

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

MARK

Commentary by **DAVID BROWN**

INTRODUCTION

THAT the Second Gospel was written by Mark is universally agreed, though by what Mark, not so. The great majority of critics take the writer to be “John whose surname was Mark,” of whom we read in the Acts, and who was “sister’s son to Barnabas” (^{<5010>}Colossians 4:10). But no reason whatever is assigned for this opinion, for which the tradition, though ancient, is not uniform; and one cannot but wonder how it is so easily taken for granted by WETSTEIN, HUG, MEYER, EBRARD, LANGE, ELLICOTT, DAVIDSON, TREGELLES, etc. ALFORD goes the length of saying it “has been universally believed that he was the same person with the John Mark of the Gospels. But GROTIUS thought differently, and so did SCHLEIERMACHER, CAMPBELL, BURTON, and DA COSTA; and the grounds on which it is concluded that they were two different persons appear to us quite unanswerable. “Of John, surnamed Mark,” says CAMPBELL, in his Preface to this Gospel, “one of the first things we learn is, that he attended Paul and Barnabas in their apostolical journeys, when these two traveled together (^{<4125>}Acts 12:25 13:5). And when afterwards there arose a dispute between them concerning him, insomuch that they separated, Mark accompanied his uncle Barnabas, and Silas attended Paul. When Paul was reconciled to Mark, which was probably soon after, we find Paul again employing Mark’s assistance, recommending him, and giving him a very honorable testimony (^{<5010>}Colossians 4:10 ^{<5041>}2 Timothy 4:11 ^{<5024>}Philemon 1:24). But we hear not a syllable of his attending Peter as his minister, or assisting him in any capacity. And yet, as we shall presently see, no tradition is more ancient, more uniform, and better sustained by internal evidence, than that Mark, in his Gospel, was but “the interpreter of Peter,” who, at the close of his first Epistle speaks of him as “Marcus my son” (^{<4053>}1 Peter 5:13), that is, without doubt, his son in the Gospel — converted to Christ through his instrumentality. And when we consider how little the Apostles Peter and Paul were together — how seldom they even met — how different were their tendencies, and how separate their spheres of

labor, is there not, in the absence of all evidence of the fact, something approaching to violence in the supposition that the same Mark was the intimate associate of both? "In brief," adds CAMPBELL, "the accounts given of Paul's attendant, and those of Peter's interpreter, concur in nothing but the name, Mark or Marcus; too slight a circumstance to conclude the sameness of the person from, especially when we consider how common the name was at Rome, and how customary it was for the Jews in that age to assume some Roman name when they went thither."

Regarding the Evangelist Mark, then, as another person from Paul's companion in travel, all we know of his personal history is that he was a convert, as we have seen, of the Apostle Peter. But as to his Gospel, the tradition regarding Peter's hand in it is so ancient, so uniform, and so remarkably confirmed by internal evidence, that we must regard it as an established fact. "Mark," says PAPIAS (according to the testimony of EUSEBIUS, [*Ecclesiastical History*, 3.39]), "becoming *the interpreter of Peter*, wrote accurately, though not in order, whatever he remembered of what was either said or done by Christ; for he was neither a hearer of the Lord nor a follower of Him, but afterwards, as I said, [he was a follower] of Peter, who arranged the discourses for use, but not according to the order in which they were uttered by the Lord." To the same effect IRENAEUS [*Against Heresies*, 3,1]: "Matthew published a Gospel while Peter and Paul were preaching and founding the Church at Rome; and after their departure (or decease), Mark, *the disciple and interpreter of Peter*, he also gave forth to us in writing the things which were preached by Peter." And CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA is still more specific, in a passage preserved to us by EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 6.14]: "Peter having publicly preached the word at Rome, and spoken forth the Gospel by the Spirit, many of those present exhorted Mark, as *having long been a follower of his*, and remembering what he had said, to write what had been spoken; and that having prepared the Gospel, he delivered it to those who had asked him for it; which, when Peter came to the knowledge of, he neither decidedly forbade nor encouraged him." EUSEBIUS' own testimony, however, from other accounts, is rather different: that Peter's hearers were so penetrated by his preaching that they gave Mark, as being *a follower of Peter*, no rest till he consented to write his Gospel, as a memorial of his oral teaching; and "that the apostle, when he knew by the revelation of the Spirit what had been done, was delighted with the zeal of those men, and sanctioned the reading of the writing (that is, of this Gospel of Mark) in the churches" [*Ecclesiastical History*, 2.15]. And giving in another of his works a similar statement, he says that "Peter, from excess of humility, did not think himself qualified to write the Gospel; but Mark, his acquaintance and pupil, is said to have recorded his relations of the actings of Jesus. And Peter

testifies these things of himself; for all things that are recorded by Mark are said to be memoirs of Peter's discourses." It is needless to go farther — to ORIGEN, who says Mark composed his Gospel "as Peter guided" or "directed him, who, in his Catholic Epistle, calls him his son," etc.; and to JEROME, who but echoes EUSEBIUS.

This, certainly, is a remarkable chain of testimony; which, confirmed as it is by such striking internal evidence, may be regarded as establishing the fact that the Second Gospel was drawn up mostly from materials furnished by Peter. In DA COSTA'S *Four Witnesses* the reader will find this internal evidence detailed at length, though all the examples are not equally convincing. But if the reader will refer to our remarks on ^{<A1K07}Mark 16:7, and ^{<A1K27}John 18:27, he will have convincing evidence of a *Petrine* hand in this Gospel.

It remains only to advert, in a word or two, to the *readers* for whom this Gospel was, in the first instance, designed, and the *date* of it. That it was not for *Jews* but *Gentiles*, is evident from the great number of explanations of Jewish usages, opinions, and places, which to a Jew would at that time have been superfluous, but were highly needful to a Gentile. We can here but refer to ^{<A1K18}Mark 2:18 7:3,4 12:18 13:3 14:12 15:42, for examples of these. Regarding the date of this Gospel — about which nothing certain is known — if the tradition reported by IRENAEUS can be relied on that it was written at Rome, "after the departure of Peter and Paul," and if by that word "departure" we are to understand their *death*, we may date it somewhere between the years 64 and 68; but in all likelihood this is too late. It is probably nearer the truth to date it eight or ten years earlier.

CHAPTER 1

◀BOOK MARK 1:1-8.

THE PREACHING AND BAPTISM OF JOHN.

(◀BOOK MATTHEW 3:1-12 ◀BOOK LUKE 3:1-18).

1. The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God — By the “Gospel” of Jesus Christ here is evidently meant the blessed Story which our Evangelist is about to tell of His Life, Ministry, Death, Resurrection, and Glorification, and of the begun Gathering of Believers in His Name. The abruptness with which he announces his subject, and the energetic brevity with which, passing by all preceding events, he hastens over the ministry of John and records the Baptism and Temptation of Jesus — as if impatient to come to the Public Life of the Lord of glory — have often been noticed as characteristic of this Gospel — a Gospel whose direct, practical, and singularly vivid setting imparts to it a preciousness peculiar to itself. What strikes every one is, that though the briefest of all the Gospels, this is in some of the principal scenes of our Lord’s history the fullest. But what is not so obvious is, that wherever the finer and subtler feelings of humanity, or the deeper and more peculiar hues of our Lord’s character were brought out, these, though they should be lightly passed over by all the other Evangelists, are sure to be found here, and in touches of such quiet delicacy and power, that though scarce observed by the cursory reader, they leave indelible impressions upon all the thoughtful and furnish a key to much that is in the other Gospels. These few opening words of the Second Gospel are enough to show, that though it was the purpose of this Evangelist to record chiefly the outward and palpable facts of our Lord’s public life, he recognized in Him, in common with the Fourth Evangelist, the glory of the Only-begotten of the Father.

2, 3. As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee — (◀BOOK Malachi 3:1 ◀BOOK Isaiah 40:3).

3. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight — The second of these quotations is given by Matthew and Luke in the same connection, but they reserve the former quotation till they have occasion to return to the Baptist, after his imprisonment (◀BOOK Matthew 11:10 ◀BOOK Luke 7:27). (Instead of the words, “as

it is written in the Prophets,” there is weighty evidence in favor of the following reading: “As it is written in Isaiah the prophet.” This reading is adopted by all the latest critical editors. If it be the true one, it is to be explained thus — that of the two quotations, the one from Malachi is but a later development of the great primary one in Isaiah, from which the whole prophetic matter here quoted takes its name. But the received text is quoted by IRENÆUS, before the end of the second century, and the evidence in its favor is greater in *amount*, if not in weight. The chief objection to it is, that if this was the true reading, it is difficult to see how the other one could have got in at all; whereas, if it be not the true reading, it is very easy to see how it found its way into the text, as it removes the startling difficulty of a prophecy beginning with the words of Malachi being ascribed to Isaiah). For the exposition, see on ^{<100>}Matthew 3:1-6,11; ^{<101>}Matthew 3:11.

^{<100>}MARK 1:9-11.

BAPTISM OF CHRIST AND DESCENT OF THE SPIRIT UPON HIM IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER. (^{<103>}MATTHEW 3:13-17 ^{<102>}LUKE 3:21,22).

See on ^{<103>}Matthew 3:13-17.

^{<102>}MARK 1:12,13.

TEMPTATION OF CHRIST. (^{<105>}MATTHEW 4:1-11 ^{<104>}LUKE 4:1-13).

See on ^{<105>}Matthew 4:1-11.

^{<104>}MARK 1:14-20.

CHRIST BEGINS HIS GALILEAN MINISTRY — CALLING OF SIMON AND ANDREW, JAMES AND JOHN.

See on ^{<102>}Matthew 4:12-22.

◀102▶ MARK 1:21-39.

HEALING OF A DEMONIAK IN THE SYNAGOGUE OF CAPERNAUM AND THEREAFTER OF SIMON'S MOTHER-IN-LAW AND MANY OTHERS — JESUS, NEXT DAY, IS FOUND IN A SOLITARY PLACE AT MORNING PRAYERS, AND IS ENTREATED TO RETURN, BUT DECLINES, AND GOES FORTH ON HIS FIRST MISSIONARY CIRCUIT.

(◀106▶ LUKE 4:31-44 ◀108▶ MATTHEW 8:14-17 4:23-25).

21. And they went into Capernaum — (See on ▶1043 Matthew 4:13).

and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught — This should have been rendered, “straightway on the sabbaths He entered into the synagogue and taught,” or “continued to teach.” The meaning is, that as He began this practice on the very first sabbath after coming to settle at Capernaum, so He continued it regularly thereafter.

22. And they were astonished at his doctrine — or “teaching” — referring quite as much to the manner as the matter of it.

for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes — See on ▶1023 Matthew 7:28,29.

23. And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit — literally, “in an unclean spirit” — that is, so entirely under demoniacal power that his personality was sunk for the time in that of the spirit. The frequency with which this character of “impurity” is ascribed to evil spirits — some twenty times in the Gospels — is not to be overlooked.

and he cried out — as follows:

24. Saying, Let us alone — or rather, perhaps, “ah!” expressive of mingled *astonishment* and *terror*.

what have we to do with thee — an expression of frequent occurrence in the Old Testament (◀11781 1 Kings 17:18 ▶12012 2 Kings 3:13 ▶145212 2 Chronicles 35:21, etc.). It denotes *entire separation of interests*: — that is, “Thou and we have nothing in common; we want not Thee; what wouldst Thou with us?” For the analogous application of it by our Lord to His mother, see on ▶11015 John 2:4.

thou Jesus of Nazareth — “Jesus, Nazarene!” an epithet originally given to express contempt, but soon adopted as the current designation by those who held our Lord in honor (^{<4087>}Luke 18:37 ^{<4166>}Mark 16:6 ^{<4122>}Acts 2:22).

art thou come to destroy us? — In the case of the Gadarene demoniac the question was, “Art Thou come hither to torment us before the time?” (^{<4089>}Matthew 8:29). Themselves tormentors and destroyers of their victims, they discern in Jesus their own destined tormentor and destroyer, anticipating and dreading what they know and feel to be awaiting them! Conscious, too, that their power was but permitted and temporary, and perceiving in Him, perhaps, the woman’s Seed that was to bruise the head and destroy the works of the devil, they regard His approach to them on this occasion as a signal to let go their grasp of this miserable victim.

I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God — This and other even more glorious testimonies to our Lord were given, as we know, with no good will, but in hope that, by the acceptance of them, He might appear to the people to be in league with evil spirits — a calumny which His enemies were ready enough to throw out against Him. But a Wiser than either was here, who invariably rejected and silenced the testimonies that came to Him from beneath, and thus was able to rebut the imputations of His enemies against Him (^{<4124>}Matthew 12:24-30). The expression, “Holy One of God,” seems evidently taken from that Messianic Psalm (^{<3910>}Psalms 16:10), in which He is styled “Thine Holy One.”

25. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him — A glorious word of command. BENJEL remarks that it was only the testimony borne to Himself which our Lord meant to silence. That he should afterwards cry out for fear or rage (^{<4126>}Mark 1:26) He would right willingly permit.

26. And when the unclean spirit had torn him — Luke (^{<4085>}Luke 4:35) says, “When he had thrown him in the midst.” Malignant cruelty — just showing what he *would* have done, if permitted to go farther: it was a last fling!

and cried with a loud voice — the voice of enforced submission and despair.

he came out of him — Luke (^{<4085>}Luke 4:35) adds, “and hurt him not.” Thus impotent were the malignity and rage of the impure spirit when under the restraint of “the Stronger than the strong one armed” (^{<4121>}Luke 11:21,22).

27. What thing is this? what new doctrine — teaching

is this? — The audience, rightly apprehending that the miracle was wrought to illustrate the teaching and display the character and glory of the Teacher, begin by asking what novel kind of teaching this could be, which was so marvellously attested.

28. And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee — rather, “the whole region of Galilee”; though some, as MEYER and ELLICOTT, explain it of the country surrounding Galilee.

29. And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue — so also in ⁴⁰⁸⁸Luke 4:38.

they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John — The mention of these four — which is peculiar to Mark — is the first of those traces of Peter’s hand in this Gospel, of which we shall find many more. The house being his, and the illness and cure so nearly affecting himself, it is interesting to observe this minute specification of the number and names of the witnesses; interesting also — as the first occasion on which the sacred triumvirate of Peter and James and John are selected from among the rest, to be a threefold cord of testimony to certain events in their Lord’s life (see on ⁴¹⁵⁷Mark 5:37) — Andrew being present on this occasion, as the occurrence took place in his own house.

30. But Simon’s wife’s mother lay sick of a fever — Luke, as was natural in “the beloved *physician*” (⁵⁰⁴⁴Colossians 4:14), describes it professionally; calling it a “great fever,” and thus distinguishing it from that lighter kind which the Greek physicians were wont to call “small fevers,” as GALEN, quoted by WETSTEIN, tells us.

and anon — immediately.

they tell him of her — naturally hoping that His compassion and power towards one of His own disciples would not be less signally displayed than towards the demonized stranger in the synagogue.

31. And he came and took her by the hand — rather, “And advancing, He took her,” etc. The beloved physician again is very specific: “And He stood over her.”

and lifted her up — This act of condescension, most felt doubtless by Peter, is recorded only by Mark.

and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them — preparing their sabbath-meal: in token both of the perfectness and immediateness of the cure, and of her gratitude to the glorious Healer.

32. And at even, when the sun did set — so ^{<4086>}Matthew 8:16. Luke (^{<4049>}Luke 4:40) says it was setting.

they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils — the demonized. From ^{<4034>}Luke 13:14 we see how unlawful they would have deemed it to bring their sick to Jesus for a cure during the sabbath hours. They waited, therefore, till these were over, and then brought them in crowds. Our Lord afterwards took repeated occasion to teach the people by example, even at the risk of His own life, how superstitious a straining of the sabbath rest this was.

33. And all the city was gathered together at the door — of Peter's house; that is, the sick and those who brought them, and the wondering spectators. This bespeaks the presence of an eye-witness, and is one of those lively examples of word-painting so frequent in this Gospel.

34. And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils — In ^{<4086>}Matthew 8:16 it is said, "He cast out the spirits with His word"; or rather, "with a word" — a word of command.

and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him — Evidently they would have spoken, if permitted, proclaiming His Messiahship in such terms as in the synagogue; but once in one day, and that testimony immediately silenced, was enough. See on ^{<4024>}Mark 1:24. After this account of His miracles of healing, we have in ^{<4087>}Matthew 8:17 this pregnant quotation, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying (^{<2504>}Isaiah 53:4), Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."

35. And in the morning — that is, of the day after this remarkable sabbath; or, *on the first day of the week*. His choosing this day to inaugurate a new and glorious stage of His public work, should be noted by the reader.

rising up a great while before day — "while it was yet night," or long before daybreak.

he went out — all unperceived from Peter's house, where He slept.

and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed — or, "continued in prayer." He was about to begin His first preaching and healing circuit; and as on similar solemn occasions (^{<4156>}Luke 5:16 6:12 9:18,28,29 ^{<4069>}Mark 6:46), He spent some time in special prayer, doubtless with a view to it. What would one not give to have been, during the stillness of those grey morning hours, within hearing — not of His "strong crying and tears," for He had scarce arrived at the stage for that — but of His calm, exalted anticipations of the work which lay immediately before Him, and the

outpourings of His soul about it into the bosom of Him that sent Him! He had doubtless enjoyed some uninterrupted hours of such communings with His heavenly Father ere His friends from Capernaum arrived in search of Him. As for them, they doubtless expected, after such a day of miracles, that the next day would witness similar manifestations. When morning came, Peter, loath to break in upon the repose of his glorious Guest, would await His appearance beyond the usual hour; but at length, wondering at the stillness, and gently coming to see where the Lord lay, he finds it — like the sepulcher afterwards — empty! Speedily a party is made up to go in search of Him, Peter naturally leading the way.

36. And Simon and they that were with him followed after him — rather, “pressed after Him.” Luke (^{<Q44E>}Luke 4:42) says, “The multitudes sought after Him”; but this would be a party from the town. Mark, having his information from Peter himself, speaks only of what related directly to him. “They that were with him” would probably be Andrew his brother, James and John, with a few other choice brethren.

37. And when they had found him — evidently after some search.

they said unto him, All men seek for thee — By this time, “the multitudes” who, according to Luke (^{<Q44E>}Luke 4:42), “sought after Him” — and who, on going to Peter’s house, and there learning that Peter and a few more were gone in search of Him, had set out on the same errand — would have arrived, and “came unto Him and stayed Him, that He should not depart from them” (^{<Q44E>}Luke 4:42); all now urging His return to their impatient townsmen.

38. And he said unto them, Let us go — or, according to another reading, “Let us go elsewhere.”

into the next towns — rather, “unto the neighboring village-towns”; meaning those places intermediate between towns and villages, with which the western side of the Sea of Galilee was studded.

that I may preach there also; for therefore came I forth — not from Capernaum, AS DE WETTE miserably interprets, nor from His privacy in the desert place, as MEYER, no better; but from the Father. Compare ^{<S163>}John 16:28, “I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world,” etc. — another proof, by the way, that the lofty phraseology of the Fourth Gospel was not unknown to the authors of the others, though their design and point of view are different. The language in which our Lord’s reply is given by Luke (^{<Q44E>}Luke 4:43) expresses the high necessity under which, in this as in every other step of His work, He acted — “I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also; for therefore” — or, “to this

end” — “am I sent.” An act of self-denial it doubtless was, to resist such pleadings to return to Capernaum. But there were overmastering considerations on the other side.

◀114▶ **MARK 1:40-45.**

HEALING OF A LEPER. (◀115▶ **MATTHEW 8:1-4** ▶116▶ **LUKE 5:12-16**).

See on ▶115▶ **Matthew 8:1-4.**

CHAPTER 2

MARK 2:1-12.

HEALING OF A PARALYTIC.

(MATTHEW 9:1-8 LUKE 5:17-26).

This incident, as remarked on Matthew 9:1, appears to follow next in order of time after the cure of the leper (Mark 1:40-45).

1. And again he entered into Capernaum — “His own city” (Matthew 9:1).

and it was noised that he was in the house — no doubt of Simon Peter (Mark 1:29).

2. And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door — This is one of Mark’s graphic touches. No doubt in this case, as the scene occurred at his informant’s own door, these details are the vivid recollections of that honored disciple.

and he preached the word unto them — that is, indoors; but in the hearing, doubtless, of the multitude that pressed around. Had He gone forth, as He naturally would, the paralytic’s faith would have had no such opportunity to display itself. Luke (Luke 5:17) furnishes an additional and very important incident in the scene — as follows: “And it came to pass on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town,” or village, “of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem.” This was the highest testimony yet borne to our Lord’s growing influence, and the necessity increasingly felt by the ecclesiastics throughout the country of coming to some definite judgment regarding Him. “And the power of the Lord was [present] to heal them” — or, “was [efficacious] to heal them,” that is, the sick that were brought before Him. So that the miracle that is now to be described was among the most glorious and worthy to be recorded of many then performed; and what made it so was doubtless the faith which was manifested in connection with it, and the proclamation of the forgiveness of the patient’s sins that immediately preceded it.

3. And they come unto him — that is, towards the house where He was.

bringing one sick of the palsy — “lying on a bed” (^{<40B>}Matthew 9:2).

which was borne of four — a graphic particular of Mark only.

4. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press — or, as in Luke (^{<40B>}Luke 5:19), “when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude,” they “went upon the housetop” — the flat or terrace-roof, universal in Eastern houses.

they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed — or portable couch

wherein the sick of the palsy lay — Luke (^{<40B>}Luke 5:19) says, they “let him down through the tilling with his couch into the midst before Jesus.” Their whole object was to *bring the patient into the presence of Jesus*; and this not being possible in the ordinary way, because of the multitude that surrounded Him, they took the very unusual method here described of accomplishing their object, and succeeded. Several explanations have been given of the way in which this was done; but unless we knew the precise plan of the house, and the part of it from which Jesus taught — which may have been a quadrangle or open court, within the buildings of which Peter’s house was one, or a gallery covered by a veranda — it is impossible to determine precisely how the thing was done. One thing, however, is clear, that we have both the accounts from an eye-witness.

5. When Jesus saw their faith — It is remarkable that all the three narratives call it “*their* faith” which Jesus saw. That the patient himself had faith, we know from the proclamation of his forgiveness, which Jesus made before all; and we should have been apt to conclude that his four friends bore him to Jesus merely out of benevolent compliance with the urgent entreaties of the poor sufferer. But here we learn, not only that his bearers had the same faith with himself, but that Jesus marked it as a faith which was not to be defeated — a faith victorious over all difficulties. This was the faith for which He was ever on the watch, and which He never saw without marking, and, in those who needed anything from Him, richly rewarding.

he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son — “be of good cheer” (^{<40B>}Matthew 9:2).

thy sins be forgiven thee — By the word “be,” our translators perhaps meant “are,” as in Luke (^{<40B>}Luke 5:20). For it is not a command to his sins to depart, but an authoritative proclamation of the man’s pardoned state as a believer. And yet, as the Pharisees understood our Lord to be *dispensing* pardon by this saying, and Jesus not only acknowledges that they were

right, but founds His whole argument upon the correctness of it, we must regard the saying as a royal proclamation of the man's forgiveness by Him to whom it belonged to dispense it; nor could such a style of address be justified on any lower supposition. (See on ^{<4171>}Luke 7:41, etc.).

6. But there were certain of the scribes — “and the Pharisees” (^{<4171>}Luke 5:21)

sitting there — those Jewish ecclesiastics who, as Luke told us (^{<4171>}Luke 5:17), “were come out of every village of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem,” to make their observations upon this wonderful Person, in anything but a teachable spirit, though as yet their venomous and murderous feeling had not showed itself.

and reasoning in their hearts.

7. Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? — In this second question they expressed a great truth. (See ^{<3425>}Isaiah 43:25 ^{<3718>}Micah 7:18 ^{<3346>}Exodus 34:6,7, etc.). Nor was their first question altogether unnatural, though in our Lord's sole case it was unfounded. That a man, to all appearances like one of themselves, should claim authority and power to forgive sins, they could not, on the first blush of it, but regard as in the last degree startling; nor were they entitled even to weigh such a claim, as worthy of a hearing, save on supposition of resistless evidence afforded by Him in support of the claim. Accordingly, our Lord deals with them as men entitled to such evidence, and supplies it; at the same time chiding them for rashness, in drawing harsh conclusions regarding Himself.

8. Why reason ye these things in your hearts — or, as in Matthew, (^{<4194>}Matthew 9:4) “Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?”

9. Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee — or “are forgiven thee”;

or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed and walk? — “Is it easier to command away disease than to bid away sin? If, then, I do the one which you can see, know thus that I have done the other, which you cannot see.”

10. But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins — that forgiving power dwells in the Person of this Man, and is exercised by Him while on this earth and going out and in with you.

(he saith to the sick of the palsy),

11. I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house — This taking up the portable couch, and walking home with it, was designed to prove the completeness of the cure.

12. And immediately he arose, took up the bed — “Sweet saying!” says BENGEL: “The bed had borne the man: now the man bore the bed.”

and went forth before them all — proclaiming by that act to the multitude, whose wondering eyes would follow him as he pressed through them, that He who could work such a glorious miracle of healing, must indeed “have power on earth to forgive sins.”

We never saw it on this fashion — “never saw it thus,” or, as we say, “never saw the like.” In Luke (^{<4133>}Luke 5:26) it is, “We have seen strange [unexpected] things to-day” — referring both to the miracles wrought and the forgiveness of sins pronounced by Human Lips. In Matthew (^{<4098>}Matthew 9:8) it is, “They marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.” At forgiving power they wondered not, but that a man, to all appearance like one of themselves, should possess it!

^{<4123>}MARK 2:13-17.

LEVI'S (OR MATTHEW'S) CALL AND FEAST.

(^{<4099>}MATTHEW 9:9-13 ^{<4172>}LUKE 5:27-32).

See on ^{<4099>}Matthew 9:9-13.

^{<4123>}MARK 2:18-22.

DISCOURSE ON FASTING.

(^{<4094>}MATTHEW 9:14-17 ^{<4133>}LUKE 5:33-39).

See on ^{<4133>}Luke 5:33-39.

^{<4123>}MARK 2:23-28.

PLUCKING CORN-EARS ON THE SABBATH DAY.

(^{<4121>}MATTHEW 12:1-8 ^{<4133>}LUKE 6:1-5).

See on ^{<4121>}Matthew 12:1-8.

CHAPTER 3

<400> MARK 3:1-12.

THE HEALING OF A WITHERED HAND ON THE SABBATH DAY, AND RETIREMENT OF JESUS TO AVOID DANGER.

(<4129> MATTHEW 12:9-21 <4166> LUKE 6:6-11).

See on <4119> Matthew 12:9-21.

<4183> MARK 3:13-19.

THE TWELVE APOSTLES CHOSEN.

See on <4162> Luke 6:12-19.

<4183> MARK 3:20-30.

JESUS IS CHARGED WITH MADNESS AND DEMONICAL POSSESSION — HIS REPLY.

(<4122> MATTHEW 12:22-37 <4114> LUKE 11:14-26).

See on <4122> Matthew 12:22-37; <4121> Luke 11:21-26.

<4183> MARK 3:31-35.

HIS MOTHER AND BRETHREN SEEK TO SPEAK WITH HIM AND THE REPLY. (<4126> MATTHEW 12:46-50 <4189> LUKE 8:19-21).

See on <4126> Matthew 12:46-50.

CHAPTER 4

MARK 4:1-34.

PARABLE OF THE SOWER — REASON FOR TEACHING IN PARABLES — PARABLES OF THE SEED GROWING WE KNOW NOT HOW, AND OF THE MUSTARD SEED.

(^{<400>}MATTHEW 13:1-23,31,32 ^{<400>}LUKE 8:4-18).

1. And he began again to teach by the seaside: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude — or, according to another well-supported reading, “a mighty” or “immense multitude.”

so that he entered into a ship — rather, “the ship,” meaning the one mentioned in ^{<400>}Mark 3:9. (See on ^{<400>}Matthew 12:15).

and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land — crowded on the seashore to listen to Him. (See on ^{<400>}Matthew 13:1,2.)

2. And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine — or “teaching.”

Parable of the Sower (^{<400>}Mark 4:3-9,13-20).

MARK 4:3,14.

THE SOWER, THE SEED, AND THE SOIL.

3. Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow — What means this? See on ^{<400>}Mark 4:14.

First Case: THE WAYSIDE (^{<400>}Mark 4:4,15).

4. And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the wayside — by the side of the hard path through the field, where the soil was not broken up.

and the fowls *of the air* came and devoured it up — Not only could the seed not get beneath the surface, but “it was trodden down” (^{<400>}Luke 8:5), and afterwards picked up and devoured by the fowls. What means this? See on ^{<400>}Mark 4:15.

Second Case: THE STONY or rather, ROCKY GROUND. (^{<4015>}Mark 4:5,16).

5. And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth — “the rocky ground”; in Matthew (^{<4035>}Matthew 13:5), “the rocky places”; in Luke (^{<4016>}Luke 8:6), “the rock.” The thing intended is, not ground with stones in it which would not prevent the roots striking downward, but ground where a quite thin surface of earth covers a rock. What means this? See on ^{<4016>}Mark 4:16.

Third Case: THE THORNY GROUND. (^{<4007>}Mark 4:7,18,19).

7. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit — This case is that of ground not thoroughly cleaned of the thistles, etc.; which, rising above the good seed, “choke” or “smother” it, excluding light and air, and drawing away the moisture and richness of the soil. Hence it “becomes unfruitful” (^{<4032>}Matthew 13:22); it grows, but its growth is checked, and it never ripens. The evil here is neither a hard nor a shallow soil — there is *softness* enough, and *depth* enough; but it is the existence in it of what draws all the moisture and richness of the soil away to itself, and so *starves the plant*. What now are these “thorns?” See on ^{<4019>}Mark 4:19.

Fourth Case: THE GOOD GROUND. (^{<4008>}Mark 4:8,20).

8. And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit, etc. — The goodness of this last soil consists in its qualities being precisely the reverse of the other three soils: from its softness and tenderness, receiving and cherishing the seed; from its depth, allowing it to take firm root, and not quickly losing its moisture; and from its cleanness, giving its whole vigor and sap to the plant. In such a soil the seed “brings forth fruit,” in all different degrees of profusion, according to the measure in which the soil possesses those qualities. See on ^{<4020>}Mark 4:20.

9. And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

After this parable is recorded the Evangelist says:

10. And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve — probably those who followed Him most closely and were firmest in discipleship, next to the Twelve.

asked of him the parable — The reply would seem to intimate that this parable of the sower was of that fundamental, comprehensive, and introductory character which we have assigned to it (see on ^{<4013>}Matthew 13:1).

Reason for Teaching in Parables (^{<4041>}Mark 4:11,12,21-25).

11, 12. And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them, etc. — See on ^{<4039>}Matthew 13:10-17.

13. Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables? — Probably this was said not so much in the spirit of rebuke, as to call their attention to the exposition of it which He was about to give, and so train them to the right apprehension of His future parables. As in the parables which we have endeavored to explain in ^{<4039>}Matthew 13:1-58, we shall take this parable and the Lord's own exposition of the different parts of it together.

14. The sower soweth the word — or, as in Luke (^{<4081>}Luke 8:11), “Now the parable is this: The seed is the *word of God*.” But who is “the sower?” This is not expressed here because if “the word of God” be the seed, every scatterer of that precious seed must be regarded as a sower. It is true that in the parable of the tares it is said, “He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man,” as “He that soweth the tares is the devil” (^{<4037>}Matthew 13:37,38). But these are only the great unseen parties, struggling in this world for the possession of man. Each of these has his agents among men themselves; and Christ's agents in the sowing of the good seed are the *preachers* of the word. Thus, as in all the cases about to be described, the sower is the same, and the seed is the same; while the result is entirely different, the whole difference must lie in the *soils*, which mean the *different states of the human heart*. And so, the great general lesson held forth in this parable of the sower is, that however faithful the preacher, and how pure soever his message, *the effect of the preaching of the word depends upon the state of the hearer's heart*. Now follow the cases. See on ^{<4046>}Mark 4:4.

15. And these are they by the wayside, where the word is sown; but, when they have heard, etc. — or, more fully (^{<4039>}Matthew 13:19), “When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart.” The great truth here taught is, that *hearts all unbroken and hard are no fit soil for saving truth*. They apprehend it not (^{<4039>}Matthew 13:19) as God's means of restoring them to Himself; it penetrates not, makes no impression, but lies loosely on the surface of the heart, till the wicked one — afraid of losing a victim by his “believing to salvation” (^{<4082>}Luke 8:12) — finds some frivolous subject by whose greater attractions to draw off the attention, and straightway it is gone. Of how many hearers of the word is this the graphic but painful history!

16. And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground, etc. — “Immediately” the seed in such a case “springs up” — all the quicker from the shallowness of the soil — “because it has no depth of earth.” But the sun, beating on it, as quickly scorches and withers it up, “because it has no root” (^{<4046>}Mark 4:6), and “lacks moisture” (^{<4086>}Luke 8:6). The great truth here taught is that *hearts superficially impressed are apt to receive the truth with readiness, and even with joy* (^{<4083>}Luke 8:13); *but the heat of tribulation or persecution because of the word, or the trials which their new profession brings upon them quickly dries up their relish for the truth, and withers all the hasty promise of fruit which they showed.* Such disappointing issues of a faithful and awakening ministry — alas, how frequent are they!

18. And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,

19. And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in — or “the pleasures of this life” (^{<4084>}Luke 8:14).

choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful — First, “The cares of this world” — anxious, unrelaxing attention to the business of this present life; second, “The deceitfulness of riches” — of those riches which are the fruit of this worldly “care”; third, “The pleasures of this life,” or “the lusts of other things entering in” — the enjoyments in themselves may be innocent, which worldly prosperity enables one to indulge. These “choke” or “smother” the word; drawing off so much of one’s attention, absorbing so much of one’s interest, and using up so much of one’s time, that only the dregs of these remain for spiritual things, and a ragged, hurried, and heartless formalism is at length all the religion of such persons. What a vivid picture is this of the mournful condition of many, especially in great commercial countries, who once promised much fruit! “They bring no fruit to perfection” (^{<4084>}Luke 8:14); indicating how much *growth* there may be, in the early stages of such a case, and *promise* of fruit — which after all never *ripens*.

20. And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred — A heart soft and tender, stirred to its depths on the great things of eternity, and jealously guarded from worldly engrossments, such only is the “honest and good heart” (^{<4085>}Luke 8:15), which “keeps,” that is, “retains” the seed of the word, and bears fruit just in proportion as it is such a heart. Such “bring forth fruit with *patience*” (^{<4085>}Mark 4:15), or continuance, “enduring to the end”; in contrast with those in whom the word is “choked” and brings no fruit to *perfection*. The

“thirtyfold” is designed to express the *lowest* degree of fruitfulness; the “hundredfold” the *highest*; and the “sixtyfold” the *intermediate* degrees of fruitfulness. As a “hundredfold,” though not unexampled (^{<032>}Genesis 26:12), is a rare return in the natural husbandry, so the highest degrees of spiritual fruitfulness are too seldom witnessed. The closing words of this introductory parable seem designed to call attention to the *fundamental* and *universal* character of it.

21. And he said unto them, Is a candle — or “lamp”

brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick? — “that they which enter in may see the light” (^{<086>}Luke 8:16). See on ^{<055>}Matthew 5:15, of which this is nearly a repetition.

22. For there is nothing hid which shall not be manifested, etc. — See on ^{<026>}Matthew 10:26,27; but the connection there and here is slightly different. Here the idea seems to be this — “I have privately expounded to you these great truths, but only that ye may proclaim them publicly; and if ye will not, others will. For these are not designed for secrecy. They are imparted to be diffused abroad, and they shall be so; yea, a time is coming when the most hidden things shall be brought to light.”

23. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear — This for the second time on the same subject (see on ^{<009>}Mark 4:9).

24. And he saith unto them, Take heed what ye hear — In Luke (^{<088>}Luke 8:18) it is, “Take heed how ye hear.” The one implies the other, but both precepts are very weighty.

with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you — See on ^{<002>}Matthew 7:2.

and unto you that hear — that is, thankfully, teachably, profitably.

shall more be given.

25. For he that hath, to him shall be given; and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath — or “seemeth to have,” or “thinketh he hath.” (See on ^{<032>}Matthew 13:12). This “having” and “thinking he hath” are not different; for when it hangs loosely upon him, and is not appropriated to its proper ends and uses, it both is and is not his.

Parable of the Seed Growing We Know not How (^{<026>}Mark 4:26-29).

This beautiful parable is peculiar to Mark. Its design is to teach the *Imperceptible Growth* of the word sown in the heart, from its earliest stage of development to the ripest fruits of practical righteousness.

26, 27. So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day — go about his other ordinary occupations, leaving it to the well-known laws of vegetation under the genial influences of heaven. This is the sense of “the earth bringing forth fruit of herself,” in ^{<4027>}Mark 4:27.

28. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear — beautiful allusion to the succession of similar stages, though not definitely marked periods, in the Christian life, and generally in the kingdom of God.

29. But when the fruit is brought forth — to maturity

immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come — This charmingly points to the transition from the earthly to the heavenly condition of the Christian and the Church.

Parable of the Mustard Seed (^{<4030>}Mark 4:30-32).

For the exposition of this portion, see on ^{<4031>}Matthew 13:31,32.

33. And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it — Had this been said in the corresponding passage of Matthew, we should have concluded that what that Evangelist recorded was but a specimen of other parables spoken on the same occasion. But Matthew (^{<4034>}Matthew 13:34) says, “All *these* things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables”; and as Mark records only some of the parables which Matthew gives, we are warranted to infer that the “many such parables” alluded to here mean no more than the full complement of them which we find in Matthew.

34. But without a parable spake he not unto them — See on ^{<4035>}Matthew 13:34.

and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples — See on ^{<4022>}Mark 4:22.

MARK 4:35-5:20.

JESUS CROSSING THE SEA OF GALILEE, MIRACULOUSLY STILLS A TEMPEST — HE CURES THE DEMONIAK OF GADARA. (MATTHEW 8:23-34 LUKE 8:22-39).

The time of this section is very definitely marked by our Evangelist, and by him alone, in the opening words.

Jesus Stills a Tempest on the Sea of Galilee (Mark 4:35-41).

35. And the same day — on which He spoke the memorable parables of the preceding section, and of the thirteenth chapter.

when the even was come — (See on Mark 6:35). This must have been the earlier evening — what we should call the afternoon — since after all that passed on the other side, when He returned to the west side, the people were waiting for Him in great numbers (Mark 4:21 Luke 8:40).

he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side — to the east side of the lake, to grapple with a desperate case of possession, and set the captive free, and to give the Gadarenes an opportunity of hearing the message of salvation, amid the wonder which that marvellous cure was fitted to awaken and the awe which the subsequent events could not but strike into them.

36. And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship — that is, without any preparation, and without so much as leaving the vessel, out of which He had been all day teaching.

And there were also with him other little ships — with passengers, probably, wishing to accompany Him.

37. And there arose a great storm of wind — “a tempest of wind.” To such sudden squalls the Sea of Galilee is very liable from its position, in a deep basin, skirted on the east by lofty mountain ranges, while on the west the hills are intersected by narrow gorges through which the wind sweeps across the lake, and raises its waters with great rapidity into a storm.

and the waves beat into the ship — kept beating or pitching on the ship.

so that it was now full — rather, “so that it was already filling.” In Matthew (Matthew 8:24), “insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves”; but this is too strong. It should be, “so that the ship was getting covered by the waves.” So we must translate the word used in Luke

(^{<483>}Luke 8:23) — not as in our version — “And there came down a storm on the lake, and they were filled [with water]” — but “they were getting filled,” that is, those who sailed; meaning, of course, that their ship was so.

38. And he was in the hinder part of the ship — or stern.

asleep on a pillow — either a place in the vessel made to receive the head, or a cushion for the head to rest on. It was evening; and after the fatigues of a busy day of teaching under the hot sun, having nothing to do while crossing the lake, He sinks into a deep sleep, which even this tempest raging around and tossing the little vessel did not disturb.

and they awake him, and say unto him, Master — or “Teacher.” In Luke (^{<483>}Luke 8:24) this is doubled — in token of their life-and-death earnestness — “Master, Master.”

carest thou not that we perish? — Unbelief and fear made them sadly forget their place, to speak so. Luke has it, “Lord, save us, we perish.” When those accustomed to fish upon that deep thus spake, the danger must have been imminent. They say nothing of what would become of *Him*, if they perished; nor think, whether, if He could not perish, it was likely He would let this happen to them; but they hardly knew what they said.

39. And he arose, and rebuked the wind — “and the raging of the water” (^{<483>}Luke 8:24).

and said unto the sea, Peace, be still — two sublime words of command, from a Master to His servants, the elements.

And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm — The sudden hushing of the wind would not at once have calmed the sea, whose commotion would have settled only after a considerable time. But the word of command was given to both elements at once.

40. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? — There is a natural apprehension under danger; but there was unbelief in their fear. It is worthy of notice how considerately the Lord defers this rebuke till He had first removed the danger, in the midst of which they would not have been in a state to listen to anything.

how is it that ye have no faith? — next to none, or none in present exercise. In Matthew (^{<483>}Matthew 8:26) it is, “Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?” *Faith* they had, for they applied to Christ for relief: but *little*, for they were afraid, though Christ was in the ship. Faith dispels fear, but only in proportion to its strength.

41. And they feared exceedingly — were struck with deep awe.

and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him? — “What is this?” Israel has all along been singing of JEHOVAH, “Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, Thou stillest them!” “The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea!” (³⁹⁹Psalm 89:9 93:4). But, lo, in this very boat of ours is One of our own flesh and blood, who with His word of command hath done the same! Exhausted with the fatigues of the day, He was but a moment ago in a deep sleep, undisturbed by the howling tempest, and we had to waken Him with the cry of our terror; but rising at our call, His majesty was felt by the raging elements, for they were instantly hushed — “WHAT MANNER OF MAN IS THIS?”

CHAPTER 5

Glorious Cure of the Gadarene Demoniac (^{<401E>}Mark 5:1-20).

1. And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.

2. And when he was come out of the ship, immediately — (see ^{<401E>}Mark 5:6).

there met him a man with an unclean spirit — “which had devils [demons] long time” (^{<4027>}Luke 8:27). In Matthew (^{<4028>}Matthew 8:28), “there met him two men possessed with devils.” Though there be no discrepancy between these two statements — more than between two witnesses, one of whom testifies to something done by one person, while the other affirms that there were two — it is difficult to see how the principal details here given could apply to more than one case.

3. Who had his dwelling among the tombs — Luke (^{<4027>}Luke 8:27) says, “He ware no clothes, neither abode in any house.” These tombs were hewn out of the rocky caves of the locality, and served for shelters and lurking places (^{<4026>}Luke 8:26).

4. Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, etc. — Luke says (^{<4029>}Luke 8:29) that “oftentimes it [the unclean spirit] had caught him”; and after mentioning how they had vainly tried to bind him with chains and fetters, because, “he brake the bands,” he adds, “and was driven of the devil [demon] into the wilderness.” The dark tyrant — power by which he was held clothed him with superhuman strength and made him scorn restraint. Matthew (^{<4028>}Matthew 8:28) says he was “exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way.” He was the terror of the whole locality.

5. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones — Terrible as he was to others, he himself endured untold misery, which sought relief in tears and self-inflicted torture.

6. But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him — not with the spontaneous alacrity which says to Jesus, “Draw me, we will *run* after thee,” but inwardly compelled, with terrific rapidity, before the Judge, to receive sentence of expulsion.

7. What have I to do with thee, Jesus, Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not — or, as in ^{<4189>}Matthew 8:29, “Art Thou come to torment us before the time?” (See on ^{<4124>}Mark 1:24). Behold the *tormentor* anticipating, dreading, and entreating exemption from *torment!* In Christ they discern their destined Tormentor; the time, they know, is fixed, and they feel as if it were come already! (^{<3129>}James 2:19).

8. For he said unto him — that is, before the unclean spirit cried out.

Come out of the man, unclean spirit! — Ordinarily, obedience to a command of this nature was immediate. But here, a certain delay is permitted, the more signally to manifest the power of Christ and accomplish His purposes.

9. And he asked him, What is thy name? — The object of this question was to extort an acknowledgment of the virulence of demoniacal power by which this victim was enthralled.

And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many — or, as in Luke (^{<4130>}Luke 8:30) “because many devils [demons] were entered into him.” A legion, in the Roman army, amounted, at its full complement, to six thousand; but here the word is used, as such words with us, and even this one, for an indefinitely large number — large enough however to rush, as soon as permission was given, into two thousand swine and destroy them.

10. And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country — The entreaty, it will be observed, was made by *one spirit*, but in behalf of *many* — “*he* besought Him not to send *them*, etc.” — just as in ^{<4139>}Mark 5:9, “*he* answered *we* are many.” But what do they mean by entreating so earnestly not to be ordered out of the country? Their next petition (^{<4152>}Mark 5:12) will make that clear enough.

11. Now there was there, nigh unto the mountains — rather, “to the mountain,” according to what is clearly the true reading. In ^{<4130>}Matthew 8:30, they are said to have been “a good way off.” But these expressions, far from being inconsistent, only confirm, by their precision, the minute accuracy of the narrative.

a great herd of swine feeding — There can hardly be any doubt that the owners of these were Jews, since to them our Lord had now come to proffer His services. This will explain what follows.

12. And all the devils besought him, saying — “if thou cast us out” (^{<4131>}Matthew 8:31).

Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them — Had they spoken out all their mind, perhaps this would have been it: “If we must quit our hold of this man, suffer us to continue our work of mischief in another form, that by entering these swine, and thus destroying the people’s property, we may steel their hearts against Thee!”

13. And forthwith Jesus gave them leave — In Matthew (⁴⁰⁸²Matthew 8:32) this is given with majestic brevity — “Go!” The owners, if Jews, drove an illegal trade; if heathens, they insulted the national religion: in either case the permission was just.

And the unclean spirits went out — of the man.

and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently — rushed.

down a steep place — down the hanging cliff.

into the sea (they were about two thousand) — The number of them is given by this graphic Evangelist alone. and were choked in the sea — “perished in the waters” (⁴⁰⁸³Matthew 8:32).

14. And they that fed the swine fled, and told it — “told everything, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils” (⁴⁰⁸⁵Matthew 8:33).

in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done — Thus had they the evidence, both of the herdsmen and of their own senses, to the reality of both miracles.

15. And they come to Jesus — Matthew (⁴⁰⁸⁸Matthew 8:34) says, “Behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus.”

and see him that was possessed with the devil — the demonized person.

and had the legion, sitting — “at the feet of Jesus,” adds Luke (⁴⁰⁸⁹Luke 8:35); in contrast with his former *wild* and *wandering* habits.

and clothed — As our Evangelist had not told us that he “ware no clothes,” the meaning of this statement could only have been conjectured but for “the beloved physician” (⁴⁰⁹²Luke 8:27), who supplies the missing piece of information here. This is a striking case of what are called *Undesigned Coincidences* amongst the different Evangelists; one of them taking a thing for granted, as familiarly known at the time, but which we should never have known but for one or more of the others, and without the knowledge of which some of their statements would be unintelligible. The clothing which the poor man would feel the want of the moment his consciousness returned to him, was doubtless supplied to him by some of the Twelve.

and in his right mind — but now, oh, in what a lofty sense! (Compare an analogous, though a different kind of case, ²⁰⁶⁸Daniel 4:34-37).

and they were afraid — Had this been awe only, it had been natural enough; but other feelings, alas! of a darker kind, soon showed themselves.

16. And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil — (“the demonized person”).

and also concerning the swine — Thus had they the double testimony of the herdsmen and their own senses.

17. And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts — Was it the owners only of the valuable property now lost to them that did this? Alas, no! For Luke (⁴⁰⁸⁷Luke 8:37) says, “Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought Him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear.” The evil spirits had thus, alas! their object. Irritated, the people could not suffer His presence; yet awe-struck, they dared not order Him off: so they entreat Him to withdraw, and — He takes them at their word.

18. he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him — the grateful heart, fresh from the hand of demons, clinging to its wondrous Benefactor. How exquisitely natural!

19. Howbeit, Jesus suffered him not, etc. — To be a missionary for Christ, in the region where he was so well known and so long dreaded, was a far nobler calling than to follow Him where nobody had ever heard of him, and where other trophies not less illustrious could be raised by the same power and grace.

20. And he departed, and began to publish — not only among his friends, to whom Jesus immediately sent him, but

in Decapolis — so called, as being a region of ten cities. (See on ⁴¹⁰⁵Matthew 4:25).

how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel — Throughout that considerable region did this monument of mercy proclaim his new-found Lord; and some, it is to be hoped, did more than “marvel.”

MARK 5:21-43.

THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS RAISED TO LIFE — THE WOMAN WITH AN ISSUE OF BLOOD HEALED.

(MATTHEW 9:18-26 LUKE 8:41-56).

The occasion of this scene will appear presently.

Jairus' Daughter (Mark 5:21-24).

21. And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side — from the Gadarene side of the lake, where He had parted with the healed demoniac, to the west side, at Capernaum.

much people gathered unto him — who “gladly received Him; for they were all waiting for Him” (Luke 8:40). The abundant teaching earlier that day (Mark 4:1, etc., and Matthew 13:1-58) had only whetted the people’s appetite: and disappointed, as would seem, that He had left them in the evening to cross the lake, they remain hanging about the beach, having got a hint, probably through some of His disciples, that He would be back the same evening. Perhaps they witnessed at a distance the sudden calming of the tempest. The tide of our Lord’s popularity was now fast rising.

and he was nigh unto the sea.

22. And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue — of which class there were but few who believed in Jesus (John 7:48). One would suppose from this that the ruler had been with the multitude on the shore, anxiously awaiting the return of Jesus, and immediately on His arrival had accosted Him as here related. But Matthew (Matthew 9:18) tells us that the ruler came to Him while He was in the act of speaking at His own table on the subject of fasting; and as we must suppose that this converted publican ought to know what took place on that memorable occasion when he made a feast to his Lord, we conclude that here the right order is indicated by the First Evangelist alone.

Jairus by name — or “Jaeirus.” It is the same name as *Jair*, in the Old Testament (Numbers 32:41 Judges 10:3 Esther 2:5).

and when he saw him, he fell at his feet — in Matthew (Matthew 9:18), “worshipped Him.” The meaning is the same in both.

23. And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter — Luke (Luke 8:42) says, “He had one only daughter, about twelve years of age.” According to a well-known rabbin, quoted by LIGHTFOOT, a daughter.

till she had completed her twelfth year, was called “little,” or “a little maid”; after that, “a young woman.”

lieth at the point of death — Matthew (^{<4085>}Matthew 9:18) gives it thus: “My daughter is even now dead” — “has just expired.” The news of her death reached the father after the cure of the woman with the issue of blood: but Matthew’s brief account gives only the *result*, as in the case of the centurion’s servant (^{<4085>}Matthew 8:5, etc.).

come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live — or, “that she may be healed and live,” according to a fully preferable reading. In one of the class to which this man belonged, so steeped in prejudice, such faith would imply more than in others.

The Woman with an Issue of Blood Healed (^{<4082>}Mark 5:24-34).

24. And Jesus went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him — The word in Luke (^{<4082>}Luke 8:42) is stronger — “choked,” “stifled Him.”

26. And had suffered many things of many physicians — The expression perhaps does not necessarily refer to the suffering she endured under medical treatment, but to the much varied treatment which she underwent.

and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse — pitiable case, and affectingly aggravated; emblem of our natural state as fallen creatures (^{<2365>}Ezekiel 16:5,6), and illustrating the worse than vanity of all human remedies for spiritual maladies (^{<2813>}Hosea 5:13). The higher design of all our Lord’s miracles of healing irresistibly suggests this way of viewing the present case, the propriety of which will still more appear as we proceed.

27. When she had heard of Jesus, came — This was the right experiment at last. What had she “heard of Jesus?” No doubt it was His marvellous cures she had heard of; and the hearing of these, in connection with her bitter experience of the vanity of applying to any other, had been blessed to the kindling in her soul of a firm confidence that He who had so willingly wrought such cures on others was able and would not refuse to heal her also.

in the press behind — shrinking, yet seeking.

touched his garment — According to the ceremonial law, the touch of anyone having the disease which this woman had would have defiled the person touched. Some think that the recollection of this may account for her

stealthily approaching Him in the crowd behind, and touching but the hem of His garment. But there was an instinct in the faith which brought her to Jesus, which taught her, that if that touch could set her free from the defiling disease itself, it was impossible to communicate defilement to Him, and that this wondrous Healer must be above such laws.

28. For she said — “within herself” (^{<4022>}Matthew 9:21).

If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole — that is, if I may but *come in contact* with this glorious Healer *at all*. Remarkable faith this!

29. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up — Not only was her issue of blood stanchd (^{<4044>}Luke 8:44), but the cause of it was thoroughly removed, insomuch that by her bodily sensations she immediately knew herself perfectly cured.

30. And Jesus immediately knowing in himself that virtue — or “efficacy.”

had gone out of him — He was conscious of the forthgoing of His healing power, which was not — as in prophets and apostles — something *foreign to Himself* and imparted merely, but what He had *dwelling within Him* as “His own fullness.”

turned him about in the press — crowd.

and said, Who touched my clothes?

31. And his disciples said unto him — Luke says (^{<4045>}Luke 8:45), “When all denied, Peter and they that were with Him said, Master.”

Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? — “Askest thou, Lord, who touched Thee? Rather ask who touched Thee not in such a throng.” “And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched Me” — “a certain person has touched Me” — “for I perceive that virtue is gone out of Me” (^{<4046>}Luke 8:46). Yes, the multitude “*thronged and pressed Him*” — they *jostled against Him*, but all *involuntarily*; they were merely *carried along*; but one, one only — “a certain person — TOUCHED HIM,” with the conscious, voluntary, dependent touch of faith, reaching forth its hand expressly to have contact with Him. This and this only Jesus acknowledges and seeks out. Even so, as AUGUSTINE long ago said, *multitudes still come similarly close to Christ in the means of grace, but all to no purpose, being only sucked into the crowd*. The voluntary, living contact of faith is that electric conductor which alone draws virtue out of Him.

32. And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing — not for the purpose of summoning forth a culprit, but, as we shall presently see, to obtain from the healed one a testimony to what He had done for her.

33. But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her — alarmed, as a humble, shrinking female would naturally be, at the necessity of so public an exposure of herself, yet conscious that she had a tale to tell which would speak for her.

came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth — In Luke (^{<4087>}Luke 8:47) it is, “When the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before Him, she declared unto Him before all the people for what cause she had touched Him, and how she was healed immediately.” This, though it tried the modesty of the believing woman, was just what Christ wanted in dragging her forth, her public testimony to the facts of her case — the disease, with her abortive efforts at a cure, and the instantaneous and perfect relief which her touching the Great Healer had brought her.

34. And he said unto her, Daughter — “be of good comfort” (^{<4088>}Luke 8:48).

thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague — Though healed as soon as she believed, it seemed to her a stolen cure — she feared to acknowledge it. Jesus therefore sets His royal seal upon it. But what a glorious dismissal from the lips of Him who is “our Peace” is that, “Go in peace!”

Jairus' Daughter Raised to Life (^{<4085>}Mark 5:35-43).

35. Thy daughter is dead; why troublest thou the Master any further? — the Teacher.

36. he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe — Jesus, knowing how the heart of the agonized father would sink at the tidings, and the reflections at the *delay* which would be apt to rise in his mind, hastens to reassure him, and in His accustomed style: “Be not afraid, only believe” — words of unchanging preciousness and power! How vividly do such incidents bring out Christ’s knowledge of the human heart and tender sympathy! (^{<3015>}Hebrews 4:15).

37. And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James — (See on ^{<40129>}Mark 1:29).

38. And he cometh — rather, “they come.”

to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly — “the minstrels and the people making a noise” (^{<4023>}Matthew 9:23) — lamenting for the dead. (See ^{<4452>}2 Chronicles 35:25 ^{<4020>}Jeremiah 9:20 ^{<3156>}Amos 5:16).

39. And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth — so brief her state of death as to be more like a short sleep.

40. And they laughed him to scorn — rather, simply, “laughed at Him” — “knowing that she was dead” (^{<4053>}Luke 8:53); an important testimony this to the reality of her death.

But when he had put them all out — The word is strong — “turned them all out”; meaning all those who were making this noise, and any others that may have been there from sympathy, that only those might be present who were most nearly concerned, and those whom He had Himself brought as witnesses of the great act about to be done.

he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him — Peter, and James, and John.

and entereth in where the damsel was lying.

41. And he took the damsel by the hand — as He did Peter’s mother-in-law (^{<4033>}Mark 1:31).

and said unto her, Talitha cumi — The words are *Aramaic*, or *Syro-Chaldaic*, the then language of Palestine. Mark loves to give such wonderful words just as they were spoken. See ^{<4073>}Mark 7:34 14:36.

42. And straightway the damsel — The word here is different from that in ^{<4053>}Mark 5:39-41, and signifies “young maiden,” or “little girl.”

arose, and walked — a vivid touch evidently from an eye-witness.

And they were astonished with a great astonishment — The language here is the strongest.

43. And he charged them straitly — strictly.

that no man should know it — The only reason we can assign for this is His desire not to let the public feeling regarding Him come too precipitately to a crisis.

and commanded that something should be given her to eat — in token of perfect restoration.

CHAPTER 6

MARK 6:1-6.

CHRIST REJECTED AT NAZARETH.
(MATTHEW 13:54-58 LUKE 4:16-30).

See on Luke 4:16-30.

MARK 6:7-13.

MISSION OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES.
(MATTHEW 10:1,5-15 LUKE 9:1-6).

See on Matthew 10:1; Matthew 10:5-15.

MARK 6:14-29.

**HEROD THINKS JESUS A RESURRECTION OF THE
MURDERED BAPTIST — ACCOUNT OF HIS DEATH.**
(MATTHEW 14:1-12 LUKE 9:7-9).

Herod's View of Christ (Mark 6:14-16).

14. And King Herod — that is, Herod Antipas, one of the three sons of Herod the Great, and own brother of Archelaus (Matthew 2:22), who ruled as *ethnarch* over Galilee and Perea.

heard of him; (for his name was spread abroad); and he said — “unto his servants” (Matthew 14:2), his councillors or court ministers.

That John the Baptist was risen from the dead — The murdered prophet haunted his guilty breast like a specter, and seemed to him alive again and clothed with unearthly powers, in the person of Jesus.

15. Others said, That it is Elias. And others, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets — (See on Matthew 16:14).

16. But when Herod heard thereof, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded; he is risen from the dead — “himself has risen”; as if the innocence and sanctity of his faithful reprover had not suffered that he should lie long dead.

Account of the Baptist’s Imprisonment and Death (^{<4057>}Mark 6:17-29).

17. For Herod himself had sent forth, and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison — in the castle of Machaerus, near the southern extremity of Herod’s dominions, and adjoining the Dead Sea [JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities*, 18.5,2].

for Herodias’ sake — She was the granddaughter of Herod the Great.

his brother Philip’s wife — and therefore the niece of both brothers. This Philip, however, was not the tetrarch of that name mentioned in ^{<4181>}Luke 3:1 (see on ^{<4181>}Luke 3:1), but one whose distinctive name was “Herod Philip,” another son of Herod the Great — who was disinherited by his father. Herod Antipas’ own wife was the daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia; but he prevailed on Herodias, his half-brother Philip’s wife, to forsake her husband and live with him, on condition, says JOSEPHUS [*Antiquities*, 18.5,1], that he should put away his own wife. This involved him afterwards in war with Aretas, who totally defeated him and destroyed his army, from the effects of which he was never able to recover himself.

18. For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother’s wife — Noble fidelity! It was not lawful because Herod’s wife and Herodias husband were both living; and further, because the parties were within the forbidden degrees of consanguinity (see ^{<4181>}Leviticus 20:21); Herodias being the daughter of Aristobulus, the brother of both Herod and Philip [JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities*, 18.5,4].

19. Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him — rather, as in the *Margin*, “had a grudge against him.” Probably she was too proud to speak to him; still less would she quarrel with him.

and would have killed him; but she could not.

20. For Herod feared John — but, as BENGEL notes, John feared not Herod.

knowing that he was a just man and an holy — Compare the ease of Elijah with Ahab, after the murder of Naboth (^{<1210>}1 Kings 21:20).

and observed him — rather, as in the *Margin*, “kept” or “saved him”; that is, from the wicked designs of Herodias, who had been watching for some pretext to get Herod entangled and committed to despatch him.

and when he heard him, he did many things — many good things under the influence of the Baptist on his conscience.

and heard him gladly — a striking statement this, for which we are indebted to our graphic Evangelist alone, illustrating the working of contrary principles in the slaves of passion. But this only shows how far Herodias must have wrought upon him, as Jezebel upon Ahab, that he should at length agree to what his awakened conscience kept him long from executing.

21. And when a convenient day — for the purposes of Herodias.

was come, that Herod — rather, “A convenient day being come,” when Herod.

on his birthday, made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee — This graphic minuteness of detail adds much to the interest of the tragic narrative.

22. And when the daughter of the said Herodias — that is, — her daughter by her proper husband, Herod Philip: Her name was Salome [JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities*, 18.5,4].

came in and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel — “the girl” (See on ^{415C}Mark 5:42).

Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee.

23. And he — the king, so called, but only by courtesy (see on ^{415D}Mark 6:14).

sware unto her Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, unto the half of my kingdom — Those in whom passion and luxury have destroyed self-command will in a capricious moment say and do what in their cool moments they bitterly regret.

24. And she said, The head of John the Baptist — Abandoned women are more shameless and heartless than men. The Baptist’s fidelity marred the pleasures of Herodias, and this was too good an opportunity of getting rid of him to let slip.

25. I will that thou give me by and by — rather, “at once.”

in a charger — large, flat trencher — “the head of John the Baptist.”

26. And the king was exceeding sorry — With his feelings regarding John, and the truths which so told upon his conscience from that preacher's lips, and after so often and carefully saving him from his paramour's rage, it must have been very galling to find himself at length entrapped by his own rash folly.

yet for his oath's sake — See how men of no principle, but troublesome conscience, will stick at breaking a rash oath, while yielding to the commission of the worst crimes!

and for their sakes which sat with him — under the influence of that false shame, which could not brook being thought to be troubled with religious or moral scruples. To how many has this proved a fatal snare!

he would not reject her.

27. And immediately the king sent an executioner — one of the guards in attendance. The word is Roman, denoting one of the Imperial Guard.

and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison — after, it would seem, more than twelve months' imprisonment. Blessed martyr! Dark and cheerless was the end reserved for thee: but now thou hast thy Master's benediction, "Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in Me" (⁴¹⁰⁶Matthew 11:6), and hast found the life thou gavest away (⁴⁰⁸⁹Matthew 10:39). But where are they in whose skirts is found thy blood?

28. And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother — Herodias did not shed the blood of the stern reprover; she only got it done, and then gloated over it, as it streamed from the trunkless head.

29. And when his disciples heard of it — that is, the Baptist's own disciples.

they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb — "and went and told Jesus" (⁴¹¹²Matthew 14:12). If these disciples had, up to this time, stood apart from Him, as adherents of John (⁴¹⁰²Matthew 11:2), perhaps they now came to Jesus, not without some secret reflection on Him for His seeming neglect of their master; but perhaps, too, as orphans, to cast in their lot henceforth with the Lord's disciples. How Jesus felt, or what He said, on receiving this intelligence, is not recorded; but He of whom it was said, as He stood by the grave of His friend Lazarus, "Jesus wept," was not likely to receive such intelligence without deep emotion. And one reason why He might not be unwilling that a small body of John's disciples should cling to him to the last, might be to provide some attached friends

who should do for his precious body, on a small scale, what was afterwards to be done for His own.

◀4161 MARK 6:30-56.

THE TWELVE ON THEIR RETURN, HAVING REPORTED THE SUCCESS OF THEIR MISSION, JESUS CROSSES THE SEA OF GALILEE WITH THEM, TEACHES THE PEOPLE, AND MIRACULOUSLY FEEDS THEM TO THE NUMBER OF FIVE THOUSAND — HE SENDS HIS DISCIPLES BY SHIP AGAIN TO THE WESTERN SIDE, WHILE HE HIMSELF RETURNS AFTERWARDS WALKING ON THE SEA — INCIDENTS ON LANDING. (◀4143 MATTHEW 14:13-36 ◀4190 LUKE 9:10-17 ◀4163 JOHN 6:1-24).

Here, for the first time, all the four streams of sacred text run parallel. The occasion and all the circumstances of this grand section are thus brought before us with a vividness quite remarkable.

Five Thousand Miraculously Fed (◀4161 Mark 6:30-44).

30. And the apostles gathered themselves together — probably at Capernaum, on returning from their mission (◀4107 Mark 6:7-13).

and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught — Observe the various reasons He had for crossing to the other side. First, Matthew (◀4143 Matthew 14:13) says, that “when Jesus heard” of the murder of His faithful forerunner — from those attached disciples of his who had taken up his body and laid it in a sepulcher (see on ◀4161 Mark 6:29) — “He departed by ship into a desert place apart”; either to avoid some apprehended consequences to Himself, arising from the Baptist’s death (◀4103 Matthew 10:23), or more probably to be able to indulge in those feelings which that affecting event had doubtless awakened, and to which the bustle of the multitude around Him was very unfavorable. Next, since He must have heard the report of the Twelve with the deepest interest, and probably with something of the emotion which He experienced on the return of the Seventy (see on ◀2007 Luke 10:17-22), He sought privacy for undisturbed reflection on this begun preaching and progress of His kingdom. Once more, He was wearied with the multitude of “comers and goers” — depriving Him even of leisure enough to take His food — and wanted *rest*: “Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a

while,” etc. Under the combined influence of all these considerations, our Lord sought this change.

32. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately — “over the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias,” says John (^{<400>}John 6:1), the only one of the Evangelists who so fully describes it; the others having written when their readers were supposed to know something of it, while the last wrote for those at a greater distance of time and place. This “desert place” is more definitely described by Luke (^{<400>}Luke 9:10) as “belonging to the city called Bethsaida.” This must not be confounded with the town so called on the western side of the lake (see on ^{<402>}Matthew 11:21). This town lay on its northeastern side, near where the Jordan empties itself into it: in Gaulonitis, out of the dominions of Herod Antipas, and within the dominions of Philip the Tetrarch (^{<400>}Luke 3:1), who raised it from a village to a city, and called it *Julias*, in honor of Julia, the daughter of Augustus [JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities*, 18.2,1].

33. And the people — the multitudes.

saw them departing, and many knew him — The true reading would seem to be: “And many saw them departing, and knew or recognized [them].”

and ran afoot — Here, perhaps, it should be rendered “by land” — running round by the head of the lake, and taking one of the fords of the river, so as to meet Jesus, who was crossing with the Twelve by ship.

thither out of all cities, and outwent them — got before them.

and came together unto him — How exceedingly graphic is this! every touch of it betokening the presence of an eye-witness. John (^{<400>}John 6:3) says, that “Jesus went up into a mountain” — somewhere in that hilly range, the green tableland which skirts the eastern side of the lake.

34. And Jesus, when he came out of the ship — having gone on shore.

saw much people — a great multitude.

and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd — At the sight of the multitudes who had followed Him by land and even got before Him, He was so moved, as was His wont in such cases, with compassion, because they were like shepherdless sheep, as to forego both privacy and rest that He might minister to them. Here we have an important piece of information from the Fourth Evangelist (^{<400>}John 6:4), “And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh” — rather, “Now the passover, the feast of the Jews, was nigh.”

This accounts for the multitudes that now crowded around Him. They were on their way to keep that festival at Jerusalem. But Jesus did not go up to this festival, as John expressly tells us, (^{<B01E>}John 7:1) — remaining in Galilee, because the ruling Jews sought to kill Him.

35. And when the day was now far spent — “began to wear away” or “decline,” says Luke (^{<B01E>}Luke 9:12). Matthew (^{<B04E>}Matthew 14:15) says, “when it was evening”; and yet he mentions a later evening of the same day (^{<B06E>}Mark 6:23). This earlier evening began at three P.M.; the latter began at sunset.

36. Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat — John tells us (^{<B06E>}John 6:5,6) that “Jesus said to Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? (And this He said to prove him: for He Himself knew what He would do).” The subject may have been introduced by some remark of the disciples; but the precise order and form of what was said by each can hardly be gathered with precision, nor is it of any importance.

37. He answered and said unto them — “They need not depart” (^{<B04E>}Matthew 14:10).

Give ye them to eat — doubtless said to prepare them for what was to follow.

And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat? — “Philip answered Him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little” (^{<B06E>}John 6:7).

38. He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes — John is more precise and full: “One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, saith unto Him, There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?” (^{<B06E>}John 6:8,9). Probably this was the whole stock of provisions then at the command of the disciples — no more than enough for one meal to them — and entrusted for the time to this lad. “He said, Bring them hither to me” (^{<B04E>}Matthew 14:18).

39. And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass — or “green hay”; the rank grass of those bushy wastes. For, as John (^{<B06E>}John 6:10) notes, “there was much grass in the place.”

40. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties —

Doubtless this was to show at a glance the number fed, and to enable all to witness in an orderly manner this glorious miracle.

41. And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven —

Thus would the most distant of them see distinctly what He was doing.

and blessed — John (^{<RB1>}John 6:11) says, “And when he had given thanks.” The sense is the same. This thanksgiving for the meal, and benediction of it as the food of thousands, was the crisis of the miracle.

and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them

— thus virtually holding forth these men as His future ministers.

and the two fishes divided he among them all.

42. And they did all eat, and were filled — All the four Evangelists mention this: and John (^{<RB1>}John 6:11) adds, “and likewise of the fishes, as much as they would” — to show that vast as was the multitude, and scanty the provisions, the meal to each and all of them was a plentiful one. “When they were filled, He said unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost” (^{<RB2>}John 6:12). This was designed to bring out the whole extent of the miracle.

43. And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes — “Therefore (says ^{<RB3>}John 6:13), they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.” The article here rendered “baskets” in all the four narratives was part of the luggage taken by Jews on a journey — to carry, it is said, both their provisions and hay to sleep on, that they might not have to depend on Gentiles, and so run the risk of ceremonial pollution. In this we have a striking corroboration of the truth of the four narratives. Internal evidence renders it clear, we think, that the first three Evangelists wrote independently of each other, though the fourth must have seen all the others. But here, each of the first three Evangelists uses the same word to express the apparently insignificant circumstance that the baskets employed to gather up the fragments were of the kind which even the Roman satirist, JUVENAL, knew by the name of *cophinus*, while in both the narratives of the feeding of the Four Thousand the baskets used are expressly said to have been of the kind called *spuris*. (See ^{<RB9>}Mark 8:19,20.)

44. And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men

— “besides women and children” (^{<RB1>}Matthew 14:21). Of these, however,

there would probably not be many; as only the males were obliged to go to the approaching festival.

Jesus Recrosses to the Western side of the Lake Walking on the Sea
(^{<4165>}Mark 6:45-56).

One very important particular given by John alone (^{<4165>}John 6:15) introduces this portion: “When Jesus therefore perceived that they would take Him by force, to make Him a king, He departed again into a mountain Himself alone.”

45. And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before — Him.

unto Bethsaida — Bethsaida of Galilee (^{<4121>}John 12:21). John (^{<4167>}John 6:17) says they “went over the sea towards Capernaum” — the wind, probably, occasioning this slight deviation from the direction of Bethsaida.

while he sent away the people — “the multitude.” His object in this was to put an end to the misdirected excitement in His favor (^{<4165>}John 6:15), into which the disciples themselves may have been somewhat drawn. The word “constrained” implies reluctance on their part, perhaps from unwillingness to part with their Master and embark at night, leaving Him alone on the mountain.

46. And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray — thus at length getting that privacy and rest which He had vainly sought during the earlier part of the day; opportunity also to pour out His soul in connection with the extraordinary excitement in His favor that evening — which appears to have marked the zenith of His reputation, for it began to decline the very next day; and a place whence He might watch the disciples on the lake, pray for them in their extremity, and observe the right time for coming to them, in a new manifestation of His glory, on the sea.

47. And when even was come — the later evening (see on ^{<4165>}Mark 6:35). It had come even when the disciples embarked (^{<4143>}Matthew 14:23 ^{<4166>}John 6:16).

the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land — John says (^{<4167>}John 6:17), “It was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them.” Perhaps they made no great effort to push across at first, having a lingering hope that their Master would yet join them, and so allowed the darkness to come on. “And the sea arose” (adds the beloved disciple, ^{<4168>}John 6:18), “by reason of a great wind that blew.”

48. And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them — putting forth all their strength to buffet the waves and bear on against a head wind, but to little effect. He “saw” this from His mountain top, and through the darkness of the night, for His heart was all with them: yet would He not go to their relief till His own time came.

and about the fourth watch of the night — The Jews, who used to divide the night into three watches, latterly adopted the Roman division into four watches, as here. So that, at the rate of three hours to each, the fourth watch, reckoning from six P.M., would be three o’clock in the morning. “So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs” (^{<4169>}John 6:19) — rather more than halfway across. The lake is about seven miles broad at its widest part. So that in eight or nine hours they had only made some three and a half miles. By this time, therefore, they must have been in a state of exhaustion and despondency bordering on despair; and now at length, having tried them long enough.

he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea — “and draweth nigh unto the ship” (^{<4169>}John 6:19).

and would have passed by them — but only in the sense of ^{<4238>}Luke 24:28 ^{<4122>}Genesis 32:26; compare ^{<4187>}Genesis 18:3,5 42:7.

49. But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out — “for fear” (^{<4145>}Matthew 14:26). He would appear to them at first like a dark moving speck upon the waters; then as a human figure; but in the dark tempestuous sky, and not dreaming that it could be their Lord, they take it for a spirit. Compare ^{<4267>}Luke 24:37.

50. For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: It is I; be not afraid — There is something in these two little words — given by Matthew, Mark and John (^{<4147>}Matthew 14:27 ^{<4151>}Mark 6:50 ^{<4161>}John 6:20) — “It is I,” which from the mouth that spake it and the circumstances in which it was uttered, passes the power of language to express. Here were they in the midst of a raging sea, their little bark the sport of the elements, and with just enough of light to descry an object on the waters which only aggravated their fears. But Jesus deems it enough to dispel all apprehension to let them know that *He was there*. From other lips that “I am” would have merely meant that the person speaking was such a one and not another person. That, surely, would have done little to calm the fears of men expecting every minute, it may be, to go to the bottom. But spoken by One who at that moment was “treading upon the waves of the sea,” and was about to hush the raging elements with His word, what was it but the Voice which cried of old in the ears of Israel, even from the days of Moses, “I

AM”; “I, EVEN I, AM HE!” Compare ^{<BIB>}John 18:5,6 8:58. Now, that Word is “made flesh, and dwells among us,” uttering itself from beside us in dear familiar tones — “It is the Voice of my Beloved!” How far was this apprehended by these frightened disciples? There was one, we know, in the boat who outstripped all the rest in susceptibility to such sublime appeals. It was not the deep-toned writer of the Fourth Gospel, who, though he lived to soar beyond all the apostles, was as yet too young for prominence, and all unripe. It was Simon Barjonas. Here follows a very remarkable and instructive episode, recorded by Matthew alone:

Peter Ventures to Walk upon the Sea (^{<BIB>}Matthew 14:28-32).

^{<BIB>}**MATTHEW 14:28:**

And Peter answered Him, and said, Lord, If it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water — not “let me,” but “give me the word of *command*” — “command,” or “order me to come unto Thee upon the waters.”

^{<BIB>}**MATTHEW 14:29:**

And He said, Come — Sublime word, issuing from One conscious of power over the raging element, to bid it serve both Himself and whomsoever else He pleased!

And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked upon the water — “waters.”

to come to Jesus — “It was a bold spirit,” says BISHOP HALL, “that could wish it; more bold that could act it — not fearing either the softness or the roughness of that uncouth passage.”

^{<BIB>}**MATTHEW 14:30:**

But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid: and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me — The wind was as boisterous before, but Peter “saw” it not, seeing only the power of Christ, in the lively exercise of faith. Now he “sees” the fury of the elements, and immediately the power of Christ to bear him up fades before his view, and this makes him “afraid” — as how could he be otherwise, without any *felt* power to keep him up? He then “begins to sink”; and finally, conscious that his experiment had failed, he casts himself, in a sort of desperate confidence, upon his “Lord” for deliverance!

◀4143▶ **MATTHEW 14:31:**

*And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? — This rebuke was not administered while Peter was sinking, nor till Christ had him by the hand: first reinvigorating his faith, and then with it enabling him again to walk upon the crested wave. Useless else had been this loving reproof, which owns the *faith* that had ventured on the deep upon the bare word of Christ, but asks why that *distrust* which so quickly marred it.*

◀4143▶ **MATTHEW 14:32:**

And when they — Jesus and Peter.

were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

51. And he went up unto them into the ship — John (◀4143▶John 6:21) says, “Then they willingly received him into the ship” — or rather, “Then were they willing to receive Him” (with reference to their previous terror); but implying also a glad welcome, their first fears now converted into wonder and delight. “And immediately,” adds the beloved disciple, “they were at the land whither they went,” or “were bound.” This additional miracle, for as such it is manifestly related, is recorded by the fourth Evangelist alone. As the storm was suddenly calmed, so the little bark — propelled by the secret power of the Lord of nature now sailing in it — glided through the now unruffled waters, and, while they were wrapt in wonder at what had happened, not heeding their rapid motion, *was found* at port, to their still further surprise.

“Then are they glad, because at rest; And quiet now they be; So to the haven He them brings; Which they desired to see.”

Matthew (◀4143▶Matthew 14:33) says, “Then they that were in the ship came [that is, ere they got to land] and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth Thou art the Son of God.” But our Evangelist is wonderfully striking.

and the wind ceased and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered — The Evangelist seems hardly to find language strong enough to express their astonishment.

52. For they considered not the miracle of the loaves; for their heart was hardened — What a singular statement! The meaning seems to be that if they had but “considered [reflected upon] the miracle of the loaves,” wrought but a few hours before, they would have *wondered at nothing* which He might do within the whole circle of power and grace.

Incidents on Landing (^{<406>}Mark 6:53-56).

The details here are given with a rich vividness quite peculiar to this charming Gospel.

53. And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret — from which the lake sometimes takes its name, stretching along its western shore. Capernaum was their landing-place (^{<406>}John 6:24,25).

and drew to the shore — a nautical phrase, nowhere else used in the New Testament.

54. And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him — “immediately they recognized Him”; that is, the people did.

55. and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was — At this period of our Lord’s ministry the popular enthusiasm in His favor was at its height.

56. and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment — having heard, no doubt, of what the woman with the issue of blood experienced on doing so (^{<406>}Mark 5:25-29), and perhaps of other unrecorded cases of the same nature.

and as many as touched him — or “it” — the border of His garment.

were made whole — All this they *continued* to do and to experience while our Lord was in that region. The *time* corresponds to that mentioned (^{<406>}John 7:1), when He “walked in Galilee,” instead of appearing in Jerusalem at the passover, “because the Jews,” that is, *the rulers*, “sought to kill Him” — while *the people* sought to enthrone Him!

CHAPTER 7

MARK 7:1-23.

DISCOURSE ON CEREMONIAL POLLUTION.

(MATTHEW 15:1-20).

See on Matthew 15:1-20.

MARK 7:24-37.

THE SYROPHOENICIAN WOMAN AND HER DAUGHTER — A DEAF AND DUMB MAN HEALED. (MATTHEW 15:21-31).

The Syrophenician Woman and Her Daughter (Mark 7:24-30).

The first words of this narrative show that the incident followed, in point of time, immediately on what precedes it.

24. And from thence he arose, and went into the borders — or “unto the borders.”

of Tyre and Sidon — the two great Phoenician seaports, but here denoting the territory generally, to the frontiers of which Jesus now came. But did Jesus actually enter this heathen territory? The whole narrative, we think, proceeds upon the supposition that He did. His immediate object seems to have been to avoid the wrath of the Pharisees at the withering exposure He had just made of their traditional religion.

and entered into an house, and would have no man know it — because He had not come there to minister to heathens. But though not “sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matthew 15:24), He hindered not the lost sheep of the vast Gentile world from coming to Him, nor put them away when they did come — as this incident was designed to show.

but he could not be hid — Christ’s fame had early spread from Galilee to this very region (Mark 3:8 Luke 6:17).

25. For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit — or, as in Matthew (⁴⁰⁵²Matthew 15:22), “was badly demonized.”

heard of him — One wonders how; but distress is quick of hearing.

26. The woman was a Greek — that is, “a Gentile,” as in the *Margin*.

a Syrophenician by nation — so called as inhabiting the Phoenician tract of Syria. JUVENAL uses the same term, as was remarked by JUSTIN MARTYR and TERTULLIAN. Matthew (⁴⁰⁵²Matthew 15:22) calls her “a woman of Canaan” — a more intelligible description to his Jewish readers (compare ⁴⁰⁰³Judges 1:30,32,33).

and she besought him that he would east forth the devil out of her daughter — “She cried unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David: my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil” (⁴⁰⁵²Matthew 15:22). Thus, though no Israelite herself, she salutes Him as Israel’s promised Messiah. Here we must go to ⁴⁰⁵³Matthew 15:23-25 for some important links in the dialogue omitted by our Evangelist.

⁴⁰⁵²MATTHEW 15:23:

But he answered her not a word — The design of this was first, perhaps, to show that He was not *sent* to such as she. He had said expressly to the Twelve, “Go not into the way of the Gentiles” (⁴⁰⁰⁵Matthew 10:5); and being now among them Himself, He would, for consistency’s sake, let it be seen that He had not gone thither for *missionary* purposes. Therefore He not only kept silence, but had actually left the house, and — as will presently appear — was proceeding on His way back, when this woman accosted Him. But another reason for keeping silence plainly was to try and whet her faith, patience, and perseverance. And it had the desired effect: “She *cried after them*,” which shows that He was already on His way from the place.

And His disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us — They thought her troublesome with her importunate cries, just as they did the people who brought young children to be blessed of Him, and they ask their Lord to “send her away,” that is, to grant her request and be rid of her; for we gather from His reply that they meant to solicit favor for her, though not for her sake so much as their own.

⁴⁰⁵³MATTHEW 15:24:

But He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel — a speech evidently intended for the disciples themselves,

to satisfy them that, though the grace He was about to show to this Gentile believer was *beyond His strict* commission, He had not gone *spontaneously* to dispense it. Yet did even this speech open a gleam of hope, could she have discerned it. For thus might she have spoken: “I am not SENT, did He say? Truth, Lord, Thou comest not hither in quest of *us*, but I come in quest of *Thee*; and must I go empty away? So did not the woman of Samaria, whom when Thou foundest her on Thy way to Galilee, Thou sentest away to make many rich! But this our poor Syrophoenician could not attain to. What, then, can she answer to such a speech? Nothing. She has reached her lowest depth, her darkest moment: she will just utter her last cry:

Ⓜ**MATTHEW 15:25:**

Then came she and worshipped Him, saying, Lord, help me! — This appeal, so artless, wrung from the depths of a believing heart, and reminding us of the publican’s “God be merciful to me a sinner,” moved the Redeemer at last to break silence — but in what style? Here we return to our own Evangelist.

27. But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled — “Is there hope for me here? ... Filled FIRST?” “Then my turn, it seems, *is* coming! “ — but then, “The CHILDREN first? ... Ah! when, on that rule, shall my turn ever come!” But ere she has time for these ponderings of His word, another word comes to supplement it.

for it is not meet to take the children’s bread, and to cast it unto the dogs — Is this the death of her hopes? Nay, rather it is life from the dead. Out of the eater shall come forth meat (Ⓜ⁰⁷¹⁴⁴Judges 14:14). “At evening-time, it shall be light” (Ⓜ³⁸⁴¹⁷Zechariah 14:7). “Ah! I have it now. Had He kept silence, what could I have done but go unblest? but He hath spoken, and the victory is mine.”

28. And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord — or, as the same word is rendered in Ⓜ⁴¹⁵⁷Matthew 15:27. “Truth, Lord.”

yet the dogs eat of the children’s crumbs — which fall from their master’s table” (Ⓜ⁴¹⁵⁷Matthew 15:27). “I thank Thee, O blessed One, for that word! That’s my whole case. Not of the children? True. A dog? True also: Yet the dogs under the table are allowed to eat of the children’s crumbs — the droppings from their master’s full table: Give me that, and I am content: One crumb of power and grace from Thy table shall cast the devil out of my daughter.” Oh, what lightning quickness, what reach of instinctive ingenuity, do we behold in this heathen woman!

29. And he said unto her — “O woman, great is thy faith” (^{<4153>}Matthew 15:28). As BENGEL beautifully remarks, Jesus “marvelled” only at two things — *faith* and *unbelief* (see ^{<4116>}Luke 7:9).

For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter — That moment the deed was done.

30. And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed — But Matthew (^{<4153>}Matthew 15:28) is more specific; “And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.” The wonderfulness of this case in all its features has been felt in every age of the Church, and the balm it has administered, and will yet administer, to millions will be known only in that day that shall reveal the secrets of all hearts.

Deaf and Dumb Man Healed (^{<4071>}Mark 7:31-37).

31. And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the Sea of Galilee — or, according to what has very strong claims to be regarded as the true text here, “And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre, He came through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee.” The manuscripts in favor of this reading, though not the most numerous, are weighty, while the versions agreeing with it are among the most ancient; and all the best critical editors and commentators adopt it. In this case we must understand that our Lord, having once gone out of the Holy Land the length of Tyre, proceeded as far north as Sidon, though without ministering, so far as appears, in those parts, and then bent His steps in a southeasterly direction. There is certainly a difficulty in the supposition of so long a *detour* without any missionary object: and some may think this sufficient to cast the balance in favor of the received reading. Be this as it may, on returning from these coasts of Tyre, He passed

through the midst of the coasts — frontiers.

of Decapolis — crossing the Jordan, therefore, and approaching the lake on its east side. Here Matthew, who omits the details of the cure of this deaf and dumb man, introduces some particulars, from which we learn that it was only one of a great number. “And Jesus,” says that Evangelist (^{<4153>}Matthew 15:29-31), “departed from thence, and came nigh unto the Sea of Galilee, and went up into a mountain” — the mountain range bounding the lake on the northeast, in Decapolis: “And great multitudes came unto Him, having with them lame, blind, dumb, maimed” — not “mutilated,” which is but a secondary sense of the word, but “deformed” — “and many others, and cast them down at Jesus’ feet; and He healed them: insomuch that the multitude [multitudes] wondered, when they saw the dumb to

speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see; and they glorified the God of Israel” — who after so long and dreary an absence of visible manifestation, had returned to bless His people as of old (compare ^{<476>}Luke 7:16). Beyond this it is not clear from the Evangelist’s language that the people saw into the claims of Jesus. Well, of these cases Mark here singles out one, whose cure had something peculiar in it.

32. And they bring unto him one that was deaf ... and they beseech him to put his hand upon him — In their eagerness they appear to have been somewhat too officious. Though usually doing as here suggested, He will deal with this case in His own way.

33. And he took him aside from the multitude — As in another case He “took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town” (^{<482>}Mark 8:23), probably to fix his undistracted attention on Himself, and, by means of certain actions He was about to do, to awaken and direct his attention to the proper source of relief.

and put his fingers into his ears — As his indistinct articulation arose from his deafness, our Lord addresses Himself to this first. To the impotent man He said, “Wilt thou be made whole?” to the blind men, “What will ye that I shall do unto you?” and “Believe ye that I am able to do this?” (^{<486>}John 5:6 ^{<488>}Matthew 20:32 9:28). But as this patient could *hear* nothing, our Lord substitutes symbolical actions upon each of the organs affected.

and he spit and touched his tongue — moistening the man’s parched tongue with saliva from His own mouth, as if to lubricate the organ or facilitate its free motion; thus indicating the source of the healing virtue to be His own person. (For similar actions, see ^{<482>}Mark 8:23 ^{<486>}John 9:6).

34. And looking up to heaven — ever acknowledging His Father, even while the healing was seen to flow from Himself (see on ^{<486>}John 5:19).

he sighed — “over the wreck,” says TRENCH, “which sin had brought about, and the malice of the devil in deforming the fair features of God’s original creation.” But, we take it, there was a yet more painful impression of that “evil thing and bitter” whence all our ills have sprung, and which, when “Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses” (^{<487>}Matthew 8:17), became mysteriously His own. “In thought of these his brows benign, Not even in healing, cloudless shine.”; KEBLE

and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened — Our Evangelist, as remarked on ^{<484>}Mark 5:41, loves to give such wonderful words just as they were spoken.

35. And straightway his ears were opened — This is mentioned first as the source of the other derangement.

and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain — The cure was thus alike instantaneous and perfect.

36. And he charged them that they should tell no man — Into this very region He had sent the man out of whom had been cast the legion of devils, to proclaim “what the Lord had done for him” (^{<4165>}Mark 5:19). Now He will have them “tell no man.” But in the former case there was no danger of obstructing His ministry by “blazing the matter” (^{<4045>}Mark 1:45), as He Himself had left the region; whereas now He was sojourning in it.

but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it — They could not be restrained; nay, the prohibition seemed only to whet their determination to publish His fame.

37. And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well — reminding us, says TRENCH, Of the words of the first creation (^{<0083>}Genesis 1:31, *Septuagint*), upon which we are thus not unsuitably thrown back, for Christ’s work is in the truest sense “a new creation,”

he maketh both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak — “and they glorified the God of Israel” (^{<4083>}Matthew 15:31). See on ^{<4003>}Mark 7:31.

CHAPTER 8

MARK 8:1-26.

FOUR THOUSAND MIRACULOUSLY FED — A SIGN FROM HEAVEN SOUGHT AND REFUSED — THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES — A BLIND MAN AT BETHSAIDA RESTORED TO SIGHT. (^{<1032>}MATTHEW 15:32-16:12).

This section of miscellaneous matter evidently follows the preceding one in point of time, as will be seen by observing how it is introduced by Matthew.

Feeding of the Four Thousand (^{<1001>}Mark 8:1-9).

1. In those days the multitude being very great, etc.

2. I have compassion on the multitude — an expression of that deep emotion in the Redeemer's heart which always preceded some remarkable interposition for relief. (See ^{<1044>}Matthew 14:14 20:34 ^{<1044>}Mark 1:41 ^{<1073>}Luke 7:13; also ^{<1036>}Matthew 9:36, before the mission of the Twelve; compare ^{<1028>}Judges 2:18 10:16).

because they have now been with me — in constant attendance.

three days, and have nothing to eat:

3. And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way — In their eagerness they seem not to have thought of the need of provisions for such a length of time; but the Lord thought of it. In Matthew (^{<1032>}Matthew 15:32) it is, "I will not send them away fasting" — or rather, "To send them away fasting I am unwilling."

4. From whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness? — Though the question here is the same as when He fed the five thousand, they evidently *now* meant no more by it than that *they* had not the means of feeding the multitude; modestly leaving the Lord to decide what was to be done. And this will the more appear from His not now trying them, as before, by saying, "They need not depart, give ye them to eat"; but simply asking what they had, and then giving His directions.

5. And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven — It was important in this case, as in the former, that the precise number of the loaves should be brought out. Thus also does the distinctness of the two miracles appear.

9. And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away — Had not our Lord distinctly referred, in this very chapter and in two successive sentences, to the feeding of the five thousand and of the four thousand as two distinct miracles, many critics would have insisted that they were but two different representations of one and the same miracle, as they do of the two expulsions of the buyers and sellers from the temple, at the beginning and end of our Lord's ministry. But even in spite of what our Lord says, it is painful to find such men as NEANDER endeavoring to identify the two miracles. The localities, though both on the eastern side of the lake, were different; the time was different; the preceding and following circumstances were different; the period during which the people continued fasting was different — in the one case not even one entire day, in the other three days; the number fed was different — five thousand in the one case, in the other four thousand; the number of the loaves was different — five in the one case, in the other seven; the number of the fishes in the one case is definitely stated by all the four Evangelists — two; in the other case both give them indefinitely — “a few small fishes”; in the one case the multitude were commanded to sit down “upon the green grass”; in the other “on the ground”; in the one case the number of the baskets taken up filled with the fragments was twelve, in the other seven; but more than all, perhaps, because apparently quite incidental, in the one case the name given to the kind of baskets used is the same in all the four narratives — the *cophinus* (see on ^{416B}Mark 6:43); in the other case the name given to the kind of baskets used, while it is the same in both the narratives, is quite different — the *spuris*, a basket large enough to hold a man's body, for Paul was let down in one of these from the wall of Damascus (^{419S}Acts 9:25). It might be added, that in the one case the people, in a frenzy of enthusiasm, would have taken Him by force to make Him a king; in the other case no such excitement is recorded. In view of these things, who could have believed that these were one and the same miracle, even if the Lord Himself had not expressly distinguished them?

Sign from Heaven Sought (^{418B}Mark 8:10-13).

10. And straightway he entered into a ship — “into the ship,” or “embarked.”

with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha — In Matthew (^{415B}Matthew 15:39) it is “the coasts of Magdala.” Magdala and

Dalmanutha were both on the western shore of the lake, and probably not far apart. From the former the surname “Magdalene” was probably taken, to denote the residence of Mary Magdalene. Dalmanutha may have been a village, but it cannot now be identified with certainty.

11. seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him — not in the least desiring evidence for their conviction, but hoping to entrap Him. The first part of the answer is given in Matthew alone (^{<4160>}Matthew 16:2,3): “He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather; for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to-day: for the sky is red and lowering [sullen, gloomy]. Hypocrites! ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?” The same simplicity of purpose and careful observation of the symptoms of approaching events which they showed in common things would enable them to “discern the signs of the times” — or rather “seasons,” to which the prophets pointed for the manifestation of the Messiah. The scepter had departed from Judah; Daniel’s seventy weeks were expiring, etc.; and many other significant indications of the close of the old economy, and preparations for a freer and more comprehensive one, might have been discerned. But all was lost upon them.

12. And he sighed deeply in his spirit — The language is very strong. These glimpses into the interior of the Redeemer’s heart, in which our Evangelist abounds, are more precious than rubies. The state of the Pharisaic heart, which prompted this desire for a fresh sign, went to His very soul.

and saith, Why doth this generation — “this wicked and adulterous generation” (^{<4160>}Matthew 16:4).

seek after a sign? — when they have had such abundant evidence already.

There shall no sign be given unto this generation — literally, “If there shall be given to this generation a sign”; a Jewish way of expressing a solemn and peremptory determination to the contrary (compare ^{<3015>}Hebrews 4:5 ^{<4951>}Psalms 95:11, *Margin*). “A generation incapable of appreciating such demonstrations shall not be gratified with them.” In ^{<4160>}Matthew 16:4 He added, “but the sign of the prophet Jonas.” (See on ^{<4123>}Matthew 12:39,40.)

13. And he left them — no doubt with tokens of displeasure.

The Leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees (^{<4084>}Mark 8:14-21).

14. Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf — This is another example of that graphic circumstantiality which gives such a charm to this briefest of the

four Gospels. The circumstance of the “one loaf” only remaining, as WEBSTER and WILKINSON remark, was more suggestive of their Master’s recent miracles than the entire absence of provisions.

15. And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees — “and of the Sadducees” (^{<1616>}Matthew 16:6).

and of the leaven of Herod — The teaching or “doctrine” (^{<1612>}Matthew 16:12) of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees was quite different, but both were equally pernicious; and the Herodians, though rather a political party, were equally envenomed against our Lord’s spiritual teaching. See on ^{<1624>}Matthew 12:14. The *penetrating* and *diffusive* quality of leaven, for good or bad, is the ground of the comparison.

16. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have no bread — But a little while ago He was tried with the obduracy of the Pharisees; now He is tried with the obtuseness of His own disciples. The *nine* questions following each other in rapid succession (^{<1617>}Mark 8:17-21) show how deeply He was hurt at this want of spiritual apprehension, and worse still, their low thoughts of Him, as if He would utter so solemn a warning on so petty a subject. It will be seen, however, from the very form of their conjecture, “It is because *we* have no bread,” and our Lord’s astonishment that they should not by that time have known better with what He took up His attention — that He ever left *the whole care for His own temporal wants to the Twelve*: that He did this so entirely, that finding they were reduced to their last loaf they felt as if unworthy of such a trust, and could not think but that the same thought was in their Lord’s mind which was pressing upon their own; but that in this they were so far wrong that it hurt His feelings — sharp just in proportion to His love — that such a thought of Him should have entered their minds! Who that, like angels, “desire to look into these things” will not prize such glimpses above gold?

17. have ye your heart yet hardened? — How strong an expression to use of true-hearted disciples! See on ^{<1652>}Mark 6:52.

18. Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? — See on ^{<1633>}Matthew 13:13.

and do ye not remember?

19. When I brake the five loaves among five thousand — “the five thousand.”

how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? etc.

21. How is it that ye do not understand? — “do not understand that the warning I gave you could not have been prompted by any such petty consideration as the want of loaves in your scrip.” Profuse as were our Lord’s miracles, we see from this that they were not wrought at random, but that He carefully noted their minutest details, and desired that this should be done by those who witnessed, as doubtless by all who read the record of them. Even the different kind of baskets used at the two miraculous feedings, so carefully noted in the two narratives, are here also referred to; the one smaller, of which there were twelve, the other much larger, of which there were seven.

Blind Man at Bethsaida Restored to Sight (^{<4182>}Mark 8:22-26).

22. And he cometh to Bethsaida — Bethsaida Julias, on the northeast side of the lake, whence after this He proceeded to Caesarea Philippi (^{<4187>}Mark 8:27).

and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him — See on ^{<4133>}Mark 7:32.

23. And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town — Of the deaf and dumb man it is merely said that “He took him aside” (^{<4133>}Mark 7:33); but this blind man He *led by the hand* out of the town, doing it Himself rather than employing another — great humility, exclaims BENGEL — that He might gain his confidence and raise his expectation.

and when he had spit on his eyes — the organ affected — See on ^{<4133>}Mark 7:33.

and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw aught.

24. And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking — This is one of the cases in which one edition of what is called the received text differs from another. That which is decidedly the best supported, and has also internal evidence on its side is this: “I see men; for I see [them] as trees walking” — that is, he could distinguish them from trees only by their motion; a minute mark of truth in the narrative, as ALFORD observes, describing how human objects had appeared to him during that gradual failing of sight which had ended in blindness.

25. After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up; and he was restored, and saw every man clearly — Perhaps the one operation perfectly restored the *eyes*, while the other imparted immediately the *faculty of using them*. It is the only recorded example of a *progressive* cure, and it certainly illustrates similar methods in the spiritual

kingdom. Of the four recorded cases of sight restored, all the patients save one either *came* or *were brought* to the Physician. In the case of the man born blind, *the Physician came* to the patient. So some seek and find Christ; of others He is found who seek Him not.

26. Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town — Besides the usual reasons against going about “blazing the matter,” retirement in this case would be salutary to himself.

<4187> MARK 8:27-38.

**PETER’S NOBLE CONFESSION OF CHRIST — OUR LORD’S
FIRST EXPLICIT ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS APPROACHING
SUFFERINGS, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION — HIS
REBUKE OF PETER, AND WARNING TO ALL THE TWELVE.
(<4163> MATTHEW 16:13-27 <4183> LUKE 9:18-26).**

For the exposition, see on <4163> Matthew 16:13-28.

CHAPTER 9

MARK 9:1-13.

JESUS IS TRANSFIGURED — CONVERSATION ABOUT ELIAS. (MATTHEW 16:28-17:13 LUKE 9:27-36).

See on Luke 9:27-36.

MARK 9:14-32.

HEALING OF A DEMONIAK BOY — SECOND EXPLICIT ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS APPROACHING DEATH AND RESURRECTION. (MATTHEW 17:14-23 LUKE 9:37-45).

Healing of the Demoniak Boy (Mark 9:14-29).

14. And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them — This was “on the next day, when they were come down from the hill” (Luke 9:37). The Transfiguration appears to have taken place at night. In the morning, as He came down from the hill on which it took place — with Peter, and James, and John — on approaching the other nine, He found them surrounded by a great multitude, and the scribes disputing or discussing with them. No doubt these cavillers were twitting the apostles of Jesus with their inability to cure the demoniak boy of whom we are presently to hear, and insinuating doubts even of their Master’s ability to do it; while they, zealous for their Master’s honor, would no doubt refer to His past miracles in proof of the contrary.

15. And straightway all the people — the multitude.

when they beheld him, were greatly amazed — were astounded.

and running to him saluted him — The singularly strong expression of surprise, the sudden arrest of the discussion, and the rush of the multitude towards Him, can be accounted for by nothing less than something amazing in His appearance. There can hardly be any doubt that *His countenance still retained traces of His transfiguration-glory.* (See

^{<2429}Exodus 34:29,30). So BENGEL, DE WETTE, MEYER, TRENCH, ALFORD. No wonder, if this was the case, that they not only ran to Him, but saluted Him. Our Lord, however, takes no notice of what had attracted them, and probably it gradually faded away as He drew near; but addressing Himself to the scribes, He demands the subject of their discussion, ready to meet them where they had pressed hard upon His half-instructed and as yet timid apostles.

16. And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them? — Ere they had time to reply, the father of the boy, whose case had occasioned the dispute, himself steps forward and answers the question; telling a piteous tale of deafness, and dumbness, and fits of epilepsy — ending with this, that the disciples, though entreated, could not perform the cure.

17. And one of the multitude answered, and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son — “mine only child” (^{<4088}Luke 9:38).

which hath a dumb spirit — a spirit whose operation had the effect of rendering his victim speechless, and deaf also (^{<4025}Mark 9:25). In Matthew’s report of the speech (^{<4075}Matthew 17:15), the father says “he is lunatic”; this being another and most distressing effect of the possession.

18. And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him; and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away — rather, “becomes withered,” “dried up,” or “paralyzed”; as the same word is everywhere else rendered in the New Testament. Some additional particulars are given by Luke, and by our Evangelist below. “Lo,” says he in ^{<4039}Luke 9:39, “a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him hardly [or with difficulty] departeth from him.”

and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not — Our Lord replies to the father by a severe rebuke to the disciples. As if wounded at the exposure before such a multitude, of the weakness of His disciples’ faith, which doubtless He felt as a reflection on Himself, He puts them to the blush before all, but in language fitted only to raise expectation of what He Himself would do.

19. He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation — “and perverse,” or “perverted” (^{<4077}Matthew 17:17 ^{<4041}Luke 9:41).

how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? — language implying that it was a shame to them to want the faith necessary to perform this cure, and that it needed some. patience to put up with them. It is to us surprising that some interpreters, as CHRYSOSTOM and CALVIN, should represent this rebuke as addressed, not to the disciples at all, but to the

scribes who disputed with them. Nor does it much, if at all, mend the matter to view it as addressed to both, as most expositors seem to do. With BENGEL, DE WETTE, and MEYER, we regard it as addressed directly to the nine apostles who were unable to expel this evil spirit. And though, in ascribing this inability to their “want of faith” and the “perverted turn of mind” which they had drunk in with their early training, the rebuke would undoubtedly apply, with vastly greater force, to those who twitted the poor disciples with their inability, it would be to change the whole nature of the rebuke to suppose it addressed to those who had *no faith at all*, and were *wholly perverted*. It was because faith sufficient for curing this youth was to be expected of the disciples, and because they should by that time have got rid of the perversity in which they had been reared, that Jesus exposes them thus before the rest. And who does not see that this was fitted, more than anything else, to impress upon the by-standers the severe loftiness of the training He was giving to the Twelve, and the unsophisticated footing He was on with them?

Bring him unto me — The order to bring the patient to Him was instantly obeyed; when, lo! as if conscious of the presence of his Divine Tormentor, and expecting to be made to quit, the foul spirit rages and is furious, determined to die hard, doing all the mischief he can to this poor child while yet within his grasp.

20. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him — Just as the man with the legion of demons, “when he *saw* Jesus, ran and worshipped Him” (⁴¹⁸⁶Mark 5:6), so this demon, *when he saw Him*, immediately “tare him.” The feeling of terror and rage was the same in both cases.

and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming — Still Jesus does nothing, but keeps conversing with the father about the case — partly to have its desperate features told out by him who knew them best, in the hearing of the spectators; partly to let its virulence have time to show itself; and partly to deepen the exercise of the father’s soul, to draw out his faith, and thus to prepare both him and the by-standers for what He was to do.

21. And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child, etc. — Having told briefly the affecting features of the case, the poor father, half dispirited by the failure of the disciples and the aggravated virulence of the malady itself in presence of their Master, yet encouraged too by what he had heard of Christ, by the severe rebuke He had given to His disciples for not having faith enough to cure the boy, and by the dignity with which He had ordered him to be

brought to Him — in this mixed state of mind, he closes his description of the case with these touching words:

22. but if thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us — “us,” says the father; for it was a sore family affliction. Compare the language of the Syrophenician woman regarding her daughter, “Lord, help me.” Still nothing is done: the man is but *struggling into faith*: it must come a step farther. But he had to do with Him who breaks not the bruised reed, and who knew how to inspire what He demanded. The man had said to Him, “*If Thou canst do.*”

23. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe — The man had said, “If Thou canst do anything.” Jesus replies.

all things are possible to him that believeth — “My doing all depends on thy believing.” To impress this still more, He redoubles upon the believing: “If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.” Thus the Lord helps the birth of faith in that struggling soul; and now, though with pain and sore travail, it comes to the birth, as TRENCH, borrowing from OLSHAUSEN, expresses it. Seeing the case stood still, waiting not upon the Lord’s power but his own faith, the man becomes immediately conscious of conflicting principles, and rises into one of the noblest utterances on record.

24. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe: help thou mine unbelief — that is, “It is useless concealing from Thee, O Thou mysterious, mighty Healer, the unbelief that still struggles in this heart of mine; but that heart bears me witness that I do believe in Thee; and if distrust still remains, I disown it, I wrestle with it, I seek help from Thee against it.” Two things are very remarkable here: First, *The felt and owned presence of unbelief*, which only the strength of the man’s faith could have so revealed to his own consciousness. Second, *His appeal to Christ for help against his felt unbelief* — a feature in the case quite unparalleled, and showing, more than all protestations could have done, the insight he had attained into the existence of a *power in Christ more glorious than any he had besought for his poor child*. The work was done; and as the commotion and confusion in the crowd was now increasing, Jesus at once, as Lord of spirits, gives the word of command to the dumb and deaf spirit to be gone, never again to return to his victim.

26. And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him; and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead — The malignant, cruel spirit, now conscious that his time was come, gathers up his whole strength, with intent by a last stroke to kill his victim, and had nearly succeeded. But the Lord of life was there; the Healer of all maladies,

the Friend of sinners, the Seed of the woman, “the Stronger than the strong man armed,” was there. The very faith which Christ declared to be enough for everything being now found, it was not possible that the serpent should prevail. Fearfully is he permitted to bruise the *heel*, as in this case; but his own *head* shall go for it — his works shall be destroyed (^{<418>}1 John 3:8).

27. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.

28. Why could not we cast him out?

29. And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting — that is, as nearly all good interpreters are agreed, “this kind of evil spirits cannot be expelled,” or “so desperate a case of demoniacal possession cannot be cured, but by prayer and fasting.” But since the Lord Himself says that His disciples could not fast while He was with them, perhaps this was designed, as ALFORD hints, for their after-guidance — unless we take it as but a definite way of expressing the general truth, that great and difficult duties require special preparation and self-denial. But the answer to their question, as given in ^{<417>}Matthew 17:20,21 is fuller: “And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief. For verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you” (^{<417>}Matthew 17:20). See on ^{<412>}Mark 11:23. “Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting” (^{<417>}Matthew 17:21), that is, though nothing is impossible to faith, yet such a height of faith as is requisite for such triumphs is not to be reached either in a moment or without effort — either with God in prayer or with ourselves in self-denying exercises. Luke (^{<496>}Luke 9:43) adds, “And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God” — “at the majesty” or “mightiness of God,” in this last miracle, in the Transfiguration, etc.; or, at the *divine grandeur* of Christ rising upon them daily.

Second Explicit Announcement of His Approaching Death and Resurrection (^{<403>}Mark 9:30-32).

30. And they departed thence, and passed — were passing along.

through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know it — By comparing ^{<417>}Matthew 17:22,23 and ^{<496>}Luke 9:43,44 with this, we gather, that as our Lord’s reason for going through Galilee more privately than usual on this occasion was to reiterate to them the announcement which had so shocked them at the first mention of it, and thus familiarize them with it by little and little, so this was His reason for enjoining silence upon them as to their present movements.

31. For he taught his disciples, and said unto them — “Let these sayings sink down into your ears” (^{<0944>}Luke 9:44); not what had been passing between them as to His grandeur, but what He was now to utter.

The Son of man is delivered — The use of the present tense expresses how near at hand He would have them to consider it. As BENGEL says, steps were already in course of being taken to bring it about.

into the hands of men — This remarkable antithesis, “the Son of *man* shall be delivered into the hands of *men*,” it is worthy of notice, is in all the three Evangelists.

and they shall kill him — that is, “Be not carried off your feet by all that grandeur of Mine which ye have lately witnessed, but bear in mind what I have already told you and now distinctly repeat, that that Sun in whose beams ye now rejoice is soon to set in midnight gloom.”

and after he is killed, he shall rise the third day.

32. But they understood not that saying — “and it was hid from them, [so] that they perceived it not” (^{<0945>}Luke 9:45).

and were afraid to ask him — Their most cherished ideas were so completely dashed by such announcements, that they were afraid of laying themselves open to rebuke by asking Him any questions. But “they were Exceeding sorry” (^{<0723>}Matthew 17:23). While the other Evangelists, as WEBSTER and WILKINSON remark, notice their ignorance and their fear, Matthew, who was one of them, retains a vivid recollection of their sorrow.

^{<0933>}MARK 9:33-50.

STRIFE AMONG THE TWELVE WHO SHOULD BE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, WITH RELATIVE TEACHING — INCIDENTAL REBUKE OF JOHN FOR EXCLUSIVENESS. (= ^{<0901>}MATTHEW 18:1-9 ^{<0944>}LUKE 9:46-50).

Strife among the Twelve, with Relative Teaching (^{<0933>}Mark 9:33-37).

33. What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? — From this we gather that after the painful communication He had made to them, the Redeemer had allowed them to travel so much of the way by themselves; partly, no doubt, that He might have privacy for Himself to dwell on what lay before Him, and partly that they might be induced to

weigh together and prepare themselves for the terrible events which He had announced to them. But if so, how different was their occupation!

34. But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest — From ^{<408B>}Matthew 18:1 we should infer that the subject was introduced, not by our Lord, but by the disciples themselves, who came and asked Jesus who should be greatest. Perhaps one or two of them first referred the matter to Jesus, who put them off till they should all be assembled together at Capernaum. He had all the while “perceived the thought of their heart” (^{<409F>}Luke 9:47); but now that they were all together “in the house,” He questions them about it, and they are put to the blush, conscious of the *temper* towards each other which it had kindled. This raised the whole question afresh, and at this point our Evangelist takes it up. The subject was suggested by the recent announcement of the Kingdom (^{<406B>}Matthew 16:19-28), the transfiguration of their Master, and especially the preference given to three of them at that scene.

35. If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all — that is, “let him be” such: he must be prepared to take the last and lowest place. See on ^{<410E>}Mark 10:42-45.

36. And he took a child — “a little child” (^{<408B>}Matthew 18:2); but the word is the same in both places, as also in ^{<409F>}Luke 9:47.

and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms — This beautiful trait is mentioned by our Evangelist alone.

he said unto them — Here we must go to Matthew (^{<408B>}Matthew 18:3,4) for the first of this answer: “Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven: that is, “Conversion must be thorough; not only must the heart be turned to God in general, and from earthly to heavenly things, but in particular, except ye be converted from that carnal ambition which still rankles within you, into that freedom from all such feelings which ye see in this child, ye have neither part nor lot in the kingdom at all; and he who in this feature has most of the child, is highest there.” Whosoever, therefore, shall “humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven”: “for he that is [willing to be] least among you all, the same shall be great” (^{<409F>}Luke 9:48).

37. Whosoever shall receive one of such children — so manifesting the spirit unconsciously displayed by this child.

in my name — from love to Me.

receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but Him that sent me — (See on ^{<1000>}Matthew 10:40).

Incidental Rebuke of John for Exclusiveness (^{<4038>}Mark 9:38-41).

38. And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbade him, because he followeth not us — The link of connection here with the foregoing context lies, we apprehend, in the emphatic words which our Lord had just uttered, “in My name.” “Oh,” interposes John — young, warm, but not sufficiently apprehending Christ’s teaching in these matters — “that reminds me of something that we have just done, and we should like to know if we did right. We saw one casting out devils “in *Thy name*,” and we forbade him, because he followeth not us. Were we right, or were we wrong?” Answer — “Ye were wrong.” “But we did it because he followeth not us.” “No matter.”

39. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me — soon, that is, readily “speak evil of me.”

40. For he that is not against us is on our part — Two principles of immense importance are here laid down: “First, No one will readily speak evil of Me who has the faith to do a miracle in My name; and second, If such a person cannot be supposed to be *against* us, ye are to consider him *for* us.” Let it be carefully observed that our Lord does not say this man should *not* have “followed them,” nor yet that it was indifferent whether he did or not; but simply teaches how such a person was to be regarded, *although he did not* — namely, as a reverer of His name and a promoter of His cause.

41. For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward — (See on ^{<1002>}Matthew 10:42).

Continuation of Teaching Suggested by the Disciple’s Strife
(^{<4102>}Mark 9:42-50).

What follows appears to have no connection with the incidental reproof of John immediately preceding. As that had interrupted some important teaching, our Lord hastens back from it, as if no such interruption had occurred.

42. For whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me — or, shall cause them to stumble; referring probably to the effect which such unsavory disputes as they had held would have upon the

inquiring and hopeful who came in contact with them, leading to the belief that after all they were no better than others.

it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck — The word here is simply “millstone,” without expressing of which kind. But in ^{<41816>}Matthew 18:6 it is the “ass-turned” kind, far heavier than the small hand-mill turned by female slaves, as in ^{<41725>}Luke 17:35. It is of course the same which is meant here.

and he were cast into the sea — meaning, that if by such a death that stumbling were prevented, and so its eternal consequences averted, it would be a happy thing for them. Here follows a striking verse in ^{<41817>}Matthew 18:7, “Woe unto the world because of offenses!” (There will be stumblings and falls and loss of souls enough from the world’s treatment of disciples, without any addition from you: dreadful will be its doom in consequence; see that ye share not in it). “For it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh!” (The struggle between light and darkness will inevitably cause stumblings, but not less guilty is he who wilfully makes any to stumble).

43. And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell — See ^{<41819>}Matthew 5:29,30. The only difference between the words there and here is that there they refer to impure inclinations; here, to an ambitious disposition, an irascible or quarrelsome temper, and the like: and the injunction is to strike at the root of such dispositions and cut off the occasions of them.

47. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell-fire — On the words “hell” and “hell-fire,” or “the hell of fire,” see on ^{<41822>}Matthew 5:22.

48. Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched — See on ^{<41831>}Matthew 5:30; The “unquenchableness” of this fire has already been brought before us (see on ^{<41812>}Matthew 3:12); and the awfully vivid idea of an undying worm, everlastingly consuming an unconsumable body, is taken from the closing words of the evangelical prophet (^{<24694>}Isaiah 66:24), which seem to have furnished the later Jewish Church with its current phraseology on the subject of future punishment (see LIGHTFOOT).

49. For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt — A difficult verse, on which much has been written — some of it to little purpose. “Every one” probably means “Every follower of mine”; and the “fire” with which he “must be salted” probably means

“a fiery trial” to season him. (Compare ^{<38B>}Malachi 3:2, etc.). The reference to salting the sacrifice is of course to that maxim of the Levitical law, that every acceptable sacrifice must be sprinkled with salt, to express symbolically its soundness, sweetness, wholesomeness, acceptability. But as it had to be *roasted* first, we have here the further idea of a salting with fire. In this case, “every sacrifice,” in the next clause, will mean, “Every one who would be found an acceptable offering to God”; and thus the whole verse may perhaps be paraphrased as follows: “Every disciple of Mine shall have a fiery trial to undergo, and everyone who would be found an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable and well-pleasing to God, must have such a *salting*, like the Levitical sacrifices.” Another, but, as it seems to us, farfetched as well as harsh, interpretation — suggested first, we believe, by MICHAELIS, and adopted by ALEXANDER — takes the “every sacrifice which must be salted with fire” to mean those who are “cast into hell,” and the *preservative* effect of this salting to refer to the preservation of the lost not only *in* but *by means of* the fire of hell. Their reason for this is that the other interpretation changes the meaning of the “fire,” and the characters too, from the lost to the saved, in these verses. But as our Lord confessedly ends His discourse with the case of His own true disciples, the transition to them in ^{<40B>}Mark 9:48 is perfectly natural; whereas to apply the preservative salt of the sacrifice to the preserving quality of hell-fire, is equally contrary to the symbolical sense of salt and the Scripture representations of future torment. Our Lord has still in His eye the unseemly jarrings which had arisen among the Twelve, the peril to themselves of allowing any indulgence to such passions, and the severe self-sacrifice which salvation would cost them.

50. Salt is good; but if the salt have lost his saltness — its power to season what it is brought into contact with.

wherewith will ye season it? — How is this property to be restored? See on ^{<41B>}Matthew 5:13.

Have salt in yourselves — See to it that ye retain in yourselves those precious qualities that will make you a blessing to one another, and to all around you.

and — with respect to the miserable strife out of which all this discourse has sprung, in one concluding word.

have peace one. with another — This is repeated in ^{<51B>}1 Thessalonians 5:13.

CHAPTER 10

◀1103 MARK 10:1-12.

FINAL DEPARTURE FROM GALILEE — DIVORCE.
(◀1103 MATTHEW 19:1-12 ▶1103 LUKE 9:51).

See on ▶1103 Matthew 19:1-12.

◀1103 MARK 10:13-19.

LITTLE CHILDREN BROUGHT TO CHRIST.
(◀1103 MATTHEW 19:13-15 ▶1103 LUKE 18:15-17).

See on ▶1103 Luke 18:15-17.

◀1107 MARK 10:17-31.

THE RICH YOUNG RULER.
(◀1107 MATTHEW 19:16-30 ▶1107 LUKE 18:18-30).

See on ▶1107 Luke 18:18-30.

◀1102 MARK 10:32-45.

THIRD EXPLICIT AND STILL FULLER ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS APPROACHING SUFFERINGS, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION — THE AMBITIOUS REQUEST OF JAMES AND JOHN, AND THE REPLY. (◀1102 MATTHEW 20:17-28 ▶1102 LUKE 18:31-34).

Third Announcement of His approaching Sufferings, Death, and Resurrection (◀1102 Mark 10:32-34).

32. And they were in the way — on the road.

going up to Jerusalem — in Perea, and probably somewhere between Ephraim and Jericho, on the farther side of the Jordan, and to the northeast of Jerusalem.

and Jesus went before them — as GROTIUS says, in the style of an intrepid Leader.

and they were amazed — or “struck with astonishment” at His courage in advancing to certain death.

and as they followed, they were afraid — for their own safety. These artless, lifelike touches — not only from an eye-witness, but one whom the noble carriage of the Master struck with wonder and awe — are peculiar to Mark, and give the second Gospel a charm all its own; making us feel as if we ourselves were in the midst of the scenes it describes. Well might the poet exclaim: “The Savior, what a noble flame Was kindled in His breast, When, hasting to Jerusalem, He march’d before the rest!” COWPER

And he took again the twelve — referring to His previous announcements on this sad subject.

and began to tell them what things should happen unto him — “were going to befall Him.” The word expresses something already begun but not brought to a head, rather than something wholly future.

33. Saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem — for the last time, and — “all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished” ([Ⓢ]Luke 18:31).

the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles — This is the first express statement that the Gentiles would combine with the Jews in His death; the two grand divisions of the human race for whom He died thus taking part in crucifying the Lord of Glory, as WEBSTER and WILKINSON observe.

34. And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again — Singularly explicit as this announcement was, Luke ([Ⓢ]Luke 18:34) says “they understood none of these things; and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.” The meaning of the words they could be at no loss to understand, but their import in relation to His Messianic kingdom they could not penetrate; the whole prediction being right in the teeth of their preconceived notions. That they should have clung so tenaciously to the popular notion of an “*unsuffering*” Messiah,

may surprise us; but it gives inexpressible weight to their after-testimony to a suffering and dying Savior.

Ambitious Request of James and John — The Reply
(^{418B}Mark 10:35-45).

35. And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying — Matthew (^{411B}Matthew 20:20) says their “mother came to Him with her sons, worshipping Him and desiring,” etc. (Compare ^{412B}Matthew 27:56, with ^{415B}Mark 15:40).

Salome was her name (^{416B}Mark 16:1). We cannot be sure with which of the parties the movement originated; but as our Lord, even in Matthew’s account, addresses Himself to James and John, taking no account of the mother, it is likely the mother was merely set on by them. The thought was doubtless suggested to her sons by the recent promise to the Twelve of “thrones to sit on, when the Son of man should sit on the throne of His glory” (^{402B}Matthew 19:28); but after the reproof so lately given them (^{418B}Mark 9:33, etc.). they get their mother to speak for them.

Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire — thus cautiously approaching the subject.

36. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? — Though well aware what was in their mind and their mother’s, our Lord will have the unseemly petition uttered before all.

37. Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory — that is, Assign to us the two places of highest honor in the coming kingdom. The semblance of a plea for so presumptuous a request might possibly have been drawn from the fact that one of the two usually leaned on the breast of Jesus, or sat next Him at meals, while the other was one of the favored three.

38. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask — How gentle the reply to such a request, preferred at such a time, after the sad announcement just made!

can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? — To “drink of a cup” is in Scripture a figure for getting one’s fill either of good (^{496B}Psalm 16:5 23:5 116:13 ^{410B}Jeremiah 16:7) or of ill (^{497B}Psalm 75:8 ^{498B}John 18:11 ^{499B}Revelation 14:10). Here it is the cup of suffering.

and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with — (Compare for the language, ^{490B}Psalm 42:7). The object of this question seems to have been to try how far those two men were *capable* of the

dignity to which they aspired and this on the principle that he who is able to suffer most for His sake will be the nearest to Him in His kingdom.

39. And they said unto him, We can — Here we see them owning their mother's petition for them as their own; and doubtless they were perfectly sincere in professing their willingness to follow their Master to any suffering He might have to endure. As for James, he was the first of the apostles who was honored, and showed himself able to be baptized with his Master's baptism of blood (⁴¹¹Acts 12:1,2); while *John*, after going through all the persecutions to which the infant Church was exposed from the Jews, and sharing in the struggles and sufferings occasioned by the first triumphs of the Gospel among the Gentiles, lived to be the victim, after all the rest had got to glory, of a bitter persecution in the evening of his days, for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. Yes, they were dear believers and blessed men, in spite of this unworthy ambition, and their Lord knew it; and perhaps the foresight of what they would have to pass through, and the courageous testimony He would yet receive from them, was the cause of that gentleness which we cannot but wonder at in His reproof.

And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized — No doubt this prediction, when their sufferings at length came upon them, cheered them with the assurance, not that they would sit on His right and left hand — for of that thought they would be heartily ashamed — but that “if they suffered with Him, they should be also glorified together.”

40. But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand in not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared — “of My Father” (⁴¹²Matthew 20:23). The supplement which our translators have inserted is approved by some good interpreters, and the proper sense of the word rendered “but” is certainly in favor of it. But besides that it makes the statement too elliptical — leaving too many words to be supplied — it seems to make our Lord repudiate the right to assign to each of His people his place in the kingdom of glory; a thing which He nowhere else does, but rather the contrary. It is true that He says their place is “prepared for them by His Father.” But that is true of their admission to heaven at all; and yet from His great white throne Jesus will Himself adjudicate the kingdom, and authoritatively invite into it those on His right hand, calling them the “blessed of His Father”; so little inconsistency is there between the eternal choice of them by His Father, and that public adjudication of them, not only to heaven in general, but each to his own position in it, which all Scripture assigns to Christ. The true rendering, then, of this clause, we take it, is this: “But to sit on My right hand and on My left hand is not Mine to give, save

to them for whom it is prepared.” When therefore He says, “It is not Mine to give,” the meaning is, “I cannot give it as a *favor* to whomsoever I *please*, or on a principle of *favoritism*; it belongs exclusively to those for whom it is prepared,” etc. And if this be His meaning, it will be seen how far our Lord is from disclaiming the right to assign to each his proper place in His Kingdom; that on the contrary, He expressly asserts it, merely announcing that the principle of distribution is quite different from what these petitioners supposed. Our Lord, it will be observed, does not *deny* the petition of James and John, or say they shall *not* occupy the place in His kingdom which they now improperly sought: — for aught we know, *that may be their true place*. All we are sure of is, that their asking it was displeasing to Him “to whom all judgment is committed,” and so was not fitted to gain their object, but just the reverse. (See what is taught in ²⁴⁸Luke 14:8-11). One at least of these brethren, as ALFORD strikingly remarks, saw on the right and on the left hand of their Lord, as He hung upon the tree, the crucified thieves; and bitter indeed must have been the remembrance of this ambitious prayer at that moment.

41. And when the ten heard it, they began to be much displeased with James and John — or “were moved with indignation,” as the same word is rendered in ⁴¹⁸Matthew 20:24. The expression “*began to be*,” which is of frequent occurrence in the Gospels, means that more passed than is expressed, and that we have but the result. And can we blame the ten for the indignation which they felt? Yet there was probably a spice of the old spirit of rivalry in it, which in spite of our Lord’s recent lengthened, diversified, and most solemn warnings against it, had not ceased to stir in their breasts.

42. But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule — are recognized or acknowledged as rulers.

over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them: and their great ones exercise authority upon them — as superiors exercising an acknowledged authority over inferiors.

43. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister — a subordinate servant.

44. And whosoever of you will be the chiefest — or “first.”

shall be — that is, “let him be, or “shall be he who is prepared to be.”

servant of all — one in the lowest condition of service.

45. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many — “instead of many,”

that is, “In the kingdom about to be set up, this principle shall have no place. All My servants shall there be equal; and the only greatness known to it shall be the greatness of humility and devotedness to the service of others. He that goes down the deepest in these services of self-denying humility shall rise the highest and hold the chiefest place in that kingdom; even as the Son of man, whose abasement and self-sacrifice for others, transcending all, gives Him of right a place above all!” As “the Word in the beginning with God,” He *was* ministered unto; and as the risen Redeemer in our nature He now *is* ministered unto, “angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him” (◀1106▶ 1 Peter 3:22); but not for this came He hither. The Served of all came to be the Servant of all; and His last act was the grandest Service ever beheld by the universe of God — “HE GAVE HIS LIFE A RANSOM FOR MANY!”, etc. Many” is here to be taken, not in contrast with *few* or with *all*, but in opposition to *one* — the one Son of man for the many sinners.

◀1106▶ MARK 10:46-52.

BLIND BARTIMAEUS HEALED. (◀1119▶ MATTHEW 20:29-34 ◀1285▶ LUKE 18:35-43).

See on ◀1285▶ Luke 18:35-43.

CHAPTER 11

◀1108 MARK 11:1-11.

CHRIST'S TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM, ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK. (◀1206 MATTHEW 21:1-9 ▶2929 LUKE 19:29-40 ▶3122 JOHN 12:12,19).

See on ▶2929 Luke 19:29-40.

◀1111 MARK 11:11-26.

THE BARREN FIG TREE CURSED WITH LESSONS FROM IT - SECOND CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE, ON THE SECOND AND THIRD DAYS OF THE WEEK. (◀1212 MATTHEW 21:12-22 ▶2945 LUKE 19:45-48).

11. And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon — surveyed.

all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out into Bethany with the twelve — Thus briefly does our Evangelist dispose of this His first day in Jerusalem, after the triumphal entry. Nor do the Third and Fourth Gospels give us more light. But from Matthew (◀1210 Matthew 21:10,11,14-16) we learn some additional and precious particulars, for which see on ▶2945 Luke 19:45-48. It was not now safe for the Lord to sleep in the city, nor, from the day of His Triumphal Entry, did He pass one night in it, save the last fatal one.

The Barren Fig Tree Cursed (◀1112 Mark 11:12-14).

12. And on the morrow — The Triumphal Entry being on the first day of the week, this following day was Monday.

when they were come from Bethany — “in the morning” (◀1218 Matthew 21:18).

he was hungry — How was that? Had he stolen forth from that dear roof at Bethany to the “mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God?” (◀1102 Luke 6:12); or, “in the morning,” as on a former occasion,

“risen up a great while before day, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed” (^{<40135>}Mark 1:35); not breaking His fast thereafter, but bending His steps straight for the city, that He might “work the works of Him that sent Him while it was day?” (^{<4004>}John 9:4). We know not, though one lingers upon and loves to trace out the every movement of that life of wonders. One thing, however we are sure of — it was *real bodily hunger* which He now sought to allay by the fruit of this fig tree, “if haply He might find any thing thereon”; not a mere *scene* for the purpose of teaching a lesson, as some early heretics maintained, and some still seem virtually to hold.

13. And seeing a fig tree — (In ^{<40119>}Matthew 21:19, it is “one fig tree,” but the sense is the same as here, “a certain fig tree,” as in ^{<40189>}Matthew 8:19, etc.). Bethphage, which adjoined Bethany, derives his name from its being a *fig region* — “House of figs.”

afar off having leaves — and therefore promising fruit, which in the case of figs come before the leaves.

he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet — What the precise import of this explanation is, interpreters are not agreed. Perhaps all that is meant is, that as the proper fig season had not arrived, no fruit would have been expected even of this tree but for the leaves which it had, which were in this case prematurely and unnaturally developed.

14. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever — That word did not *make* the tree barren, but sealed it up in its own barrenness. See on ^{<40133>}Matthew 13:13-15.

And his disciples heard it — and marked the saying. This is introduced as a connecting link, to explain what was afterwards to be said on the subject, as the narrative has to proceed to the other transactions of this day.

Second Cleansing of the Temple (^{<40115>}Mark 11:15-18).

For the exposition of this portion, see on ^{<40265>}Luke 19:45-48.

Lessons from the Cursing of the Fig Tree (^{<40112>}Mark 11:20-26).

20. And in the morning — of Tuesday, the third day of the week: He had slept, as during all this week, at Bethany.

as they passed by — going into Jerusalem again.

they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots — no partial blight, leaving life in the root; but it was now dead, root and branch. In ^{<40119>}Matthew 21:19

it is said it withered away as soon as it was cursed. But the full blight had not appeared probably at once; and in the dusk perhaps, as they returned to Bethany, they had not observed it. The precision with which Mark distinguishes the days is not observed by Matthew, intent only on holding up the truths which the incident was designed to teach. In Matthew the whole is represented as taking place at once, just as the two stages of Jairus' daughter — dying and dead — are represented by him as one. The only difference is between a mere summary and a more detailed narrative, each of which only confirms the other.

21. And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto him — satisfied that a miracle so very peculiar — a miracle, not of *blessing*, as all His other miracles, but of *cursing* — could not have been wrought but with some higher reference, and fully expecting to hear something weighty on the subject.

Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away — so connecting the two things as to show that he traced the death of the tree entirely to the curse of his Lord. Matthew (⁴¹¹⁷Matthew 21:20) gives this simply as a general exclamation of surprise by the disciples “how soon” the blight had taken effect.

22. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.

23. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed ... he shall have whatsoever he saith — Here is the lesson now. From the nature of the case supposed — that they might wish a mountain removed and cast into the sea, a thing far removed from anything which they could be thought actually to desire — it is plain that not physical but moral obstacles to the progress of His kingdom were in the Redeemer's view, and that what He designed to teach was the great lesson, that *no obstacle should be able to stand before a confiding faith in God*.

24. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them — This verse only *generalizes* the assurance of ⁴¹¹²³Mark 11:23; which seems to show that it was designed for the special encouragement of *evangelistic* and *missionary* efforts, while this is a directory for prevailing *prayer in general*.

25. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses, etc. — This is repeated from the Sermon on the Mount (see on ⁴¹⁰²Matthew 6:12); to remind them that if this was necessary to the

acceptableness of all prayer, much more *when great things were to be asked and confidently expected.*

◀1127▶ **MARK 11:27-33.**

THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS QUESTIONED — HIS REPLY.

(◀1213▶ **MATTHEW 21:23-27** ◀1211▶ **LUKE 20:1-8**).

See on ◀1213▶ Matthew 21:23-27.

CHAPTER 12

◀117▶ MARK 12:1-12.

PARABLE OF THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN. (◀123▶ MATTHEW 21:33-46 ▶219▶ LUKE 20:9-18).

See on ▶123▶ Matthew 21:33-46.

◀1123▶ MARK 12:13-40.

ENTANGLING QUESTIONS ABOUT TRIBUTE THE RESURRECTION, AND THE GREAT COMMANDMENT, WITH THE REPLIES — CHRIST Baffles THE PHARISEES BY A QUESTION ABOUT DAVID, AND DENOUNCES THE SCRIBES. (◀125▶ MATTHEW 22:15-46 ▶211▶ LUKE 20:20-47).

The time of this section appears to be still the third day (Tuesday) of Christ's last week. Matthew introduces the subject by saying (◀125▶ Matthew 22:15), "Then went the Pharisees and took counsel how they might entangle Him in His talk."

13. And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees — "their disciples," says Matthew (◀126▶ Matthew 22:16); probably young and zealous scholars in that hardening school.

and of the Herodians — (See on ▶124▶ Matthew 12:14). In ▶211▶ Luke 20:20 these willing tools are called "spies, which should feign themselves just [righteous] men, that they might take hold of His words, that so they might deliver Him unto the power and authority of the governor." Their plan, then, was to entrap Him into some expression which might be construed into disaffection to the Roman government; the Pharisees themselves being notoriously discontented with the Roman yoke.

Tribute to Caesar (◀124▶ Mark 12:14-17).

14. And when they were come, they say unto him, Master — Teacher.

we know that thou art true, and carest for no man; for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth — By

such flattery — though they said only the truth — they hoped to throw Him off His guard.

Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not? — It was the civil poll tax paid by all enrolled in the “census.” See on ^{<40725>}Matthew 17:25.

15. Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy — “their wickedness” (^{<4218>}Matthew 22:18); “their craftiness” (^{<4219>}Luke 20:23). The malignity of their hearts took the form of craft, pretending what they did not feel — an anxious desire to be guided aright in a matter which to a scrupulous few might seem a question of some difficulty. Seeing perfectly through this,

He said unto them, Why tempt ye me? — “hypocrites!”

bring me a penny that I may see it — “the tribute money” (^{<4219>}Matthew 22:19).

16. And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image — stamped upon the coin.

and superscription? — the words encircling it on the obverse side.

And they said unto him, Caesar’s.

17. And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s — Putting it in this general form, it was impossible for sedition itself to dispute it, and yet it dissolved the snare.

and to God the things that are God’s — How much is there in this profound but to them startling addition to the maxim, and how incomparable is the whole for fullness, brevity, clearness, weight!

and they marvelled at him — “at His answer, and held their peace” (^{<4218>}Luke 20:26), “and left Him, and went their way” (^{<4222>}Matthew 22:22).

The Resurrection (^{<41218>}Mark 12:18-27).

18. Then come unto him the Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection — “neither angel nor spirit” (^{<4217>}Acts 23:7). They were the materialists of the day. See on ^{<4216>}Acts 23:6.

and they asked him, saying — as follows:

19-22. Master, Moses wrote unto us — (^{<6215>}Deuteronomy 25:5).

If a man’s brother die, and leave his wife behind him ... And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also.

23. In the resurrection therefore when they shall rise, etc.

24. Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures — regarding the future state.

neither the power of God? — before which a thousand such difficulties vanish.

25. For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage — “neither can they die any more” (^{<2183>}Luke 20:36). Marriage is ordained to perpetuate the human family; but as there will be no breaches by death in the future state, this ordinance will cease.

but are as the angels which are in heaven — In Luke (^{<2183>}Luke 20:36) it is “equal unto the angels.” But as the subject is death and resurrection, we are not warranted to extend the equality here taught beyond the one point — the *immortality* of their nature. A beautiful clause is added in Luke (^{<2183>}Luke 20:36) — “and are the children of God” — not in respect of *character*, which is not here spoken of, but of *nature* — “being the children of the resurrection,” as rising to an undecaying existence (^{<6183>}Romans 8:21,23), and so being the children of their Father’s immortality (^{<51861>}Timothy 6:16).

26. And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses — “even Moses” (^{<2187>}Luke 20:37), whom they had just quoted for the purpose of entangling Him.

how in the bush God spake unto him — either “at the bush,” as the same expression is rendered in ^{<2187>}Luke 20:37, that is, when he was there; or “in the [section of his history regarding the] bush.” The structure of our verse suggests the latter sense, which is not unusual.

saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? — (^{<1816>}Exodus 3:6).

27. He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living — not “the God of dead but [the God] of living persons.” The word in brackets is almost certainly an addition to the genuine text, and critical editors exclude it. “For all live unto Him” (^{<2188>}Luke 20:38) — “in His view,” or “in His estimation.” This last statement — found only in Luke — though adding nothing to the argument, is an important additional illustration. It is true, indeed, that to God no human being is dead or ever will be, but all mankind sustain an abiding conscious relation to Him; but the “all” here means “those who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world.” These sustain a gracious covenant relation to God which cannot be dissolved. (Compare ^{<6181>}Romans 6:10,11). In this sense our Lord affirms that for Moses to call the Lord the “GOD” of His patriarchal servants, if at that moment they had

no existence, would be unworthy of Him. He “would be *ashamed* to be called their God, if He had not prepared for them a city” (^{<8116>}Hebrews 11:16). It was concluded by some of the early Fathers, from our Lord’s resting His proof of the Resurrection on such a passage as this, instead of quoting some much clearer testimonies of the Old Testament, that the Sadducees, to whom this was addressed, acknowledged the authority of no part of the Old Testament but the Pentateuch; and this opinion has held its ground even till now. But as there is no ground for it in the New Testament, so JOSEPHUS is silent upon it; merely saying that they rejected the Pharisaic traditions. It was because the Pentateuch was regarded by all classes as the fundamental source of the Hebrew religion, and all the succeeding books of the Old Testament but as developments of it, that our Lord would show that even there the doctrine of the Resurrection was taught. And all the rather does He select this passage, as being not a bare annunciation of the doctrine in question, but as expressive of that glorious truth *out of which the Resurrection springs*. “And when the multitude heard this” (says ^{<1223>}Matthew 22:23), “they were astonished at His doctrine.” “Then,” adds ^{<1219>}Luke 20:39,40, “certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said” — enjoying His victory over the Sadducees. “And after that they durst not ask Him any [question at all]” — neither party could; both being for the time utterly foiled.

The Great Commandment (^{<1128>}Mark 12:28-34).

“But when the Pharisees had heard that He had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together” (^{<1234>}Matthew 22:34).

28. And one of the scribes — “a lawyer,” says Matthew (^{<1235>}Matthew 22:35); that is, teacher of the law.

came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him — manifestly in no bad spirit. When Matthew (^{<1235>}Matthew 22:35) therefore says he came “tempting,” or “trying him,” as one of the Pharisaic party who seemed to enjoy the defeat He had given to the Sadducees, we may suppose that though somewhat priding himself upon his insight into the law, and not indisposed to measure his knowledge with One in whom he had not yet learned to believe, he was nevertheless an honest-hearted, fair disputant.

Which is the first commandment of all? — first in importance; the primary, leading commandment, the most fundamental one. This was a question which, with some others, divided the Jewish teachers into rival schools. Our Lord’s answer is in a strain of respect very different from what He showed to cavillers — ever observing His own direction, “Give not that which is holy to the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine;

lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you”
 (4005 Matthew 7:6).

29. And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is — The readings here vary considerably. TISCHENDORF and TREGELLES read simply, “the first is”; and they are followed by MEYER and ALFORD. But though the authority for the precise form of the received text is slender, a form almost identical with it seems to have most weight of authority. Our Lord here gives His explicit sanction to the distinction between commandments of a more *fundamental* and *primary* character, and commandments of a more *dependent* and *subordinate* nature; a distinction of which it is confidently asserted by a certain class of critics that the Jews knew nothing, that our Lord and His apostles nowhere lay down, and which has been invented by Christian divines. (Compare 4123 Matthew 23:23).

Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord — This every devout Jew recited twice every day, and the Jews do it to this day; thus keeping up the great ancient national protest against the polytheisms and pantheisms of the heathen world: it is the great utterance of the national faith in One Living and Personal God — “ONE JEHOVAH!”

30. And thou shalt — We have here the language of *law*, expressive of God’s *claims*. What then are we here bound down to do? One word is made to express it. And what a word! Had the essence of the divine law consisted in *deeds*, it could not possibly have been expressed in a single word; for no one deed is comprehensive of all others embraced in the law. But as it consists in *an affection of the soul*, one word suffices to express it — but only one. *Fear*, though due to God and enjoined by Him, is *limited* in its sphere and *distant* in character. *Trust*, *hope*, and the like, though essential features of a right state of heart towards God, are called into action only by *personal necessity*, and so are — in a good sense, it is true, but still are properly — *selfish* affections; that is to say, they have respect to *our own well-being*. But LOVE is an *all-inclusive* affection, embracing not only every other affection proper to its object, but all that is proper to be *done* to its object; for as love spontaneously seeks to please its object, so, in the case of men to God, it is the native well spring of a voluntary obedience. It is, besides, the most *personal* of all affections. One may fear an event, one may hope for an *event*, one may rejoice in an *event*; but one can love only a *Person*. It is the *tenderest*, the most *unselfish*, the most *divine* of all affections. Such, then, is the affection in which the essence of the divine law is declared to consist.

Thou shalt love — We now come to the glorious Object of that demanded affection.

Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God — that is, Jehovah, the Self-Existent One, who has revealed Himself as the “I AM,” and there is *none else*; who, though by His name JEHOVAH apparently at an unapproachable distance from His finite creatures, yet bears to *thee* a real and definite relationship, out of which arises *His claim* and *thy duty* — of LOVE. But with what are we to love Him? Four things are here specified. First, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God”

with thy heart — This sometimes means “the whole inner man” (as ²⁰²³Proverbs 4:23); but that cannot be meant here; for then the other three particulars would be superfluous. Very often it means “our emotional nature” — the seat of *feeling* as distinguished from our intellectual nature or the seat of *thought*, commonly called the “mind” (as in ²⁰⁴⁷Philippians 4:7). But neither can this be the sense of it here; for here the heart is distinguished both from the “mind” and the “soul.” The “heart,” then, must here mean the *sincerity* of both the thoughts and the feelings; in other words, *uprightness* or *true-heartedness*, as opposed to a *hypocritical* or *divided* affection. But next, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God” with thy soul. This is designed to command our emotional nature: Thou shalt put *feeling* or *warmth* into thine affection. Further, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God”

with thy mind — This commands our intellectual nature: Thou shalt put *intelligence* into thine affection — in opposition to a blind devotion, or mere devoteeism. Lastly, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God”

with thy strength — This commands our energies: Thou shalt put *intensity* into thine affection — “Do it with thy might” (²⁰⁹⁰Ecclesiastes 9:10). Taking these four things together, the command of the Law is, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God *with all thy powers* — with a *sincere*, a *fervid*, an *intelligent*, an *energetic* love.” But this is not all that the Law demands. God will have all these qualities in their most perfect exercise. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God,” says the Law, “with *all thy heart*,” or, with perfect sincerity; “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all thy soul*,” or, with the utmost fervor; “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all thy mind*,” or, in the fullest exercise of an enlightened reason; and “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all thy strength*,” or, with the whole energy of our being! So much for the First Commandment.

31. And the second is like — “unto it” (⁴⁰²⁹Matthew 22:39); as demanding the same affection, and only the extension of it, in its proper measure, to the creatures of Him whom we thus love — our *brethren* in the participation of

the same nature, and *neighbors*, as connected with us by ties that render each dependent upon and necessary to the other.

Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself — Now, as we are not to love ourselves supremely, this is virtually a command, in the first place, *not* to love our neighbor with all our heart and soul and mind and strength. And thus it is a condemnation of the idolatry of the creature. Our supreme and uttermost affection is to be reserved for God. But as *sincerely* as ourselves we are to love all mankind, and with *the same readiness to do and suffer for them* as we should reasonably desire them to show to us. The golden rule (⁴⁰⁷²Matthew 7:12) is here our best interpreter of the nature and extent of these claims.

There is none other commandment greater than these — or, as in ⁴¹²⁴Matthew 22:40, “On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets” (see on ⁴¹⁵⁷Matthew 5:17). It is as if He had said, “This is all Scripture in a nutshell; the whole law of human duty in a portable, pocket form.” Indeed, it is so *simple* that a child may understand it, so *brief* that all may remember it, so *comprehensive* as to embrace all possible cases. And from its very nature it is *unchangeable*. It is inconceivable that God should require from his rational creatures anything *less*, or in substance anything *else*, under any *dispensation*, in any *world*, at any *period* throughout eternal duration. He cannot but claim this — all this — alike in *heaven*, in *earth*, and in *hell*! And this incomparable summary of the divine law belonged to the *Jewish religion*! As it shines in its own self-evidencing splendor, so it reveals its own true source. The religion from which the world has received it could be none other than a *God-given religion*!

32. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master — Teacher.

thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he — The genuine text here seems clearly to have been, “There is one,” without the word “God”; and so nearly all critical editors and expositors read.

33. And to love him with all the heart ... and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices — more, that is, than all positive institutions; thereby showing insight into the essential difference between what is *moral* and in its own nature *unchangeable*, and what is obligatory only *because enjoined*, and only *so long as enjoined*.

34. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly — rather, “intelligently,” or “sensibly”; not only in a good spirit, but with a promising measure of insight into spiritual things.

he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God — for he had but *to follow out a little further* what he seemed sincerely to own, to find his way into the kingdom. He needed only the experience of another eminent scribe who at a later period said, “We know that *the law is spiritual*, but *I am carnal*, sold under sin”: who exclaimed, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me?” but who added, “I thank God through Jesus Christ!” (^{<4074>}Romans 7:14,24,25). Perhaps among the “great company of the priests” and other Jewish ecclesiastics who “were obedient to the faith,” almost immediately after the day of Pentecost (^{<4017>}Acts 6:7), this upright lawyer was one. But for all his nearness to the Kingdom of God, it may be he never entered it.

And no man after that durst ask any question — all feeling that they were no match for Him, and that it was vain to enter the lists with Him.

Christ Baffles the Pharisees Regarding David (^{<4125>}Mark 12:35-37).

35. And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple — and “while the Pharisees were gathered together” (^{<424>}Matthew 22:41).

How say the scribes that Christ is the son of David? — How come they to give it out that Messiah is to be the son of David? In Matthew (^{<424>}Matthew 22:42), Jesus asks them, “What think ye of Christ?” or of the promised and expected Messiah? “Whose son is He [to be]? They say unto Him, The son of David.” The sense is the same. “He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord?” (^{<424>}Matthew 22:42,43).

36. For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool — (^{<4311>}Psalms 110:1).

37. David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he then his son? — There is but one solution of this difficulty. Messiah is at once inferior to David as his son according to the flesh, and superior to him as the Lord of a kingdom of which David is himself a subject, not the sovereign. The human and divine natures of Christ, and the spirituality of His kingdom — of which the highest earthly sovereigns are honored if they be counted worthy to be its subjects — furnish the only key. to this puzzle.

And the common people — the immense crowd.

heard him gladly — “And no man was able to answer Him a word; neither durst any man from that day forth ask Him any more questions” (^{<4246>}Matthew 22:46).

The Scribes Denounced (^{<4128>}Mark 12:38-40).

38. And he said unto them in his doctrine — rather, “in His teaching”; implying that this was but a specimen of an extended discourse, which Matthew gives in full (^{<1210>}Matthew 23:1-39). Luke says (^{<206>}Luke 20:45) this was “in the audience of all the people said unto His disciples.”

Beware of the scribes, which love — or like.

to go in long clothing — (see on ^{<1215>}Matthew 23:5).

and love salutations in the market-places,

39. And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms — or positions.

at feasts — On this love of distinction, see on ^{<2147>}Luke 14:7; ^{<1065>}Matthew 6:5.

40. Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation — They took advantage of their helpless condition and confiding character to obtain possession of their property, while by their “long prayers” they made them believe they were raised far above “filthy lucre.” So much the “greater damnation” awaited them. (Compare ^{<1233>}Matthew 23:33). A lifelike description this of the Romish clergy, the true successors of “the scribes.”

^{<1124>}MARK 12:41-44.

THE WIDOW'S TWO MITES. (^{<2101>}LUKE 21:1-4).

See on ^{<2101>}Luke 21:1-4.

CHAPTER 13

MARK 13:1-37.

CHRIST'S PROPHECY OF THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM, AND WARNINGS SUGGESTED BY IT TO PREPARE FOR HIS SECOND COMING. (MATTHEW 24:1-51 LUKE 21:5-36).

Jesus had uttered all His mind against the Jewish ecclesiastics, exposing their character with withering plainness, and denouncing, in language of awful severity, the judgments of God against them for that unfaithfulness to their trust which was bringing ruin upon the nation. He had closed this His last public discourse (Matthew 23:1-39) by a passionate lamentation over Jerusalem, and a solemn farewell to the temple. "And," says Matthew (Matthew 24:1), "Jesus went out and departed from the temple" — never more to re-enter its precincts, or open His mouth in public teaching. *With this act ended His public ministry.* As He withdrew, says OLSHAUSEN, the gracious presence of God left the sanctuary; and the temple, with all its service, and the whole theocratic constitution, was given over to destruction. What immediately followed is, as usual, most minutely and graphically described by our Evangelist.

1. And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him — The other Evangelists are less definite. "As some spake," says Luke (Luke 21:5); "His disciples came to Him," says Matthew (Matthew 24:2). Doubtless it was the speech of one, the mouthpiece, likely, of others.

Master — Teacher.

see what manner of stones and what buildings are here — wondering probably, how so massive a pile could be overthrown, as seemed implied in our Lord's last words regarding it. JOSEPHUS, who gives a minute account of the wonderful structure, speaks of stones forty cubits long [*Wars of the Jews*, 5.5.1]. and says the pillars supporting the porches were twenty-five cubits high, all of one stone, and that of the whitest marble [*Wars of the Jews*, 5.5.2]. Six days' battering at the walls, during the siege, made no impression upon them [*Wars of the Jews*, 6.4.1]. Some of the

under-building, yet remaining, and other works, are probably as old as the first temple.

2. And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? — “Ye call My attention to these things? I have seen them. Ye point to their massive and durable appearance: now listen to their fate.”

there shall not be left — “left here” (^{<410D>}Matthew 24:2).

one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down — Titus ordered the whole city and temple to be demolished [JOSEPHUS, *Wars of the Jews*, 7.1.1]; Eleazar wished they had all died before seeing that holy city destroyed by enemies’ hands, and before the temple was so profanely *dug up* [*Wars of the Jews*, 7.8.7].

3. And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, over against the temple — On their way from Jerusalem to Bethany they would cross Mount Olivet; on its summit He seats Himself, over against the temple, having the city all spread out under His eye. How graphically is this set before us by our Evangelist!

Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately — The other Evangelists tell us merely that “the disciples” did so. But Mark not only says that it was four of them, but names them; and they were the first *quarternion* of the Twelve.

4. Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled? — “and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?” They no doubt looked upon the date of all these things as one and the same, and their notions of the things themselves were as confused as of the times of them. Our Lord takes His own way of meeting their questions.

Prophecies of the Destruction of Jerusalem (^{<411E>}Mark 13:5-31).

5. And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed lest any man deceive you:

6. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ — (see ^{<414E>}Matthew 24:5) — “and the time draweth nigh” (^{<420E>}Luke 21:8); that is, the time of the kingdom in its full splendor.

and shall deceive many — “Go ye not therefore after them” (^{<420E>}Luke 21:8). The reference here seems not to be to pretended Messiahs, deceiving those who rejected the claims of Jesus, of whom indeed there were plenty — for our Lord is addressing His own genuine disciples — but to persons

pretending to be Jesus Himself, returned in glory to take possession of His kingdom. This gives peculiar force to the words, “Go ye not therefore after them.”

7. And when ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, be ye not troubled — (See on ^{<4133>}Mark 13:13, and compare ^{<2811>}Isaiah 8:11-14).

for such things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet — In Luke (^{<4219>}Luke 21:9), “the end is not by and by,” or “immediately.” Worse must come before all is over.

8. These are the beginnings of sorrows — “of travail-pangs,” to which heavy calamities are compared. (See ^{<4081>}Jeremiah 4:31, etc.). The annals of TACITUS tell us how the Roman world was convulsed, before the destruction of Jerusalem, by rival claimants of the imperial purple.

9. But take heed to yourselves: for — “before all these things” (^{<4212>}Luke 21:12); that is, before these public calamities come.

they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten — These refer to *ecclesiastical* proceedings against them.

and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings — before *civil* tribunals next.

for my sake, for a testimony against them — rather “unto them” — to give you an opportunity of bearing testimony to Me before them. In the Acts of the Apostles we have the best commentary on this announcement. (Compare ^{<4007>}Matthew 10:17,18).

10. And the gospel must first be published among all nations — “for a witness, and then shall the end come” (^{<4244>}Matthew 24:14). God never sends judgment without previous warning; and there can be no doubt that the Jews, already dispersed over most known countries, had nearly all heard the Gospel “as a witness,” before the end of the Jewish state. The same principle was repeated and will repeat itself to “*the end*.”

11. But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand — “Be not anxious beforehand.”

what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate — “Be not filled with apprehension, in the prospect of such public appearances for Me, lest ye should bring discredit upon My name, nor think it necessary to prepare beforehand what ye are to say.”

but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost — (See on ^{<4009>}Matthew 10:19,20.)

13. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake — Matthew (^{<4184>}Matthew 24:12) adds this important intimation: “And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many” — “of the many,” or “of the most,” that is, of the generality of professed disciples — “shall wax cold.” Sad illustrations of the effect of abounding iniquity in cooling the love even of faithful disciples we have in the *Epistle of James*, written about the period here referred to, and too frequently ever since.

but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved — See on (^{<4182>}Matthew 10:21,22; and compare (^{<5108>}Hebrews 10:38,39, which is a manifest allusion to these words of Christ; also (^{<4120>}Revelation 2:10. Luke (^{<4218>}Luke 21:18) adds these reassuring words: “But there shall not an hair of your heads perish.” Our Lord had just said (^{<4216>}Luke 21:16) that they should be *put to death*; showing that this precious promise is far above immunity from mere bodily harm, and furnishing a key to the right interpretation of the ninety-first Psalm and such like.

14. But when ye shall see — “Jerusalem compassed by armies” — by encamped armies; in other words, when ye shall see it *besieged*, and

the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not — that is, as explained in Matthew (^{<4185>}Matthew 24:15), “standing in the holy place.”

(**let him that readeth understand**) — readeth that prophecy. That “the abomination of desolation” here alluded to was intended to point to the Roman ensigns, as the symbols of an idolatrous, and so unclean pagan power, may be gathered by comparing what Luke says in the corresponding verse (^{<4217>}Luke 21:20); and commentators are agreed on it. It is worthy of notice, as confirming this interpretation, that in I Maccabees 1:54 — which, though apocryphal *Scripture*, is authentic *history* — the expression of Daniel (^{<2713>}Daniel 11:31 12:11) is applied to the idolatrous profanation of the Jewish altar by Antiochus Epiphanes.

then let them that be in Judea flee to the mountains — The ecclesiastical historian, EUSEBIUS, early in the fourth century, tells us that the Christians fled to *Pella*, at the northern extremity of Perea, being “prophetically directed” — perhaps by some prophetic intimation more explicit than this, which would be their chart — and that thus they escaped the predicted calamities by which the nation was overwhelmed.

15. And let him that is on the housetop not get down into the house, neither enter therein, to take any thing out of his house — that is, let him take the outside flight of steps from the roof to the ground; a graphic way of denoting the extreme urgency of the case, and the danger of being

tempted, by the desire to save his property, to delay till escape should become impossible.

16. And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment.

17. But woe to them — or, “alas for them.”

that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days — in consequence of the aggravated suffering which those conditions would involve.

18. And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter — making escape perilous, or tempting you to delay your flight. Matthew (^{<484>}Matthew 24:20) adds, “neither on the sabbath day,” when, from fear of a breach of its sacred rest, they might be induced to remain.

19. For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be — Such language is not unusual in the Old Testament with reference to tremendous calamities. But it is matter of literal fact that there was crowded into the period of the Jewish war an amount and complication of suffering perhaps unparalleled; as the narrative of JOSEPHUS, examined closely and arranged under different heads, would show.

20. And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh — that is, no human life.

should be saved: but for the elect’s sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days — But for this merciful “shortening,” brought about by a remarkable concurrence of causes, the whole nation would have perished, in which there yet remained a remnant to be afterwards gathered out. This portion of the prophecy closes, in Luke, with the following vivid and important glance at the subsequent fortunes of the chosen people: “And they shall fall by the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (^{<42124>}Luke 21:24). The language as well as the idea of this remarkable statement is taken from ^{<2780>}Daniel 8:10,13. What, then, is its import here? It implies, first, that a time is coming when Jerusalem shall cease to be “trodden down of the Gentiles”; which it was then by pagan, and since and till now is by Mohammedan unbelievers: and next, it implies that the period when this treading down of Jerusalem by the Gentiles is to cease will be when “the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” or “completed.” But what does this mean? We may gather the meaning of it from ^{<6110>}Romans 11:1-36 in which the divine purposes and procedure towards

the chosen people from first to last are treated in detail. In ^{<6125>}Romans 11:25 these words of our Lord are thus reproduced: “For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.” See the exposition of that verse, from which it will appear that “till the fullness of the Gentiles be come in” — or, in our Lord’s phraseology, “till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” — does not mean “till the general conversion of the world to Christ,” but “till the Gentiles have had their *full time* of that place in the Church which the Jews had before them.” After that period of *Gentilism*, as before of *Judaism*, “Jerusalem” and Israel, no longer “trodden down by the Gentiles,” but “grafted into their own olive tree,” shall constitute, with the believing Gentiles, one Church of God, and fill the whole earth. What a bright vista does this open up!

21. And then, if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo he is there; believe him not — So ^{<6173>}Luke 17:23. No one can read JOSEPHUS’ account of what took place before the destruction of Jerusalem without seeing how strikingly this was fulfilled.

to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect — implying that this, though all *but* done, will prove impossible. What a precious assurance! (Compare ^{<3109>}2 Thessalonians 2:9-12).

23. But take ye heed; behold, I have foretold you all things — He had just told them that the seduction of the elect would prove impossible; but since this would be all but accomplished, He bids them be on their guard, as the proper means of averting that catastrophe. In Matthew (^{<4103>}Matthew 24:26-28) we have some additional particulars: “Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert; go not forth: behold, He is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” See on ^{<6173>}Luke 17:23,24. “For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.” See on ^{<6173>}Luke 17:37.

24. But in those days, after that tribulation — “Immediately after the tribulation of those days” (^{<4103>}Matthew 24:29).

the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light.

25. And the stars of heaven shall fall — “and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth” (^{<6173>}Luke 21:25,26).

and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken — Though the grandeur of this language carries the mind over the head of all periods but that of Christ's Second Coming, nearly every expression will be found used of the Lord's coming in terrible national judgments: as of Babylon (²³¹⁹Isaiah 13:9-13); of Idumea (²³⁴¹Isaiah 34:1,2,4,8-10); of Egypt (²³¹⁷Ezekiel 32:7,8); compare also ²⁹⁰⁷Psalms 18:7-15 ²³⁴¹Isaiah 24:1,17-19 ²⁹⁰³Joel 2:10,11, etc. We cannot therefore consider the mere strength of this language a proof that it refers exclusively or primarily to the precursors of the final day, though of course in "*that day*" it will have its most awful fulfillment.

26. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory — In ⁴¹²⁹Matthew 24:30, this is given most fully: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man," etc. That this language finds its highest interpretation in the Second Personal Coming of Christ, is most certain. But the question is, whether that be the primary sense of it as it stands here? Now if the reader will turn to ²⁰⁷³Daniel 7:13,14, and connect with it the preceding verses, he will find, we think, the true key to our Lord's meaning here. There the powers that oppressed the Church — symbolized by rapacious wild beasts — are summoned to the bar of the Great God, who as the Ancient of days seats Himself, with His assessors, on a burning Throne: thousand thousands ministering to Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before Him. "The judgment is set, and the books are opened." Who that is guided by the *mere words* would doubt that this is a description of the Final Judgment? And yet nothing is clearer than that it is *not*, but a description of a vast *temporal* judgment, upon organized bodies of men, for their incurable hostility to the kingdom of God upon earth. Well, after the doom of these has been pronounced and executed, and room thus prepared for the unobstructed development of the kingdom of God over the earth, what follows? "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like THE SON OF MAN came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they [the angelic attendants] brought Him near before Him." For what purpose? To receive investiture in the kingdom, which, as Messiah, of right belonged to Him. Accordingly, it is added, "And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Comparing this with our Lord's words, He seems to us, by "the Son of man [on which phrase, see on ⁴¹⁵¹John 1:51] coming in the clouds with great power and glory," to mean, that when judicial vengeance shall once have been executed upon Jerusalem, and the ground thus cleared for the unobstructed

establishment of His own kingdom, His true regal claims and rights would be visibly and gloriously asserted and manifested. See on ^{<4028>}Luke 9:28 (with its parallels in ^{<4178>}Matthew 17:1 ^{<4092>}Mark 9:2), in which nearly the same language is employed, and where it can hardly be understood of anything else than *the full and free establishment of the kingdom of Christ on the destruction of Jerusalem*. But what is that “sign of the Son of man in heaven?” Interpreters are not agreed. But as before Christ came to destroy Jerusalem some appalling portents were seen in the air, so before His Personal appearing it is likely that something *analogous* will be witnessed, though of what nature it would be vain to conjecture.

27. And then shall he send his angels — “with a great sound of a trumpet” (^{<4061>}Matthew 24:31).

and shall gather together his elect, etc. — As the tribes of Israel were anciently gathered together by sound of trumpet (^{<4093>}Exodus 19:13,16,19 ^{<4029>}Leviticus 23:24 ^{<4300>}Psalms 81:3-5), so any mighty gathering of God’s people, by divine command, is represented as collected by sound of trumpet (^{<4271>}Isaiah 27:13; compare ^{<6115>}Revelation 11:15); and the ministry of angels, employed in all the great operations of Providence, is here held forth as the agency by which the present assembling of the elect is to be accomplished. LIGHTFOOT thus explains it: “When Jerusalem shall be reduced to ashes, and that wicked nation cut off and rejected, then shall the Son of man send His ministers with the trumpet of the Gospel, and they shall gather His elect of the several nations, from the four corners of heaven: so that God shall not want a Church, although that ancient people of His be rejected and cast off: but that ancient Jewish Church being destroyed, a new Church shall be called out of the Gentiles.” But though something like this appears to be the primary sense of the verse, in relation to the destruction of Jerusalem, no one can fail to see that the language swells beyond any gathering of a human family into a Church upon earth, and forces the thoughts onward to that gathering of the Church “at the last trump,” to meet the Lord in the air, which is to wind up the present scene. Still, this is not, in our judgment, the *direct* subject of the prediction; for ^{<4138>}Mark 13:28 limits the whole prediction to the generation then existing.

28. Now learn a parable of the fig tree — “Now from the fig tree learn the parable,” or the high lesson which this teaches.

When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves — “its leaves.”

29. So ye, in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass — rather, “coming to pass.”

know that it — “the kingdom of God” (^{<2131>}Luke 21:31).

is nigh, even at the doors — that is, the full manifestation of it; for till then it admitted of no full development. In Luke (^{<2128>}Luke 21:28) the following words precede these: “And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh” — their redemption, in the first instance certainly, from Jewish oppression (^{<3124>}1 Thessalonians 2:14-16 ^{<2152>}Luke 11:52); but in the highest sense of these words, redemption from all the oppressions and miseries of the present state at the second appearing of the Lord Jesus.

30. Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass fill all these things be done — or “fulfilled” (^{<2664>}Matthew 24:34 ^{<2132>}Luke 21:32). Whether we take this to mean that the whole would be fulfilled within the limits of the generation then current, or, according to a usual way of speaking, that the generation then existing would not pass away without seeing a *begun* fulfillment of this prediction, the facts entirely correspond. For either the whole was fulfilled in the destruction accomplished by Titus, as many think; or, if we stretch it out, according to others, till the thorough dispersion of the Jews a little later, under Adrian, every requirement of our Lord’s words seems to be met.

31. Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away — the strongest possible expression of the divine authority by which He spake; not as Moses or Paul might have said of their own inspiration, for such language would be unsuitable in any merely human mouth.

Warnings to Prepare for the Coming of Christ Suggested by the Foregoing Prophecy (^{<4132>}Mark 13:32-37).

It will be observed that, in the foregoing prophecy, as our Lord approaches the crisis of the day of vengeance on Jerusalem and redemption for the Church — at which stage the analogy between that and the day of final vengeance and redemption waxes more striking — His language rises and swells beyond all temporal and partial vengeance, beyond all earthly deliverances and enlargements, and ushers us resistlessly into the scenes of the final day. Accordingly, in these six concluding verses it is manifest that preparation for “THAT DAY” is what our Lord designs to inculcate.

32. But of that day and that hour — that is, the precise time.

knoweth no man — literally, no one.

no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father — This very remarkable statement regarding “the Son” is peculiar to Mark. Whether it means that the Son was *not at that time in possession*

of the knowledge referred to, or simply that it was not *among the things which He had received to communicate* — has been matter of much controversy even among the firmest believers in the proper Divinity of Christ. In the latter sense it was taken by some of the most eminent of the ancient Fathers, and by LUTHER, MELANCTHON, and most of the older Lutherans; and it is so taken by BENGEL, LANGE, WEBSTER and WILKINSON, CHRYSOSTOM and others understood it to mean that *as man* our Lord was ignorant of this. It is taken literally by CALVIN, GROTIUS, DE WETTE, MEYER, FRITZSCHE, STIER, ALFORD, and ALEXANDER.

33. Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is.

34. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, etc. — The idea thus far is similar to that in the opening part of the parable of the talents (^{<1254>}Matthew 25:14,15).

and commanded the porter — the gatekeeper.

to watch — pointing to the official duty of the ministers of religion to give warning of approaching danger to the people.

35. Watch ye therefore; for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning — an allusion to the four Roman watches of the night.

36. Lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping — See on ^{<1278>}Luke 12:35-40; ^{<1212>}Luke 12:42-46.

37. And what I say unto you — this discourse, it will be remembered, was delivered in private.

I say unto all, Watch — anticipating and requiring the diffusion of His teaching by them among all His disciples, and its perpetuation through all time.

CHAPTER 14

MARK 14:1-11.

THE CONSPIRACY OF THE JEWISH AUTHORITIES TO PUT JESUS TO DEATH — THE SUPPER AND THE — ANOINTING AT BETHANY — JUDAS AGREES WITH THE CHIEF PRIESTS TO BETRAY HIS LORD. (MATTHEW 26:1-16 LUKE 22:1-6 JOHN 12:1-11).

The events of this section appeared to have occurred on the fourth day (*Wednesday*) of the Redeemer's Last Week.

Conspiracy of the Jewish Authorities to Put Jesus to Death (Mark 14:1,2).

1. After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread — The meaning is, that two days after what is about to be mentioned the passover would arrive; in other words, what follows occurred two days *before* the feast.

and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death — From Matthew's fuller account (Matthew 26:1-75) we learn that our Lord announced this to the Twelve as follows, being the first announcement to them of the precise time: "And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings" (Matthew 26:1) — referring to the contents of Matthew 24:1-25:46, which He delivered to His disciples; His public ministry being now closed: from His *prophetical* He is now passing into His *priestly* office, although all along He Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses — "He said unto His disciples, Ye know that after two days is [the feast of] the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified." The *first* and the *last* steps of His final sufferings are brought together in this brief announcement of all that was to take place. The *passover* was the first and the chief of the three great annual festivals, commemorative of the redemption of God's people from Egypt, through the sprinkling of the blood of a lamb divinely appointed to be slain for that end; the destroying angel, "when he saw the blood, *passing over*" the Israelitish houses, on which that blood was seen, when he came to destroy all the first-born in the land of Egypt (Exodus 12:12,13) — bright typical foreshadowing of the great Sacrifice, and the

Redemption effected thereby. Accordingly, “by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working,” it was so ordered that precisely at the passover season, “Christ our Passover should be sacrificed for us.” On the day following the passover commenced “the feast of unleavened bread,” so called because for seven days only unleavened bread was to be eaten (^{<4228>}Exodus 12:18-20). See on ^{<4185>}1 Corinthians 5:6-8. We are further told by Matthew (^{<4185>}Matthew 26:3) that the consultation was held in the palace of Caiaphas the high priest, between the chief priests, [the scribes], and the elders of the people, how “they might take Jesus by subtlety and kill Him.”

2. But they said, Not on the feast day — rather, not during the feast; not until the seven days of unleavened bread should be over.

lest there be an uproar of the people — In consequence of the vast influx of strangers, embracing all the male population of the land who had reached a certain age, there were within the walls of Jerusalem at this festival some two million people; and in their excited state, the danger of tumult and bloodshed among “the people,” who for the most part took Jesus for a prophet, was extreme. See JOSEPHUS [*Antiquities*, 20.5.3]. What plan, if any, these ecclesiastics fixed upon for seizing our Lord, does not appear. But the proposal of Judas being at once and eagerly gone into, it is probable they were till then at some loss for a plan sufficiently quiet and yet effectual. So, just at the feast time shall it be done; the unexpected offer of Judas relieving them of their fears. Thus, as BENGEL remarks, did the divine counsel take effect.

*The Supper and the Anointing at Bethany Six Days
before the Passover* (^{<4148>}Mark 14:3-9).

The time of this part of the narrative is *four days before* what has just been related. Had it been part of the regular train of events which our Evangelist designed to record, he would probably have inserted it in its proper place, before the conspiracy of the Jewish authorities. But having come to the treason of Judas, he seems to have gone back upon this scene as what probably gave immediate occasion to the awful deed.

3. And being in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman — It was “Mary,” as we learn from ^{<6105>}John 12:3.

having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard — pure *nard*, a celebrated aromatic — (See So 1:12).

very precious — “very costly” (^{<6105>}John 12:3).

and she brake the box, and poured it on his head — “and anointed,” adds John (^{<B12>}John 12:3), “the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment.” The only use of this was to refresh and exhilarate — a grateful compliment in the East, amid the closeness of a heated atmosphere, with many guests at a feast. Such was the form in which Mary’s love to Christ, at so much cost to herself, poured itself out.

4. And there were some that had indignation within themselves and said — Matthew says (^{<B18>}Matthew 26:8), “But when His disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying,” etc. The spokesman, however, was none of the true-hearted Eleven — as we learn from John (^{<B14>}John 12:4): “Then saith one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, which should betray Him.” Doubtless the thought stirred first in his breast, and issued from his base lips; and some of the rest, ignorant of his true character and feelings, and carried away by his plausible speech, might for the moment feel some chagrin at the apparent waste.

Why was this waste of the ointment made?

5. For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence — about \$50 in our currency.

and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her — “This he said,” remarks John (^{<B16>}John 12:6), and the remark is of exceeding importance, “not that he cared for the poor but because he was a thief, and had the bag” — the scrip or treasure chest — “and bare what was put therein” — not “bare it off” by theft, as some understand it. It is true that he did this; but the expression means simply that he had charge of it and its contents, or was treasurer to Jesus and the Twelve. What a remarkable arrangement was this, by which an avaricious and dishonest person was not only taken into the number of the Twelve, but entrusted with the custody of their little property! The purposes which this served are obvious enough; but it is further noticeable, that the remotest hint was never given to the Eleven of his true character, nor did the disciples most favored with the intimacy of Jesus ever suspect him, till a few minutes before he voluntarily separated himself from their company — for ever!

6. And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me — It was good in itself, and so was acceptable to Christ; it was eminently seasonable, and so more acceptable still; and it was “what she could,” and so most acceptable of all.

7. For ye have the poor with you always — referring to ^{<B51>}Deuteronomy 15:11.

and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always — a gentle hint of His approaching departure, by One who knew the worth of His own presence.

8. She hath done what she could — a noble testimony, embodying a principle of immense importance.

she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying — or, as in John (^{<B127>}John 12:7), “Against the day of my burying hath she kept this.” Not that she, dear heart, thought of His burial, much less reserved any of her nard to anoint her dead Lord. But as the time was so near at hand when that office would have to be performed, *and she was not to have that privilege even after the spices were brought for the purpose* (^{<A1108>}Mark 16:1), He lovingly regards it as done now. “In the act of love done to Him,” says OLSHAUSEN beautifully, “she has erected to herself an eternal monument, as lasting as the Gospel, the eternal Word of God. From generation to generation this remarkable prophecy of the Lord has been fulfilled; and even we, in explaining this saying of the Redeemer, of necessity contribute to its accomplishment.” “Who but Himself,” asks STIER, “had the power to ensure to any work of man, even if resounding in His own time through the whole earth, an imperishable remembrance in the stream of history? Behold once more here the majesty of His royal judicial supremacy in the government of the world, in this, ‘Verily I say unto you.’”

10. And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them — that is, to make his proposals, and to bargain with them, as appears from Matthew’s fuller statement (^{<A134>}Matthew 26:14,15) which says, he “went unto the chief priests, and said, What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.” The thirty pieces of silver were thirty shekels, the fine paid for man- or maid-servant accidentally killed (^{<A1213>}Exodus 21:32), and equal to about \$25 in our currency — “a *goodly* price that I was prized at of them!” (^{<A3113>}Zechariah 11:13).

11. And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him money — Matthew alone records the precise sum, because a remarkable and complicated prophecy, which he was afterwards to refer to, was fulfilled by it.

And he sought how he might conveniently betray him — or, as more fully given in Luke (^{<A216>}Luke 22:6), “And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray Him unto them in the absence of the multitude.” That he should avoid an “uproar” or “riot” among the people, which probably was made an essential condition by the Jewish authorities, was thus

assented to by the traitor; into whom, says Luke (<218> Luke 22:3), “Satan entered,” to put him upon this hellish deed.

<4142> MARK 14:12-26.

PREPARATION FOR, AND LAST CELEBRATION OF, THE PASSOVER — ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE TRAITOR — INSTITUTION OF THE SUPPER. (<4187> MATTHEW 26:17-30 <217> LUKE 22:7-23,39 <6121> JOHN 13:21-30).

See on <217> Luke 22:7-23; <229> Luke 22:39; and see on <610> John 13:10,11; <6138> John 13:18,19; <6121> John 13:21-30.

<4147> MARK 14:27-31.

THE DESERTION OF JESUS BY HIS DISCIPLES AND THE FALL OF PETER, FORETOLD. (<4151> MATTHEW 26:31-35 <228> LUKE 22:31-38 <6136> JOHN 13:36-38).

See on <228> Luke 22:31-46.

<4142> MARK 14:32-42.

THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN. (<4156> MATTHEW 26:36-46 <229> LUKE 22:39-46).

See on <229> Luke 22:39-46.

<4148> MARK 14:43-52.

BETRAYAL AND APPREHENSION OF JESUS — FLIGHT OF HIS DISCIPLES. (<4147> MATTHEW 26:47-56 <2247> LUKE 22:47-53 <6181> JOHN 18:1-12).

See on <6181> John 18:1-12.

◀114B▶ MARK 14:53-72.

JESUS ARRAIGNED BEFORE THE SANHEDRIM CONDEMNED TO DIE, AND SHAMEFULLY ENTREATED — THE FALL OF PETER. (◀115B▶ MATTHEW 26:57-75 ◀225B▶ LUKE 22:54-71 ◀618B3▶ JOHN 18:13-18,24-27).

Had we only the first three Gospels, we should have concluded that our Lord was led immediately to Caiaphas, and had before the Council. But as the Sanhedrim could hardly have been brought together at the dead hour of night — by which time our Lord was in the hands of the officers sent to take Him — and as it was only “as soon as it was day” that the Council met (◀226B▶ Luke 22:66), we should have had some difficulty in knowing what was done with Him during those intervening hours. In the Fourth Gospel, however, all this is cleared up, and a very important addition to our information is made (◀618B3▶ John 18:13,14,19-24). Let us endeavor to trace the events in the true order of succession, and in the detail supplied by a comparison of all the four streams of text.

Jesus Is Brought Privately before Annas, the Father-in-Law of Caiaphas (◀618B3▶ John 18:13,14).

◀618B3▶ JOHN 18:13:

And they led Him away to Annas first; for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year — This successful Annas, as ELLICOTT remarks, was appointed high priest by Quirinus, A.D. 12, and after holding the office for several years, was deposed by Valerius Gratus, Pilate’s predecessor in the procuratorship of Judea [JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities*, 18.2.1, etc.]. He appears, however, to have possessed vast influence, having obtained the high priesthood, not only for his son Eleazar, and his son-in-law Caiaphas, but subsequently for four other sons, under the last of whom James, the brother of our Lord, was put to death [*Antiquities*, 20.9.1]. It is thus highly probable that, besides having the title of “high priest” merely as one who had filled the office, he to a great degree retained the powers he had formerly exercised, and came to be regarded practically as a kind of rightful high priest.

◀618B4▶ JOHN 18:14:

Now Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. See on ◀618B3▶ John 11:51. What passed between Annas and our Lord during this interval the beloved disciple

reserves till he has related the beginning of Peter's fall. To this, then, as recorded by our own Evangelist, let us meanwhile listen.

Peter Obtains Access within the Quadrangle of the High Priest's Residence, and Warms Himself at the Fire (<4165>Mark 14:53,54).

53. And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled — or rather, “there gathered together unto him.”

all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes — it was then a full and formal meeting of the Sanhedrim. Now, as the first three Evangelists place all Peter's denials of his Lord after this, we should naturally conclude that they took place *while our Lord stood before the Sanhedrim*. But besides that the natural impression is that the scene around the fire took place *overnight*, the *second crowing of the cock*, if we are to credit ancient writers, would occur about the beginning of the fourth watch, or between three and four in the morning. By that time, however, the Council had probably convened, being warned, perhaps, that they were to prepare for being called at any hour of the morning, should the Prisoner be successfully secured. If this be correct, it is fairly certain that only the *last* of Peter's three denials would take place while our Lord was under trial before the Sanhedrim. One thing more may require explanation. If our Lord had to be transferred from the residence of Annas to that of Caiaphas, one is apt to wonder that there is no mention of His being marched from the one to the other. But the building, in all likelihood, was one and the same; in which case He would merely have to be taken perhaps across the court, from one chamber to another.

54. And Peter followed him afar off, even into — or “from afar, even to the interior of.”

the palace of the high priest — “An oriental house,” says ROBINSON, “is usually built around a quadrangular interior court; into which there is a passage (sometimes arched) through the front part of the house, closed next the street by a heavy folding gate, with a smaller wicket for single persons, kept by a porter. The interior court, often paved or flagged, and open to the sky, is the *hall*, which our translators have rendered ‘palace,’ where the attendants made a fire; and the passage beneath the front of the house, from the street to this court, is the *porch*.” The place where Jesus stood before the high priest may have been an open room, or place of audience on the ground floor, in the rear or on one side of the court; such rooms, open in front, being customary. It was close upon the court, for Jesus heard all that was going on around the fire, and turned and looked upon Peter (<0223>Luke 22:61).

and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire — The graphic details, here omitted, are supplied in the other Gospels.

⌘ **JOHN 18:18:**

And the servants and officers stood there — that is, in the hall, within the quadrangle, open to the sky.

who had made a fire of coals — or charcoal (in a brazier probably).

for it was cold — John alone of all the Evangelists mentions the *material*, and the *coldness* of the night, as WEBSTER and WILKINSON remark. The elevated situation of Jerusalem, observes THOLUCK, renders it so cold about Easter as to make a watch fire at night indispensable.

And Peter stood with them and warmed himself — “He went in,” says Matthew (⌘ Matthew 26:58), “and sat with the servants *to see the end.*” These two minute statements throw an interesting light on each other. His wishing to “see the end,” or issue of these proceedings, was what led him into the palace, for he evidently feared the worst. But once in, the serpent coil is drawn closer; it is a cold night, and why should not he take advantage of the fire as well as others? Besides, in the talk of the crowd about the all-engrossing topic he may pick up something which he would like to hear. Poor Peter! But now, let us leave him warming himself at the fire, and listening to the hum of talk about this strange case by which the subordinate officials, passing to and fro and crowding around the fire in this open court, would while away the time; and, following what appears the order of the Evangelical Narrative, let us turn to Peter’s Lord.

Jesus Is Interrogated by Annas — His Dignified Reply — Is Treated with Indignity by One of the Officials — His Meek Rebuke
(⌘ John 18:19-23).

We have seen that it is only the Fourth Evangelist who tells us that our Lord was sent to Annas first, overnight, until the Sanhedrim could be got together at earliest dawn. We have now, in the same Gospel, the deeply instructive scene that passed during this non-official interview.

⌘ **JOHN 18:19:**

The high priest — Annas.

then asked Jesus of His disciples and of His doctrine — probably to entrap Him into some statements which might be used against Him at the trial. From our Lord’s answer it would seem that “His disciples” were understood to be some secret party.

◀6120▶ **JOHN 18:20.**

Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world — compare ◀4100▶ Mark 7:4. He speaks of His public teaching as now a past thing — as now all over.

I ever taught in the synagogue and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort — courting publicity, though with sublime noiselessness.

and in secret have I said nothing — rather, “spake I nothing”; that is, nothing different from what He taught in public: all His private communications with the Twelve being but explanations and developments of His public teaching. (Compare ◀23519▶ Isaiah 45:19 48:16).

◀6121▶ **JOHN 18:21:**

Why askest thou Me? ask them which heard Me what I have said to them — rather, “what I said unto them.”

behold, they know what I said — From this mode of replying, it is evident that our Lord saw the attempt to draw Him into self-crimination, and resented it by falling back upon the right of every accused party to have some charge laid against Him by competent witnesses.

◀6122▶ **JOHN 18:22:**

And when He had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest Thou the high priest so? — (see ◀23106▶ Isaiah 50:6). It would seem from ◀4242▶ Acts 23:2 that this summary and undignified way of punishment what was deemed insolence in the accused had the sanction even of the high priests themselves.

◀6123▶ **JOHN 18:23:**

Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil — rather, “If I spoke evil,” in reply to the high priest.

bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou Me? — He does not say “if *not* evil,” as if His reply had been merely unobjectionable; but “if *well*,” which seems to challenge something altogether fitting in the remonstrance. He had addressed to the high priest. From our Lord’s procedure here, by the way, it is evident enough that His own precept in the Sermon on the Mount — that when smitten on the one cheek we are to turn to the smiter the other also (◀41159▶ Matthew 5:39) — is not to be taken to the letter.

Annas Sends Jesus to Caiaphas (◀6124▶ John 18:24).

ⲄⲂⲔⲛ JOHN 18:24.

Now Annas had sent Him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest — On the meaning of this verse there is much diversity of opinion; and according as we understand it will be the conclusion we come to, whether there was but *one hearing* of our Lord before Annas and Caiaphas together, or whether, according to the view we have given above, there were *two hearings* — a preliminary and informal one before Annas, and a formal and official one before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrim. If our translators have given the right sense of the verse, there was but one hearing before Caiaphas; and then ⲄⲂⲔⲛ John 18:24 is to be read as a *parenthesis*, merely supplementing what was said in ⲄⲂⲔⲛ Mark 14:13. This is the view of CALVIN, BEZA, GROTIUS, BENDEL, DE WETTE, MEYER, LUCKE, THOLUCK. But there are decided objections to this view. First: We cannot but think that the *natural* sense of the whole passage, embracing ⲄⲂⲔⲛ Mark 14:13,14,19-24, is that of a preliminary non-official hearing before “Annas first,” the particulars of which are accordingly recorded; and then of a transference of our Lord from Annas to Caiaphas. Second: On the other view, it is not easy to see why the Evangelist should not have inserted ⲄⲂⲔⲛ Mark 14:24 immediately after ⲄⲂⲔⲛ Mark 14:13; or rather, how he could well have done otherwise, As it stands, it is not only quite out of its proper place, but comes in most perplexingly. Whereas, if we take it as a simple statement of fact, that after Annas had finished his interview with Jesus, as recorded in ⲄⲂⲔⲛ Mark 14:19-23, he transferred Him to Caiaphas to be formally tried, all is clear and natural. Third: The pluperfect sense “*had sent*” is in the translation only; the sense of the original word being simply “sent.” And though there are cases where the aorist here used has the sense of an English pluperfect, this sense is not to be put upon it unless it be obvious and indisputable. Here that is so far from being the case, that the pluperfect “*had sent*” is rather an unwarrantable *interpretation* than a simple *translation* of the word: informing the reader that, *according to the view of our translators*, our Lord “*had been*” sent to Caiaphas *before* the interview just recorded by the Evangelist; whereas, if we translate the verse literally — “Annas *sent* Him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest” — we get just the information we expect, that Annas, having merely “*precognosced*” the prisoner, hoping to draw something out of Him, “sent Him to Caiaphas” to be formally tried before the proper tribunal. This is the view of CHRYSOSTOM and AUGUSTINE among the Fathers; and of the moderns, of OLSHAUSEN, SCHLEIERMACHER, NEANDER, EBRARD, WIESELER, LANGE, LUTHARDT. This brings us back to the text of our second Gospel, and in it to

The Judicial Trial and Condemnation of the Lord Jesus by the Sanhedrim — (ⲄⲂⲔⲛ Mark 14:55-64).

But let the reader observe, that though this is introduced by the Evangelist before any of the denials of Peter are recorded, we have given reasons for concluding that probably the *first two denials* took place while our Lord was with Annas, and the last only during the trial before the Sanhedrim.

55. And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death — Matthew (^{<41859>}Matthew 26:59) says they “sought *false* witness.” They knew they could find nothing valid; but having their Prisoner to bring before Pilate, they behoved to *make a case*.

and found none — none that would suit their purpose, or make a decent ground of charge before Pilate.

56. For many bare false witness against him — From their debasing themselves to “*seek*” them, we are led to infer that they were *bribed* to bear false witness; though there are never wanting sycophants enough, ready to sell themselves for naught, if they may but get a smile from those above them: see a similar scene in ^{<41811>}Acts 6:11-14. How is one reminded here of that complaint, “False witnesses did rise up: they laid to my charge things that I knew not” (^{<41811>}Psalm 31:11)!

but their witness agreed not together — If even *two* of them had been agreed, it would have been greedily enough laid hold of, as all that the law insisted upon even in capital cases (^{<41706>}Deuteronomy 17:6). But even in this they failed. One cannot but admire the providence which secured this result; since, on the one hand, it seems astonishing that those unscrupulous prosecutors and their ready tools should so bungle a business in which they felt their whole interests bound up; and, on the other hand, if they *had* succeeded in making even a plausible case, the effect on the progress of the Gospel might for a time have been injurious. But at the very time when His enemies were saying, “God hath forsaken Him; persecute and take Him; for there is none to deliver Him” (^{<41711>}Psalm 71:11). He whose Witness He was and whose work He was doing was keeping Him as the apple of His eye, and while He was making the wrath of man to praise Him, was restraining the remainder of that wrath (^{<41710>}Psalm 76:10).

57. And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him — Matthew (^{<41860>}Matthew 26:60) is more precise here: “*At the last* came two false witnesses.” As no two had before agreed in anything, they felt it necessary to secure a duplicate testimony to something, but they were long of succeeding. And what was it, when at length it was brought forward?

saying — as follows:

58. We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands — On this charge, observe, first, that eager as His enemies were to find criminal matter against our Lord, they had to go back to the outset of His ministry, His first visit to Jerusalem, more than three years before this. In all that He said and did after that, though ever increasing in boldness, they could find nothing. Next, that even then, they fix only on one speech, of two or three words, which they dared to adduce against Him. Further, they most manifestly pervert the speech of our Lord. We say not this because in Mark’s form of it, it differs from the report of the words given by the Fourth Evangelist (^{412B}John 2:18-22) — the only one of the Evangelists who reports it all, or mentions even any visit paid by our Lord to Jerusalem before His last — but because the one report bears truth, and the other falsehood, on its face. When our Lord said on that occasion, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up,” they *might*, for a moment, have understood Him to refer to the temple out of whose courts He had swept the buyers and sellers. But *after* they had expressed their astonishment at His words, in that sense of them, and reasoned upon the time it had taken to rear the temple as it then stood, since *no answer* to this appears to have been given by our Lord, it is hardly conceivable that they should continue in the persuasion that this was really His meaning. But finally, even if the more ignorant among them had done so, it is next to certain that *the ecclesiastics*, who were *the prosecutors* in this case, *did not believe that this was His meaning*. For in less than three days after this they went to Pilate, saying, “Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, *after three days I will rise again*” (^{412C}Matthew 27:63). Now what utterance of Christ known to His enemies, *could* this refer to, if not to this very saying about destroying and rearing up the temple? And if so, it puts it beyond a doubt that by this time, at least, they were perfectly aware that our Lord’s words referred to *His death by their hands and His resurrection by His own*. But this is confirmed by ^{415B}Mark 14:59.

59. But neither so did their witness agree together — that is, not even as to so brief a speech, consisting of but a few words, was there such a concurrence in their mode of reporting it as to make out a decent case. In such a charge *everything depended on the very terms alleged to have been used*. For every one must see that a very slight turn, either way, given to such words, would make them either something like *indictable matter*, or else a *ridiculous ground for a criminal charge* — would either give them a colorable pretext for the charge of impiety which they were bent on making out, or else make the whole saying appear, on the worst view that could be taken of it, as merely some mystical or empty boast.

60. Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? — Clearly, they felt that *their case had failed*, and by this artful question the high priest hoped to get *from His own mouth* what they had in vain tried to obtain from their false and contradictory witnesses. But in this, too, they failed.

61. But he held his peace, and answered nothing — This must have nonplussed them. But they were not to be easily balked of their object.

Again the high priest — arose (^{<4166>}Matthew 26:62), matters having now come to a crisis.

asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? — Why our Lord should have answered this question, when He was silent as to the former, we might not have quite seen, but for Matthew, who says (^{<4166>}Matthew 26:63) that the high priest *put Him upon solemn oath*, saying, “I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God.” Such an adjuration was understood to render an answer legally necessary (^{<4161>}Leviticus 5:1). (Also see on ^{<4183>}John 18:28.)

62. And Jesus said, I am — or, as in Matthew (^{<4166>}Matthew 26:64), “Thou hast said [it].” In Luke, however (^{<4221>}Luke 22:70), the answer, “Ye say that I am,” should be rendered — as DE WETTE, MEYER, ELLICOTT, and the best critics agree that the preposition requires — “Ye say [it], for I am [so].” Some words, however, were spoken by our Lord before giving His answer to this solemn question. These are recorded by Luke alone (^{<4227>}Luke 22:67,68): “Art Thou the Christ [they asked]? tell us. And He said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe: and if I also ask [interrogate] “you, ye will not answer Me, nor let Me go.” This seems to have been uttered before giving His direct answer, as a calm remonstrance and dignified protest against the prejudgment of His case and the unfairness of their mode of procedure. But now let us hear the rest of the answer, in which the conscious majesty of Jesus breaks forth from behind the dark cloud which overhung Him as He stood before the Council. (Also see on ^{<4183>}John 18:28.)

and — in that character.

ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven — In Matthew (^{<4166>}Matthew 26:64) a slightly different but interesting turn is given to it by one word: “Thou hast said [it]: nevertheless” — We prefer this sense of the word to “besides,” which some recent critics decide for — “I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sit on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds

of heaven.” The word rendered “hereafter” means, not “at some future time” (as to-day “hereafter commonly does), but what the English word originally signified, “after here,” “after now,” or “from this time.” Accordingly, in ^{<0249>}Luke 22:69, the words used mean “from now.” So that though the reference we have given it to the day of His glorious Second Appearing is too obvious to admit of doubt, He would, by using the expression, “From this time,” convey the important thought which He had before expressed, immediately after the traitor left the supper table to do his dark work, “*Now is the Son of man glorified*” (^{<0433>}John 13:31). At this moment, and by this speech, did He “witness *the* good confession” emphatically and properly, as the apostle says in ^{<0413>}1 Timothy 6:13. Our translators render the words there, “Who *before* Pontius Pilate witnessed”; referring it to the admission of His being a *King*, in the presence of Caesar’s own chief representative. But it should be rendered, as LUTHER renders it, and as the best interpreters now understand it, “Who *under* Pontius Pilate witnessed,” etc. In this view of it, the apostle is referring not to what our Lord confessed *before* Pilate — which, though noble, was not of such primary importance — but to that sublime confession which, under Pilate’s administration, He witnessed before the only competent tribunal on such occasions, the Supreme Ecclesiastical Council of God’s chosen nation, that He was THE MESSIAH, and THE SON OF THE BLESSED ONE; in the former word owning His Supreme *Official*, in the latter His Supreme *Personal*, Dignity.

63. Then the high priest rent his clothes — On this expression of *horror of blasphemy*, see ^{<1283>}2 Kings 18:37.

and saith, What need we any further witnesses? (Also see on ^{<0433>}John 18:28.)

64. Ye have heard the blasphemy — (See ^{<0413>}John 10:33). In Luke (^{<0271>}Luke 22:71), “For we ourselves have heard of His own mouth” — an affectation of religious horror. (Also see on ^{<0433>}John 18:28.)

what think ye? — “Say what the verdict is to be.”

they all condemned him to be guilty of death — or of a capital crime, which *blasphemy* against God was according to the Jewish law (^{<0246>}Leviticus 24:16). Yet *not absolutely all*; for *Joseph* of Arimathea, “a good man and a just,” was one of that Council, and “*he was not a consenting party* to the counsel and deed of them,” for that is the strict sense of the words of ^{<0251>}Luke 23:50,51. Probably he absented himself, and *Nicodemus* also, from this meeting of the Council, the temper of which they would know too well to expect their voice to be listened to; and in that

case, the words of our Evangelist are to be taken strictly, that, without one dissentient voice, “all [present] condemned him to be guilty of death.”

The Blessed One Is Now Shamefully Entreated (^{<4146>}Mark 14:65).

Every word here must be carefully observed, and the several accounts put together, that we may lose none of the awful indignities about to be described.

65. some began to spit on him — or, as in ^{<4167>}Matthew 26:67, “to spit in [into] His face.” Luke (^{<4235>}Luke 22:63) says in addition, “And the men that held Jesus mocked him” — or cast their jeers at Him. (Also see on ^{<4183>}John 18:28.)

to cover his face — or “to blindfold him” (as in ^{<4234>}Luke 22:64).

to buffet him — Luke’s word, which is rendered “smote Him” (^{<4234>}Luke 22:63), is a stronger one, conveying an idea for which we have an exact equivalent in English, but one too colloquial to be inserted here.

began to say unto him, Prophecy — In Matthew (^{<4168>}Matthew 26:68) this is given more fully: “Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote Thee?” The sarcastic fling at Him as “*the Christ*,” and the demand of Him in this character to name the unseen perpetrator of the blows inflicted on Him, was in them as infamous as to Him it must have been, and was intended to be, stinging.

and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands — or “struck Him on the face” (^{<4234>}Luke 22:64). Ah! Well did He say prophetically, in that Messianic prediction which we have often referred to, “I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not My face from shame and spitting!” (^{<2816>}Isaiah 50:6). “And many other things blasphemously spake they against Him” (^{<4235>}Luke 22:65). This general statement is important, as showing that virulent and varied as were the *recorded* affronts put upon Him, they are but a *small specimen* of what He endured on that dark occasion.

Peter’s FIRST DENIAL of His Lord (^{<4146>}Mark 14:66-68).

66. And as Peter was beneath in the palace — This little word “*beneath*” — one of our Evangelist’s graphic touches — is most important for the right understanding of what we may call the topography of the scene. We must take it in connection with Matthew’s word (^{<4169>}Matthew 26:69): “Now Peter sat *without* in the palace” — or quadrangular court, in the center of which the fire would be burning; and crowding around and buzzing about it would be the menials and others who had been admitted

within the court. At the upper end of this court, probably, would be the memorable chamber in which the trial was held — *open to the court*, likely, and *not far from the fire* (as we gather from ^{<4273>}Luke 22:61), but *on a higher level*; for (as our verse says) the court, with Peter in it, was “beneath” it. The ascent to the Council chamber was perhaps by a short flight of steps. If the reader will bear this explanation in mind, he will find the intensely interesting details which follow more intelligible.

there cometh one of the maids of the high priest — “the damsel that kept the door” (^{<4187>}John 18:17). The Jews seem to have employed women as porters of their doors (^{<4123>}Acts 12:13).

67. And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him — Luke (^{<4226>}Luke 22:56) is here more graphic; “But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire” — literally, “by the *light*,” which, shining full upon him, revealed him to the girl — “and earnestly looked upon him” — or, “fixed her gaze upon him.” His demeanor and timidity, which must have attracted notice, as so generally happens, leading,” says OLSHAUSEN, “to the recognition of him.”

and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth — “with Jesus the Nazarene,” or, “with Jesus of Galilee” (^{<4169>}Matthew 26:69). The sense of this is given in John’s report of it (^{<4187>}John 18:17), “Art not thou also one of this man’s disciples?” that is, thou as well as “that other disciple,” whom she knew to be one, but did not challenge, perceiving that he was a privileged person. In Luke (^{<4226>}Luke 22:56) it is given as a remark made by the maid to one of the by-standers — this man was also with Him.” If so expressed in Peter’s hearing — drawing upon him the eyes of every one that heard it (as we know it did, ^{<4150>}Matthew 26:70), and compelling him to answer to it — that would explain the different forms of the report naturally enough. But in such a case this is of no real importance.

68. But he denied — “before all” (^{<4150>}Matthew 26:70).

saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest — in Luke (^{<4227>}Luke 22:57), “I know Him not.”

And he went out into the porch — the vestibule leading to the street — no doubt finding the fire-place too *hot* for him; possibly also with the hope of escaping — but that was not to be, and perhaps he dreaded that, too. Doubtless by this time his mind would be getting into a sea of commotion, and would fluctuate every moment in its resolves.

AND THE COCK CREW — (See on ^{<4234>}Luke 22:34). This, then, was the First Denial.

Peter's SECOND DENIAL of His Lord (^{<4149>}Mark 14:69,70).

There is here a verbal difference among the Evangelists, which without some information which has been withheld, cannot be quite extricated.

69. And a maid saw him again — or, “a girl.” It might be rendered “the girl”; but this would not necessarily mean the same one as before, but might, and probably does, mean just the female who had charge of the door or gate near which Peter now was. Accordingly, in ^{<4157>}Matthew 26:71, she is expressly called “another [maid].” But in Luke (^{<4228>}Luke 22:58) it is a *male* servant: “And after a little while [from the time of the first denial] another” — that is, as the word signifies, “another male” servant. But there is no real difficulty, as the challenge, probably, after being made by one was reiterated by another. Accordingly, in John (^{<4385>}John 18:25), it is, “*They* said therefore unto him, etc. — “as if more than one challenged him at once.

and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them — or, as in ^{<4157>}Matthew 26:71 — “This [fellow] was also with Jesus the Nazarene.”

70. And he denied it again — In Luke (^{<4228>}Luke 22:58), “Man, I am not.” But worst of all in Matthew — “And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man” (^{<4152>}Matthew 26:72). This was the Second Denial, more vehement, alas! than the first.

Peter's THIRD DENIAL of His Lord (^{<4140>}Mark 14:70-72).

70. And a little after — “about the space of one hour after” (^{<4229>}Luke 22:59).

they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto — “bewrayeth [or ‘discovereth’] thee” (^{<4153>}Matthew 26:73). In Luke (^{<4229>}Luke 22:59) it is, “Another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this [fellow] also was with him: for he is a Galilean.” The Galilean dialect had a more *Syrian* cast than that of Judea. *If Peter had held his peace*, this peculiarity had not been observed; but hoping, probably, to put them off the scent by joining in the *fireside talk*, he was thus discovered. The Fourth Gospel is particularly interesting here: “One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman [or kinsman to him] whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with Him?” (^{<4386>}John 18:26). No doubt his relationship to Malchus drew his attention to the man who had smitten him, and this enabled him to identify Peter. “Sad reprisals!” exclaims BENGEL. Poor Peter! Thou art caught in thine own toils; but like a wild bull in a net, thou wilt toss and rage, filling up the measure of thy terrible declension by one more denial of thy Lord, and that the foulest of all.

71. But he began to curse — “anathematize,” or wish himself accursed if what he was now to say was not true.

and to swear — or to take a solemn oath.

saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak.

72. And the second time the cock crew — The other three Evangelists, who mention but one crowing of the cock — and that not the first, but the second and last one of Mark — all say the cock crew “immediately,” but Luke (^{<423f>}Luke 22:60) says, “Immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.” Alas! — But now comes the wonderful sequel.

The Redeemer’s Look upon Peter, and Peter’s Bitter Tears
(^{<4147>}Mark 14:72 ^{<423f>}Luke 22:61,62).

It has been observed that while the beloved disciple is the only one of the four Evangelists who does not record the repentance of Peter, he is the only one of the four who records the affecting and most beautiful scene of his complete restoration (^{<4215>}John 21:15-17).

^{<423f>}**LUKE 22:61:**

And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter — How? it will be asked. We answer, From the chamber in which the trial was going on, in the direction of the court where Peter then stood — in the way already explained. See on ^{<4146>}Mark 14:66. Our Second Evangelist makes no mention of this look, but dwells on the warning of his Lord about the double crowing of the cock, which would announce his triple fall, as what rushed stingingly to his recollection and made him dissolve in tears.

And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept — To the same effect is the statement of the First Evangelist (^{<4155>}Matthew 26:75), save that like “the beloved physician,” he notices the “bitterness” of the weeping (^{<423f>}Luke 22:62). The most precious link, however, in the whole chain of circumstances in this scene is beyond doubt that “look” of deepest, tenderest import reported by Luke alone (^{<423f>}Luke 22:61). Who can tell what lightning flashes of wounded love and piercing reproach shot from that “look” through the eye of Peter into his heart!

And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice.

◀127▶ **LUKE 22:62:**

And Peter went out and wept bitterly — How different from the sequel of Judas' act! Doubtless the hearts of the two men towards the Savior were perfectly different from the first; and the treason of Judas was but the consummation of the wretched man's resistance of the blaze of light in the midst of which he had lived for three years, while Peter's denial was but a momentary obscuration of the heavenly light and love to his Master which ruled his life. But the immediate cause of the blessed revulsion which made Peter "weep bitterly" (◀1265▶ Matthew 26:75) was, beyond all doubt, this heart-piercing "look" which his Lord gave him. And remembering the Savior's own words at the table, "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; *but I prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not*" (◀1228▶ Luke 22:31,32), may we not say that *this prayer fetched down all that there was in that look* to pierce and break the heart of Peter, to keep it from despair, to work in it "repentance unto salvation not to be repented of," and at length, under other healing touches, to "restore his soul?" (See on ▶1107▶ Mark 16:7).

CHAPTER 15

MARK 15:1-20.

JESUS IS BROUGHT BEFORE PILATE — AT A SECOND HEARING, PILATE, AFTER SEEKING TO RELEASE HIM, DELIVERS HIM UP — AFTER BEING CRUELLY ENTREATED, HE IS LED AWAY TO BE CRUCIFIED.

(~~4181~~ MATTHEW 26:1,2,11-31 ~~4231~~ LUKE 23:1-6,13-25 ~~6838~~ JOHN 18:28-19:16).

See on ~~6838~~ John 18:28-19:16.

MARK 15:21-37.

CRUCIFIXION AND DEATH OF THE LORD JESUS.

(~~4173~~ MATTHEW 27:32-50 ~~4236~~ LUKE 23:26-46 ~~6917~~ JOHN 19:17-30).

See on ~~6917~~ John 19:17-30.

MARK 15:38-47.

SIGNS AND CIRCUMSTANCES FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF THE LORD JESUS. — HE IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS AND BURIED — THE SEPULCHRE IS GUARDED.

(~~4175~~ MATTHEW 27:51-66 ~~4236~~ LUKE 23:45,47-56 ~~6891~~ JOHN 19:31-42).

See on ~~4175~~ Matthew 27:51-56; and ~~6891~~ John 19:31-42.

CHAPTER 16

MARK 16:1-20.

ANGELIC ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE WOMEN ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, THAT CHRIST IS RISEN — HIS APPEARANCES AFTER HIS RESURRECTION — HIS ASCENSION — TRIUMPHANT PROCLAMATION OF HIS GOSPEL. (MARK MATTHEW 28:1-10,16-20 LUKE 24:1-51 JOHN 20:1,2,11-29).

The Resurrection Announced to the Women (Mark 16:1-8).

1. when the sabbath was past — that is, at sunset of our Saturday.

Mary Magdalene — (See on Luke 8:2).

Mary the mother of James — James the Less (see Mark 15:40).

and Salome — the mother of Zebedee's sons (compare Mark 15:40 with Matthew 27:56).

had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him — The word is simply “bought.” But our translators are perhaps right in rendering it here “had bought,” since it would appear, from Luke 23:56, that they had purchased them immediately after the Crucifixion, on the *Friday* evening, during the short interval that remained to them before sunset, when the sabbath rest began; and that they had only deferred using them to anoint the body till the sabbath rest should be over. On this “anointing,” see on John 19:40.

2. very early in the morning — (See on Matthew 28:1).

the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulcher at the rising of the sun — not quite literally, but “at earliest dawn”; according to a way of speaking not uncommon, and occurring sometimes in the Old Testament. Thus our Lord rose on the third day; having lain in the grave part of Friday, the whole of Saturday, and part of the following First day.

3. they said among themselves — as they were approaching the sacred spot.

Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulcher? ... for it was very great — On reaching it they find their difficulty gone — the stone already rolled away by an unseen hand. *And are there no others who, when advancing to duty in the face of appalling difficulties, find their stone also rolled away?*

5. entering into the sepulcher, they saw a young man — In ^{<48E>}Matthew 28:2 he is called “the angel of the Lord”; but here he is described as he appeared to the eye, in the bloom of a life that knows no decay. In Matthew he is represented as sitting on the stone *outside* the sepulcher; but since even there he says, “*Come, see the place where the Lord lay*” (^{<48E>}Matthew 28:6), he seems, as ALFORD says, to have gone in with them from without; only awaiting their arrival to accompany them into the hallowed spot, and instruct them about it.

sitting on the right side — having respect to the position in which His Lord had lain there. This trait is peculiar to Mark; but compare ^{<48E>}Luke 1:11.

clothed in a long white garment — On its *length*, see ^{<20E>}Isaiah 6:1; and on its *whiteness*, see on ^{<48E>}Matthew 28:3.

and they were affrighted.

6. he saith unto them, Be not affrighted — a stronger word than “Fear not” in Matthew (^{<48E>}Matthew 28:5).

Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified! — “the Nazarene, the Crucified,”

he is risen; he is not here — (See on ^{<42E>}Luke 24:5,6).

behold the place where they laid him — (See on ^{<48E>}Matthew 28:6).

7. But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter — This Second Gospel, being drawn up — as all the earliest tradition states — *under the eye of Peter*, or from materials chiefly furnished by him, there is something deeply affecting in the preservation of this little phrase by Mark alone.

that he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him, as he said unto you — (See on ^{<48E>}Matthew 28:7).

8. And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulcher: for they trembled and were amazed — “for tremor and amazement seized them.”

neither said they anything to any man; for they were afraid — How intensely natural and simple is this!

Appearances of Jesus after His Resurrection (^{<4169>}Mark 16:9-18).

- 9. Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils** — There is some difficulty here, and different ways of removing it have been adopted. She had gone with the other women to the sepulcher (^{<4169>}Mark 16:1), parting from them, perhaps, before their interview with the angel, and on finding Peter and John she had come with them back to the spot; and it was at this second visit, it would seem, that Jesus appeared to this Mary, as detailed in ^{<4311>}John 20:11-18. *To a woman was this honor given to be the first that saw the risen Redeemer, and that woman was NOT his virgin-mother.*
- 11. they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not** — This, which is once and again repeated of them all, is most important in its bearing on their subsequent testimony to His resurrection at the risk of life itself.
- 12. After that he appeared in another form** — (compare ^{<4246>}Luke 24:16).
unto two of them as they walked, and went into the country — The reference here, of course, is to His manifestation to the two disciples going to Emmaus, so exquisitely told by the Third Evangelist (see on ^{<4243>}Luke 24:13, etc.).
- 13. they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them,**
 etc.
- 15. he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature** — See on ^{<4319>}John 20:19-23 and ^{<4246>}Luke 24:36-49.
- 16. He that believeth and is baptized** — Baptism is here put for the external signature of the inner faith of the heart, just as “confessing with the mouth” is in ^{<5000>}Romans 10:10; and there also as here this *outward* manifestation, once mentioned as the proper fruit of faith, is not repeated in what follows (^{<5011>}Romans 10:11).
- shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned** — These awful issues of the reception or rejection of the Gospel, though often recorded in other connections, are given in this connection only by Mark.
- 17, 18. these signs shall follow them that believe ... They shall take up serpents** — These two verses also are peculiar to Mark.

*The Ascension and Triumphant Proclamation of the Gospel
 Thereafter* (^{<4169>}Mark 16:19,20).

19. So then after the Lord — an epithet applied to Jesus by this Evangelist only in ^{<4169>}Mark 16:19,20, when He comes to His glorious Ascension and its subsequent fruits. It is most frequent in Luke.

had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven — See on ^{<4283>}Luke 24:50,51.

and sat on the right hand of God — This great truth is here only related as a fact in the Gospel history. In that exalted attitude He appeared to Stephen (^{<4076>}Acts 7:55,56); and it is thereafter perpetually referred to as His proper condition in glory.

20. they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen — We have in this closing verse a most important link of connection with the Acts of the Apostles, where He who directed all the movements of the infant Church is perpetually styled “THE LORD”; thus illustrating His own promise for the rounding and building up of the Church, “LO, I AM WITH YOU always!”