said. *I am able to destroy*—Mark: "I will destroy." Christ said neither. John ii. 19. Nor did he say *the temple of God*—or "this temple that is made with hands"—or, "I will build another made without hands." The Jews, indeed, at the time, referred his language, which by a common metaphor designated his body, to the temple in which they worshipped; but they

did not charge him with blasphemy for uttering it. He did not say he could or would destroy the temple, but if it were destroyed he would raise it up in three days; which, supposing it to be the literal temple, would have been rather a pious and patriotic act than otherwise. The Jews pronounced Jeremiah (xxvi. 11, 12) worthy of death for prophesying against the city and temple; also Stephen for speaking "blasphemous words against this holy place." Acts vi. But it could not be forgotten how Jesus had publicly displayed his zeal for the sanctity of the temple in twice cleansing it—the second time being but two or three days before: how absurd then to charge him with speaking blasphemous words against it! If they meant to insinuate that, in addition to his sacrilege in designing to destroy the temple, he was chargeable with sorcery in pretending to be able to rebuild it in three days, how absurd the charge!

62. *And the high priest arose*,—Apparently maddened by the failure of the witnesses, and by Christ's silence. By asking, "What do these testify against thee?" he seems not to know what use to make of the testimony, and artfully changes his ground. Perhaps it was the custom to stand during adjuration.

63. *But Jesus held his peace*.—Continued silent; the charge being too absurd to admit of reply, and he was not to be condemned for a less assumption than that which follows; besides, it was not the time and place for the exposition of the language employed. *Answered*—Continued the inquisition. (See on Matt. xi. 25.) *I adjure thee*—A solemn form of adjuration: it is used by the LXX., Gen. xxiv. 3, for the Hebrew, to cause to swear, to impose an oath. Some think that a prisoner thus adjured was forced to answer (*cf.* Lev. v. 1); but this is doubted; yet if he did answer, and his statement was false, he was punished as a perjurer. *By the living God*,—Who can punish falsehood. (See on Matt. xvi. 16.) *The Christ the Son of God*.—The Jews seem to have expected that the Messiah would be in some sense the Son of God; (Ps. ii.; Dan. iii. 25; John i. 49;) whether by this title they recognized his essential divinity, does not appear; (see on Matt. xvi. 16;) though this view seems favored by John v. 17, 18; x. 30-36; hence the charge of blasphemy.

64. *Jesus saith*—Influenced partly perhaps by the solemnity of an oath, (showing, by the way, that we are not to understand Matt. v. 34 of judicial oaths,) but principally because his hour was come, and it was proper that he should suffer by a sentence based on this confession rather than any other. *Thou hast said*:—A Jewish idiom, meaning, It is as thou sayest. *Nevertheless*,—Moreover, or but, there shall be another proof of this truth. *Hereafter*—After my ascension, which is shortly to take place. *Shall ye see the Son of man*—His usual title when speaking of himself; (see on Matt. viii. 20;) and which they considered equivalent to the Son of God. *Sitting on the right hand of power*,—As we say, of the Almighty. Matthew and Mark, in the Hebrew style, put the abstract for the concrete. Luke

has "the power of God." This attribute is properly referred to by Christ in this the time of his voluntary weakness. 2 Cor. xiii. 4. He seems to have Ps. cx. in view. To sit on the right hand of God implies elevation to supreme power, honor, and felicity. *Coming in—upon—the clouds of heaven.*—They were shortly to have convincing evidence of his Messiahship and divine Sonship in the overthrow of their state, and the rapid establishment of his kingdom on the earth. Coming in the clouds was considered by the Jews a certain indication of their Messiah, whom they called, Son of the clouds. Some think there is a secondary reference to his last advent; but see on Matt. xxiv. 30.

65. *Rent his clothes,*—The outer garments; (see on Matt. v, 40;) though sometimes meaning, as apparently here, the garments in general. Mark has "the inner garments." It appears to have been sometimes the case that two tunics were worn. The high-priest showed his pretended horror and indignation by rending his mantle and tunics too—not of course his priestly robes, for he was not then invested with them. The ancients thus expressed their grief, (Gen. xxxvii. 29, 34,) or their horror at what they deemed blasphemy. 2 Kings xviii. 37; xix. 1; Acts xiv. 14. At the bosom of their garments was a seam, slightly sewed, which they easily rent in sunder, and mended afterward again. Lightfoot says, "All who heard blasphemy were obliged to rend their clothes, and not sew them up again." The priests were forbidden to rend their clothes in mourning for their dead; (Lev. x. 6; xxi. 10;) but the interdict does not appear to have extended to a case of this sort. 1 Mac. xi. 71; Jos. Wars, ii. 15. 4, where there is mention of the "bosoms of the high-priests deprived of any covering but what was rent." *Blasphemy;*—He must have meant constructive blasphemy. Assuming that Jesus was an impostor, he spoke impiously and injuriously of God in calling himself "the Son of God." The high-priest was too maliciously acute to allow of an investigation of the grounds on which Jesus based his assumptions: had this taken place, the Sanhedrim could scarcely have resisted his claims.

66. *He is guilty of death.*—Deserving of death. (See on Matt. v. 21; John xix. 7; Lev. xxiv. 16.) So 2 Sam. xii. 5, a son of death. This was the penalty for blasphemy; and this was their mode of sentencing a blasphemer, when they had the power of capital punishment. By this sentence they outlawed him, so that the people might kill him in a tumult, or prosecute him before the Romans and take his life.

67. *Spit in his face,*—The grossest insult to an Oriental, who considers it an indignity for any one to spit even before his face. Job xxx. 10; Isa. l. 5. *Buffeted*—Theophylact: "Struck with the fist." *Others smote him with the palms of their hands*—Generally rendered, slapped in the face: though some take it literally, struck him with a *rhabdos*, rod, or staff. (See on Matt. v. 39.) Mark says this was done by the servants, or officers.

68. *Prophecy*—Mark and Luke say they blindfolded him: made sport with him by imitating the children's play of "blindman's-buff." They did not mean predict, but divine, or declare by preternatural knowledge. Thus Matthew implies that he was blind-folded. They ridiculed his Messianic claims. *Thou Christ*,—Let the Messiah in his prophetic character tell who smote him as king. Luke puts the record of these insults after the account of Peter's fall and repentance, and before the sentence of condemnation. It is probable that shortly after the arrival at the house of Caiaphas, the Sanhedrim went through the unsatisfactory examination recorded by Matthew, ver. 59-62, and then suspended the trial until the morning. Matt. xxvii. 1. During the interval, Jesus was subjected to the indignities mentioned in Luke, ver. 63-65. "When the morning was come," Matt. xxvii. 1—"As soon as it was day," Luke, ver. 66—the Sanhedrim was again convened, and the high-priest challenged Jesus directly respecting his claims, and this speedily resulted in his condemnation. Luke seems to affirm that the inquiry, response, and sentence, (Matt. ver. 63-66,) took place at the morning session. The *tote*, "then," ver. 67, Matthew seems to place the buffering, etc., after the inquiry, etc. But this adverb is not always a precise note of time, or of the succession of events; and it may here refer to the time of the trial in general, and the rather, as it is quite likely that the indignities mentioned were repeated frequently between midnight and morning, though the blindfolding may have taken place before the morning session. If the *tote*, "then," be strictly interpreted, the order of Matthew may be followed, and Luke be construed as grouping the events according to their character—Peter's three denials and repentance being put together; then the abuse of Jesus by "the men that held him;" then a condensed report of the trial and sentence of the Sanhedrim.

69. *Palace*:—Court. *A damsel*—The maid-servant "that kept the door." John xviii. 17. (See on v. 58.) The portress knew John to be a disciple, and therefore suspected Peter to be one. Hence the remark concerning the challenge and denial, (John xviii. 17,) may anticipate the order as given by Matthew, ver. 69, 70, Mark, 66-68, and Luke, 55-57. The portress may, indeed, have charged him with being a disciple, as he was entering with John, on suspicion, and then have followed him into the court, where she viewed him closely, by the light of the fire, or of the lanterns which they had. She thus recognized him as a disciple of Jesus, and charged him accordingly. *Thou also*—As well as John, whom she knew to be a follower of Jesus.

70. *He denied*—He disowned him. *I know not*—A strong Hebrew idiom.

71. *The porch*,—Gateway: the covered way leading from the outer gate to the court. Mark alone says "and the cock crew:" it is supposed to have been midnight—it may have been between one and two o'clock, if the second crowing was at three, the hour recognized as that of cock-crowing. Luke, ver. 58, 59. Peter

went into the porch apparently to elude observation, and being away from the noise in the court, he could hear the voice of the warning bird. *Another maid*—The word in the original being feminine, it was not necessary to put *maid* in italics. The first woman that saw him may have pointed him out a second time, (Mark, 69,) when another maid-servant, (Matt., 71,) and a man, (Luke, 58,) with others when he had returned from the porch to the fire (John, 25,) charged him with being a disciple, when he denied the second time. *Unto them that were there*,—Matthew may have designed to say that the statement was made to those who were in or near the porch, as well as to those who were in the midst of the hall, to whom it had just been communicated: this is favored by Mark: "And began to say to them that stood by"—"began" being Mark's usual pleonasm. *This fellow*—This man, as ver. 61.

72. *With an oath*,—Imprecating divine vengeance on himself if what he said was not true. Matthew alone notices the first oath.

73. *After a while*—Luke, "about the space of an hour after." *They that stood by*,—Luke says "another"—John, who seems to have been acquainted with the party, says it was a kinsman of Malchus whose ear Peter had cut off in the garden, and who was present and saw Peter on the occasion; hence Luke says he "confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this man also was with him." It may have increased Peter's apprehension to find that he was recognized as the man who had assaulted the high-priest's servant. The identification by the kinsman of Malchus was corroborated by the fact which they now adduced that he was a Galilean. *Thy speech*—Manner of speaking, dialect. *Bewrayeth thee*.—Makes thee manifest. The pronunciation of the Galileans, compared with that of the citizens of Jerusalem, was very corrupt. They could not well articulate the gutturals, confounding *aleph*, *ain*, and *cheth*; and they used *tau* for *schin*.

74. *To curse*—To curse violently, to imprecate. *To swear*,—To take an oath. He probably called down divine vengeance upon himself if his denial was not true. *The cock crew*.—Mark says "the second time." (See on v. 34.)

75. *And Peter remembered*—Luke says "the Lord turned and looked upon Peter"—with mingled reproof and pity. Christ may have been in one of the rooms of the house of Caiaphas, surrounding and overlooking the court beneath (Mark, 66), so that they could see each other without being near. This look quickened his memory, aroused his conscience, and broke his heart. Peter might well shed bitter tears, even though, as Bishop Sanderson says, his denial was only a sin of infirmity—his strength, as Chrysostom says, being broken by fear. Tertullian: "The strength of his faith was shaken, but not shaken away; his faith was moved, but not removed; it began to dry, but it did not dry up. He denied his God with his lips; but still held him fast with his heart." Whitby indorses Cornelius a' Lapide,

who says he sinned mortally—the aggravation of his sin gave great bitterness to his repentance.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1 *Christ is delivered bound to Pilate.* 3 *Judas hangeth himself.* 19 *Pilate, admonished of his wife,* 24 *washeth his hands,* 26 *and looseth Barabbas.* 29 *Christ is crowned with thorns,* 34 *crucified,* 40 *reviled,* 50 *dieth, and is buried:* 66 *his sepulchre is sealed, and watched.*

XXVII.—1. *When the morning was come,*—Early, as soon as they could; for the Jews were obliged to administer justice publicly and in day-time. The Sanhedrim usually met in the temple, the courts of which were not open at night. (See on Matt. xxvi. 68.) *All the chief priests*—The Sanhedrim in full and formal session. Mark xv. 1. Joseph and Nicodemus were either not present or not noticed. *To put him to death.*—To devise means to execute him. Grotius: "They consulted, as Matt. xii. 14; xxii. 15, how they might accuse him before the Roman governor, so as to effect his condemnation; rejecting the idea of assassination as disgraceful, and of public tumult as dangerous."

2. *And when they had bound him,*—As a malefactor of the worst class. His bonds may have been removed during the examination. *To Pontius Pilate the governor.*—He was the *epitropos*, or *procurator*, under the President of Syria, though he is here, and also in Josephus, (Ant. xviii. 3. 1,) called governor, or president, because he was invested with the superintendency of Judea, having the power of life and death.

3. *Then Judas,*—Whether this was immediately after the sentence by the Sanhedrim, or after the sentence of Pilate, is not settled by the *tote*, "then;" though as Matthew has put it at the former point, and as there is nothing to oppose this arrangement, it may have taken place then. No other evangelist notices it, and Matthew but briefly, and without passion—a suggestive fact. Some suppose that Judas would not have betrayed Jesus if he had thought the Sanhedrim would have condemned him to death, or that Jesus would not work a miracle to save his life; hence his regret when he found that Christ was about to suffer. But how could he fail to understand the language of Jesus respecting his betrayal? (See on Matt. xxvi. 21-25.) *Repented himself,*—Regretted what he had done—a different word from that which is commonly rendered repent, and which expresses the idea of a change of mind from evil to good; whereas the other expresses regret for any thing, whether good or bad. So 2 Cor. vii. 8, 10: "I do not regret, though I did regret.—Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be regretted." The condemnation of Jesus was the occasion of his feeling this regret, as it caused him to reflect on the heinousness of his crime. Avaricious as he was, he would

then have given the world, if he had it, to cancel the damning deed. *Brought again*—Returned, restored. *The thirty pieces of silver*—(See on Matt. xxvi. 15.)

4. *I have sinned*—The language of bitter remorse. Ambrose says, "I am persuaded that if Judas had spoken to Christ what he spoke to the high-priest, I have sinned, etc., he might have been saved." *The innocent blood*.—Some say, an innocent person—an Hellenistic idiom, like "flesh and blood" for mankind: 1 Sam. xix. 5; 2 Sam. xxi. 16, LXX.—but in these passages it seems to mean the blood of innocent persons—blood which had not been forfeited by any crime. The idea of death is conveyed by the phrase. S. Clarke: "I have committed a horrid sin, in betraying an innocent man to death." Cf. Matt. xxiii. 35: "righteous blood." *What is that to us?*—That is no concern of ours. *See thou to that*.—Thou wilt see—a Latinism for Have care for that thyself. They treated him as traitors generally are treated: they availed themselves of the treason, but they despised the traitor. But they could hardly help knowing that those who avail themselves of the sin are as bad as those who commit it, and that it is a damning crime to hire a man to betray the innocent to death—and they admitted that the money was the price of blood.

5. *He cast down*—Having thrown. *In the temple*,—Perhaps *en* should be rendered at, or by. The priests and elders, at least some of them, had returned to the temple to attend to their appointed tasks, and they may have been just then in the Court of the Israelites, or of the Women, or in the porch which led into the *naos*—the word here used—meaning the holy place. *Hanged himself*.—When suspended, the rope seems to have given way, and he fell down headlong over a rocky precipice, on a stake or rough stone, and burst asunder, so that his bowels protruded. Acts i. 18.

6. *The treasury*,—The original word comes from *corban* (see Mark vii. 11), and is here used for the eleven chests in which gifts to the temple were deposited, and which were placed in the Court of the Women. What consciences these men had! How they strained out the gnat after swallowing the camel! *The price of blood*.—That which procured the death of a man. The hypocrites may have had Deut. xxiii. 18 in view. The Jews and early Christians did not consider it lawful for executioners to make offerings or alms.

7. *The potter's field*,—The article indicates that it was a particular field known by that name, having been owned by a potter, who had dug the clay for his pottery. Being exhausted of the clay, and unfit for tillage, it sold for little; though it would do for a cemetery, especially one for the interment of *strangers*—probably those who died while attending the feasts. Cf. Acts ii. 10, though there another word is used.

9. *Then was fulfilled*—The prophecy referring to this event was then accomplished. *By Jeremy*—As Matthew frequently omits the name of the author quoted, he may have here simply written "by the prophet," and some transcriber having Jer. xviii. in his head, inserted "Jeremy." It would appear from Augustin, that there were some MSS. in his time that had no name. There is none in MSS. 37, 157 of the 10th and 11th centuries, nor in the first Syriac, Persian Polyglott, and first two Latin versions. The prophet (Zech. xi. 13) puts the language into the mouth of the Messiah, because he permitted and controlled the transaction; this being according to the prophetic style. So it is said (Acts i. 18), that Judas bought the field, meaning, he was the occasion of its purchase. Matthew therefore gives the sense of the prediction, rather than its precise language. He refers the actions to the true actors. The LXX. have a curious rendering: "Put them into the smelting furnace, and I will see whether it is proof, in like manner as I have been proved by them. So I took the thirty pieces of silver, and threw them down in the house of the Lord, for the smelting furnace." *Thirty pieces of silver*,—Silverlings, shekels, amounting to some \$18, the price of a slave (Ex. xxi. 32). Well might Zechariah say, ironically and sarcastically, "A goodly price that I was prized at of them!" What a price for the prophet! What a price for Him whom he typified! This Matthew expresses by *the price of him that was valued*—the price that was set on his head, by the stipulation of Judas with the priests, who are here meant in the exegetical clause, *whom they of the children of Israel did value*. Le Clerc says, "'The price of him that was valued' was meant by Matthew to express 'the goodly price,' ironically, of the prophet."

10. *The potter's field*,—Hackett says, "A workman in a pottery which I visited at Jerusalem, said that all their clay was obtained from the hill over the Valley of Hinnom"—where tradition locates the field of blood—the "Hill of Evil Counsel." A part of the Cerameicus at Athens was made a burial-place for those who fell in battle. *As the Lord appointed me*.—A free rendering of the Hebrew of Zechariah, "And the Lord said unto me." The nature and design of prophecy required a certain degree of obscurity, which would be removed by the fulfillment.

11. *And Jesus stood before the governor*:—In the pretorium: his accusers being outside. They delivered Jesus to Pilate because the power of inflicting capital punishment had been taken from the Sanhedrim. Lightfoot thinks it was lost by default merely. The Talmud says it was taken away forty years or more prior to the destruction of Jerusalem, which was just before the death of Christ. Some think the Jews still retained that power in religious causes. But the exercise of it supposed in Acts vii. 57; xxiii. 27, is scarcely to the point, as the stoning of Stephen and the intended murder of Paul, were not the execution of a judicial sentence, but acts of phrensy, the latter of which was arrested by the timely intervention of the Roman authorities. What Herod did (Acts xii. 2) seems to have been done with an abuse of the power delegated to him by the Roman

government. But if the Sanhedrim had still the power of capital punishment in religious causes, it declined the odium of exercising it in this case. If claims like those which Jesus advanced were constructively blasphemous, and deserving of death, (Lev. xxiv. 16; John xix. 7,) they had not proved, and they probably feared they could not prove, that he was an impostor. Hence they preferred to charge him with a civil crime. *Art thou the King of the Jews?*—Pilate seems to have asked this question to give Jesus an opportunity to say in what sense he claimed to be a king. Luke records the accusation which suggested the question. *Thou sayest.*—Campbell accounts for this idiomatic form of expressing an affirmative, by reference to the form of the interrogatory, "Thou art the King of the Jews?"

12. *And when he was accused*—Of mutiny and treason—by the chief priests and elders. *He answered nothing.*—See on ver. 14 and Matt. xxvi. 63.

13. *Hearest thou not*—Why dost thou not defend thyself against these numerous accusations?

14. *To never a word;*—To not one word: a strong expression. *Marvelled greatly.*—Pilate was astonished at his silence, perhaps, because it indicated a degree of self-possession, forbearance, and patience, which he had never before witnessed. Isa. liii. 7; 1 Pet. ii. 23. He may have also wondered that Jesus did not defend himself from those charges which the procurator had reason to believe were false and malicious, and which as such could not be substantiated by any credible testimony. But Jesus had already vindicated his innocence, and established his claims before the Jews, and he had said enough to Pilate to satisfy him that his Messianic claims were no invasion of Cesar's prerogative; hence any reply to the clamors of his enemies would have been useless and inexpedient.

15. *At that feast,*—At feast-time. *Was wont to release*—Used to release. The custom was probably imitated from the Syrians, or from the Greeks at their Thesmophoriae, or from the Romans at their Lectisternia, when Livy says all prisoners in Rome were freed from their chains. Herod, who imitated heathen customs, may have borrowed this from them: it was hardly of Jewish origin—in memory of the release from Egypt—as the Jewish law punished "without mercy." Heb. x. 28. The Christian emperors, Valentinian, Theodosius, and Arcadius, used to release all prisoners, with some exceptions, at Easter. *Would.*—Desired.

16. *Notable*—Notorious. *Barabbas.*—Not Jesus Barabbas, as some cursive MSS. and some versions read, but no ancient MSS., versions, or Fathers. According to Mark and Luke, he was a rioter and murderer—probably an insurrectionist against the government. John, with a biting irony, says he was a robber—a perfect outlaw—how opposite to the character of the meek and lowly Jesus! Matt. xii. 19.

17. *Whom will ye*—Mark says they had demanded the usual release of a prisoner. By suggesting Jesus, who had been convicted of no crime, or Barabbas, who was notoriously steeped in crime, Pilate may have thought they would for very shame be obliged to take Jesus. *Christ?*—Without the article. (See on Matt. i. 1.)

18. *For he knew*—As he saw no seditions raised by Jesus, and witnessed his meek appearance. His surpassing excellence and popularity excited the envy of the priests—hence Pilate asked the people to make their choice, and they would probably have chosen Jesus had they not been urged to a contrary choice by their superiors. Ver. 20.

19. *When he was set*—Besides, (*de,*) while he was sitting on the tribunal. *His wife*,—Women, to the honor of their sex, never appear to have countenanced any ill-treatment of the Saviour. *Have thou nothing*—Do nothing against him, for he is innocent. *Many things*—Greatly. *This day in a dream*,—It is likely the disturbance early in the morning, with some vague information concerning the facts in the case, occasioned the dream. There is no need of calling in preternatural agency. Whether or not she attached importance to it because morning dreams were supposed to be ominous, does not appear. *Because of him*—On his account. Nicephorus says her name was Claudia Procula. The Gospel of Nicodemus says she was Procla, a proselyte. Grotius says this circumstance affords an incidental proof of the veracity of Matthew; for it was only in the reign of Tiberius that governors were permitted to take their wives into the provinces. Tac. Ann. iii. 33, 34.

20. *But the chief priests*—(See on v. 18.)

21. *Whether of the twain*—Which of the two. Acts iii. 14. *Barabbas*.—They may have had some sympathy for him if he was an insurrectionist against the Roman government.

22. *What shall I do then with Jesus*,—He asked this in absolute perplexity. *Which is called*—Mark: "Whom ye call." He seems to be embarrassed with the names and titles of Jesus.

23. *And the governor said*,—The third time. (See Luke.) *Why*—Sc. Not so; for what evil hath he done?

24. *When Pilate saw*—Rhemish: "And Pilate seeing that he prevailed nothing." The original is in the present, which has more graphic effect: he prevails nothing—a riot is getting up. *He took water*,—Deut. xxi. 6-9; Ps. xxvi. 6. Pilate, as Origen suggests, may have been acquainted with the Jewish custom, and adopted it to let the Jews know that they, not he, must bear the responsibility of this judicial murder. It did not indeed exculpate Pilate, but it attested the

innocence of Jesus. *The multitude* could not all hear what Pilate said, but they could all see and understand what he did. The Gentiles had a custom of washing hands to expiate crime: it does not appear that they thus professed their innocence. AEn. ii. 715. It was an ancient custom for judges, on passing sentence, to raise their hands to heaven, and testify they were innocent of the blood of the person condemned. *Just person*.—Probably suggested by the communication of his wife, ver. 19. *See ye to it*.—(See on v. 4.)

25. *His blood be on us*.—Lev. xx. 9; Jos. ii. 19; 2 Sam. i. 16; 1 Kings ii. 37. We will be accountable for his death. It may have been, as Strong suggests, a challenge to all to defend his innocence, according to the Oriental custom of hereditary revenge. Lamy says the witnesses touched the head of the criminal, and said, "Thy blood be upon thee," and thinks the Jews alluded to this. Among the Greeks, witnesses upon whose testimony any were put to death, imprecated curses on themselves and children, if their testimony were not true. Grotius says, Roman witnesses said, "His blood be upon us;" hence before a Roman tribunal the Jews adopted this form, adding, *and upon our children*—which must have been called to mind when 500 of them a day were crucified by Titus, and when, as Josephus says, room was wanted for the crosses, and crosses for the bodies. Did the high-priest have this imprecation in view, Acts v. 28?

26. *Then released*—As Mark says, "willing to satisfy the people," and being afraid of a tumult. *Scourged*—Whipping was an ancient Greek punishment; but this scourging before execution was a Roman custom; hence the original word comes from the Latin *flagello*, because the *flagrum*, or whip, occasioned a severe burning pain. Horace speaks of the *flagila* as *horribilia*. This punishment was usually confined to slaves, free men being whipped with rods. Cicero says, "To bind Roman citizens is unlawful; to scourge them is a great crime: to put them to death is almost parricide; but what shall I say of crucifying them?" Pilate seems to have hoped that the Jews would be satisfied with scourging, as this was so severe a punishment; but as they were not, it answered for that which usually preceded crucifixion. In this light all the evangelists are consistent. Some doubt if Pilate condemned Christ, but only permitted the Jews to execute him; but Grotius proves from Tacitus and others, that he condemned and crucified him. Sedition was often punished by crucifixion.

27. *Then*—S. Clarke says, "It appears from John xix. that some of these things were done before Pilate condemned Jesus, but Matthew, for method's sake, relates all these circumstances together." Possibly; but there is nothing in the synoptists to show that John (xix. 4-15) does not record another attempt to save Jesus after the release of Barabbas, the sentence, (Luke xxiii. 24,) the scourging, etc. *The soldiers*—Those that were about him, the procurator having no lictors, as had the *proeses* of Syria. *Into the common hall*—The pretorium. Mark calls it a palace, a

hall. (See ver. 11.) They probably took him into the open court of the governor's house, which may have been large enough to contain *the whole band*. (See on Matt. xxvi. 47.) The words of *soldiers* are redundant, and injure the sentence.

28. *A scarlet robe*.—The *chlamys* was a cloak worn by kings, military officers, soldiers, and others, though with a difference in quality. It was fastened on the shoulder with a clasp. This may have been the mantle in which he had been sent back from Herod, or an officer's cast-off *sagum*—which was usually purple. John calls it a "robe," or cloak; and, with Mark, says it was purple: Matthew says *scarlet*; but *kokine* is sometimes used for *porphura*, a bright red. The former dye is made from a grain (hence the name), the *coccus* of the ilex, which contains a worm, whose juice is called *kermes* by the Arabians—hence our word crimson: the latter is from the *porphura* (*purpura*), the purple muscle, a Mediterranean shell-fish, which yields a liquor of a reddish-purple color, much prized by the ancients. Philo—in Flaccum—speaks of Carobas, a mock king in Egypt, as dressed in this color. The robe was brought scoffingly by the soldiers, as though it were the *roba picta*, sent by the Roman Senate. They thus ridiculed Christ's pretensions to royalty.

29. *A crown of thorns*.—Not of the *acanthus*, or bear's foot, but probably of the *naba*, which abounds in the East. It has very small and sharp spines, well adapted to give pain. The crown might easily be made of its soft, round, and pliant branches—the leaves resemble those of ivy, being of a deep green. The crown would thus be like that with which emperors and generals were crowned. Clement Alex. says, (*Poed.* ii. 8,) "It is absurd in us, who hear that our Lord was crowned with thorns, to insult the venerable Sufferer by crowning ourselves with flowers." *A reed*—Probably a cane, as a mock scepter. *Hail, King of the Jews!*—A common mode of saluting the emperor: *Cesar ave! Bowed the knee*—The mode of doing reverence, or worship, as in Mark, who records it last, as if it were a distinct ceremonial. Vopiscus says, "When Proculus was playing chess at a party, and had come out *imperator* ten times, a certain not ignoble member of the guard said to him, Hail, Augustus! and the purple cloth being brought, placed it on his shoulder, and did him reverence." Ambrose: "They were without the motive of a good deed, but God was not without his honor. He is saluted as a king, is crowned as a conqueror, is adored as God and Lord."

30. *And they spit upon him*.—(See on Matt. xxvi. 67.) *And took the reed, and smote him on the head*.—John says, in our version, "smote him with their hands"—gave him blows, properly, with a stick. Among other indignities offered to Sejanus, the favorite of Tiberius, as they were carrying him to prison, Dio says that "they struck him on the head." While the soldiers were offering these indignities to Jesus in the court of the palace the Jews seem to have remained outside. Hoping, perhaps, that their fury may have somewhat subsided, Pilate

brought Jesus out and repeated the assertion that he had found no fault in him. As Jesus appeared in the garb of mock royalty, Pilate said, "Behold the man!"—wishing, perhaps, to turn their malice into pity or contempt, to avert the execution of the sentence. (See John xix. 5-16.)

31. *Led him away*—The phrase for taking a prisoner to execution.

32. *And as they came out*,—Executions among the ancients took place outside the city walls. Num. xv. 35, 36; 1 Kings xxi. 13; Heb. xiii. 12. That it was a Roman custom appears from Plautus, *extra urbem—patibulum*. *Found*—Met. *A man of Cyrene*—A Cyrenian. Cyrene was the capital of the Pentapolis, or Libya Cyrenaica, partly corresponding to Barca, in Northern Africa. It was situated in a plain a few miles from the Mediterranean coast. The city was next to Carthage in importance: it was destroyed in the fourth century: its ruins are called Grenneh, or Curin. It was the resort of many Jews, who were protected by the Ptolemies and by the Romans. Simon may have come to Jerusalem to attend the passover. Acts ii. 10; xi. 20; 1 Macc. xv. 23. Mark and Luke say he was "coming out of the country"—where he probably sojourned with a friend during the passover: he may have been repairing to the city for morning worship at the temple. *Him they compelled to bear his cross*.—It was customary for the Romans to make the prisoner carry his cross to the place of execution. On Gen. xxii. 6, "Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son," the Jewish Lesser Bereshith says, "as a man carries his cross." Nonius out of Plautus: "Let him carry his cross through the city, and then be fastened to it." This was the lowest degree of ignominy, hence the epithet *furcifer*. It is likely that Christ sank beneath the burden of the cross, having been exhausted by what he had undergone, and they therefore forced Simon to carry it. As the service was considered ignominious, Simon had to be compelled. (See on Matt. v. 41.) This will not settle the question, whether or not he was a disciple of Christ; for where were the twelve? One can hardly help thinking that if he was not then, he became one afterward; and if so, what an honor he must have considered this indignity! What a glorious shame! Da Costa says that as the cross was ordinarily fastened to the shoulders of the victim, it was not unloosed by the soldiers; but they "in irony compelled Simon, who in passing had expressed his compassion for the adorable Sufferer, to lift the cross, and to bear it after him—an image of the true disciple of our Lord, sharing in his cross and in his ignominy." Tatian, in his Harmony, represents Simon helping to bear it; which Lardner understands of "bearing the hinder part of the cross after Jesus, after our Lord had bore it all himself some way." Bede: "The cross is first borne by our Lord, and then handed over to be borne by Simon, and this was done with a befitting mystery; for the Lord suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps." *Stauros* means a stake, as the upright piece of the cross was fastened into the ground. Near the top was a transverse beam, to which the hands were nailed: about the middle was fixed a piece of wood, on which the

person sat. He was without covering, except an apron. He was drawn up with cords upon the cross, first tied, and then nailed. Many deny that the feet were nailed, but Hug, Bahr, and others, have proved that they were—at least sometimes—as were Christ's. The feet were about a yard from the ground. Crucifixion is supposed by some to be alluded to in Gen. xl. 19; Deut. xxi. 22; Ezra vi. 11; Esth. vii. 10. It dates back as far as the time of Semiramis. It was inflicted on slaves and such free persons as were convicted of the most heinous crimes. Their bodies were left for birds of prey. Horace speaks of feeding crows on a cross. The suffering of crucifixion was, so great that the Romans called any great anguish a *crux*—which, by the way, means the transverse beam, which was sometimes nailed to a tree or post. Bishop Andrewes notes the four things ascribed to the cross, answerable to the four quarters of it: bloody, Col. i. 20; doleful, Acts i. 3; scandalous, Gal. v. 11; accursed, Gal. iii. 13.

33. *Golgotha*,—Syriac, *Gogultho*; Chaldee, *Golgoltha*; Hebrew, *Golgoleth*. The Jews dropped the second *l*, as in the Samaritan version of Num. i. 22; so Babel for Balbel—on account of euphony. A human skull was called *Golgotha* because of its roundness: *cf.* Gilgal. Luke simply calls it *Kranion*, Skull; Vulgate, *Calvariae*, from *calvus*, bald; the bare skull. Stockius says, "No doubt it was called by this name because many skulls of those who had suffered crucifixion and other capital punishments were there scattered up and down." Some think skulls would not have been left unburied, and if they were buried, they would not give name to the place. Kuinoel says, that the bodies of malefactors were buried, and the heads left on the ground. It is likely, however, that the entire corpse was buried, but as many were interred near the place of execution, the Jews not allowing malefactors to be buried in the tombs of their fathers, when graves were dug, skulls would be thrown out, and perhaps many would be left uncovered, which circumstance would give rise to the name. Some think it refers to the shape of the hill or rock—a bare knoll. It is nowhere, however, called a mountain, or hill; though it was quite likely an eminence, and not improbably at the traditional site. In *Itiner. Hieros.*, A.D. 333, it is called *Monticulus Golgotha*. *That is to say*,—Which word signifies.

34. *Vinegar mingled with gall*:—Mark says, "wine mingled with myrrh." Some think the mixture in Matthew was offered in derision, and that in Mark to stupefy, according to the custom of intoxicating criminals who were about to be put to death. Prov. xxxi. 6. But *oxos*, in Matthew, means sour wine (*vin aigre*), the common drink of the Roman soldiers (Luke xxiii. 36); hence some of the best MSS., ancient versions, and editors, read "wine" in Matthew. *Chole* is used in the LXX. for wormwood, Prov. v. 4; Lam. iii. 15, and for bitter poison, *rosh*, Deut. xxix. 18, 33. Bochart thinks the gall, *rosh*, (Ps. lxix. 21,) is the hyssop, (John xix. 29,) a species of which growing in Judea is so bitter as not to be eatable. Chrysostom and Theophylact think this hyssop was poisonous. Nonnus says, "One

gave the deadly acid, mixed with hyssop." *Chole*, therefore, may mean wormwood, myrrh, hyssop, or any other bitter herb, which was steeped in the sour wine. *And when he had tasted thereof*,—He knew, of course, what it was; but by tasting it, and then refusing to drink it, he gave them to understand that he declined it, as an unfit beverage, being nauseous, or because it was stupefying, and he would not have his sufferings thus alleviated.

35. *Parted his garments*,—Having offered him the nauseous draught, they stripped him, and nailed him to the cross. The clothes of those who were executed were perquisites of the executioners. *Casting lots*:—Ballots, dice, etc. According to Homer, (Il. iii. 310-325,) the ballots were thrown into an urn or helmet, which was violently shaken, and the ballot which first fell out was successful. The Trojans and Romans had a similar custom; as also the Hebrews. Num. xxxiii. 54; Prov. xvi. 33: "The lot is cast into the lap," or urn. The heathen believed that Jove had the disposing of lots. *That it might be fulfilled*—(See on Matt. i. 22; Ps. xxii. 18.) David in the troubles and triumphs of this psalm seems to have been a type of his Son and Lord. *Garments*—Probably, outer garments, which, supposing there were two, would have to be rent, so that each soldier might have a part. *Vesture*—In the quotation, might mean generally raiment; but as contrasted with the "garments," it denotes the coat, *chiton*, or tunic. John xix. 23, 24. This was an under garment, and was woven, "without seam," as tunics are frequently in the East. (See on Matt. v. 40.) It could not be divided without injury, as those garments could which had seams.

36. *And sitting down*,—And having sat down, they then kept guard over him. This was usual, to see that none removed the body. They could hardly have thought, however, that the disciples of Jesus would attempt to do so.

37. *And set up*—This does not necessarily refer to the soldiers: it may be rendered, "they set up." It is probable the soldiers affixed the tablet to the cross by order of Pilate. *His accusation*—Cause, crime—that is, the *epigraph*, as Mark calls it, setting forth the cause of his crucifixion, according to custom. It was written in Hebrew (or the Syro-Chaldee, the vulgar tongue), Greek (the language of literary men and most foreigners), and Latin (that of the Roman conquerors.) If Matthew wrote in Hebrew, he may have given the precise Hebrew inscription; Mark, the Latin; Luke and John, the Greek. (See on John xix. 19-22.)

38. *Two thieves*—Robbers, probably insurgents, or rebels, as there were many such at that time in Judea. It is likely that they were not very scrupulous in regard to the property of any one, Roman or Jew. For the sake of example, as usual, they had been reserved for execution at the time of the feast. It was a special indignity to Jesus to crucify him between two robbers. He had complained, "Are ye come out as against a robber?" Now they crucify him as the king of robbers.

39. *And they that passed by*,—Probably the crowds going in and out of the city. *Reviled*—Literally, blasphemed—rendered "railed on" in Mark. (See on Matt. xii. 31.) *Wagging their heads*,—A common mode of derision. Job xvi. 4; Ps. xxii. 7, 8; cix. 25; Isa. xxxvii. 22.

40. *Thou that destroyest*—A popular mode of expressing an assertion of capacity or intention to do any thing. It is not surprising that a mob which had but little else to say in reproach of Christ, should reiterate the absurd charge of the two false witnesses—xxvi. 61. *If thou be*—As thou art: the indicative gives force to the irony and sarcasm. Chrysostom: "Being the children of the devil, how do they imitate the very words of their father! Matt. iv. 6."

41. *Elders*,—A deputation from the Sanhedrim: they, of course, led on the people.

42. *He saved others*;—This they knew was a fact; the example of Lazarus was too recent to have been forgotten—though they spoke with malicious irony. They affected to disbelieve his miracles, or to credit them to demoniacal influence, which would not now avail him. *Himself he cannot save*.—This they must have known was false, in the sense in which they meant it. Consistently with his design of atoning for the sin of the world, he could not save himself, as his hour was come; otherwise he could. John x. 18. (See on Matt. xxvi. 53, 54.) *If he be the King of Israel*,—As thou art King of Israel—the Messianic King. Mark has "Christ the King"—not the Roman style, which the soldiers naturally used, "the King of the Jews." *We will believe him*.—If he had "saved himself," he would have forfeited all claim to our confidence: we believe him, because he did not deliver himself from death, but died and rose again.

43. *He trusted in God*;—Alluding perhaps to Matt. xxvi. 53, as well as to his oft-repeated assertion that he was acting according to the divine will. *If he will have him*:—Ps. xxii. 8, LXX.—"seeing he delighteth in him"—as he loves him. By quoting this passage thus sarcastically, they little thought they were verifying the prediction, *for he said, I am the Son of God*.—If God's Son, he will love him, and therefore will rescue him. Wis. ii. 13, 18. (See on Matt. xiv. 33.)

44. *The thieves also*—In like manner the robbers also, who were crucified with him, reviled him. Winer says, "The plural is used when the predicate refers to one individual, but the writer wishes to avoid particularizing him, as Matt. ii. 20." As Matthew and Mark do not wish to relate the particulars concerning the penitent robber, they speak in general terms; but Luke speaks with exactness, because he details them.

45. *Now from the sixth hour*—From 12 to 3 P.M. *There was darkness*—This was not an eclipse, as it was the time of full moon: some think it was a haze, or mist, arising from sulphureous vapors, such as accompany earthquakes, one of

which happened at that time, (ver. 51)—but that was not an earthquake produced by natural causes. Others think it was like the meteoric phenomenon described by Ebn Batuta, who speaks of a spot "enveloped by a dense cloud so close to the earth that it might be almost touched with the hand." It does not appear to have been total, and Elsner thinks it was caused by a preternatural accumulation of clouds, enveloping the whole atmosphere—*cf.* Ex. x. 21-23—and was meant to portend the calamities that should soon overwhelm the Jewish nation. The clouds must have been very dense, as according to Luke the sun was obscured. The ancient commentators thought it was preternatural, and that it extended over the globe, alleging in evidence certain passages of Africanus, Phlegon, Thallus, and Dionysius the Areopagite, which, however, are not considered worthy of any regard, though Grotius and Whitby adduce them. (See Tertullian, *Apol.* 21; Origen, *contra Cels.* ii.; Euseb. *Chron.*) Those who consider it an earthquake-mist—which may extend to a radius of ten miles—confine it to Jerusalem and its vicinity; but Origen and most modern commentators extend it to the land of Judea, which seems most probable, this being a frequent meaning of *ge*, rendered land or earth. (See on Matt. v. 5.) Hence, it is no wonder that heathen historians say nothing about it. The omission of Josephus is accounted for on another ground: he omitted many facts of the gospel history with which he must have been familiar, as he did not wish to bring his history into disrepute with either the Jews or the Romans.

46. *Eli*,—"Eloi," in Mark, appears to be the Aramaic form of the word. The Hebrew is *Eli, Eli, lamah azabthani*; the Aramaic, or Syro-Chaldee, as in Mark. *Shabak* means to leave, let alone, in the Chaldee of Ezra vi. 7; Dan. iv. 12 or 15; and *shebakthani* is used in the Chaldee Targum and Syriac version of Ps. xxii. 2 (1). Our Lord here seems to be in an agony, like that in the garden—the lowest depth of the *kenosis*, Phil. ii. 7, 8. His own divine personality, essentially one with the Father, allowed the humanity to feel an agony which it would be presumptuous in man or angel to attempt to conceive. (See on Matt. xxvi. 39.) It was not occasioned by mere bodily pain, else the malefactors were more heroic than he; nor does the exclamation imply murmuring, or reluctance to die, or want of confidence in Him whom he styles *My God*, and immediately after "Father," into whose hands he commends his spirit; nor any local removal of his own Divinity or of the Father; but an indescribable agony and dereliction of comfort, when "it pleased the Lord to bruise him, put him to grief, and make his soul an offering for sin." Isa. liii. 10. This is the only one of the seven sentences uttered by Christ on the cross recorded by Matthew and Mark, who alone record it.

47. *Some of them*—Perhaps Hellenistic Jews, who were not familiar with the Aramaic dialect, and mistook the meaning of Christ's language, or heard it indistinctly. Affected by the prodigies, they may have thought that Jesus called for Elias, and that the prophet might make his appearance, as it was the general

opinion that Elijah was to be the precursor of the Messiah. *This man*—A form of expression frequently used in a respectful sense: *cf.* Matt. iii. 17.

48. *And straightway*—Immediately. But for John, this could not be accounted for, as he alone says that Jesus exclaimed "I thirst," which expression, and not "Eli," etc., induced them to give him drink, *One of them ran*,—John says, "they filled." Of course, it was only one person's work to run and fill the sponge, yet this and other acts would naturally be attributed to the bystanders in common. *A sponge*,—If the vessel of vinegar, *posca*, sour wine and water, was there not merely for the soldiers, as their ordinary drink, but for the persons who were executed, to assuage the burning thirst occasioned by crucifixion, then the sponge may have been there for the purpose to which they thus applied it. *Reed*,—Cane, *calamus*. John says "hyssop." As there is a kind of hyssop which has a woody, reed-like stalk, two feet or more long, which would be long enough to reach a person on a cross, this is generally supposed to be the reed in question. In drinking the *posca*, our Lord did not contravene his statement that he would not drink any more of the fruit of the vine, i.e., wine; for though *posca* was sometimes called wine, yet it was not considered wine, not being allowed to be used in libations: it was, indeed, vinegar and water.

49. *The rest said*,—Mark attributes this to the person who ran for the vinegar. It is likely he said it, and they repeated it—q.d.: "Yes, let us see if he will." In Mark, "Let alone" is the same word as *Let be* in Matthew—only the latter is in the plural. Matthew, Mark, and John, are thus harmonized. According to the mis-interpretation of the bystanders, Jesus called for Elias at the same time that he said, "I thirst;" they therefore said, Let him have some vinegar: we shall see if Elias will come to take him down.

50. *When he had cried again*—Probably in the words, "It is finished" (John), followed by "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke), he *yielded up the ghost*.—Dismissed the spirit, or expired, as in Mark and Luke. Ghost is from the Anglo-Saxon *gast*, an inmate of the body, viewed as a house. It expresses the reality of man's spiritual nature. "There is a spirit in man," which is given up at death, so that it may return to God who gave it. Ecc. xii. 7. Some say the language here used expresses the sovereignty which Christ had over his life, so that he died voluntarily, which in one sense is true, but not perhaps in the sense intended. He did not by miracle arrest the agencies by which he was put to death, as he could have done, because he came to die; but there is no proof that he shortened his life by any supernatural act. He merely allowed the physical, mental, and moral agencies employed to produce their normal effect, and death was the necessary result. The language is not peculiar. In Gen. xxxv. 18, LXX., speaking of Rachel's death, a similar phrase is used. Josephus and other Greek writers use like expressions; and Euripides has this very phrase for expired.

51. *The veil of the temple*—This was not the veil which hung before the holy place; but "the second veil," (Heb. ix. 3,) which hung at the entrance into the holy of holies. Ex. xxvi. 35. A similar curtain was used in the temple of Diana at Ephesus, and of Jupiter at Olympia. The rending of the veil, according to some, was occasioned by the earthquake; but it is difficult to say how that could rend it; besides, it is spoken of as a distinct fact. Doubtless, both phenomena were supernatural; and they are generally considered symbolical, the earthquake of the shaking and removal of the Jewish dispensation, (Heb. xii. 26-29,) and the rending of the veil of the removal of all ceremonial obstructions, and the opening of the new and living way to God, (Heb. x. 19-22)—a passage which seems to have been overlooked by De Wette and others, who resolve the phenomenon into a myth to which no reference is made, except by the synoptists or their interpolators! Schleiermacher asks how it could be known except by the priests, as they alone could have witnessed it. He forgets that a few weeks afterward, "a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith," (Acts vi. 7,) and they could tell it. But how does he know that none but priests saw it? It was at the hour of evening worship in the temple, and it is quite likely that the holy place, as well as the holy of holies, was thrown open by the miraculous agency, so that the people might witness the phenomenon. No one in the apostles' times seems to have questioned the statement of the evangelists; and there is small reason for Neander to quote apocryphal and rabbinical authorities to prove that "some matter of fact lies at the foundation of this mythical adjunct." Matthew alone mentions the quaking, or shaking, of the earth, and the rending of the rocks. Many travelers think that the fissures in the rocks near Jerusalem could have been produced by only such an agency as this. Theophylact says, "As the Jews were wont to rend their garments when they heard blasphemy, so the temple, not enduring the execrable blasphemies against the Son of God, tore his veil in pieces." Ambrose: "O the breasts of Jews, harder than the stones! The rocks are rent, but their hearts are hardened. The judge entreats, his officer believes; the traitor by his death condemns his crimes; the elements flee; the earth is shaken; the tombs are opened; yet the obduracy of the Jews remains unmoved."

52. *And the graves were opened*,—Monuments, tombs. The ancients speak of sepulchers being thrown open by earthquakes. The tombs were opened by the earthquake at the death of Christ; but the saints were quickened at his resurrection and came out of them then. *Slept*,—The primitive Christians used this symbol for death, because it implies rest from toil and hope of resurrection; hence they called their places of interment cemeteries, sleeping-places.

53. *The holy city*,—Jerusalem: (see on Matt. iv. 5.) *And appeared unto many*.—Thus furnishing proof of the reality of their resurrection, and affording a guaranty that Christ at the last day will raise up all that sleep in their graves. Who these saints were whether Simeon, Zacharias, etc., who had recently died, or

patriarchs, prophets, etc., of the old time—whether they died again, as Lazarus did, or ascended with Christ at his resurrection, as the Fathers believed—cannot be determined.

54. *Feared greatly*,—(See on Matt. viii. 27.) *The Son of God*.—The Messiah, as he professed to be: an innocent man—not a malefactor, or impostor. They seem to consider the prodigious attestations of the Saviour's claims of divine Sonship; and so they were designed to be.

55. *Many women*—All the synoptists describe them as those who were his disciples, and who ministered to him in Galilee. Luke viii. 1-3. They followed him to Jerusalem to have as much as possible of his presence and instruction, and to sympathize with him in his sufferings, of which they had pre-intimation. (*Beholding afar off*)—Probably because those crucified were naked, and because the soldiers and mob were near the cross. His mother and aunt, with Mary Magdalene and John, were some time before near enough to be spoken to by Jesus; but it is likely John had to take away the Virgin-mother, the sword having gone through her soul, (Luke ii. 35,) so that she was not able to remain to witness the end, and the other two had retreated to a more distant point, where the rest were standing. Cf. Ps. xxxviii. 11.

56. *Mary Magdalene*,—A reputable woman of Magdala. Luke viii. 2, 3. *Mary the mother of James*—(See on Matt. x. 3; xiii. 55.) *The mother of Zebedee's children*.—Salome (Mark) is elsewhere so described; (see on Mark xx. 20;) her sons being distinguished apostles, (Matt. x. 2,) and Zebedee probably having been a man of some repute.

57. *When the even was come*,—Probably a little before sunset, when they removed the bodies. (See on Matt. xiv. 15; Jos. Wars, iv. 5. 2.) *There came*—Alford, "probably to the pretorium;" Meyer, "to the place of execution," as in ver. 38, John. *Arimathea*,—Generally identified with Ramleh, a pleasant town in the borders of a fertile plain, 30 miles north-west of Jerusalem, on the road to Joppa, supposed to be the place where Samuel was born. 1 Sam. i. 1. Grotius identifies it with the Ramah of Josh. xviii. 25, and the Rumah of 2 Kings xxiii. 36. Robinson thinks that Samuel's Ramah was at Soba, 8 miles south-west of Jerusalem, and that Arimathea might be the Ramathem, or Aramatha, located by Eusebius and Jerome near Lydda; and not Ramleh, which signifies sand, a sandy plain, while Ramah signifies a hill. Ramathem is the Greek form of the Hebrew Ramathaim. With the article, this might readily pass into the Greek Arimathea. Joseph is said to be of Arimathea to distinguish him from other disciples of the same name. Cf. 1 Mac. xi. 34; Jos. Ant. xiii. 4. 8.

58. *He went to Pilate*,—Mark says "boldly," and it required considerable courage, for he might have expected to be ridiculed by the Jews, suspected by the

governor, and insulted by the Roman soldiers. *Begged*—Requested. It was not customary for the Romans to bury the bodies of those whom they executed; yet they would allow their friends to take them away for interment; and in this case Pilate would be the more willing, because he believed that Jesus was innocent, and Joseph was a man of wealth and position, whom he would not be disposed to disoblige. *To be delivered*—Restored to the friends.

59. *Taken the body*,—According to Mark and Luke, he took it down from the cross; the soldiers probably letting it remain there, because they knew that Joseph made application for it. As Joseph and Nicodemus, who assisted him, (John,) believed in Jesus, they could not allow his sacred body to be cast into the common Golgotha. It is hard to say what notions they formed concerning his resurrection, in which they must have believed. They may have construed it in a figurative sense, or being Pharisees, as a kind of metempsychosis, the spirit animating another body. They hardly expected that Jesus would rise again, in the same body, in three days. Their faith was vague and confused, but it was sincere, and their love was strong. *Wrapped it*—Herodotus (ii. 86) says the Egyptians washed the corpse, and embalmed it in a wrapper of fine linen, with thongs of leather. But the sheet brought by Joseph for the occasion (Mark) was probably designed to be removed after the Sabbath, when more elaborate funereal attentions would be bestowed upon the body. Matthew, writing for Jews, who were familiar with the funereal rites, says nothing about them, as did the other evangelists who wrote for Gentiles.

60. *His own new tomb*,—Well known to many for whom Matthew wrote. Having no occupant, the body raised must be Christ's; and as it was in a rock, there could be no digging through it to abstract the corpse. *Hewn out in the rock*;—A common way of preparing sepulchres in the East. Isa. xxii. 16. Immense numbers of such tomb-caves are found there. Some suppose that at first Joseph did not intend to put the body into his own tomb; but he intended to put it somewhere, and where else could he have put it? And why did Nicodemus bring so much spicery, if they did not intend the most honorable sepulture? Probably neither of them thought they were fulfilling a prophecy by what they did; yet such was the case—a prophecy which seemed very unlikely to be fulfilled: (Isa. liii. 9:) which Lowth renders, "And his grave was appointed with the wicked; but with the rich man was his tomb." Those who crucified him with the robbers, of course, intended to bury him with them; but by a strange providence he was preserved from that fate, and buried in a manner becoming his sacred person, and so as to preclude all doubt in regard to his real death and resurrection; for *he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre*,—The mouth of the tomb, which was cut horizontally into the rock: a common mode of guarding the entrances of caves and sepulchres. The stone appears to have been a very great one, as it had to be rolled, doubtless, by those who carried the body, probably Joseph's servants. John says

the tomb was in a garden in the place of crucifixion—which probably means in that part of the suburbs—the garden being doubtless separated from Calvary by a wall. *Kepos*, indeed, means, a *keep*, an inclosure. It was a retired place just outside the city walls, selected because of the rocky elevation in which a tomb could be conveniently constructed. The traditional sites of the crucifixion and burial are so close together that they are both under the roof of the same church. As Jesus was too poor to own a grave, and was going to rise again so soon that he did not need to own one, "He borrowed e'en his grave."

61. *The other Mary*,—Mark says she was the "mother of Joses." *Sitting over against the sepulchre*.—Opposite the tomb—in the posture of mourners: the two Marys were prominent, but other women followed the corpse—a sad cortege. After the sepulchre was closed they returned and prepared spices and ointments to apply to the body after the Sabbath.

62. *Now the next day*—On the Sabbath, which began on Friday, 6 P.M. Some think they made application for a guard that evening at the beginning of the Sabbath; but as the word usually means "on the morrow," i.e., after the night has passed, it is generally thought they made their application on Saturday. Alford and others think it was on Saturday evening after the Sabbath, but they would not consider this, as an act of great necessity, any violation of the Sabbath. Grotius says, "The council could not sit on that day; but after a private consultation, some of the priests and others of the sect of the Pharisees went to Pilate as if they had somewhat to say to him of the utmost consequence." They merely affected to fear that the disciples would attempt to remove the body. Lardner suggests that they did not think of it on Friday night, and when they did and applied to Pilate, it was merely to cast a scandal upon the disciples. *The day of the preparation*,—Friday, when they made preparation for the Sabbath.

63. *Sir*,—Usually rendered Lord—Campbell renders "My Lord." *That*—Expressing contempt. *Deceiver*—Literally vagabond; hence, impostor. *While he was yet alive*,—They did not doubt that he was dead. *After three days*—Within three days. (See on Matt. xii. 40; xvi. 21.) Did they then understand what he meant by raising the temple in three days—John ii. 19, 21; Matt. xxvi. 61? Or did they refer to what he said, Matt. xii. 40? Be it as it may, they bore witness before his resurrection that he had predicted the time as well as the fact of that event. Joseph and Nicodemus believed the prediction, though they did not understand it; but the others understood it, though they disbelieved it: they interpreted it to mean such a resurrection of the body as Lazarus had experienced.

64. *By night*,—Nearly all the MSS., versions, and editors omit this, as an interpolation from Matt. xxviii. 13. *Steal him away*,—Take him away secretly. Tob. i. 18. *The last error*—Deceit, imposture, as ver. 63; 1 Thess. ii. 3; Eph. iv. 14; 2 Thess. ii. 11; 1 John iv. 6. The imposture arising from his death shall be

worse than that of his life; and it was a great imposture to say that he would arise, but it would be a greater—one fraught with greater mischief—if his disciples should steal his corpse, and point to his vacant tomb in proof that his prophecy was true.

65. *Ye have a watch*:—As the original word is derived from the Latin *custodiam*, it is likely Pilate alluded to the *speira*, ver. 27. (See on Matt. xxvi. 47.) Suidas defined it, "the detachment on duty at the prison, a military body, a troop." Theophylact says, the *custodia* consisted of 60 soldiers, the *speira* of 200. Virgil uses *custodia* for a guard, or body of soldiers, AEn. vi. 574; ix. 166. Pilate gave them permission to detail the guard for this purpose: *Ye have a guard: go and make the tomb as secure as ye know how.*

66. *So they went*—If the Jews would not have done all this themselves on the Sabbath, they would not scruple to have Gentiles do it for them: they have never been scrupulous in regard to a point like this. *Sealing the stone*,—Dan. vi. 17; Rev. xx. 3. The sealing material was probably affixed to the two ends of a band drawn around the stone: Pilate's seal was probably used. *And setting a watch*.—Together with the watch—that is, the watch assisted them in securing the tomb by sealing the stone. It is no argument against the genuineness of this paragraph, that the other evangelists say nothing about it. Must every important passage found in only one author be repudiated as spurious? Aquinas: "See how beyond the power of contradiction these precautions prove the reality of Christ's resurrection, and how the inveterate enemies of Christ become unwilling witnesses of it; for since the sepulchre was guarded, there was no possibility of any deception on the part of the disciples. To remove the least possibility of deception, Pilate would not let the soldiers alone seal the monument—the Jews assist them."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1 *Christ's resurrection is declared by an angel to the women.* 9 *He himself appeareth unto them.* 11 *The high priests give the soldiers money to say that he was stolen out of his sepulchre.* 16 *Christ appeareth to his disciples,* 19 *and sendeth them to teach and baptize all nations.*

XXVIII.—1. *In the end of the sabbath*,—After the Sabbath. *As it began to dawn*—Probably between four and five o'clock—the interval between night and day; hence spoken of by the several evangelists with some latitude of expression. It was early, not only when they started to the tomb, but also when they reached it, yet there was daylight enough to enable them to see the condition of the tomb, and while they were there the sun may have arisen. It was at the time of full moon, and the sun rose between five and six. When John says it was "early, there being

yet darkness," he means the day had just broken. It was the darkness of moonlight and twilight, compared with broad daylight. *Toward the first day of the week*,—Early on Sunday morning. *Came Mary*—(See on Matt. xxvii. 56.) *To see the sepulchre*.—Intending to seek help to remove the stone which they saw Joseph roll against it, and which they did not know was sealed. They wanted to finish the embalming.

2. *And, behold, there was a great earthquake*:—Before the women arrived: the guard witnessed it, and the women saw its effects. *For*—This seems to attribute the shaking of the earth, i.e., probably, the tomb, to the descent of the celestial messenger to roll back the stone—which he did, as Theophylact says, "not to let the Saviour out, but to let the disciples in." Celsus might have spared his sneer: "The Son of God, it seems, could not open the sepulchre, but wanted another to remove the stone." *Sat upon it*.—As in triumph.

3. *Countenance*—*Idea*: so Dan. i. 13, 15, LXX. Vulgate, *aspectus*—alluding not to form or shape, but to brightness: his face, not being covered, shone as lightning. *His raiment white as snow*.—A common metaphor: whiteness is the emblem of purity, hence priests were robed in white. It is likely that the angel shone like Jesus in his transfiguration. (See on Matt. xvii. 2.) Luke says the robes were of a dazzling brightness. Dan. vii. 9; Rev. iii. 4; vi. 11; vii. 9-13. Angels were never before spoken of as so habited. They came in robes of state to grace the resurrection of their Lord and ours.

4. *And for fear of him*—His appearance nearly frightened them to death. They shook as well as the earth—the same word is used as in ver. 2.

5. *Answered*—Replying to their thoughts which were depicted in their countenances. (See on Matt. xi. 25.) *Fear not ye*—Though the guard may well tremble. Jud. vi. 23; Dan. x. 12; Luke i. 13, 30; Rev. i. 17. Jerome: "Always in the Old and New Testament, when any majestic person appears, he first banishes fear, that the mind being calm, may receive the things that are said." *Which was crucified*.—Isidore Clarius: "See how the angels are the very first not to be ashamed of the mention of the cross; so that we may be the less surprised at Paul's glorying so proudly in it."

6. *As he said*.—A slight reflection on them: how could they misinterpret or forget what he had said? *See*—Look at. *The place*—The cavity hollowed out of the tomb, for the reception of the corpse. The angel appears to have left the stone before the women reached the tomb; for it seems from Mark that he was not on it when they arrived. *The Lord*—In the mouth of an angel is very suggestive. Phil. ii. 11; Heb. i. 6.

7. *His disciples*,—The apostles; a part, the more notable, representing the whole. In Mark, Peter is specially mentioned—in view of his late denial and

repentance. *He goeth before you*—The present for the future, as determined and imminent. Jesus was going into Galilee after showing himself in Jerusalem. *There shall ye see him*:—Mark adds, "as he said unto you." (See on ver. 10 and Matt. xxvi. 32.) *Lo, I have told you*.—Now go!

8. *Fear and great joy*;—The awe was occasioned by the sight of the angel, and the joy by his good news.

9. *And as they went*—As it is not said that any of the women, except Mary Magdalene, made a second visit to the tomb, and as Jesus may have met the others after he had shown himself to Mary, and before they had found the disciples—Peter and John only having been seen by Mary—the literal rendering of S. Clarke, Doddridge, and others, may be correct, "As they were going." *Behold, Jesus*—"Also"—in the original—referring to the angels. As Matthew does not specify Christ's interview with Mary, he may have comprehended it in this general statement, as it could not have been but a few minutes previous to his interview with the other women; or, as some suppose, Mark, who does not specify the interview with the other women, may have comprehended it in that with Mary, which may have been a few minutes after, though her name alone is mentioned because of her prominence. The same general style obtains in Luke (xxiv. 10), who does not mention the appearance of Jesus either to Mary or to the other women. *All hail*.—*Chairete!* a term of salutation, expressive of a wish for one's happiness, like our word Hail! from the Saxon *hal*, or *hael*, health, *salve!* Vulgate, *avete!* So Luke i. 28. Syriac, "Peace be to you!" which is better than, "I salute you!" or, "God save you!" or Campbell's "Rejoice!" *And they came*,—They drew up close to him, and being satisfied of his identity, they prostrated themselves before him, in the usual manner of showing reverence; though, as Bengel says, done oftener to him before his passion by strangers than by his disciples; (see on Matt. ii. 2; viii. 2; xiv. 33;) and embraced his feet, thus evincing their mingled feelings of veneration, attachment, and joy.

10. *Be not afraid*:—Their terror, perhaps, was getting the ascendancy. *Go tell my brethren*,—The familiar and endearing title by which he designates all his followers, and not merely the apostles; (John xx. 17; Heb. ii. 11-17;) though seldom used before his death. Matt. xii. 49, 50. It was very kind to use it now after they had deserted him. The angel said, "Go tell his disciples." Jesus did not intend to show himself publicly in Judea, but only to the apostles, and that very briefly: he appointed a mountain in Galilee, where he had so largely exercised his ministry, as the place of general meeting, and therefore sent word to his disciples that they should see him there. Had he appeared publicly in Jerusalem at that time, when there were such multitudes in attendance at the feast, there would have been such an excitement as would not be in keeping with the quiet methods and spiritual influences by which he established his kingdom, which was not to come

with that kind of observation. (See on ver. 7; Luke xvii. 20; Acts x. 40, 41.) Matthew does not record the delivery of their message to the disciples; but Luke does. Luke xxiv. 9, 10.

11. *Some of the watch*—They may have all left the tomb before the arrival of the women, and some of them may have made their report to the priests by the time the women had seen the angels. *Showed unto the chief priests*—Who were anxiously awaiting the result. The guard would make their formal report to their commandant; but they were now hurrying from the tomb in consternation—as the language implies.

12, 13. *And when they were assembled*—The priests probably called together as many of the members of the Sanhedrim as they could find—perhaps not summoning Joseph, Nicodemus, Gamaliel, and others who might be favorably inclined toward Jesus, or not capable of the meanness and malice by which they themselves were actuated. They could think of no better expedient than to give the soldiers large sums of money to induce them to misrepresent the case, knowing that Roman soldiers, like their superiors, were not generally proof against bribes. Acts xxiv. 26. *Large*—Enough to satisfy the soldiers, so as to secure their consent.

14. *And if this come*—If this be reported, or testified to the governor—come before him officially. *We will persuade him*,—Or conciliate him by assurances that this is the best way of disposing of an embarrassing case, of which they knew Pilate was heartily sick; or by bribery, as they knew he was notoriously corrupt in this respect. So Acts xii. 20; 2 Macc. iv. 45; Jos. Ant. xiv. ult. *And secure you*.—Indemnify you—keep you out of trouble.

15. *This saying*—This tale about the clandestine removal of the body. *Commonly reported*—Current. *Until this day*.—A note of genuineness, as Matthew's contemporaries could have challenged his statement had it been false. Lardner argues from this and Matt. xxvii. 8, that a considerable space of time, more than eight, or ten, or fifteen years, must have intervened—he suggests thirty. Justin Martyr (Dial. with Tryphon) says the Jews took pains to send persons into every country to spread this report. Traces of it are found in rabbinical books, e.g., *Toldoth Jeschu*, where Judas is said to take away the body and bury it in his own garden! It is rather too stupid for reproduction in these times. Were all the men that composed the guard asleep at one time—when the penalty of being found asleep at their post, or off their watch, was certain death? and so sound asleep that the rolling of the stone and removal of the body waked none of them? and if asleep, how did they know the disciples stole him? Gregory Nyssen: "How should thieves have had time to pull off the linen bandages which, being spicy, would cling to the body, and could not be pulled off but in some time, by persons who had leisure? How should thieves have leisure and assurance to put the napkin that was about his head, not with the linen clothes, but wrapped together, in a place by

itself? John xx. 5-7. Here are no signs of the horror or hurry of thieves." Augustin: "O ye wretches! O ye worst of men! Ye were either on the watch, and so should have guarded him; or ye were fast asleep, and so were quite unconscious of what happened." Boys: "As the friends, so the foes of Christ, became preachers of his resurrection, as Calvin truly says, *vel tacendo, vel mentiendo*—some by silence did seem to confess it; others by reporting an incredible tale, did more strongly confirm it."

16. *Then*—Now—not a note of time, but of transition, resuming the narrative from ver. 10: the events recorded Luke xxiv. 13-43; John xx. 19-29, happening principally in Jerusalem, took place before the reunion in Galilee; but Matthew, agreeably to his plan, not because he was ignorant of them, touches lightly on our Lord's movements in Judea. *Into a mountain where*—To the mountain whither. Some refer this to Galilee, and omit "to the mountain," as an interpolated gloss, as it is wanting in 6 MSS., and there is no previous reference to it by our Lord, when he speaks of the meeting in Galilee; Matt. xxvi. 32; xxviii. 4, 10; (ver. 11-15 being parenthetical;) but the words are probably genuine. Tradition makes Tabor the mountain. Lightfoot and others suggest, as more probable, that on which he taught the people. Matt. v.-vii. *Had appointed them*.—To repair.

17. *And when they saw him*,—Seeing him approach on the top of the mountain. *They worshipped him*:—(See on Matt. ii. 2.) *But some doubted*.—Scarcely any of the apostles, who were previously confirmed in their belief of his resurrection; but some of the disciples in Galilee, who now saw him for the first time after his resurrection. It is likely a vast number of his followers were attracted to that place of meeting—perhaps the "five hundred brethren" spoken of by Paul. 1 Cor. xv. 6.

18. *And Jesus came*,—Drew near to them, so that they could see and hear him distinctly. *All power*—All authority is given to me in heaven and on the earth. In his character of Mediator he is invested with universal sovereignty. Matt. xi. 27; John v. 19-27; xvii. 2; 1 Cor. xv. 24; Eph. i. 20-23; Phil. ii. 9-11; Col. i. 18, 19.

19. *Go ye therefore*—Because I have this authority. Alford says, "Demonstrably, this was not understood as spoken to the apostles only, but to all the brethren"—but certainly the apostles were primarily intended. *Teach all nations*,—Disciple all the nations. Campbell renders "convert:" he likes Doddridge's "proselyte," but thinks it is too learned and technical; he might have added Jewish and ambiguous. He would prefer "disciple," but thinks "there is no such verb in the language," except as meaning "punish." But Hammond uses it in the sense of making disciples. So Barrow (Of Baptism). So Joseph Hallet (1735), "Go, disciple all nations." Dr. Sam. Parr (Sermon on Sacrament) says, "To disciple is a more proper word than teach." Bishop Blomfield renders, Matt. xiii. 52, "discipled into the kingdom of heaven." Wesley, Scott, and others, "disciple all nations." Wynne: "make disciples in all nations;" Wakefield: "make disciples

of all the nations;" Le Clerc: *Faite des disciples parmi toutes les nations—apprenez leur*—make disciples among all the nations—teaching them. In the margin of the Oxford Bible, 1701, is "make disciples in all nations:" in the margin of the London Bible, 1701, "make disciples, or Christians, of all nations." No various reading is found in the first edition, 1611, or the Cambridge, 1638. Webster and Wilkinson say, "'make disciples,' convert to the faith. Acts xiv. 21." The word comes from *mathetes*, a disciple, a scholar. Acts xiv. 21, "discipled many." Wesley explains: "Make them my disciples. This includes the whole design of Christ's commission. Baptizing and teaching are the two great branches of that great design. And these were to be determined by the circumstances of things; which made it necessary in baptizing adult Jews or heathens, to teach them before they were baptized; in discipling their children, to baptize them before they were taught; as the Jewish children in all ages were first circumcised, and after taught to do all God had commanded them." So also were children in the patriarchal age, Gen. xvii. Olshausen says, "Some have quite misunderstood the *matheteusate* as what should precede baptism, 'first instruct, then baptize them.' Even the grammatical construction does not warrant such a mode of statement, for the participles baptizing and teaching are precisely what constitute the *matheteuein*." So Webster and Wilkinson. Alford says, "The *matheteuein* consists of two parts, the initiatory, admissory rite, and the subsequent teaching. It is much to be regretted that the rendering of *matheteuein*, 'teach,' has clouded the meaning of these important words. It will be observed that in our Lord's words, as in the Church, the process of ordinary discipleship is from baptism to instruction, i.e., is admission in infancy to the covenant and growing up into 'to observe all things'—the exception being what circumstances rendered so frequent in the early Church, instruction before baptism in the case of adults. Baptism as known to the Jews included, as Acts xvi. 15, 33, whole households." The Church is a school, and circumcision, or baptism, is the act of matriculation; and as teaching is not confined to "the pulpit," parents, pastors, and others, are bound to instruct the young disciples at their homes and elsewhere, that they may be brought up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Eph. vi. 4. Accordingly, the apostles baptized the families of their converts. Justin Martyr, A.D. 140, says that there were many of both sexes 60 or 70 years of age, who were discipled to Christ from their infancy—using the same word as that in this text. What else would the early converts do with their children? Were they to be brought up neither in Judaism nor Christianity? Surely every Jew would expect to have his children with him in the visible Church of Christ, and to bring them, as well as himself, thus formally under the bond of the covenant. Some wonder that the apostles should have scrupled to admit the Gentiles into the Church; but they do not appear to have had any scruples about admitting them, but only whether they should not be first circumcised. The restriction (Matt. x. 5) is removed by this universal commission. *Baptizing*—(See on Matt. iii. 6; Acts ii. 38, 41; viii. 36-38; x. 47, 48; xvi. 15, 33;

xix. 3-5.) *Them*—All the individuals of all nations: if any refused discipleship the responsibility rests on them; but the commission includes all. Owen: "The construction respects the sense, not the grammar: so in 1 Cor. xii. 2, and in the purest Attic writers." *In the name*—Into or unto, not on the authority, though that is implied, but consecrating them to the service of God. Acts xxii. 16; Rom. vi. 3; 1 Cor. i. 13-15; x. 2. So Parkhurst: "to be baptized into the faith, or confession, or in token of one's faith and of one's openly confessing. Acts ii. 38; viii. 16; x. 48." *Name*, not names. There are three names, in the popular sense of the word, and *onoma* is probably understood before each—the name of the Father, and the name of the Son, etc. All three are to be *named* in the formula of baptism, which is an oath of allegiance comprising the profession of faith in the sacred Three, and the vow of obedience to them. This is the only place in the Bible in which these names occur in this order. As the apostles are said to baptize into or unto the name of Jesus, (Acts ii. 38; x. 48; xix. 5; Rom. vi. 3,) some have supposed they used only his name when they baptized Jews, thus vindicating the Messiahship of Jesus, which was chiefly controverted by the Jews; but that the full formula was used when Gentiles were baptized. But the most ancient Fathers, e.g., Justin Martyr, quote this as the proper baptismal formula; and the Church has pronounced it unwise to deviate from it.

20. *Teaching*—Instructing—a different word from that in ver. 19. Alford well remarks, "In these words does the Lord found the office of preachers in his Church, with all that belongs to it, the duties of the minister, the school-teacher, the Scripture reader. This teaching is not merely the *kerugma* of the gospel—not mere proclamation of the good news—but the whole catechetical office of the Church upon and in the baptized." *All things*—The apostles taught nothing to others that Christ had not taught to them: what then becomes of the doctrine of "development?" Meanwhile, they were to teach others all that Christ had taught them: the entire system of Christianity is exoteric. Luke xii. 3; Acts xx. 27. *And lo*,—Behold, take notice of this for your comfort and encouragement; as S. Clarke paraphrases, "Though I must now depart from you into heaven, and cannot be any longer with you personally, yet the Holy Ghost whom I will send, shall be always with you, and shall guide, and assist, and preserve you, and your successors to the end of the world." Some refer Christ's presence to his divine ubiquity; but it means his special presence, as in Matt. xviii. 20; John xiv. 23. Alford says his humanity, as well as his divinity, as the vine lives in the branches. But in no proper local sense is his humanity present with his Church on earth. *I am*—The present indicating certainty and permanency. *With you*—In the midst of you, expressing fellowship and community of interest. To be with, implies to assist. John iii. 2. Alford judiciously says, "To understand this only of the apostles and their (?) successors, is to destroy the whole force of these weighty words. The command is to the universal Church, to be performed, in the nature of things, by her

ministers and teachers, the manner of appointing which is not here prescribed, but to be learnt in the unfoldings of Providence recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, who by his special ordinance were the founders and first builders of that Church; but whose office, on that very account precluded the idea of succession or renewal." *Alway*—All the days, that is, the whole period of the gospel dispensation. *End of the world*.—The end of time. (See on Matt. xiii. 39.) As the apostles had no successors in their proper apostolic character, the reference must be to their successors in the general work of the ministry—indeed, to the Church at large in its teaching capacity. *Amen*.—Not found in many MSS., versions, Fathers, and editors: it may have been added with sundry inscriptions, in various MSS., by copyists. The commission in Mark xvi. 15-18 appears to be an enlargement of the commission to the apostles after the return from Galilee, and just before the ascension, which Mark immediately after records.

END OF THE COMMENTARY OF MATTHEW.