

MATTHEW

MATTHEW — INTRODUCTION

About four hundred years have elapsed since Malachi, and no prophet has arisen in Israel. We left Israel under the dominion of the Persians, which was soon followed by the Grecians including the Syrian period in which Antiochus Epiphanes flourished, and the Maccabees, about one hundred and fifty to one hundred and seventy years before Christ. Then came the Roman period when the Messiah appeared.

At the outset, remember that the Old Testament promised an earthly Kingdom to Israel when the Messiah came, and for which the faithful were looking. Jesus was the Messiah though they knew Him not, and He had come to set up that Kingdom. Moreover, from the beginning of His ministry down to a certain point to be named later, He proceeds on the assumption that the Kingdom has come if the nation will receive him. He is not received, but rejected, whereupon He changes the character of His teaching. He then begins to speak of the church instead of the Kingdom, and to lay plans, humanly speaking, for the formation of a new body of people altogether. This body is composed of Gentiles as well as Jews, who sustain a peculiar relation to Him while the Kingdom is in abeyance, and indeed forevermore.

That phrase, "the Kingdom in abeyance," means that the Kingdom promised in the Old Testament is yet to be set up on this earth in Israel, with Jesus, the Messiah, at its head. This will be when Israel, punished and repentant, shall receive Him by faith as all the prophets have spoken. In the meantime the church comes into view, with a unique origin, history and destiny, concerning which the New Testament treats almost exclusively.

THE TRANSITION GOSPEL

How then shall we place Matthew's Gospel? Can we do better than to speaking of it as covering the transition period, i.e., the period including the rejection of the Kingdom by Israel and the coming into view of the church after the resurrection of our Lord?

Keep in mind that Matthew is writing for the Jewish people, and is seeking, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to present Jesus to them as the One who fulfills the Old Testament features of the Messiah. For this reason the first Gospel is sometimes called the Gospel of the Kingdom, because more than any other, it dwells upon that aspect of the truth.

But this suggests that each of the Gospels has its own viewpoint of the history and work of the Savior, to appreciate which is important in the study of that Gospel. In the Old Testament the Coming One is alluded to in different ways, but they have been reduced to four, as for example: He is the King of Israel, He is the Servant of Jehovah, He is the Son of Man, and He is the Son of God. This classification reappears in the Gospels, and as we shall see, Matthew reveals Him in the first particular, Mark in the second, Luke in the third and John in the fourth.

QUESTIONS

1. How long an interim has taken place since Malachi?
2. Give an outline history of Israel during this period.
3. How does the Messiah change His teaching at a certain point, and why?
4. What is meant by "the Kingdom in abeyance"?
5. What period does Matthew's Gospel cover?
6. For what class of people is he writing?
7. What is this Gospel called, and why?
8. How may the other Gospels be classified?

MATTHEW 1-2 — THE ADVENT OF OUR LORD

In this lesson there are four divisions:

1. The Genealogical Table (1-1-17)
2. The Announcement to Joseph (1:18-25)
3. The Flight into Egypt (2:1-18)
4. The Return to Nazareth (2:19-23)

THE GENEALOGICAL TABLE (1:1-17)

We learned the value of genealogical tables to Israel in the Old Testament. This value applied to the separation into families and tribes with reference to the possession of Canaan; but it had a peculiar application to the Messiah also. He must come in the line of Abraham through David (v. 1), and no Israelite could be interested in a so-called "messiah" of whom this was not true. That Matthew should lay stress on this, and give the "generation" in detail is one evidence that his Gospel was addressed to Jews rather than the Gentiles. Neither Mark nor John gives a genealogy, and Luke's genealogy (3:23-38) differs from Matthew's, and for a special reason does not pause at Abraham, but extends back to God, through Adam.

Reference will be made to Matthew's table again when we reach Luke's Gospel, but verse 16 is important, showing that "Joseph the husband of Mary" was legal heir to the throne of David, for the genealogical table following David's time is that of the kings. Although "the husband of Mary," he was not the begetter of Jesus as in the preceding cases. The changed expression is significant, "Mary, of whom was born Jesus." The child did not come from natural generation, but in the manner indicated in the next chapter.

The Mary in this instance is always identified in the New Testament as the mother of Jesus, but there are five other Marys:

1. Mary Magdalene" (~~418D~~Luke 8:2)
2. Mary, the mother of James the less and Joses, the wife of Alpheus and a sister of the Virgin (~~4276~~Matthew 27:56; ~~4150~~Mark 15:40; ~~6925~~John 19:25)
3. Mary of Bethany, sister of Martha and Lazarus (~~4209~~Luke 10:39)
4. Mary the mother of John Mark (~~4422~~Acts 12:12)
5. A Mary associated with Paul in Rome (~~6146~~Romans 16:6).

Jesus is the family name of our Lord (~~4131~~Luke 1:31), the same as Joshua in the Old Testament, and means "Savior" (v. 21); but Christ or The Christ, is His official designation (not, as we sometimes treat it, His last name).

Christos is the Greek form of the Hebrew *Messiah* (~~2025~~Daniel 9:25-26), and means "The Anointed One." In the Old Testament, the prophet, the

priest and the king were all anointed with oil, but Jesus their great antitype was anointed with the Holy Spirit (3:16).

THE ANNOUNCEMENT TO JOSEPH (1:18-25)

Under "the announcement to Joseph," notice the testimony to the virgin birth (vv. 18, 20). Had Jesus been begotten after the flesh He would have been a sinner like us, and incapable of being our Savior. And yet had He not been the legal descendant of Joseph, and heir to the throne, the Jews would have been justified in rejecting him. Behold the wisdom and power of God! Compare the predictions of the virgin birth: ^{<00815>}Genesis 3:15; ^{<00714>}Isaiah 7:14; ^{<00822>}Jeremiah 31:22, and the corresponding account in ^{<00838>}Luke 1:28-35.

"His people" (v. 21) means in the first place the Jews, and then all who accept him as their Savior by faith.

Verses 22-23 are peculiar to Matthew, who, in writing distinctively for Israel, is careful to connect the events of Jesus' life with the Old Testament in which they believed and which contained His credentials. Only Matthew refers to Emmanuel ("God with us") as a name for Jesus, which ties to Jesus' final words as recorded in this Gospel: "I am with you always" (28:20).

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT (2:1-18)

"The flight into Egypt" is divisible into:

1. The visit of the wise men (vv. 1-2)
2. The testimony of the priests and scribes (vv. 3-6)
3. The worship of the babe in the manger (vv. 7-12)
4. The warning to Joseph (vv. 13-15)
5. The slaughter of the little children (vv. 16-18)

This "Herod" is Herod the Great, an Edomite and appointee of Caesar. He was a cruel and despotic man, and his practical usurpation of the throne, and tyranny over the people, explain his apprehension (v. 3), on hearing that a true King of the Jews was born.

The "wise men" (*Magi* in Greek) were Gentile astrologers, occupied with occult things, foretelling events from the stars, etc. (^{<00848>}Daniel 2:48), and

earnest seekers after truth. Kepler, the astronomer, thought the "star" was a constellation of Jupiter and Saturn, but it is more likely to have been a miraculous sign from God. Nor is it necessary to suppose that it led them all the way from their eastern home, because verse 9 indicates that when they started from Herod towards Bethlehem it reappeared to them. The way they came to expect a great king is suggested by their probable acquaintance with Balaam's prophecy (^{<4020>}Numbers 23-24) and the predictions of Daniel.

The conduct of the priests and scribes illustrates a common phenomenon, namely, the truth held in the mind but having no power in the life. They knew where the Messiah should be born, but lacked the interest to inquire whether this were He. Their quotation (v. 6) is from ^{<3102>}Micah 5:2, although its rendering suggests that it was taken not from the Hebrew, or Greek Septuagint, but probably a Chaldaic paraphrase.

Herod's interest (vv. 7-8) was the grossest hypocrisy, but what a contrast is borne to it by these Gentiles worshiping, not the child's mother, but the child! Some find significance in their gifts: gold representing royalty; frankincense, purity; and myrrh, suffering.

"We three kings of Orient are," is a line of a familiar hymn alluding to this visit, but is misleading, since there is nothing to indicate that they were kings, or that their number was limited to three. Another error is traceable to the picture representing them as worshiping a babe in a manger, whereas it is not unlikely that Jesus was a year old at this time. The reasons for thinking so are

(1) that ^{<4120>}Luke 2:30 says, "when they had performed all things according to the law..., they returned..., to Nazareth," while Matthew speaks of their going into Egypt after the departure of the wise men; and

(2) The shepherds in Luke 2 found "the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger"; but the wise men "saw the young child with Mary" in "the house."

Possibly His parents returned to Nazareth after His birth, and then at the recurrence of the Passover the next year came down to Bethlehem again.

In the subsection called "The warning to Joseph," two prophecies find fulfillment. In verse 15, ^{<3100>}Hosea 11:1, and in verse 18, ^{<2415>}Jeremiah

31:15. The first found an approximate fulfillment in Israel, which in the Old Testament is sometimes called God's Son (^{<1042>}Exodus 4:22; Jet. 31:9); but, according to the law of double reference, it has here an ultimate fulfillment in Christ who is often identified with Israel. The second causes Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, to personify Israel weeping for her children slain by Herod's sword. This weeping, in a sense, has continued ever since, not to end until Israel at last looks "upon Him whom they pierced" and mourns because of Him.

THE RETURN TO NAZARETH (2:19-23)

"The return to Nazareth" demands attention because of the words "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet He shall be called a Nazarene" (v. 23). The meaning is not clear because no one of the prophets calls Him by this name. However, all the prophets speak of Him in one way or another, as the despised or rejected One, and this in the eyes of a Jew is what it meant to be a dweller in Nazareth. The whole of Galilee was despised by them because it held so many Gentiles, but Nazareth was despised even by Galileans themselves. (Compare ^{<1046>}John 1:46.)

QUESTIONS

1. Divide this lesson into four parts.
2. Name the twofold value of genealogies to Israel.
3. What two facts give importance to 1:16?
4. Give the list of the Marys of the New Testament.
5. What are the distinctions between the two names of our Lord?
6. How are the wisdom and power of God shown in His birth?
7. What is peculiar to Matthew as writing for the Jews?
8. Analyze chapter 2 into its main divisions.
9. How may the Magi have known of the coming King?
10. What does the conduct of the priests and scribes teach?
11. Why may we think that chapter 2 refers to Jesus when a year old?
12. How may the last verse of that chapter be explained?

MATTHEW 3-4:11 — PREPARATION FOR PUBLIC MINISTRY

BAPTIZED BY JOHN (CHAP. 3)

For the earlier history of John the Baptist compare Luke 1. In verses 1-6 of the present lesson, however, we have the place and theme of his ministry, a statement of his official relationship to the Messiah, his description, and an account of the interest awakened by his mission.

"The Kingdom of heaven" or "the heavens" (v. 2) means the earthly kingdom promised to Israel in the Old Testament, over which the Messiah was to reign. It is "the Kingdom of the heavens" in that it is the rule of the heavens over the earth (6:10). Compare ^{<10B>}Daniel 2:34-36, 44. The rejection of the Messiah caused the postponement of this Kingdom until His coming again.

In verses 7-12 we have a reference to the religious leaders of the nation at this time, and a warning of judgment awaiting them. We met with "scribes" in the preceding chapter, and here we have Pharisees and Sadducees. The scribes made copies of the sacred Scriptures, and classified and taught them (^{<10B7>}2 Samuel 8:17; ^{<10B8>}Jeremiah 8:8), but by and by, they added to this other things not so necessary or lawful, and compelled the people to accept them or be charged with heterodoxy. This was the charge brought against our Lord Himself because He confined His teaching to the Scripture. Among the things they added were Hebrew legends (*Gemara*), and rabbinical rules on questions of ritual (*Mishna*), the two forming the Talmud of later times.

"Pharisee" comes from a Hebrew word meaning "separate," and identifies a sect whose origin dated from the return from Babylon. At first its object was to keep alive a reverence for the law of God, but later it degenerated into a traditionalism corresponding to the teaching of the scribes. Pharisees were zealous but self-righteous, and became the fiercest enemies of Jesus Christ. Sadducees some think were named after their founder Zadok. They were skeptics who denied the immortality of the soul. They also denied the oral tradition on which Pharisaic teaching was largely based. They were the rich and worldly people of Judea in our Lord's time. These definitions explain the hard names and the warnings applied to the Pharisees and

Sadducees (v. 7). Their hypocrisy is seen in verse 8, their pride of race, verse 9, their speedy judgment, verse 10.

Baptism with water (v. 11) had been practiced among the Jews in connection with the proselytism of the verses, and was the outward sign by which the latter signified the change of mind and purpose supposed to have taken place within, and which is really the meaning of "repentance." This baptism of John, however, is not identical with Christian baptism as will be seen later.

The last clause of verse 11 refers to Christ, who baptized His disciples with the Holy Ghost, after His ascension, on the day of Pentecost (~~400~~ Acts 2; ~~623~~ 1 Corinthians 12:13); and will baptize Israel with fire when He comes again in judgment (v. 12). This is an illustration of the law of double reference of which we learned in the Old Testament.

Verses 13-17 are the most important. The sinless one coming to a sinner to be baptized with sinners, how strange! No wonder John forbade Him. But it was not John's baptism He sought, although John baptized Him. John's baptism was the sign and seal of repentance, to escape wrath, but Jesus had no need of repentance and no fear of wrath. His baptism was to "fulfill all righteousness" (v. 15). In other words, the Father had made a covenant of redemption with the Son, in which the Son, as God Incarnate, worked out, through atoning sufferings and obedience, a perfect righteousness for sinful men. His baptism by John was the sign and seal of this covenant. It was His seal of consecration to His chosen work, and the Father's seal of faithfulness to the sufferer, the latter being proven by the open heavens, the descending dove and the paternal voice. Thus was He inaugurated into His great office.

TEMPTED BY SATAN (4:1-11)

It is the Holy Spirit who is referred to in verse 1, and indeed, after His anointing by the Spirit, almost everything Jesus is said to have done, was accomplished, not in the power of His own natural spirit, but the Holy Spirit. It would have been wrong for Him to have entered into this temptation on His own account. The "Devil" of the same verse we became acquainted with as a personal being, in the Old Testament. But although he possesses personality, a word synonymous with self-consciousness, that is not to say that he appeared to Jesus in human form. The form he assumed

is not revealed, although the temptation was objective in character, as was that of the first Adam in Eden, with which it stands in contrast.

The temptation was three-fold, the appeal being directed to "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" (~~1~~ John 2:16), which is all the devil has to offer. The Father had just testified to His Sonship, but He is tempted to doubt it because He is hungry (v. 3). He has just declared His confidence in the Word of God (v. 4), and He is tempted to presume upon it (vv. 5-7). He had been promised the Kingdom through the Cross, and He is tempted to obtain it in another way (vv. 8-10). As Scofield says, "Satan's one object was to induce Christ to act from Himself and independently of His Father," and Christ defeated him "by a means open to His humblest follower, the intelligent use of the Word of God."

This victory of Christ takes on great significance when we realize that as the second Adam He took the place of the first. What we lost in the first, we, who believe, have restored to us in the second (~~1~~ Romans 5:12-21; ~~1~~ 1 Corinthians 15:20-22, 45-49).

QUESTIONS

1. Where do we learn the earlier history of John the Baptist?
2. Define "the Kingdom of heaven."
3. Define "scribes," "Pharisees," "Sadducees."
4. Give the history of the Jewish "Talmud."
5. What illustration of the law of double reference is found in this lesson?
6. What meaning is attached to Jesus' baptism?
7. What is the meaning of "personality"?
8. What was Satan's one object in the temptation of Christ?
9. What gives the temptation its great significance for us?

MATTHEW 4:12-5:12 — BEGINNING HIS MINISTRY

THE STARTING POINT (4:12-17)

For antecedent and parallel events, read ~~<R115>~~ John 1:15-51; ~~<R11>~~ Luke 3:1-20; 4:14-32, which explain why John the Baptist was imprisoned, and why Jesus left Nazareth. Identify Capernaum on the map, and read up its history in a Bible dictionary since it becomes important as the center of our Lord's ministry in Galilee. Zabulon and Nephtalim, or Zebulun and Naphtali, we recognize as names of tribes of Israel and locations in Canaan, called after them. Locate them on the map, and compare ~~<2001>~~ Isaiah 9:1-2 RV, which is to have a completer fulfillment at the second coming of Christ. The "Kingdom of heaven" He "began to preach" (v. 17) was that which He came to set up in Israel had the nation received Him. Not a spiritual Kingdom only, but a manifested Kingdom like that of David, wherein righteousness should reign.

THE FIRST FOLLOWERS (4:18-22)

He had met these men before (John 1), and called them to be His disciples. Having believed on Him, they are now called into His service.

THE FIRST WORKS (4:23-25)

The teaching was in the synagogues, and the preaching in the open air where the crowds gathered. Note the theme of His preaching, not the gospel of grace which now saves the sinner, but the "gospel of the Kingdom": the good news that the earthly Kingdom promised to Israel was ready to be set up if they would have it. Later, when His rejection by Israel is confirmed, this gospel ceases to be preached, and the gospel of grace takes its place. The gospel of grace is preached in the present dispensation of the church, but when the church, the body of Christ, is complete, and caught up to meet Him in the air (~~<2043>~~ 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18), then the gospel of the Kingdom will be again preached because the Kingdom will be drawing near a second time. The miracles of healing are in connection with the gospel of the Kingdom. That is not to say that there are no such miracles at present, but only that they are peculiar to setting up the earthly Kingdom, and doubtless will be seen again in a marked manner as the day

approaches. The Satanic counterfeits of these miracles now in many places indicate the time is at hand.

THE FIRST DISCOURSE (5:1)

Beginning here and extending to the close of chapter 7 we have what is called the Sermon on the Mount (5:1); but we are not to suppose that these words were all spoken at one time, or in their present connection. In comparison with the other Gospels suggests differently. For the purpose of the Holy Spirit in Matthew's Gospel, however, it was desirable to group them as though they formed a single discourse. Addressing the Jew, he is showing that Jesus is the King who has come to set up His Kingdom, and in these words, chapters 5-7 sets forth at one glance the laws or code of that Kingdom. We must be clear about this. The Sermon on the Mount does not set forth the terms of salvation for sinners. Neither is it the experience which the church will perfectly attain in this age, but is primarily Jewish and pertains to conditions on the earth when the manifested Kingdom of the Messiah is in vogue. It would be wrong to press this too far, and say that the Sermon on the Mount has no application whatever to the Christian church or the times in which we live, for God is the same through all dispensations, and the underlying principles of His government never change. But just how to apply it must be determined in detail, and by the never failing light of the Holy Spirit who has been given to lead the Christian into all the truth (~~John~~ John 16:13).

The first twelve verses, or the Beatitudes, constitute an exordium to the discourse, in which is set forth the characteristics of the heirs of the Kingdom. There are nine beatitudes, and dispensationally viewed, show us Israel, or rather the faithful remnant of Israel, in the tribulation period awaiting the Kingdom. They will be poor in spirit, and shall get the Kingdom. They will mourn and shall be comforted. They will be meek and shall inherit the earth. They will hunger and thirst after righteousness, and shall be filled.

But in an accommodated sense the beatitudes apply to believers in the present age. There is a heavenly side and an earthly side to the Kingdom, and it is only those who are "poor in spirit," humbling themselves on account of sin and believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, who, through the new birth, receive the Kingdom. They who now mourn for their sins are comforted in forgiveness and cleansing through the blood. They who now

hunger and thirst after righteousness are filled. We have here a picture of a redeemed and sanctified man, an ideal man whom the Savior is to make actual by saving him from his sin.

For private study or classroom work, it would be desirable to include the whole of the Sermon on the Mount in one lesson, but for the purpose of this commentary, we pause here.

QUESTIONS

1. Divide this lesson into four parts.
2. Did you read the scripture references for the antecedent or parallel events?
3. Have you looked up Capernaum?
4. Why does Matthew so often quote the Old Testament?
5. What is meant by the "Kingdom of heaven" in this case?
6. What is the distinction between "the gospel of the Kingdom" or "gospel of grace"?
7. What is set forth in the Sermon on the Mount?
8. What is set forth in the beatitudes?
9. What is their historical sense?
10. How do they apply to us in an accommodated sense?

MATTHEW 5:13-7:29 — THE CODE OF THE KINGDOM

The King has announced His kingdom at hand, and now declares the laws or code of that Kingdom. These which we began to speak of in the last lesson, have a two-fold application, ultimately to the Kingdom when it shall be set up, and approximately and in an accommodated sense to the Christian at present. Except at the first of these is kept in mind, confusion and uncertainty must attend the interpretation.

We have two figurative descriptions of disciples, "Salt" and "Light" (5:13-16). Salt is a preservative, and true Christian disciples counteract worldly corruption. They are the light of the world whose conduct is to reflect the

Savior. These two descriptions are a text for what follows, which shows how the disciple is to preserve the world and shine in it.

We have a statement of Christ's relation to the law, (vv. 17-20). His mission was not to set aside the Old Testament, but to fill it out, in that He obeyed the law perfectly, and fulfilled in Himself all the prophets had spoken of the Coming One. He also completely revealed the meaning of the Old Testament, which involves the warning of verse 19, made necessary by what He says in verse 20.

We have a comparison between righteousness outward and inward (vv. 21-48). The righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees was outward and ceremonial, that of the Kingdom of God on earth must go deeper. The spirit of murder is anger (vv. 21-22, compared with ~~AR5~~ 1 John 3:15). *Raca* (a word of contempt) uttered against a brother will involve a condemnation by the Sanhedrim, and "thou fool" shall subject the guilty one to "hell fire" when the Kingdom is on earth. In the meantime these penalties show us God's estimate of sin now and always, and intensify our thanksgiving for the salvation we have in Christ.

As anger is the spirit of murder, so a lustful look is adultery (vv. 27-30). It were better to be blind than be guilty of it. The Greek word for hell is *Gehenna*, the place in the valley of Hinnom where human sacrifices were formerly offered and which is used in Scripture as identical with "the lake of fire." Divorce is linked with adultery, and becomes adultery under the circumstances indicated (vv. 31-32). The command against swearing (vv. 33-37) does not forbid legal oaths, but profanity, which includes expletives common in everyday speech. Retaliation (vv. 38-42) is personal, not judicial nor governmental. If the cause were that of another we have no right to do some of the things here commanded, or permit others to do them, but they are clearly within one's own rights. This is how men will act in the Kingdom, and how they ought to act now. And the absence of such a spirit shows how far we are from God, and what it is to be lost. What would become of us, without a Savior! This leads to the law of love (vv. 43-47) which is as far from human hearts in their natural state as the foregoing. Our example is God (v. 48), but who has attained to it? And if not, how can we see His face, except as He has in grace made provision for us in His Son?

Following these laws on our relation to others, we have those touching the religious life, i.e., our relations to God — almsgiving (6:1-4), worship (vv.

5-15), fasting (vv. 16-18), all of which must be done as in the presence of the Father. The "Lord's Prayer" will be dealt with in Luke.

Next are laws relating more particularly to one's self — trust (vv. 19-34), self-judgment (7:1-6), prayer (vv. 7-12), false teachers (vv. 13-20), future reward (vv. 21-23). Under the head of "trust," note (vv. 22-24), that the eye cannot look to earth and to heaven at the same time; and (v. 34), that lack of trust is always pessimistic of the future. Under self-judgment, we are not denied privilege, or liberated from the duty, of passing upon the conduct of others and the evil that is in the world, which would be contradictory of ~~<4085>~~ Matthew 18:15-18; ~~<4640>~~ 1 Corinthians 5:12-13 and other places; but to defer judgment as to motives, the sources from which such conduct or evil springs. (~~<4640>~~ Romans 14.) To abuse this spirit of restraint, however, and permit evil to remain unjudged, would be to "cast that which is holy unto the dogs."

Reasons for the Golden Rule (7:12) have been suggested thus:

- (1) We are to be careful about judging others;
- (2) we should seek divine wisdom in doing so; and
- (3) which obtained, would lead us to act in love towards all.

How many foolishly say they live by the Golden Rule! The Bible and experience prove that no one has ever done so except Him who uttered it. And yet it is that by which the man out of Christ elects to be judged! What madness! Some tell us that Christ borrowed this word from the sacred books of the east, but this is folly, for what is found there is merely a negative teaching, while this is positive. What you would not have others do to you, do not to them, is different from doing to others what you would have them do to you.

Under "false teachers," note that "fruits" (v. 20) does not necessarily mean open immorality, but the counterfeit of the truth of God. False prophets and teachers are sometimes very attractive in their lives, but their words, rightly understood, are inconsonant with Holy Writ.

The conclusion of this discourse shows our Lord's mind to be resting on the end of the age, and the incoming of the Kingdom. That is how our study of the Old Testament taught us to interpret the phrase, "in that day" (v. 22).

QUESTIONS

1. What is meant by the code of the Kingdom?
2. What two figures of speech describe the relation of disciples to the world?
3. In what sense did Christ fulfill the law and the prophets?
4. What does *Gehenna* refer to, and how is it used in Scripture?
5. What kind of retaliation does our Lord refer to?
6. What is meant by "Judge not"?
7. Does any one really live by the Golden Rule?
8. What is meant by the "fruits" of false prophets?

MATTHEW 8-9 — CREDENTIALS OF THE KING

We have seen that the Sermon on the Mount was probably separate discourses grouped by the evangelist under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, for a particular purpose. That purpose was the presentation of Jesus to the Jews as the Messiah, the King promised them in the Old Testament. In like manner, the miracles now following were probably wrought at different times but grouped by the evangelist for the same purpose. Jesus had come proclaiming the Kingdom to be at hand; He had laid down the laws of the Kingdom, and now in these mighty works we have the credentials of the King.

There are ten in all (nine being miracles of healing), to say nothing of the many unclassified ones (8:16-17; 9:35).

THE DISPENSATIONAL VIEW

Surely God only could do these things, and He through whom they were accomplished can be none other than the One He claimed to be (Isaiah 35:5-6). Their practical teachings have been made familiar in Sunday School lessons, so that here attention may be given to their dispensational aspects. Gaebelein teaches that the cleansing of the leper stands for Jehovah in the person of Jesus among His people Israel; the healing of the centurion's servant, absent and healed by a word, represents this Gentile dispensation still running. When its course is completed, He will enter the house again in restored relations to Israel, as symbolized in raising the sick

daughter of Zion, the mother of Peter's wife. Now come the millennial blessings to all the earth — they brought Him those suffering from many diseases and He healed them all.

For the leprosy of Israel compare ^{<2006>}Isaiah 1:5-6. Only God can heal that disease, and when Jesus spake the word, and sent the healed man to the priest, why did not the latter recognize Him? He, the priest, thus becomes the type of the unbelieving nation who ultimately rejected him.

Grace now comes to the Gentiles typified by the centurion who manifests simple faith, drawing forth from our Lord the words prophetic of this dispensation. "Many shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

The sick woman is typical of Israel whom the Lord has promised to heal at His second coming, and who will then become his minister (vv. 8-15). With the verses immediately following, compare ^{<2504>}Isaiah 53:4. The self-seeking scribe of verses 18-20 is a type of Israel filled with selfish expectations of earthly gain and glory, after the flesh and not after the Spirit.

Coming to the latter part of the chapter, we are reminded by the casting out of the demons, that Satan, the prince of the demons, will be cast into the bottomless pit, when Christ comes a second time to deliver Israel (^{<600>}Revelation 20). From the dispensational point of view, the deliverance of these men foreshadows that of the faithful Jews in the tribulation, while the destruction of the swine indwelt by the demons, foreshadows the remainder of the nation rushing into the judgment awaiting them.

The healing of the paralytic (9:1-8) shows from another point of view what Christ will do for Israel when He comes again. He will pardon their iniquity (^{<2425>}Isaiah 43:25), and heal them of their sin in soul and body (^{<300>}Malachi 4:2).

The important feature in the call of Matthew (9-17) is the question of John's disciples and its answer. The explanation is that Christ is the bridegroom, and while He was with His disciples there could be no mourning; but by and by, He would be rejected, and then it would be different. Here follows a revelation of a new order of things. The old garment is Judaism with its legal righteousness, which cannot be patched up; i.e., law and grace cannot go together in the same system of faith. The

new wine is Christianity, while the old bottles are the Mosaic institutions, a figure which teaches the same truth.

The miracles of verses 18-26 are typical. Christ is coming to bring life to Israel, the daughter of Zion; but while He is coming, the Gentiles, in parenthesis as it were, touch Him by faith, and salvation comes to them in that moment.

These hints are sufficient for our present purpose if they whet the appetite to turn to larger works and pursue the subjects further.

NEW AND IMPORTANT WORDS

There are two or three words here which we meet for the first time.

"Devils" is one, which in the Revised Version is rendered "demons." There is but one devil, Satan, but there are many demons. We know nothing of their origin save that they are not to be confounded with evil angels, as for instance in ~~Rev~~ 2 Peter 2:4. Any Bible dictionary will furnish information concerning them.

"Lord" (Greek, *Kurios*), as applied to Christ, is met for the first time. It means "master" and may be used of merely human relationships, but in the New Testament is chiefly employed as the divine title of Jesus Christ.

"Son of Man" our Lord uses of Himself about eighty times. "Son of David" is His Jewish name, "Son of God" His divine name, and "Son of Man" his racial name. This latter conveys the thought that His mission transcends in scope and result all merely Jewish limitations.

QUESTIONS

1. What is signified by the title of this lesson?
2. How many miracles are in this group and of what nature chiefly?
3. Name the miracles in their order.
4. Give a general idea of their dispensational intent.
5. Explain Christ's references to the old garments and old wine bottles.
6. Distinguish between the devil and demons.
7. How is the word Lord commonly used of Christ?
8. What is the significance of the title Son of Man?

MATTHEW 10-12 — EXPANSION AND OPPOSITION

The King has come, the code of His Kingdom is set forth, His credentials presented, and He now expands the testimony concerning Himself, with the result of increasing opposition. This expansion is connected with the commission of the twelve disciples (chap. 10), and the opposition is revealed in various ways in the chapters following.

THE DISCIPLES COMMISSIONED (CHAP. 10)

Here we find "apostles" for the first time (v. 2), which means "those sent forth," an indispensable qualification for whose office was that of an eyewitness of the resurrection of Christ (~~<4022>~~Acts 1:22; ~~<4001>~~1 Corinthians 9:1). The apostles were endued with miraculous powers as credentials of their ministry, and their work at this time was to announce to Israel only, that the Kingdom was at hand (vv. 6-7). The Kingdom is the one promised to Israel on this earth, and through Israel to the other nations. This explains things in the chapter, which if rightly understood, will keep us from reading into it that which does not belong there.

For example, the power granted in verses 1 and 8 was in connection with this preaching of the Kingdom, and withdrawn when the Kingdom was finally rejected by Israel; although it will be renewed when the faithful remnant of the Jews again go forth during the tribulation to preach the same Kingdom. In the meantime, the preaching of the gospel of grace, especially committed to Paul, who wasn't of the twelve, is accompanied by gifts of another kind (~~<4000>~~Ephesians 4:10-12). Look at verses 11-15, where the "worthy" mean those looking for the Messiah promised by the Old Testament prophets. The gospel of grace is not offered to the "worthy," but to "whomsoever" will accept it. Or, take verses 16-23, which speak of the way the apostles' message would be received, and compare the prophecy they contain with the persecution in the Acts of the Apostles; or look at these verses in the light of the second coming of Christ, to which verse 23 refers. We learned in Daniel and elsewhere, that time is not counted in the history of Israel when she is not in her own land. Hence the testimony here begun by the apostles and continued up to Israel's rejection of the Kingdom, is an unfinished testimony, and will be taken up again when the church is translated during the tribulation.

From this point to verse 33 we find encouragement. The disciples are identified with their Lord (vv. 24-25); therefore, they need not fear (vv. 26-28), for He cares for them (vv. 29-33). Then follows a description of the age in which we live, a time of war rather than peace (34-36); of separation on the part of Christ's followers (vv. 37-38), and yet with the prospect of a bright recompense (vv. 39-42).

Modern research throws light on a chapter like this. Take verses 9 and 20. Upon a monument at Kefr-Hanar in Syria, during this same period, one who calls himself a slave of the Syrian goddess tells of his begging journeys in her services, and uses the word for his collecting-bag here translated "scrip." He boasts that "each journey brought in seventy bags." The contrast with the followers of Christ is marked, who were neither to earn nor beg as they went forth with speed to herald His coming.

ANXIETY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST (CHAP. 11)

We are not surprised that as the testimony of Christ thus expanded (v. 1), John the Baptist in his prison should wonder, "Why, if this be the Christ, does He not take the Kingdom, or why does He not deliver me? Have I been mistaken in my witness to Him?" John is told to reflect upon the evidence and to wait (vv. 2-6).

How our Lord defends John, lest this act should reflect upon him (vv. 7-15)! Verse 11 has reference to John's relation to the Kingdom. The least in the Kingdom of heaven when it shall be set up upon earth, shall be greater than John could be before that time. The words do not speak of John in the moral sense, in which he was as great as any man born of woman, but in this dispensational sense. Verse 12 is capable of two interpretations, an external and an internal one. In the first, the enemies of Jesus and John are the violent who are rejecting the Kingdom by force; in the second, the violent are those who in face of the opposition are pressing into the Kingdom.

A description of that generation follows as a foolish one (vv. 16-19), but there were some who believed and are referred to in the words "wisdom is justified of her children."

As the judge of that generation our Lord now speaks (vv. 20-27). "Woe," is heard for the first time. In the coming day there will be different degrees of punishment (vv. 22, 24), responsibility being gauged by privilege. From

the "wise and prudent" in their own eyes, i.e., the self-righteous Pharisees, these things were hidden, but were revealed unto "babes," the poor in spirit conscious of their need (v. 25). Our Lord now turns toward these in verses 28-30, in which he offers no longer the Kingdom, but rest and service to them that come to Him. Practically He has been rejected by the nation, and is approaching the turning point in His ministry, when the proclamation of the Kingdom shall cease.

OPPOSITION EXPRESSED (CHAP. 12)

The enmity is coming to a head. In verses 1-8, the Lord of the Sabbath is unjustly accused of Sabbath-breaking, and answers His accusers by facts of Holy Writ. David, as the rejected king in his time, ate the shew-bread, and "Great David's greater Son" in His rejection is correspondingly guiltless. Next comes the temptation of verses 9-14, with the result that the opposition now becomes organized (v. 14), and the Lord withdraws Himself for His hour is not yet come. As He is departing, the incident of verses 22-30 takes place, when He is again charged as the representative of Satan (v. 24, compared with 9:34). The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost consists in attributing His work to Satan (vv. 31-32). "A word against the Son of Man" might be forgiven, for the Holy Spirit still remained to convict one of that sin by testifying to Christ. But when the testimony of the Holy Spirit to Christ was rejected as in this case, there was no hope left.

The opposition increases by the demand for a sign (vv. 38-42). Had He not given sufficient signs? Jonah is a type of His own death and resurrection and He will give him as a sign. The Queen of Sheba is another sign. But Israel is like a man out of whom a demon had gone of his own accord, and comes back to find the place unoccupied and brings seven other worse spirits to fill the former abode. The nation, in other words, had been cured of idolatry by the Babylonian captivity, but now it was boasting of forms and ceremonies, traditions and self-righteousness. It was empty so far as the fear of Jehovah was concerned, and by and by the evil spirit would return, and the end of Israel, i.e., the period of the tribulation, would be worse than the beginning.

The Lord is rejected even by His family, as we judge by comparing the closing verses of this chapter with the reason in ~~Mark~~ Mark 3:21. He declines to see them, and intimates the formation of a new family of faith.

QUESTIONS

1. What is an essential qualification for an apostle?
2. What is the limitation of the apostles' commission at this time?
3. How does that limitation affect the teaching of chapter 10?
4. How may "violent" be interpreted in chapter 11?
5. On what principle will future retribution be rendered?
6. What is the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost?
7. How would you explain verse 43-45?
8. How would you explain Jesus' reference to His mother and His brethren?

MATTHEW 13 — THE TURNING POINT

From the dispensational point of view, there is no chapter of the New Testament more needful to be understood than this. It contains seven parables, which now that the practical rejection of the Messiah by Israel has taken place, set forth the result of the gospel in the world down to the end of this age, when He shall come again. It is symbolic that our Lord now goes into a ship on the sea, the latter a type of the Gentile nations as compared with Israel; and also that He talks about sowing the seed in a field which is the world, as distinguished from laboring in a vineyard which is Israel (²⁰¹⁰Isaiah 5:1-7).

The parables are divisible into three groups, the first four stories spoken before the multitude, and the last three in the presence of the disciples only. The first group — the sower, and the tares and wheat — refers more especially to the earlier history of Christendom; the second group — the mustard seed and leaven — describe its further progress and development.

THE FIRST GROUP: THE SOWER, THE TARES AND WHEAT

The Lord explains them, but prior thereto answers the question of the disciples (v. 10), in which He speaks of the "mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven." A "mystery" in Scripture is a previously hidden truth, now divinely revealed, but in which the supernatural element remains despite the revelation. The "Kingdom of heaven," or the "Kingdom of the heavens" as used here means that Kingdom which is to be set up on the earth, the truth

concerning which is "left in the hands of men" while the King is absent, in other words, it stands for Christendom. It is given to true disciples to know the mystery of Christendom, but to others it is not given (vv. 11-17).

The parable of the sower needs no comment other than emphasis on the fact that all the seed sown does not bear fruit. The devil in the first case, the flesh in the second, and the world in the third, prevent it. In other words, all men will not be converted to Christ before the end of this age. This is brought out with more force in the second parable (vv. 24-30, 36-43). The good seed here is not the gospel of the first parable, but that which the gospel produces, "the children of the Kingdom." These are sown among men, and Satan sows his seed with them. The children of Satan look as much like the children of God as tares look like wheat. Only the angels can separate them. Scofield says: "Mere unbelievers are never called the children of the devil, only religious unbelievers are called so," i.e., those who profess the name of Christ, and do not hold the truth of Christ (~~4138~~ Matthew 13:38; 23:15; ~~4088~~ John 8:38-44, and other places).

THE SECOND GROUP: THE MUSTARD SEED, THE LEAVEN

The mustard seed shows the rapid but abnormal development of Christendom to a great place in the earth. The fowls of the air mean unbelievers of various classes, who, for selfish reasons embrace Christianity and find shelter in its branches (compare ~~2700~~ Daniel 4:20, 22; ~~6680~~ Revelation 18:2). "Leaven" represents "a principle of corruption working subtly" and is used in Scripture invariably in a bad sense (~~4198~~ Genesis 19:3; ~~4161~~ Matthew 16:11-12; ~~4085~~ Mark 8:15; ~~4616~~ 1 Corinthians 5:6-8, etc.). The teaching of the parable is that the gospel would be mingled with false doctrine, the latter increasing to the end of the age. (Compare here ~~5401~~ 1 Timothy 4:1-3; ~~5077~~ 2 Timothy 2:17-18; 4:3-4; ~~4010~~ 2 Peter 2:1-3.)

THE THIRD GROUP: THE HID TREASURE, THE PEARL, THE DRAGNET

The multitude is dismissed, the Lord and His disciples have entered the house, and He is explaining the parable of the tares. After this He says, "the Kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hid in a field" (v. 44). The field was previously defined as the world. The hidden treasure is Israel (~~4095~~ Exodus 19:5; ~~4920~~ Psalm 135:4). Christ is the "man who hath found" it. It is now hidden. Who knows where the "lost tribes" are? And even the

Jew as we know him is in the world, and is in a sense lost there (~~4125~~Romans 11:25). Christ has sold all that He had to buy the field. He gave His life for the world (~~4018~~1 Peter 1:18), but He died in a special sense for that nation (~~4115~~John 11:51). What joy He will have when He takes His treasure to Himself (~~4510~~Deuteronomy 30:9; Isa 49:13; 62:4-7).

Christ is the merchantman of the next parable (v. 45), and the pearl of great price is the church, for which He gave Himself (~~4125~~Ephesians 5:25-33). "Ye are not your own but are bought with a price." There is beauty in the thought of the church as a pearl whether we consider its origin, form, appearance or value. It comes into existence not mechanically but vitally, just as Christ forms His church by communicating His own life to it. The pearl comes from the sea as the church comes from the nations symbolized by the sea. A grain of sand imbeds itself between the animal and the shell and creates a wound in the side of the animal in so doing. In the healing of the wound the animal deposits a thin crust of a bright aspect around this grain of sand, repeating the process till the pearl is formed, blending the colors of the rainbow. Eve was taken out of the side of Adam, and the side of Christ was opened that out of it He might build His church, to which He addeth daily such as are being saved (~~4124~~Acts 2:41-47; ~~4121~~Ephesians 2:21; ~~5129~~Colossians 2:19).

THE DRAGNET

The parable's dragnet is not the Gospel, but a picture of that which takes place in Christendom at the end of this age, i.e., after the church is taken up into the air (~~5113~~1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

The foregoing interpretation is unusual to those coming freshly upon it, but to others who have pursued the lessons in the Old Testament prophets, it will appear perfectly consistent, and furnish a corroboration of the unity and divinity of the Bible.

QUESTIONS

1. Name the parables in their order.
2. What is the scope of their interpretation?
3. What is meant by "the Kingdom of the heavens" in this chapter?
4. What is a mystery in a scriptural sense?
5. What inference is clear from these parables?

6. Who are "the children of the devil," scripturally interpreted?
7. How is "leaven" invariably used in Scripture?
8. Give the interpretations of the hid treasure and the pearl.
9. What four features give beauty to the pearl as a type of the church?

MATTHEW 14-15 — FIRST MINISTRY TO THE GENTILES

Jesus has come. He has proclaimed the nearness of the Kingdom, revealed its code or principles, presented His credentials, and sent forth His heralds. But He has been antagonized and practically rejected by the nation. Then comes the turning point, when He ceases to proclaim the nearness of the Kingdom, and discourses of it in mystery. In seven parables he outlines how it will fare among the nations in the absence of the King.

One might suppose that the teachings and the doings of our Lord to follow, would assume a different complexion from any thing before. As a matter of fact such is the case in the judgment of those keen in dispensational discernment. But for the purpose before us it is undesirable to strain after such interpretations, and except where they are very clear, we shall content ourselves with the more practical line of comment.

At the close of the chapter 13 (vv. 53-58), "they were offended in Him"; less and less is the nation disposed to receive him as its Messiah, and because of the suspicions of Herod (14:1-2), He deems it prudent to withdraw Himself once more (vv. 13-14). The events that follow in the chapter are the feeding of the five thousand, the walking upon the sea, the quieting of the storm, and the healing of the sick. All these are additional evidences of the grace and power of Jesus, leading to the conviction "Of a truth thou art the Son of God" (v. 33).

At chapter 15 the Pharisees once more seek occasion against him (vv. 1-2), but His disciples have broken no divine law, but only disregarded one of their traditions. The charge is not that their hands are soiled, but only ceremonially unclean (~~4000~~ Mark 7:1-4). Christ takes the indirect method of reply by attacking the traditions (vv. 3-6). The fifth commandment is plain enough but the Pharisees had supplemented it with interpretations, making it so burdensome, that devices had to be invented to neutralize them. But in

neutralizing the traditions they had done away with the original law. A man to honor his parents must do so and so for them, they said, i.e., more than the commandment contemplated. But if "so and so" became irksome in any case, it was only necessary to affirm that the money it involved had been pledged as a gift to the altar, and then it need not be given to the parents. Thus the latter failed to be honored at all.

The boldness of Christ is marked in this instance (vv. 10-11), giving further offence to His enemies (v. 12), His words calling for an explanation even to His disciples (vv. 15-20).

There is a dispensational color in the transaction following (vv. 21-28), which is the first recorded ministry of Christ to a Gentile and in a Gentile country. It comes close upon the aversion to Him of His own nation, and points prophetically to that "turning to the Gentiles" which marks the present age. The significance here is found in the woman's first appeal to Him as the Son of David (v. 22), to which as a Gentile, she has no right (v. 24); but when, dropping that, she throws herself upon His "uncovenanted mercies" so to speak, addressing Him only as "Lord," the plea is at once granted.

QUESTIONS

1. What may be assumed as to the teachings of this Gospel following the turning point of chapter 13?
2. Name the leading facts of chapter 14.
3. To what conviction do they lead?
4. Explain in your own words ~~DESI~~ Matthew 15:1-6.
5. What gives a dispensational color to the story of the Syrophenician woman?
6. What is its prophetic application?

MATTHEW 16-17:23 — FIRST STATEMENT OF HIS DEATH

In the first of these chapters there are several revelations, from one of which we take the title of the lesson.

We need not dwell on the first section (vv. 1-4), in which Jesus once more rebukes the Pharisees and Sadducees. Nor need we dwell on the second section which is self-explanatory (vv. 5-12). But at the third (v. 13-16) we reach something of much importance. Of course, Jesus knew what men said of Him, but the question of verse 13 was to lead up to the confession of Peter, which in the outcome became His own formal claim to the Messiahship, the first He had made. The answer of verse 14 shows that the people knew Him not, as it is today, at the drawing to a close of the Christian age (compare ^{<6011>}2 Peter 2-3). In the face of this, Peter's confession is wonderful, including "all upon which personal faith in the Son of God rests."

But it is wonderful also in that it is a supernatural revelation to Peter (vv. 17-20). The time is now ripe for Jesus to reveal that great fact, the mystery of His church, which had been hid from former ages. There is in the Greek of verse 18 a play upon the words "Peter" and "rock." The first is *petros*, which means "a little rock," a piece of a large rock. The second is *petra*, which means "rock." Christ does not mean to build His church on Peter, but on the confession of Himself as "the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Christ is the rock. Peter is careful to tell us this (^{<6011>}1 Peter 2:4-9). The word for church, *ecclesia*, is found here for the first time, and means an assembly of called-out ones. Israel was called out of Egypt and assembled in the wilderness (^{<4178>}Acts 7:38), and the town meeting at Ephesus was an assembly, an *ecclesia* (^{<4183>}Acts 19:39). Note the future tense, "I will build my church." There was no church before, nor did it subsequently come into existence till the day of Pentecost. Nor did Peter receive "the keys" of the church, but of the "Kingdom of the heavens" (v. 19), which is "the sphere of Christian profession," or Christendom. A key is a badge of authority, and whatever it meant for Peter, it meant for all the apostles as is seen by comparing the whole verse with 18:18, where the thought is repeated and applied to all. Peter never assumed any special authority (see ^{<4187>}Acts 15:7-19; ^{<8211>}Galatians 2:11-15; ^{<6001>}1 Peter 1:1; 5:1). Just what is meant by the authority here conferred is not clear. Some think it was that exercised by Peter in opening the door of the gospel to the Jews on the day of Pentecost, and to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius (^{<4128>}Acts 2:38-42; 10:34-46). Others think it is a general authority constituted in the great commission (28:12). At all events, it was not what Rome thinks it is, for the eternal destiny of souls is held in the power of Christ alone (^{<6018>}Revelation 1:18).

The first revelation of His death following is hardly second in importance to the preceding revelation of His church, except that it has been anticipated; but the outcome of it in the case of the disciples is of the deepest instruction (vv. 21-27). The time had not come earlier for this revelation, and now that it had come how poorly prepared were the disciples to receive it (vv. 22-23)! Peter's rebuke is explained by his expectation that the earthly Kingdom would be immediately set up, and his disappointment in losing the worldly advantages which would be his at that time. His temptation of Christ was not different in essence from that of Satan in the wilderness, who would have Christ take the Kingdom other than by the Cross (v. 23). This was the occasion for a discourse on the denial of self (vv. 24-27).

The closing verse of the section above indicates that the expectation of the disciples will be realized at the second coming of Christ, and to strengthen their faith as to this the transfiguration follows (16:28; 17:8). It is to the transfiguration that verse 28 refers, inasmuch as three of them standing there saw Him "coming in His Kingdom" in miniature, in that event. For an inspired corroboration of this, read ~~6016~~ 2 Peter 1:16-18. To quote the *Scofield Bible*:

The scene contains in miniature all the elements of the future Kingdom in manifestation:

- (1) the Lord, not in humiliation, but glory;
- (2) Moses, glorified, representing the redeemed who have passed through death into the Kingdom;
- (3) Elijah glorified, representing the redeemed who have entered by translation;
- (4) the three disciples not glorified, representing Israel in the flesh in the future Kingdom;
- (5) the multitude at the foot of the mountain (v. 14), representing the nations who are to be brought into the Kingdom after it is established over Israel. For the third point, read ~~4885~~ 1 Corinthians 5:50-53 and ~~5044~~ 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17; for the fourth ~~5570~~ Ezekiel 37, and for the fifth ~~5110~~ Isaiah 11:10-12 and many other places.

It remains to speak of the disciples' question about Elijah (vv. 9-13), suggested by His appearance on the mountain, and which carries us back to ~~<991>~~Malachi 3:1 and 4:5-6. Here are two distinct prophecies, the first fulfilled in John the Baptist who had come "in the spirit and power of Elijah" (~~<9917>~~Luke 1:17); and the second yet to be fulfilled before the Lord returns a second time. This will be doubtless after the church is translated.

QUESTIONS

1. How many divisions have been found in this lesson?
2. To what was the confession of Peter equivalent so far as Christ was personally concerned?
3. Give in your own words the play on the words "Peter" and "rock."
4. Have you examined ~~<9911>~~1 Peter 2:4-9?
5. What is the Greek word for church, and its meaning?
6. When did the church of Christ come into existence?
7. Have you examined the texts touching on Peter's supposed authority?
8. What are the views about the power of the keys?
9. What explains Peter's rebuke of Christ?
10. How is ~~<9913>~~Matthew 16:28 explained?
11. How does the transfiguration show us Christ "coming in His kingdom"?
12. How would you explain Christ's words about Elijah?

MATTHEW 17:24-20:16 — SECOND STATEMENT OF DEATH

The first announcement of His death and resurrection by our Lord in the last lesson, connected His suffering with the act of His own nation, while this predicts the part played in it by one of His own band (vv. 22-23). It furnishes a starting point for a new lesson as in the other case.

The incident concluding chapter 17, is full of suggestive teaching. It is the temple tribute that is in mind, about sixty cents of our money, and Peter in saying "Yes," has already lost the significance of His confession of Christ.

If He were "the Son of the living God," then was it not His glory that had appeared in the temple, and why should He pay tribute? But He surrenders His personal right, after He again makes it clear to His disciple. How His glory as Creator flashes forth in the miracle of the piece of money!

"At the same time" the disciples ask the question beginning the next chapter. Did our Lord's words about "the keys of the Kingdom of the heavens" in the preceding chapter awaken this inquiry? (Compare ^{<4196>}Luke 9:46.) How selfish and worldly was their ambition still! The Lord's answer (vv. 2-4), is what He gave to Nicodemus (John 3). It is a question whether in verse 5 the reference is to a "little child" in the literal or in the spiritual sense, but the words "believe in me" (v. 6), turn the scale in favor of the latter. Verses 7 and 9 are hard to apply in that connection, but they teach the necessity of removing all stumbling-blocks out of our way. Verse 10 brings us back to the little child in the literal sense. Some think the words mean that every such child has its guardian angel. Some that every believer has such an angel. While others take the word "angel" in the sense of "spirit" (^{<4125>}Acts 12:15), and interpret the passage to mean that if such little children, who belong to the kingdom die, their disembodied spirits behold the Father's face in heaven — in other words they are saved.

In the section now reached (vv. 15-20), we meet for the second and last time in this Gospel the word "church," which has special interest because her executive power in the earth is spoken of. It is plain until we come to verse 18, which is to be understood not as limited to the apostles and their "successors" so-called, but as including the whole of the local church in any place gathered unto the name of the Lord Jesus. He sanctions in heaven what she thus binds or loosens on earth. What a promise that in verses 19 -20! What mighty things has it accomplished, and it still holds good!

The law of forgiveness (vv. 21-35), is in answer to Peter's question, inspired by the preceding, probably. In that case, however, our Lord had been speaking about restoring a brother to the church, while here it is a question of personal grievances, and the forgiveness must be unlimited (compare ^{<2178>}Luke 17:3-4).

At chapter 19 we find Jesus in Judea again, His last visit there prior to His crucifixion. Had we this Gospel alone to consider it would appear as the

first visit of Jesus after His baptism, but as a matter of fact there were at least two visits intervening, judging by John's record.

Once more His enemies are at His heels, this time on the divorce question (vv. 3-12). The Pharisees were divided about this, the school of Hillel holding that man might put away his wife for almost any cause, and that of Shammai, only for adultery. Our Lord goes back of Moses to the beginning (vv. 4-6). Moses never commanded writings of divorcement, but allowed or suffered it (vv. 7-8) in cases where there was suspicion of adultery (~~ORIG~~ Numbers 5). The actual sin was punishable by death. The Lord's command in the matter is plain and authoritative (v. 9). But the disciples think that under such circumstances it is better not to marry at all (v. 10), which leads Christ to say that some are unfitted for it by nature, some have been mutilated by wicked men, while some remain unmarried for the sake of the Kingdom (v. 12). All are not able wisely to remain unmarried, but where they are, it is not a man-enforced celibacy, but a divinely-bestowed gift. This seems to some to be the meaning of verse 11.

The incident of the little children (vv. 13-15) shows that the disciples had not caught the significance of the teaching of the previous chapter. But blessed be God, there is a place for children in the Kingdom. The parents in these cases must have been believers, setting an example to others to bring their offspring to Christ for His salvation and blessing.

The next incident brings before us a typical religious man of the world (vv. 16-26) through which we are taught that salvation is of God, and not dependent on the deeds of man. The Lord rebukes him for calling Him "good" (v. 17), because the young man was thinking of Him as a man merely, and "There is none righteous, no not one." He then meets him on his own ground. If he would do something to earn eternal life, there is but one thing to do; but this he is shown never to have done. If he really loves his neighbor as himself he would share what he had with his neighbor. The sequel shows how self-deceived he was (v. 22). "The eye of the needle" (v. 24) was a proverb among the Jews. After the gates of a city were closed at night, caravans could not enter. There were narrow openings at the side large enough for the human traveler to pass through but not his beast of burden. This opening was called "the eye of a needle."

Out of this event grows the conclusion of this lesson down to 20:16. The self-seeking disciple again comes into view (v. 27), and also the condescension of our Lord Who does not rebuke but graciously instructs

him (vv. 28-29). The "regeneration" here means the renewal of the earth when the Kingdom is finally set up (~~Q1B18~~ Romans 3:18-25).

The Kingdom will be administered over Israel through the apostles according to the ancient theocratic judgeship (~~Q1B18~~ Judges 2:28). But the promise holds something for all the faithful as well as the apostles (v. 29). The meaning of verse 30 is illuminated by the parable of the laborers in the next chapter which was uttered "to keep the disciples from a spirit of self-righteousness." God will give rewards in that day as may seem best to Him. They are not the legal outcome of our works even as saved sinners, but the expression of God's grace. We should be careful in the interpretation of parables not to seek a meaning or application of every detail, for in doing so we are as apt to teach error as truth.

QUESTIONS

1. What distinction is made between the first and second announcements of Christ's death?
2. Paraphrase the story of the miracle of the tribute money.
3. How has the latter part of ~~Q1B18~~ Matthew 18:10 been interpreted?
4. To whom do we understand the power of ~~Q1B18~~ Matthew 18:18 to be granted?
5. Where is Jesus at the beginning of chapter 19, and thereafter?
6. What is the Lord's teaching about divorce?
7. What lesson may be learned from 19:13-15?
8. What is the main lesson taught by the incident of the rich young ruler?
9. Explain the proverb "the eye of the needle."
10. What does "regeneration" mean in verse 19:28?
11. What is the main teaching of the laborers in the vineyard?
12. Of what are we to be careful in the interpretation of parables?

MATTHEW 20:17-22:14 — THIRD ANNOUNCEMENT OF DEATH

With this third announcement our Lord has indicated the three classes of His foes, the leaders of His nation in the first announcement, one of the twelve in the second, and now the Roman Gentiles (vv. 17-19).

The ambitious request of James and John (vv. 20-28), is in keeping with the selfishness previously expressed by Peter. The immediate occasion for the request is found in our Lord's words which they had misunderstood (vv. 19-28). The gentleness of Jesus (v. 22) is as marked as in the other case. His "cup" stood for all the agony of the Cross, how could they drink it? Not the bodily agony merely, but that experienced in the withdrawal of His Father's face. They would indeed be partakers of His suffering in one sense (v. 23), not that from the side of God but from the side of man (~~5024~~ Colossians 1:24; ~~5180~~ Philippians 3:10; ~~5021~~ 1 Peter 2:21), but their place in the Kingdom when it should be set up, must be determined by the Father. Of course, the subjection He here expresses towards the Father, is not that of His divine nature, which was co-equal with the Father, but His human nature. It is as the glorified man at the head of the Kingdom He now speaks (~~4657~~ 1 Corinthians 15:27-28; ~~5180~~ Philippians 2:9-11). The indignation of the ten against the two was not because of the latter's presumption towards the Lord, but because of the advantage they were seeking over them. The ten, in other words, were as selfish as the two; hence the rebuke and instruction following, for all.

The healing of the two blind men (vv. 29-34) recalls the instance of 9:27-31, but it is not the same. ~~4106~~ Mark 10:46 and ~~2885~~ Luke 18:35 mention but one man and the common explanation is that there were two miracles of the kind connected with this visit to Jericho, one as Christ entered and the other as He left the city. But some account for this seeming discrepancy in another way. For example, as son of David and heir to the throne, Christ was soon to be presented to Jerusalem, and ere this takes place He has the testimony of two witnesses that He is the Son of David, which was necessary according to the law. This they think, is the reason why two blind men are mentioned exclusively in Matthew's Gospel which is the Gospel of the Kingdom.

The entry into Jerusalem (21:1-11), which took place on the first day of the last week of our Lord's earthly life, is His formal offer of Himself to the nation as their King. This was necessary to His formal rejection by the nation, and is established by His fulfillment of ^{<300>}Zechariah 9:9. This allusion to Zechariah's words would mark Him as an impostor or else their true Messiah. The leaders of the nation regard Him in the former light; and even the multitude, though they at first acclaimed Him as "the Son of David" (v. 9), in their cooler judgment settled on the simpler title of 5:11, and afterwards took up the cry "Crucify Him!"

This is the second time Jesus cleansed the temple (vv. 12-17), the first near the beginning of His ministry (^{<301>}John 2:13-16). It becomes a foreshadowing of His second coming to fulfill ^{<302>}Malachi 3:3, the necessity for which appears in ^{<303>}Daniel 9:27; ^{<304>}Matthew 24:15 ff.; ^{<305>}2 Thessalonians 3:4, 8. How different the scene in verse 14, type of that which shall follow also in that day when He comes again to Israel! The language of the chief priests and scribes (v. 15) accentuates the rejection of Him manifested all along. ^{<306>}Psalm 8, which Jesus quotes, is Messianic, and His use of it is a further asseveration of His claim to be that Promised One. Bethany, the home of Martha, Mary and Lazarus, was His abiding place during this week (v. 17).

The barren fig tree (vv. 18-22) stands for the nation of Israel. On seeing the leaves of profession, He had a right to expect fruit, but there was nothing on it for Him, though He hungered. Comparing ^{<307>}Zechariah 4:7, a mountain is used in Scripture to represent a large or difficult undertaking, in which sense probably it is here used (v. 21). If Israel at this time was a mountain in the way of the gospel, it could be removed, as it was removed, by faith, and cast into the sea of the nations.

The climax is nearing. As the nation had rejected the Messiah, so now the Messiah rejects the nation in the parables following: the Two Sons (vv. 28-32); the Householder (vv. 33-46); the Marriage of the King's Son (22:1-14). The immediate occasion for them is in verses 23-27 — another attack of the leaders. They were incensed at His action in the Temple on the previous day and the words He then spake against them. Behold the divine wisdom with which He now deals with them, silencing them utterly!

The first of these parables is interpreted by our Lord Himself. The second requires no extended comment. God is the householder, Israel the vineyard, the leaders of the nation the husbandmen, the servants the holy

prophets, the son Christ Himself. The chief priests and the Pharisees are condemned out of their own mouths (v. 41). The next verse is a quotation from ~~1980L~~ Psalm 118, which is Messianic. Christ as the "Stone" is revealed in a three-fold way. To Israel He was a stumblingblock and rock of offense, for He came to them not as a monarch but in the form of a servant (~~200L~~ Isaiah 8;14-15; ~~409D~~ Romans 9:32-33; ~~402S~~ 1 Corinthians 1:23; ~~408B~~ 1 Peter 2:8). To the church He is the foundation-stone and head of the corner (~~481L~~ 1 Corinthians 3:11; ~~402D~~ Ephesians 2:20-22; ~~404D~~ 1 Peter 2:4-5). To the Gospel world-powers, He is the smiting stone of destruction (~~208B~~ Daniel 2:3-4). The Kingdom would not be given to that generation which had rejected Christ, but to the faithful remnant in the latter days.

The third parable foreshadows more than the other two, as it brings in the Gentiles ivy. 8-10). Verse 3 applies to the offer of the Kingdom made to Israel up to the time of Christ's death and resurrection. Verse 4 perhaps applies to the renewed offer down to the time of its further rejection in the martyrdom of Stephen (~~401D~~ Acts 7). Read especially ~~449B~~ Acts 3:19-21. Verse 7 applies to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, A.D. 70. Verses 8-10 apply to the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles beginning with Peter at ~~400D~~ Acts 10. The man without the wedding garment (vv. 11-12) may mean the mere professor in Christendom. "Many are called," and make this outward profession, but "few are chosen," in the sense that they really accept and put on Christ as their righteousness.

QUESTIONS

1. How did Christ distinguish His foes in connection with the announcement of His death and resurrection?
2. What spirit was evinced by James and John?
3. What dispensational meaning is attachable to the healing of the two blind men?
4. To what was Christ's entry into Jerusalem equivalent?
5. What does His cleansing of the Temple foreshadow?
6. Of what is the barren fig tree a type?
7. How would you interpret 21:21?
8. Name the three parables in which our Lord rejects the nation.
9. Name the three ways in which Christ is revealed as the "Stone."
10. Apply the parable of the marriage feast dispensationally.

MATTHEW 22:15-23:39 — WOE AND FAREWELL

Another effort to "entangle him in his talk," and a new enemy, the Herodians. They were the politicians of the time, a low class of Jews who, for selfish reasons, favored the Roman rule represented by Herod. With flattery He is approached (v. 16), but had He answered their question negatively (v. 17), the Herodians would have accused Him before the Roman judges, while affirmatively, the Pharisees could have done so before the Sanhedrin. No true Messiah, they would have said, would teach subjection to the Gentiles. But as before, He silences them, for had they rendered unto God the things that were God's, they would not now be obliged to render anything unto Caesar (vv. 18-22). The Sadducees were the rationalists who denied the future life and all connected with it; hence their question, although founded on ^{<1825>}Deuteronomy 25:5, and the following, was combined of ignorance and sarcasm. There will be a resurrection but it does not imply marriage (v. 30). The proof of resurrection He employs (v. 32), is a proof also of the inspiration of the words of the original Scriptures. In the quotation from ^{<1814>}Exodus 3:14, the present tense of "to be" is used, and on that He bases His argument for the future life. The Pharisees fare no better with their inquiry than the other two (vv. 32-40), and then our Lord asks them a question which ends attempts of this kind on their part. He quotes ^{<1811>}Psalm 110 which at once proves Him the Messiah and the very God (vv. 41-46).

Now the declaration of the judgments on His enemies. The Scribes and Pharisees were the national leaders of the Jews, in which sense they sat in Moses' seat, and it became necessary to obey them. But to observe their instruction was one thing, and to follow their example another (v. 3). As to the first, compare ^{<5311>}Romans 13:1-7 and ^{<1013>}1 Peter 2:13-17. "Phylacteries," meaning things to observe, get their name from ^{<1813>}Exodus 13:9-16, ^{<1818>}Deuteronomy 6:9 and the following verses. A phylactery is a strip of leather attached to a small box containing a parchment copy of ^{<1818>}Deuteronomy 6:4-8. This strip is used to fasten the box around the head so that it rests in the middle of the forehead. Another is wound around the left arm. This literal interpretation of the Scriptures was for show (5-7). And they not only loved show, but to be addressed by high-sounding names, which must not be true of disciples of Christ (vv. 8-12).

The eight woes of the next chapter all pronounced against various forms of hypocrisy, and with which our Lord closed His public ministry, suggest the Beatitudes with which He opened that ministry. We cannot do more than touch upon a few of the distinctions He makes. The first, that of hindering (v. 13), comes home to preachers and teachers of Christianity who are not regenerated and taught of the Spirit in the Word. The second and third, verses 14 and 15, need no explanation. The fourth, verses 16-22, displays the ignorance of the mere ritualist. The fifth and sixth describe the formalist (vv. 23-26). The seventh is a figurative description of their religious character (v. 28), and the eighth no less so (vv. 29-31). They made a show of zeal in adorning the burial places of the prophets their fathers had slain, and yet they were exhibiting the same spirit. Did our Lord ever utter a severer word than verse 33? And in that connection note the personal pronoun of authority — "Behold, I send unto you prophets." All He there predicts was soon fulfilled in the Acts.

Now the pathetic farewell (vv. 37-39). Their house is left desolate. It is Tuesday of that last week, and as He leaves the temple and the city it is not to return until Thursday, the day of the last passover and the betrayal. And yet His final word is one of hope. Israel would see him again, i.e., at His second coming, and the faithful remnant would exclaim, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."

QUESTIONS

1. Who were the Herodians?
2. What is the spiritual significance of the words, "Render unto Caesar"?
3. How does the quotation from ~~the~~ Psalm 110 prove the deity of Christ?
4. Explain the reference to the phylacteries.
5. How many woes are there, and against what feature of iniquity are they directed?
6. Quote our Lord's final words of hope.

MATTHEW 24-25 — THINGS TO COME

The present lesson connects itself with the last without a break. The disciples, mystified by what our Lord said about the "house," i.e., the temple, being left "desolate" (23:38), called His attention to its grandeur and strength (24:1). His further observation (v. 2) deepened their wonder, hence their improvement of the opportunity on the Mount of Olives for the questions of verse three.

The first was answered by the destruction of the temple under Titus, A.D. 70. But although Christ replies to this question as He does the other two, yet that reply is recorded only in ^{<221>}Luke 21:20-24. The replies to the others follow.

Verses 4-14 are capable of a two-fold application. In the first place, they give in outline panoramic form the features of the present age during the absence of the King, and then in a more particular way describe the end of the age; for, as the *Scofield Bible* says, "all that has characterized the age throughout all these centuries gathers into awful intensity at the end."

What are these features? False Christs, wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, persecutions, apostasy, false teaching, abounding iniquity, and spiritual declension — just what Christendom in these twenty centuries records as fulfilling the words. Compare ^{<202>}Daniel 9:24-27 and ^{<500>}2 Timothy 3.

To be specific as to verse 14, it refers to the proclamation of the good news that the Kingdom promised to Israel, and which both John the Baptist and Christ preached at the beginning, is again "at hand." This will be proclaimed at the end of the age, not by the church, as we understand it, which shall have been caught up to meet the Lord in the air (^{<5013>}1 Thessalonians 4:13-18), but by the Jewish remnant, the believing Israelites on the earth at that day (^{<2009>}Isaiah 1:9; ^{<5105>}Romans 11:5; ^{<646>}Revelation 14:6-7).

Verse 15 points to the crisis at the end. "The abomination of desolation" (^{<2027>}Daniel 9:27), which is the image of "the man of sin" (^{<5018>}2 Thessalonians 2:3-8), and the "Beast" (^{<6304>}Revelation 13:4-7) will then be set up in the temple of restored Jerusalem, and the hour of the Great Tribulation will have come. From this on (vv. 15-28), our Lord gives the

details of this period. The believing Jews in Jerusalem at that time are warned to flee (vv. 16-20). A renewed warning is given as to false Christians (vv. 21-26). The sudden smiting of the Gentile world-powers is announced (vv. 27-28 compared with ~~2024~~ Daniel 2:34). The glorious appearing of the Lord visible to the nations, together with the regathering of Israel as a nation are set before us next (vv. 29-31). The sign of the fig tree is given (vv. 32-33), and then "warnings applicable to this age over which these events are ever impending" (vv. 34-51); and yet, as stated above, especially applicable to the end period itself. The first verse of this last-named section (v. 34) requires special notice. The primary definition of the Greek word for "generation" is race, family, or stock, in which sense the word is evidently used by our Lord. The race of Jews (Israel) "shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled" — a promise to the truth of which the centuries bear witness.

Chapter 25 continues the discourse. The phrase "the Kingdom of heaven" or "the Kingdom of the heavens" recalls the parables of chapter 13, and applies to the same thing, viz., the sphere of professing Christianity, i.e., Christendom during the absence of the King. At the first, that is, after our Lord's ascension, the attitude of the disciples was that of going "forth to meet the bridegroom" (v. 1). In other words they were "waiting for the coming of our Lord" (~~4000~~ 1 Corinthians 1:7). But "the bridegroom tarried," and "they all slumbered and slept" (v. 5). The "midnight" is coming however, when the cry is made "Behold the bridegroom!" The wise virgins are the true believers, "the oil in their vessels" (v. 4) symbolizing the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (~~4000~~ Romans 8:9). The foolish virgins are the mere professors, as is evident from "I know you not" (v. 12). As this parable sets before us that testing of the Christian profession which the coming of the Lord will reveal, so the parable that follows sets before us the testing of service. The talents are the gifts God has bestowed on His servants to use for His glory (1 Corinthians 12). Exercise of any gift will increase it through the Holy Spirit; and faithful service, though it be in the use of any one gift, will bring approval. The difficulty in the parable is the faithless servant, who must not be regarded as a true believer, but a mere professor as in the preceding case. A true believer would never call Christ a hard master.

The closing verses (vv. 31-46) do not contain a parable as far as the record goes, but for all we know a description of fact. It is a judgment scene, but not the last judgment (~~4000~~ Revelation 20:11-15). The object of the

judgment is the Gentile nations of the earth. The time is after the church has been caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and when He has come for the gathering of the remnant of Israel at the end of this age. The place doubtless is Palestine. There is no resurrection here, no books opened, and nothing said about the dead, all of which is in contrast to the last judgment. Moreover, three classes are present here, sheep, goats, and "My brethren," the test being not the possession of eternal life, but the treatment accorded by the nations to these "brethren." The latter are the "Jewish remnant who will have preached the gospel of the Kingdom to all nations during the tribulation." Examine ^{<3840>}Zechariah 14:1-5 and Joel 3 for light upon this judgment scene.

QUESTIONS

1. How many, and what, where the questions asked by the disciples on the Mount of Olives?
2. What was the answer to the first question, and where is it recorded?
3. What two-fold application may be given to 24:1-14?
4. What features will mark this age increasing in intensity at the end?
5. How would you interpret verse 14 particularly?
6. What Old and New Testament passages are paralleled by verse 15?
7. What does generation mean, verse 34?
8. Who are meant by the wise and foolish virgins of chapter 25?
9. What is the distinction between the "testings" of the two parables in this chapter?
10. What is the difficulty in the second parable? How would you explain it?
11. How would you distinguish between the judgment at the close of this chapter, and the last judgment in Revelation?
12. Who are meant by "my brethren"?

This solemn chapter divides itself thus:

1. The Counsel to Kill Jesus (vv. 1-5)
2. The Anointing of Jesus (vv. 6-13)
3. The Bargain of Betrayal (vv. 14-16)
4. The Last Passover (vv. 17-25)

5. The Institution of the Lord's Supper (vv. 26-29)
6. The Prediction of Peter's Denial (vv. 30-35)
7. The Agony in the Garden (vv. 36-46)
8. The Betrayal and Arrest (vv. 45-56)
9. The Hearing before Caiaphas (vv. 57-68)
10. The Denial of Peter (vv. 69-75)

MATTHEW 26 — BETRAYAL AND ARREST

As to the first point (vv. 1-5), note that Christ predicts His death for the fourth time, adding the manner of it, and the time it would take place. What a calm walking up into death it was! But see how Satan, through the human conspirators, would hinder, if he could, the offering of the sacrifice at the appointed time (v. 5)!

As to the second point (vv. 6-13), we learn from ^{<B17>}John 12:1-8, that the woman was Mary, the sister of Lazarus, leading to the presumption that Simon the leper was her father, and possibly one whom Jesus had healed. The circumstance that one Gospel speaks of her as anointing Jesus' head and the other His feet, shows that the "ordinary anointing of hospitality and honor" included both. Matthew mentions the first as in harmony with the general purpose of his Gospel to reveal Jesus as the king. John reveals Him as the Son of God, in which the attitude of Mary at His feet is in harmony. Verse 12 is significant, indicating that Mary understood more of Christ's death than the disciples; in which connection note that she is "not among the women who went to the sepulchre to embalm His body." The cost of the ointment (^{<B15>}John 12:5), equals about \$50, which as values are today compared with those times would mean six times as much, or \$300. A laborer's daily wage at that time being a penny, one understands the "indignation" of the disciples (v. 8). But how blessed to obtain our Lord's interpretation of the act (v. 10)! Let us bring our best to Him no matter what men say. To Him let it be brought. There is much charity and philanthropy in our day in which the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ is not considered.

As to the third point (vv. 14-16), compare ^{<B40>}Psalms 41:9; 69:25; 109:8; ^{<B12>}Zechariah 11:12, and observe from ^{<B23>}Luke 22:3, that Satan entered

into Judas, and that the price for which he sold our Lord was that of a slave (^{<0213>}Exodus 21:32).

Coming to the Passover (vv. 17-25), let it not be supposed that because of the different accounts in the four Gospels there is any conflict among them, even though we may not be perfectly able to harmonize them. For the Passover itself, and what it commemorated, we refer to ^{<0121>}Exodus 12.

The institution of the Lord's Supper which followed (vv. 26-29), marked the end of the Mosaic dispensation. The Passover had fulfilled its purpose as the paschal lamb to which it pointed, was to be slain the next day. Hence the inauguration of a new feast embodying the fundamental truth of Christianity as that had embodied the fundamental truth of Judaism. And the fundamental truth of Christianity is "remission of sins." "Remission" means to send off, or away, i.e., to separate the sin from the sinner. In this respect there is a difference between human and divine forgiveness. The first remits the penalty, which is all that it can do, while the second remits the sin. And the latter can do this, because with God, forgiveness always follows the execution of the penalty (see ^{<0165>}Leviticus 4:35; ^{<0122>}Hebrews 9:22). We are forgiven for Christ's sake, in the sense that Christ has borne the sins of the believer in His own body on the tree. What meaning must be wrapped up in verse 29, "new with you in my Father's kingdom!" Who can fathom its depths?

Concerning the agony in the garden (vv. 36-46), we must not suppose the "cup" was the fear of mere physical pain or death, in which event Christ would have been lacking in the courage and faith of many an ordinary martyr. Moreover, He need not have died at all had He desired otherwise (^{<0107>}John 10:17-18). The "cup" must have been the making of His soul an offering for sin (^{<0250>}Isaiah 53:10), including the withdrawal of His Father's face on account of that sin (^{<0121>}Psalms 22:1) — not His own sin of course, but that of the whole world (^{<0102>}1 John 2:2). The value of His petition is seen in the testimony it bears to the necessity of the atonement, showing that without the shedding of His blood there could have been no remission.

Other events in this chapter we pass over to speak of them in the next lesson, pausing a moment to allude to the seeming discrepancy in the account of the denial of Peter (vv. 69-75). Comparing the story here with the corresponding places Mark 14, Luke 22, and John 18, it is to be kept in mind, that an excited crowd had gathered and that Peter was questioned in two places; with the servants (^{<0168>}Matthew 26:58), where the first charge

was made (v. 69); and in the porch where a great number of people would be gathered, and where the second and third charges were made by another damsel and by the crowd.

QUESTIONS

1. Name the ten great facts of this lesson.
2. How would you harmonize the two accounts of the anointing of Jesus by Mary?
3. Name the events on the night of the Passover.
4. What is the origin of the Passover and what did it commemorate?
5. How does remission differ from forgiveness, and why?
6. How should we interpret the "cup" spoken of in Gethsemane?

MATTHEW 27 — TRIAL AND CRUCIFIXION

This chapter opens with the delivery of Jesus to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor (vv. 1-2); then follows the account of Judas' remorse (vv. 3-10); Jesus is now questioned by Pilate (vv. 11-14); Barabbas is released and Jesus is condemned (vv. 15-26); He is crowned with thorns and crucified (vv. 27-44); He dies (vv. 45-46), and is buried (vv. 57-66).

The account of Judas' remorse (vv. 3-10) seems to contain two discrepancies. For example, verse 5 compared with ~~4018~~ Acts 1:18, the explanation of which is that he fell after the hanging. Verses 9 and 10 may allude to ~~2480~~ Jeremiah 18:1-4 and 19:1-3, but if so, the application is remote, since ~~38112~~ Zechariah 11:12-13 fits the case more exactly. Perhaps this is a copyist's mistake, although there is another explanation. In the Jewish canon the books of the prophets began with Jeremiah, and sometimes his name was given to the whole section of the prophets just as we use David's name for any of the Psalms, or Solomon's for the Proverbs, though there were other authors in each case.

Note that Jesus' reply to Pilate, "Thou sayest" (v. 11) is equivalent to a declaration that He was what Pilate said, "The King of the Jews."

Note Pilate's testimony to the innocence of Jesus, and that according to Roman law He was condemned unjustly (v. 24).

Note Jesus' consciousness to the end, as illustrated in his refusal to sip the stupefying drink (v. 34).

The inscription on the Cross is recorded differently by the evangelists, but this does not imply a contradiction or weaken the argument for the inspiration of their records. The inscription was in three different languages involving a different arrangement of the words in each case. Secondly, no one of the writers quotes the entire inscription. Thirdly, they all agree in emphasizing the one great fact that He was "the King of the Jews." Fourth, their narratives combined give the full inscription as follows:

"This is Jesus, The King of the Jews"
"The King of the Jews"
"This the King of the Jews"
"Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews"

It is consistent with the strictest view of the inspiration of the original autographs that the Holy Spirit may have had a purpose in causing the four different records to be written, and that the purpose was to bring out in relief the charge made against Jesus, as that charge was in itself the strongest testimony to His Messiahship and the fulfillment of the Word of God.

The words "yielded up the ghost" (v. 50) should not be passed over. They mean "dismissed His spirit," and imply an act of His will. Christ did not die like other men who cannot help themselves, but because His work was done His life was laid down of His own volition. (Compare ^{<4157>}Mark 15:37; ^{<4246>}Luke 23:46; ^{<4308>}John 10:18; 19:30.) This is an inferential testimony to the sacrificial character of His death.

The "veil of the temple" (v. 51) separated between the Holy Place and the Most Holy the latter that into which the High Priest alone entered once a year with the blood of atonement (^{<4251>}Exodus 26:31; Leviticus 16). It was a type of the human body of Christ, and its rending signified that "a new and living way" was opened for believers into God's presence (compare 9:1-8; 10:19-22).

The resurrection referred to (vv. 52-53) was one of the most remarkable testimonies to the deity of Christ and the divinity of His work on the Cross. Did the bodies of these saints return to their graves? It is usual to imagine so, but they may have ascended to heaven with Jesus when He "led captivity captive" (^{<4008>}Ephesians 4:8-10).

QUESTIONS

1. Name the seven chief events of this chapter.
2. Name the parallel Scriptures.
3. How would you harmonize verse 5 with ~~4018~~Acts 1:18?
4. How would you explain the different reports of the writing on the Cross?
5. What evidence have we here to the voluntariness of Christ's death?
6. What was the significance of the rending of the veil?
7. Have you read ~~4018~~Ephesians 4:8-10?

MATTHEW 28 — RESURRECTION

Perhaps the most important comment we can make on this chapter will be the order of the ten events on the day of which it speaks.

1. The three women, Mary Magdalene; Mary, the mother of James; and Salome, start for the sepulcher, followed by other women bearing spices.
2. These find the stone rolled away and Mary Magdalene, goes to tell the disciples (~~4275~~Luke 23:55-24:9; ~~4301~~John 20:1-2).
3. Mary, the mother of James, draws near the tomb and discovers the angel (~~4182~~Matthew 28:2).
4. She returns to meet the other women bearing the spices.
5. Peter and John arrive, look in and go away.
6. Mary Magdalene returns, sees the two angels and Jesus (~~4301~~John 20:11-18).
7. She goes to tell the disciples.
8. Mary, the mother of James, returns with the other women, all of whom see the two angels (~~4244~~Luke 24:4-5; ~~4155~~Mark 15:15).
9. They receive the angel's message.
10. While seeking the disciples they are met by Jesus (~~4188~~Matthew 28:8-10).

Another comment of interest is the order of the appearances of Jesus on this day:

1. To Mary Magdalene (~~4304~~ John 20:14-18),
2. To the women returning from the tomb with the angel's message (~~4188~~ Matthew 28:8-10),
3. To Peter (~~4284~~ Luke 24:34; ~~4655~~ 1 Corinthians 15:5),
4. To the two on the way to Emmaus (~~4243~~ Luke 24:13-31),
5. To the apostles (minus Thomas) (~~4285~~ Luke 24:36-43; ~~4309~~ John 20:19-24).

In dividing the chapter we have

- (1) the narrative of the resurrection with the appearance of Jesus to the women (vv. 1-10);
- (2) the false invention of the Jews (v. 11-15); and
- (3) the gathering in Galilee (vv. 16-20).

We can only touch upon the most important things, one of which is Christ's reference to His disciples as His "brethren" (v. 10). For the first time does he use that word in such connection, showing that until His death and resurrection on their behalf the relationship had not become possible. (Compare ~~4022~~ Psalm 22:22 and ~~3011~~ Hebrews 2:11-12.)

Another important thing is verse 13, "Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole Him away while we slept." We give excerpts from Gaebelein on this verse:

The watch recover from their fright, and some hasten to the city. Surely something happened or why should they leave their post to make a report? Then it is strange they went to the priests first and not the Roman governor. This was an irregular proceeding, from which we conclude that what they had to report was of greater importance for the priests than Pilate. Who knows but these priests had instructed the guard that if He should come forth they were to come to them first of all? Their report was a witness of the resurrection and that the tomb was empty.

The Sanhedrin was hastily summoned to receive the report in an official way. The straightforward statement, as men of military training are apt to report, made doubt about veracity impossible. To impeach them would have been insane. But what would happen if this truth got out among the people?

The resurrection must be denied which could only be by inventing a lie. The only possible lie was that His disciples stole the body. The story is incredible. It is easier to believe He arose from the dead than to believe what the Jews invented about His resurrection. The disciples had forgotten about the resurrection promised and they were a scattered, poor, timid lot of people. But even if they had been anxious to steal the body, how could they have done it? Here was the company of armed men. Then there was the sealed, heavy stone.

But the ridiculous side of the lie came out with the report the soldiers were to circulate. The disciples came and stole the body, while they were sleeping! It is incredible that all these men had fallen asleep at the same time, and so fast asleep that the commotion of rolling away the stone and the carrying away of the dead did not disturb them. Furthermore, sleeping at a post meant death for the Roman soldier. One might have nodded and risked his life, but that all slept is an impossibility. But the report is foolish; they were asleep and while asleep witnessed how the disciples stole the body of Jesus! It was a miserable lie, and is continued to the present day.

We might mention here the testimony of Josephus, who says in his *Antiquities*, 'He appeared to them alive on the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning Him.'

A third matter of importance is the Great Commission as it is called (vv. 19-20). Note the word "Name" as indicative of the Trinity. It is not names but "Name." Father, Son and Holy Spirit is the final name of the one true God. The conjunction in one name of the three affirms equality and oneness of substance. Note the peculiarity of the terms. This is the Kingdom commission, as another expresses it, not the Christian commission. The latter is in Luke, distinctively the Gentile Gospel, but not here, which is distinctively the Jewish Gospel. And this is all the more remarkable because in Luke, the disciples are commanded to go to the Jews (24:47), while here they are commanded to go to "all nations." It points to the close of the age when the commission will be carried out by the faithful remnant of the Jews so often spoken about. It has not yet been carried out. The story of the Acts is not its fulfillment. Its accomplishment has been interrupted, but will be taken up before the Lord comes to deliver Israel at the last.

QUESTIONS

- 1.** Repeat the order of the events on the day of resurrection.
- 2.** Do the same with reference to the appearance of Jesus.
- 3.** Divide the chapter into three parts.
- 4.** How would you answer the argument that the disciples stole the body of Jesus?
- 5.** What is the significance of the word "Name" in the Great Commission?
- 6.** How do you distinguish the commission in Matthew from that in Luke?