Matthew Commentary Pt 2 - Joseph Alexander

INDEX - Note that chapters 17-28 are only brief summaries.

CHAPTER 8

HERE begins a series of miracles extending through the next chapter, those recorded in the present being five in number, with a general account of many more. Of the five recounted in detail, only one is accompanied by any statement of our Lord's words, beyond what is necessarily included in the description of the miracle itself. This remarkable succession of miraculous performances, uninterrupted by discourse or teaching, is sufficient of itself to create a presumption that the incidents here given are not arranged in reference to the time of their occurrence, but to some other purpose in the mind of the historian. This presumption is strengthened by the fact, that several of these miracles are given in the other gospels in a different chronological connection. All appearance of discrepancy is removed by the absence in such cases of any chronological specification on the part of Matthew. The true ground or principle of his arrangement is the illustration of our Lord's miraculous ministry by chosen specimens, succeeding the great sample of his teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, and preceding the mission of the twelve apostles with the same didactic and miraculous functions. The precise relation of the several occurrences here given to the parallel accounts, and of the general course of the history, as well as the probable grounds for their selection, will be stated in expounding each successively. The order of the topics in this chapter is as follows. After stating the continued concourse which attended our Lord's ministry (1), the history records the healing of a leper (2–4); that of a paralytic at Capernaum, the servant of a Roman officer (5–13); that of a case of fever in the family of Peter (Mt 14:15); and of many others on the same day, not related in detail, but described in general terms, and in connection with an ancient prophecy respecting the Messiah's mission (Mt 16:17). This is followed by a dialogue, intended to exemplify the false impressions of that mission, entertained by some who called themselves disciples (18–22), and at the same time to introduce two signal miracles which actually followed it, one evincing sovereign power over nature and the elements (23–27), the other over demons and demoniacal possessions of the most malignant character (28–34).

1. Having described the Sermon on the Mount as occasioned by and uttered to a vast promiscuous assemblage (Mt 5:1), and recorded the effect which it produced upon them (Mt 7:28), the historian now informs us that this concourse did not cease with the discourse, nor even with our Lord's descent from the mountain or the highlands (see above, on Mt 5:1) where it was delivered, but continued after his return to the lake-shore and the city of Capernaum. The statement of the fact here seems designed to qualify the whole series of miracles recorded in this chapter, which we are, therefore, to conceive of as performed in the presence, or at least in the vicinity of multitudes. The connection with the foregoing chapter is made still more clear by the original construction of the first words, and to him descending from the mountain, the dative case required by the verb in Greek being afterwards repeated (followed him), which makes the first almost equivalent to a genitive absolute, he descending (or having descended), the sense of which, though not the form, is correctly given in the English versions (when he was come down) great multitudes, the Rhemish version, more exact than the older one, much people (Geneva Bible, great press of people), but admitting of still further improvement by the literal translation, many crowds, i. e. promiscuous assemblages, the plural perhaps indicating not more individuals, but groups and gatherings from various quarters.

2. This first miracle appears to be selected on account of the peculiar nature of the evil which occasioned it. A leper, one afflicted with the leprosy, a painful and loathsome cutaneous disorder, which, although a natural disease, appears to have prevailed in a preternatural degree among the ancient Hebrews, so that heathen writers represent it as a national affection, and the cause of their expulsion from Egypt. The identity of this disease with any now known has been much disputed; but the latest testimonies favour the belief that it continues to prevail, and in an aggravated form, defying all attempts to cure it, even by the most improved and scientific modern methods. But even if the same, disease, we have every reason to believe that it prevailed of old far more extensively, and in a more terrific shape than it ever does at present. The design of this extraordinary prevalence, if real, was to furnish a symbol of the loathsomeness of sin, considered as a spiritual malady, and by the rites connected with its treatment, to suggest the only means of moral renovation. The rules of procedure in such cases form a prominent part of the Mosaic law (Lev. 13:14), and were still in full force at the time of Christ's appearance. Besides the formal periodical inspection of the patient by the priest, and the purifying ceremonies incident even to a state of convalescence, the leper was excluded from society, required to dwell apart, and to announce his presence and condition by his dress, his gestures, and his words. That this law was applied without respect of persons, is apparent from the case of King Uzziah, who was smitten with the leprosy to punish his invasion of the priestly office, and though one of the most able and successful of the kings of Judah, spent the remainder of his life in a several (or separate) house, the government being administered by his son, as Prince Regent (2 Kings 15:5, 2 Chr. 26:16–21). The lepers, therefore, were a well-defined and well-known class of sufferers, distinguished from all others by the circumstances which have just been stated, and holding a sort of middle place between demoniacal possessions and mere ordinary ailments. There was no doubt much curiosity in reference to the course which our Saviour would pursue with respect to these unfortunates, who were not considered as entitled even to approach him. This may be the reason that Matthew relates the healing of a leper as his first particular example of the Saviour's miracles. Worshipped, a Greek word properly descriptive of an outward or corporeal action; in the first instance that of kissing, more especially the hand, or kissing the hand to one, as an act of homage; then applied by Herodotus to homage as performed in oriental courts by kissing the ground or by entire prostration; and then to homage or obeisance in general, whether civil or religious, which is also the old usage of the English worship, as preserved in the Marriage Service, and in 'worshipful,' 'your worship,' as official titles. There is no reason to suppose that this leper meant to do more than express the profoundest reverence and most earnest importunity. The precise acts of homage, as we learn from the other gospels, were those of kneeling (Mark 1:40) and falling on the face (Luke 5:12). This implies near approach, if not immediate contact, in direct violation of the Jewish usage. The beautiful expression in the last clause is expressive of the strongest faith in Christ's miraculous power, and only a reasonable doubt of his willingness to exercise it upon such an object. To us it seems a matter of course that he should cleanse the lepers as well as heal the sick; but it was in fact a very doubtful question till determined in the case before us. Wilt and canst are not mere auxiliaries but distinct and independent verbs, if thou art willing thou art able. To cleanse (or purify) me, i. e. to free me from the leprosy, considered not as a mere disease, but as a symbolical and actual defilement.

3. Under the influence of human sympathy, as well as of divine condescension, he complies with the request of the poor leper, both by deed and word. The deed, that of stretching out the hand and touching him, had no magical intrinsic power, being frequently dispensed with; but it visibly connected the author with the subject of the miracle, and at the same time symbolized or typified the healing virtue which it did not of itself impart. The words which accompanied this gesture correspond to those of the leper himself, but with a point and brevity which make them still more beautiful and striking. If thou wilt, … I will. Thou canst cleanse me, … Be cleansed. The version, be thou clean, though perfectly correct in sense, mars the antithesis between the active and the passive voice of one and the same verb (καθαρίσαι, καθαρίσθητι). The effect, as usual, was instantaneous, and is here described by the concise expression, that his leprosy was cleansed, which is equivalent to Mark's more explicit statement, that "the leprosy departed from him," and he was cleansed or purified, as he had asked and Christ had promised, both in a physical and moral sense. By being freed from the literal corporeal foulness of this loathsome malady, the leper became ipso facto free from the social and religious disabilities which the ceremonial law attached to it, and needed only to be recognized as thus free by the competent authority.

4. It is characteristic of the miracles of Christ, that they were neither preceded nor followed by unnecessary words or acts; but as soon as the desired change was wrought, the subject was dismissed, to make way for another. So here, the leper is no sooner cleansed than he is sent away, with an earnest exhortation and important direction. See, i. e. see to it, be careful, be upon thy guard. Man, supplied in such cases by the English version limits the sense too much, unless explained as an indefinite pronoun, like the same form in German. The charge here given was not one of absolute and permanent concealment, which was not only needless but impossible, from the sudden and complete change in the man's appearance and the subsequent effect upon his social relations. The prohibition was a relative and temporary one; and had respect to the more positive command which follows. Until that direction was complied with, he was to say nothing. This connection is suggested by the order of the sentence, "see thou tell no one … but go," &c., i. e. remain silent till thou hast gone. This was no doubt intended to secure his prompt performance of a duty which he might otherwise have postponed or omitted altogether. This was the duty of subjecting himself to the inspection of a priest, and obtaining his official recognition of the cure which had been wrought upon him. That recognition would of course be followed by the offerings prescribed in the Mosaic law for such occasions. (Lev. 4:32,) By this requisition Christ not only provided for the full authentication of the miracle, but as it were, defined his own relation to the ceremonial law, as a divine institution, and as being still in force. This was important, both as a preventive of malicious charges, and as a key to the design of his whole ministry or mission, which belonged, at least in form, to the old and not the new economy, and was only preparatory to the outward change of dispensations. (See above, on Mt 5:17.) This is the meaning put by some upon the last words for a testimony (Tyndale testimonial) to them, i. e. as a proof that I reverence the law and comply with its requirements. More probably, however, it refers to the fact of the man's being cleansed, which could be fully ascertained by nothing but official scrutiny and attestation.

5. Of the natural diseases which prevailed among the Jews when Christ was upon earth, one of the most common seems to have been palsy or paralysis (the former word being a corruption or modification of the latter), either in the strict sense of the modern nosology, or in a wider one including what is now called apoplexy. The Greek terms, paralysis and paralytic, denote according to their etymology, a relaxation of the nerves on one side. This class of our Lord's miraculous healings furnishes the next case in the series now before us. It is also remarkable as having been performed at the request and on the servant of a Roman officer, as well as for the praise bestowed by Christ himself upon his strong and discriminating faith. It is likewise an example of miraculous restoration without personal contact or immediate presence. These circumstances are sufficient to account for its selection as an item in this catalogue, without regard to its chronology, which Luke expressly fixes as immediately subsequent to his version of the Sermon on the Mount, and, therefore, as we have already seen, somewhat later than the similar discourse preserved by Matthew. (See the introduction to Mt 5–7.) There is no inconsistency, however, as Matthew gives no such chronological specification as the one in Luke 7:1, but simply says, when he went into Capernaum, literally, to him entering, as in v. 1, and with the same pleonastic repetition of the pronoun (αυτ). Now as Capernaum was the centre of his operations, to which he frequently returned from his itinerant missions (see above, on Mt 4:10), the expression here used is an indefinite one, and necessarily means nothing more than, as he was (once) entering Capernaum. Besides this chronological specification, Luke adds some circumstances not preserved by Matthew, and, therefore, not essential to his purpose. It is no part of the interpreter's office to insert what the writer has thought fit or been directed to leave out, as if his narrative were incomplete without it, though we may employ it to illustrate and explain what is recorded, and especially to reconcile apparent contradictions. It will be sufficient, therefore, to observe that Matthew's brief account of the centurion's application to our Lord, as if it had been made in person, is by no means at variance with Luke's supplementary account of the intermediate agency by which it was presented. All that was necessary to the purpose of the former was the main fact that a Roman officer did so apply, and as he simply paves over the channel of communication, but says nothing to exclude it, there is no ground for the charge of contradiction or a variant tradition. The form of expression used by Matthew that he came to (or approached) him, said to him, &c., is completely justified not only by the legal maxim sometimes quoted (qui facit per alium facit per se), but by all analogy and usage, where the speaker or writer wishes to direct attention simply to the act, and not to its attendant circumstances. How readily and naturally might one writing of the recent war in Europe, speak of communications as directly passing between Louis Napoleon and Francis Joseph, when in fact they were conveyed by diplomatists or aides-de-camp, and how absurd would be the charge of contradiction, if a later and more regular historian should introduce these intermediate agencies omitted, and perhaps not thought of, by the former writer. This will suffice to meet the charge of inconsistency between the parallels. The minute examination of Luke's supplementary details belongs to the exposition of that gospel. A centurion, or commander of a hundred men, used perhaps with some degree of latitude for the leaders of divisions in a Roman legion. The one here referred to was most probably in Herod's service, and stationed at Capernaum. It is possible, however, that the Roman Emperor, the real sovereign of the country, had his military representatives even in the districts nominally governed by the tetrarchs. Beseeching him, a Greek verb originally meaning to call on (for aid), or in, to one's assistance, but secondarily to call to, in the way of exhortation and encouragement, which justifies its being sometimes rendered comfort (as in Mt 2:18, 3:4 above), while here it has its strict and proper sense.

6. This is the centurion's description of his servant's case, as sent to Christ through the elders of the Jews (Luke 7:3). It is not easy to determine in particular cases, how strong a meaning was attached to the word Lord (κύριε) by those who used it. As on one hand it is the Greek equivalent or rather substitute for the name Jehovah, both in the Septuagint and New Testament; so on the other it

was a common title of respect or expression of civility, like Domine in Latin and Sir in English. Intermediate between these is a sense nearly corresponding to my Lord, and implying an acknowledgment of more than ordinary dignity and rank, even where there is no intentional ascription of divine honours. This is perhaps the true sense here and in many other cases, where our fixed associations with the title lead us naturally to assume a higher meaning than the speaker really intended to convey. Servant, literally, boy, an idiom found also in the Hebrew (נַעַר), French (garçon), and certain English phrases (e. g. post-boy), as well as in the use of boy itself for slave in our southern States. This usage in the Scriptures throws some light upon the application of the term to Christ himself, as both the servant and the son of God. (See below, on 12:18.) Lieth, lies, is lying, in Greek a perfect passive meaning has been thrown (down), or in modern phrase, prostrated, whether figuratively by disease, or literally on a sick bed. At home, the phrase used in all the English versions except Wiclif, which retains the Greek form, in the house, i. e. my house. Sick of the palsy, in Greek, paralytic, a word which does not seem to have been used in English when the Bible was translated. It occurs only in the two first gospels (see above, on Mt 4:24), Luke employing a participle of the cognate verb (παραλελομενος), just as we say paralyzed as well as paralytic. Grievously, or, as the Greek word originally means, fearfully, terribly. Tormented, tortured, in extreme pain, a verb formed from the noun translated torments in Mt 4:24, and there explained.

7. Saith, in modern English says, the historical or graphic present, calling up the scene as actually passing. To him, i. e. to his messenger (Luke 7:6). I will come and heal him, literally, I coming (or having come) will heal him, i. e. I am ready or about to do so, unless hindered, as he knew that he would be; so that the future does not express actual intention, but mere willingness. The verb translated heal is that employed above in Mt 4:23, 24, and there explained.

8. And answering, the centurion said, i e, by his messenger, as Christ approached (Luke 6:6). Worthy, literally, enough, of sufficient value, good enough. Come under my roof, or honour my dwelling with thy presence. Speaks the word, i. e. the word of command necessary for the purpose; or rather, as the article is not expressed in Greek, speak a word, i. e. a single word, as all-sufficient, which is substantially the meaning of the dative (λόγω) now adopted by the latest critics, (in) a word, or in the use of one word only.

9. This Terse assigns his reason for believing that a word from Christ would be sufficient without personal proximity or contact. For I am is the imperfect version of the Geneva Bible; Tyndale and Cranmer have it more exactly, for I also myself am. “I know the effect of an authoritative order, from one who has a right to give it, by my own experience as a soldier, being accustomed both to command and to obey.” These two ideas are expressed by the words under authority, (i. e. the authority of others, and in my turn) having soldiers under me. I say, i. e. habitually, I am wont to say, in the exercise of my authority as a commander. To this man, literally, this (one), an expression simply used in opposition to another. Go and come are idiomatic or proverbial terms for action in general. Servant in the last clause may either mean a soldier in attendance on an officer (see Acts, 10:7), or a domestic, as distinguished from the soldiers before mentioned. The latter is more probable, because the Greek word (δοιλος) properly denotes a slave, and because the reference is here to doing, i. e. serving, and not, as in the other clause, to going and coming, i. e. marching. The whole is a lively and laconic picture of brief command and prompt obedience.

10. The original order is, and hearing, Jesus wondered. To reconcile omniscience with surprise is no part of our privilege or duty. All such seeming contradictions are parts of the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:16), the union of humanity and deity in one theanthropic person. However incomprehensible to oar finite faculties may be the co-existence in one person of the divine logos and a human soul, the possession of the latter, if conceded, carries with it all the attributes and acts of which a perfect human soul is capable. While to Christ’s divinity or eternal spirit there could be nothing new or strange, to his humanity surprise and wonder were familiar. It may also be explained as meaning simply that he saw what would have produced a wonder in a mere man. But the strict sense is more natural, and no more incompatible with deity than the astonishment imputed to Jehovah, in still stronger terms by Isaiah (59:16, 63:5). The main fact here is that the case was wonderful, and for the reason given in the next clause, with the prefatory formula of strong asseveration, Verily (Amen) I say unto you, and addressed to those following, not merely his attendants and the messengers from the centurion (Luke 7:6), but probably the multitude, which seems to have been never far off upon such occasions. (See above, on v. 1.) The order of the Greek is, not even in Israel (the chosen people and the church of God, in which such faith might well have been expected) so great (or so much) faith have I found (or met with). The best interpretation of these words appears to be the simplest and most obvious, to wit, that this was the first instance of a strong faith in Christ’s power to heal even at a distance, and that this instance occurred not among the Jews but the Gentiles. That the centurion was a proselyte, i. e. a professed convert to the true religion, is neither affirmed nor necessarily implied. The contrast with Israel rather implies the contrary, and the representation of the Jewish elders (Luke 6:5), only proves that like Cornelius (Acts 10:1) he was one of the devout and serious class of Gentiles, who treated the religion of the Jews with respect and perhaps attended their worship.

11. Nor was this a solitary, accidental case, but only a specimen of what was to occur thereafter on a grand scale. The repetition of the formula, I say unto you, is very significant. ‘Not only do I solemnly declare this Gentile to be more enlightened, as to my authority and power, than any Jew whom I have met with; but I also solemnly declare that this superiority of faith will one day be exhibited by multitudes.’ Shall come, are to come hereafter, from a distance or ab extra, implying that at present, or by nature, they have no right to the privilege here promised or predicted. From east, and west, literally, from risings and settings, also used in the classics to

denote these quarters of the earth and heavens, and here put for all directions, or rather for the opposite extremes, between which all are comprehended. Sit down, literally, lie down or recline, a luxurious posture introduced among the later Greeks and Romans from the east. Among the ancient Greeks as well as Hebrews sitting was the universal posture, as it still continued to be in the case of women and children, while the men, by whom alone convivial entertainments were attended, leaned on their elbows, stretched on beds or couches. This was also the fashion of the Jews, when our Saviour was among them, and the use of the words sat, sat down, sat at meat, in all such cases, is a mere accommodation to our modern usage, the very same verbs being rendered lay or lying when the reference is to sickness (as in Mark 3:32, 4, 5:40, Luke 4:25, John 5:3, Acts 9:33, 28:8), and in one instance leaning, where the true sense is the common one of lying or reclining (John 13:23). The image here presented is commonly supposed to be that of a sumptuous banquet or luscious feast, representing the enjoyment of Messiah's kingdom. But although that mode of description occurs elsewhere (e. g. Isai. 25:6), the essential idea here would seem to be simply that of near domestic intercourse, admission to the family and all its intimate relations, as denoted by participation in its usual repasts, or as we say, sitting at the same table, without explicit reference to dainty food or to extraordinary festivities. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the three original patriarchs, still represented as presiding over the great family descended from them. As this family for ages was the chosen people or visible church, the admission here predicted is not merely to national or civil rights, but chiefly to religious and spiritual advantages. This is therefore a distinct premonition of the great revolutionary change to be wrought in the condition of the Gentiles by the advent of Messiah.

12. But even the admission of the Gentiles to a free participation in the rights and honours of the chosen people, however repugnant to the narrow selfish prepossessions of the carnal Jews, would have been comparatively little without what is here distinctly foretold, namely, that the change would be an exchange or an interchange of places. Not only were the Gentiles to be brought in from without, but the Jews to be cast out from within. The children of the kingdom, those who seem entitled to its honours by hereditary right, as the descendants of the Patriarchs already mentioned, but disqualified or disinherited by not partaking of their faith. (See Rom. 4:11, 16.) Will he cast out, or expelled, with primary reference to the figures of the preceding verse. While strangers from the most remote and opposite directions are to take their places, as it were, at the patriarchal table, and to be received into the patriarchal household, its natural, hereditary members will be forcibly excluded from it. Into outer darkness, or retaining more exactly the original construction, into the dark, the outer, i. e. outside of the house. The antithesis is not so much with the brilliant lights of an extraordinary feast as with the ordinary necessary light of any comfortable home, the loss of which suggests that of all other comforts, to which our Lord adds the prediction of more positive suffering, denoted by weeping and gnashing (grinding, grating) of teeth, as natural expressions of despairing grief for what has thus been lost or forfeited. The primary conception, not to be lost sight of in our other applications of the language, is that of children violently torn from the table and ejected from the house of their father, and heard giving vent to their grief and rage in the outside darkness. This beautiful but fearful picture is greatly marred by taking outer in the modern sense of utter or utmost, i. e. uttermost, extreme. Utter, as used in the older English, is synonymous with outer. This prediction of our Saviour makes the case of the centurion a type of national and social changes of the highest moment, and accounts for the prominence assigned to it in the history of his miracles. The absolute expressions of this verse are neither to be understood as simply meaning many, nor as excluding individual exceptions, but as denoting the excision of the chosen race, as such, and as a whole, "because of unbelief." (See Rom. 11:1, 11:23.)

13. Having made this didactic and prophetic use of the centurion's faith as typifying the conversion of the Gentiles, our Lord does not forget to give it present and immediate effect in the case before him. Go thy way, an old English phrase used by all the Protestant translators to express a single Greek word (παγε) meaning simply go (as Wiclif and the Rhemish Bible render it), depart, begone. (See above, on v. 4, and on Mt 4:10, 5:24, 41, in all which cases the original expression is identical.) As thou hast believed, or didst believe, in making this request. As in the fourth petition of the Lord's Prayer (see above, on Mt 6:12), the words are not conditional but comparative. The sense is not, because thou hast believed, as a meritorious ground or title to acceptance, but in accordance and proportion to thy faith, I grant thee what thou hast desired and believed me able to bestow. It is worthy of remark that in this as well as later instances, the faith to which our Lord accorded gifts of healing, was not that of the subject or the patient, but of one who represented him and interceded for him. This affords, if not a formal argument, a beautiful analogy, in favour of baptizing children on the faith of their parental sponsors, or of others standing in loco parentis. The immediate effect is stated in the last clause. Hour is a modification or corruption of the Greek word here used and originally meaning any definite period of time, whether long or short, especially if measured by some natural standard. Thus it is applied to the seasons of the year and the divisions of the day, especially the twelve parts of the natural day from sunrise to sunset, or from dawn to dusk. (See John 11:9.) Here, however, and in other like cases, it would rather seem to mean a moment, or more indefinitely, time, without regard to its precise duration, 'at that very time (or instant'). At any rate, it does not mean that the cure took place within what we now call an hour, or a space of sixty minutes, but that it was instantaneous. (Compare Luke 7:10.)

14. The next miracle is one of a more private and domestic character, performed in the bosom of a family with which our Lord had now contracted intimate relations, that of Simon Peter, whom we thus learn incidentally to have been married and a householder at Capernaum, in conjunction with his brother Andrew (Mark 1:29). This is not inconsistent with the mention of Bethsaida elsewhere (John 1:45), as "the city of Andrew and Peter." They are not here said to have been natives of Capernaum, nor even to have long

resided there. As the very name Bethsaida means a fishery or place for fishing, and was common to more villages than one upon the lake (Mark 6:45), it is probable that Peter and his brother lived there while engaged in that employment, and removed to Capernaum when Jesus chose it as the centre of his operations. It is even possible that Simon opened a house there for the convenience of his Lord and Master in the intervals of his itinerant labours. When Jesus was come, literally, Jesus coming, which means nothing more than as he once came, without determining the time, which is fixed in the parallel accounts (Mark 1:29. Luke 4:38) as immediately after the expulsion of a demon in the synagogue and probably soon after the vocation of the first apostles. (See above, on Mt 4:18–22.) Its position here is not chronological but topical, i. e. determined by the writers' purpose to give specimens of Christ's early miracles, exemplifying different kinds and classes of such wonders. Wife's mother is in Greek a single word corresponding to our compound, mother-in-law. Laid, in Greek a stronger word, cast, thrown down, prostrate, or confined to bed, the participle of the perfect passive used above in v. 6. Sick of a fever, Tyndale's version of another participle, from a verb without exact equivalent in English (Vulg. febricitantem), though akin to our adjective feverish, q. d. fevering, or having fever (Wiclif: shaken with fevers. Rhemish Bible: in a fit of a fever). This is one of the most usual and universal forms of disease, and is several times mentioned in the New Testament as the subject of miraculous healing (Besides the parallels, see John 4:52, Acts 28:8.)

15. As in the case of the centurion's servant the cure was wrought by a word spoken at a distance, showing our Lord's independence of all outward means in the exercise of his extraordinary power; so here, and in most other cases (compare Luke 4:40), he was pleased to indicate by touch and gesture the connection of the cure, as the effect produced, with himself as the producer, a connection which might otherwise have been disputed or uncertain. Left her, a much stronger word in Greek, the same that is employed above in Mt 4:11, 20, 22, 5:24, 40, and might here be rendered, let her go, released her. Arose, in Greek a passive form (γἐρθη) strictly meaning, was aroused, as if from sleep or stupor. (See above, on Mt 2:13.) Ministered unto them, or waited on them, served them, with specific reference to food. (See above, on Mt 4:11.) For them, some manuscripts and editors read him, thus confining her attendance to the person of our Lord himself. Here again we may observe that the effect was instantaneous and complete at once, without convalescence or progressive restoration, thus distinguishing the miracle from all natural or artificial cures; and also that as soon as it was wrought, the subject was restored to her original position, and resumed her ordinary household duties. (See below, on 9:25.) This is a striking illustration of the apostolical paradox, "the foolishness of God is wiser than men." (1 Cor. 1:25.)

16. One of the commonest and grossest errors in relation to the miracles of Christ is, that they were few in number, or that they are all recorded in detail. To guard against this very error, after recording two particular miracles of healing, Matthew adds a general statement of his other miraculous performances about the same time, from which we may obtain a vague but just idea of their aggregate amount. In the evening of the same day upon which he cured the fever in the house of Simon, all the sick of the city were collected there. (Mark 1:33.) The mention of the evening and of sunset does not imply any scruple on our Lord's part as to healing on the Sabbath, which he had already done in this case, and both did and justified in other cases. (See below, on Mt 12:9–13.) It might more probably imply such scruples in the minds of the people, who would then be represented as deferring their request for healing till the close of the Sabbath, at the setting of the sun. Even this, however, is unnecessary, as the fact in question is sufficiently explained by two more obvious considerations: first, that the cool of the day would be better for the sick themselves, and secondly, that some time would be requisite to spread the news and bring the sick together. Possessed with devils, literally demonized, or under the control of demons, producing by their personal presence either bodily disease or mental alienation, or the two together. All those having (themselves) ill, or being in an evil condition. (Rhemish version, ill at ease.) This may either denote bodily disease, as distinguished from mental and spiritual maladies, or, still more probably, disease in general, of which the most distressing form is separately specified. The demoniacal possessions were undoubtedly diseases, but of a preternatural description, as occasioned by the presence and personal agency of evil spirits.

17. The great distinctive feature of this narrative now reappears, the demonstration of the Messiahship of Jesus, by showing the fulfilment of the ancient prophecies in his experience. Reckoning Mt 4:14. as the fifth direct argument of this kind, that before us is the sixth, and is the more remarkable, because entirely wanting in the parallels (Mark 1:34. Luke 4:40), which give the same account of the healing at Capernaum, with still greater fulness, whereas Matthew seems to abridge that statement, as if to make room for his favourite prophetical quotation. The continual recurrence of this difference shows clearly the individuality and independence of the writer, and the existence of a definite, consistent purpose in the narrative before us, and confirms the otherwise most probable conclusion, that it was designed, in the first instance, not for Gentile but for Jewish readers. The passage quoted is still extant in Isai. 53:4, forming part of the clearest and most direct prediction of Messiah's sufferings as a sacrifice for sin. The translation was made by the evangelist himself, being much more exact than the Septuagint Version. The only departure even from the form of the original is in the substitution of the specific term diseases, in the last clause, for the more generic pains or sorrows. This is justified, however, not only by the wider use of the Greek word (νὀσος) in the early writers (such as Hesiod), but also by the obvious correspondence of the Hebrew word to one in the preceding verse which properly means sickness, although evidently put for pain and suffering in general. Took, received, a vague term rendered more specific by the context, which suggests the idea of taking upon him or assuming as a load. This is clearly expressed by the other verb which in Greek usage comprehends the acts of lifting, carrying, and removing, in all which it exactly represents the Hebrew. The terms are evidently drawn from the Mosaic law of sacrifice, a necessary

part of which is the substitution of the victim for the actual offender, so that the former bears the sins of the latter, and the latter, in default of such an expiation, is said to bear his own sins.* The application of these words by Matthew to the cure of bodily diseases cannot involve a denial of the doctrine of vicarious atonement, which is clearly taught in Mt 20:28. Nor is it a formal exposition of the passage quoted in its full sense, but, as Calvin well explains it, a hint that the prediction had begun to be fulfilled, because already its effects were visible, the Scriptures always representing sorrow as the fruit of sin. The miracles of Christ were not intended merely to relieve human suffering; for then why should they have been limited to three short years and one small country? They were also designed to authenticate his mission, and to furnish his credentials as a teacher come from God (John 3:2); to rouse attention and prepare the minds of men for the reception of the truth (John 6:2); and to serve as types and pledges of spiritual changes, often actually connected with them in experience (see below, on 9:5). Another thought suggested by this passage is, that all the philanthropic means employed by individuals or by society at large for the relief of human suffering, and especially of that produced by bodily disease, are but continuations of the work begun by Christ himself. The medical profession, more especially, when governed by right principles and actuated by becoming motives, bears the same relation to our Lord, as the Physician of the body, that the ministry ought always to sustain to him, as the Physician of the Soul. And neither this profession, nor the charities of life in general, can ever hold their proper place or have their proper influence, till brought into a due subordination and dependence upon Him who ‘Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses.’

18. Matthew seems here to interrupt his list of miracles, for the purpose of recording a brief conversation which has no direct relation to them, and is not even chronologically connected with what goes before, but of a later date, as appears from Mark’s explicit statement (4:35), that the miracle which followed the dialogue here given was performed in the evening of the same day upon which our Lord delivered several parables recorded by Matthew in his thirteenth chapter. The difficulty is not one of discrepancy as to time; for Matthew gives us no date, merely saying, when Jesus saw the multitudes about him, i. e. once on seeing them, he said, &c. The only difficulty is a seeming deviation from the plan which we have been assuming, and a consequent exposure to the charge of incoherence. If he is giving us a series of miracles, as samples of Christ’s wonder-working ministry, and purposely abstaining from unnecessary mention of his teachings or discourses, how shall we account for the abrupt anticipation of a dialogue, in which the miracles are not referred to, and which seems to have occurred long after the occurrences just mentioned? Why is it introduced at all in this catalogue of miracles, and why just here? It might be reckoned a sufficient answer to the former of these questions, that the evangelical tradition, as attested both by Luke and Matthew, represents this conversation as immediately preceding the miraculous stilling of the storm, and that Matthew, wishing to record the latter, did so with the well-known preface, although not strictly necessary for his purpose. We may, however, take another step and give a reason for his introducing this occurrence with its inseparable adjunct just at this point of his argument. Having, in strict accordance with his customary method, cited a passage of Isaiah, representing the Messiah as a sufferer, and sharing in the sufferings of others, he shows us how far this view of his mission was from being entertained even by some who sought or offered to be his disciples. This is effectually done by recording the two incidents or dialogues preceding the next miracle; and thus, without resort to any forced constructions or fortuitous assumptions, a twofold nexus is established, first, between the foregoing miracles and that which follows; secondly, between the dialogue which precedes the latter and the previous quotation from the writings of Isaiah. In other words, the stilling of the storm is introduced for its own sake as a signal and peculiar miracle; the dialogue preceding it is introduced because inseparable from it in tradition and the memory of men; and both are introduced just here, because suggested by the words quoted from Isaiah and applied to our Lord’s miracles of healing. Seeing many crowds about him, as he did very often, so that this expression does not necessarily refer to the time of the preceding incident, but may be understood as meaning, seeing once, or at a certain time, &c. Gave commandment is in Greek a single word, commanded, i. e. his disciples or immediate followers, now in habitual attendance on him, of whom four are known to us from Mt 4:18–22. Depart, go away, i. e. from Galilee on the west side of the lake and river. The other side, an expression almost always used by the classics in reference to water, and constantly applied in the Gospels to the east side of the river Jordan or the lake of Gennesaret, which division of the country thence derived its Greek and Roman name, Perea. (See above, on 4:15, 25, where the same word is translated beyond.)

19. This passage of the lake is particularly mentioned, not as any thing extraordinary in itself, but on account of the miracle to which it gave occasion; and also of the conversation which preceded it, from which it was inseparable in the first tradition of the gospel, and which at the same time has a natural connection with the previous quotation from Isaiah (in v. 7). That quotation represents the Messiah as a sufferer, assuming our distresses as the fruit and penalty of sin. But this was far from being the usual or prevalent impression, even among those who offered or professed to be the followers of Christ. This is here exemplified by a single instance, in which a Scribe, an educated and professional expounder of the law (see above, on Mt 2:4, 5:20, 7:29,) offers to follow him wherever he may go, expecting, as we learn from our Lord’s reply, to share in the advantages and honours of the kingdom about to be erected. This implies at least a partial conviction that our Lord was the Messiah. That such belief was not a common one among the class to which this man belonged, appears to be suggested by the numeral one, which can hardly be a mere equivalent to our indefinite article (a Scribe) or pronoun (a certain Scribe). For even granting such an usage in the later Greek, why should it occur in this and a few other cases, some of which are doubtful, as they might as well have been translated one.* So in this case, one Scribe, or a single Scribe, suggests that among the many who about this time became the followers of Christ, there was one

belonging to this large and influential body, which as a whole, was among the strongest counteracting influences which he had to fight against. Master, in the old and proper sense of teacher (magister), which involves a recognition of our Lord by this official teacher as his own superior. Follow, not in the bare sense of locomotion, but of personal attendance and adherence as a disciple. (See above, on Mt 4:20, 22.) Whithersoever, to whatever place, into whatever situation, even the most dangerous, but no doubt on the tacit condition that he should participate in the Messiah's triumphs and the glory of his kingdom. (See below, on Mt 20:22.) Goest, or more exactly, mayest go, the idea of contingency being suggested both by the form of the verb, which is subjunctive, and by the indefinite particle before it. (See above, on 5:11.) It is not, therefore, simply an offer to go with him on the voyage or journey now before him, which would not have been so formally and solemnly proposed, but to adhere to him in every change of place and circumstances, until his kingdom should be finally established.

20. It is only from this answer to the Scribe's proposal, that we learn its real character and spirit. Taken by itself, it might have seemed to be a perfectly disinterested offer; but in that case the reply would hardly have been natural or relevant. The reply itself is not. as it is often understood, a description or complaint of abject poverty or total destitution, which is inconsistent with the certain fact, that our Lord had many friends, that some of these possessed the means of comfortable living, and that some devoted themselves wholly to the care of his person and supply of his necessities.* Nor is such privation ever named among the griefs or sufferings with which he was acquainted of familiar as the "man of sorrows" (Isa 53:3). The words before us are nothing more than a proverbial description of an unsettled, homeless life, in contrast with the life which this "one Scribe" may have hoped to lead as his disciple. Foxes and birds are mentioned as familiar representatives of the lower animals generally, just as birds and lilies, in the Sermon on the Mount, are put for animals and plants. (See above, on Mt 6:26, 28.) The essential meaning of the clause is that even the most unimportant animals have more of a settled home than Christ himself. The language is of course hyperbolical but natural and beautifully graphic. Holes, caves or dens (so Wiclif here), a word used in the classics to describe the lairs and haunts of wild beasts, and especially of bears. Birds of the air, literally, of heaven, as in 6:26. where the Greek words are the same, and where they are explained. Nests is too specific a translation of a Greek word meaning shelters, places of repose and safety, whether nests in the strict sense, or the branches of thick trees, or any other similar resort. Son of man cannot simply mean a man, or a mere man, for this would be untrue in fact, since the want in question does not pertain to men as such; nor could any reasons be assigned for this circuitous expression of so simple an idea. The sense of man by way of eminence, the model man, the type and representative of human nature in its unfallen or restored condition, is by no means obvious or according to the analogy of Scripture, and at most an incidental secondary notion. The true sense is determined by Dan. 7:13. where the phrase is confessedly applied to the Messiah, as a partaker of our nature, a description which itself implies a higher nature, or in other words, that he is called the Son of man because he is the Son of God. This official application of the term accounts for the remarkable and interesting fact, that it is never used of any other person in the gospels, nor of Christ by any but himself. Even Acts 7:56 is scarcely an exception, since the words of Stephen are a dying reminiscence of the words of Jesus, and equivalent to saying, 'I behold him who was wont to call himself the Son of man.' This exclusive use of the expression by our Lord may be accounted for by the consideration that it is not in itself a title of honour, but of the opposite, and could not therefore be employed without irreverence by any but himself, while he was upon earth, or in a state of voluntary humiliation. Hath (or has) not, in the proper sense, possesses not or owns not, or at least, has not at his own disposal or control as a mere man or a member of society. The words are often understood as if he had said, knows not, or as if he had meant, has not within reach, has not access to; which, as we have seen, would be at variance with the known facts of the case. We have no reason to believe that our Lord ever suffered for the want of a night's lodging, except when he voluntarily abstained from sleep for devotional or charitable purposes. Even when the bigoted Samaritans refused to entertain him, we are told that he "went to another village" (Luke 9:56). To lay, in Greek another case of the subjunctive syntax, strictly meaning, where he may (or can) lay (literally, lean, incline), his head (for rest and sleep). The view which we have taken of these singular expressions has not only the advantage of making them consistent with the facts of our Lord's history, but also that of making them appropriate in answer to the Scribe's proposal, prompted, as our Lord at once perceived it to be, by a selfish and secular ambition. However simple and demure its letter, its spirit was, 'I am prepared to follow thee through conflict to a post of honour in thy kingdom when established.' The spirit of the answer is, 'My kingdom is not of this world, in which I am a transient pilgrim and without a home.'

21. There is nothing in the form of the expressions here used, or in Matthew's usage, to forbid the supposition that this second dialogue or conversation took place at another time, and that the two are put together on account of their resemblance, and their serving to illustrate the same general fact. But this last, as we shall see, is not exactly the case, and as both are joined by Luke as well as Matthew, and by both placed just before the stilling of the storm, it is much more probable that they occurred as here recorded, at the same time when our Saviour was about to cross the lake. That two such offers should have been made on one occasion, is altogether natural, especially at such a time of concourse and excitement. Indeed the one may have prompted the other, but with a qualification or condition, which might seem to make it less extravagant. While the first offers to go anywhere without restriction, the second does the same, but with a limitation as to time. We learn, however, from the parallel account (Luke 9:59), that there was still another and more striking difference between the case, namely, that in one our Lord repelled a voluntary offer, while in the other the disciple made conditions in obeying a command from Christ to follow him. This circumstance is not preserved by Matthew, showing that he merely joins the two occurrences as having taken place at the same time and being

generally similar, although the second does not, like the first, illustrate the prevailing false impressions of Messiah's kingdom. Another of the disciples, not in the restricted but the wider sense of those who attended his instructions and acknowledged his authority, all which is implied in the use of the word Master by the Scribe in v. 19, and that of the word Lord by the disciple in the case before us. Suffer, not the verb so rendered in 3:15, and let in the next verse here, but one originally meaning to turn over upon, then to turn over to, commit, entrust, and lastly to permit, which is its usual sense in the Greek of the New Testament. First does not qualify this verb ('permit me first, and I will obey afterwards'), but the verb that follows ('first to go away and then to follow thee'). Bury, in the wide sense, both of the Greek and English verb, including not the mere act of interment, but all funeral honours, the entire ceremonial practised in disposing of dead bodies, which among the Greeks, but not among the Jews, included burning. Some have understood this of a duty still indefinitely future, 'let me go away until my father dies and I have buried him.' But this, besides that it is not the obvious sense conveyed by the expression, would be both absurd and disrespectful in reply to an immediate summons. 'I will follow thee at once, if I may first go and wait until my father dies.' The only natural construction is the common one assuming that his father was already dead and his remains awaiting burial.

22. Paradoxical and difficult as this reply has always been considered with respect to its particular expressions, its essential meaning is entirely clear, to wit, that even the most tender obligations and most sacred duties, represented here by that of a son to honour his father with a decent burial, must yield to the paramount demand of the Messiah's service, and especially to his immediate positive command. This we are to hold fast, as the certain import of the passage, in considering its dubious details. The only serious exegetical question to be solved is, whether dead is to be taken in two different senses, or twice in the same sense. Both opinions are ancient; but the former has by far the greater weight of authority, being indeed almost universally adopted. There is scarcely less unanimity in reference to the first sense here attached to dead. The notion that it means grave-diggers, or the buriers of the dead, is only entitled to be mentioned as an exegetical monstrosity. With this exception nearly all who give the word two senses are agreed that it first means spiritually and then naturally dead: 'Let those who are dead in spirit (or in sins) bury their friends who are dead (in body).' The meaning supposed to be conveyed by this command or exhortation is, that there are men enough in a natural impenitent condition to take care of such things, without drawing away those who have a special call to the Messiah's service. There are two objections to this common understanding of the passage, neither of which can be regarded as conclusive, although both are entitled to deliberate attention. The first is, that it seems unreasonable and at variance with the spirit of true religion, to devolve the duty here in question upon those who are in a state of spiritual death and exempt all others from it. This objection may be met by explaining the words as a hyperbolical expression of the thought, that if either class may be excused from such a duty, it is those who owe conflicting obligations to the Saviour. The other objection is one founded on the general law of language and canon of interpretation, that the same word must be taken in the same sense when repeated in the same connection and especially in close succession, without some urgent necessity for varying it. The existence of this necessity in this case is the real point at issue. In other words, the question is, whether by taking the word twice in the same sense (that of naturally, literally dead), we obtain an intelligible meaning, or as good an one as that afforded by the usual but more artificial construction. The only meaning yielded by the former process is, that the dead should be left to bury themselves or one another, rather than withhold a disciple from immediate obedience to his Lord's commands. That the thing required is impossible, only shows that the form of the command is paradoxical, or that the case proposed is an extreme one as in Mt 5:29, 30 above and in Mt 19:24 below. It is then equivalent to saying, but in the strongest and most striking manner possible, that if the dead cannot otherwise be buried than by drawing Christ's disciples from obeying his express commands, they had better not be buried at all. It is probable that these two explanations will continue, as in time past, to commend themselves to different judgments as entitled to the preference. It is the more important, therefore, that the great principle evolved by both, and independent of the question in dispute, should be held fast on either side. Let, the verb translated suffer in Mt 3:15, leave in Mt 5:24, let have inMt 5:40, forgive in Mt 6:12, and as here in Mt 7:4. All these meanings are reducible to one radical idea, that of letting go, and all combine to make the word in this case specially significant, by necessarily suggesting, over and above that of remission, the idea of leaving or abandoning, which might indeed have been included in the version by employing the word leave instead of let

23. The evangelist continues his enumeration or exemplification of Christ's miracles by adding one demonstrative of his control over material nature or the elements, to which the foregoing dialogues were introductory, not only in tradition, but in point of fact. In other words, they really preceded it, or took place just as he was setting sail, or rather on his way to the vessel for that purpose (Luke 9:57). The original construction is like that in vs. 1 and 5, to him entering, literally, stepping in, a kindred compound to the one in v. 1, and specially applied in classical usage to the act of going aboard a vessel, so that it might here be rendered, embarking. Ship, in the wider sense of vessel, here applied to a fishing-boat, as explained above, on Mt 4:21. The Greek noun has the article, not a boat, but the boat, meaning either one which statedly transported passengers, like what we call a ferry-boat, or one habitually used by our Lord and his disciples, perhaps that of Andrew and Peter (Mt 4:18, Luke 5:3), or another specially provided for the purpose (Mark 3:9). His disciples might be understood to mean the two, with whom he had been just conversing (vs. 19–22) who are so described, expressly or by implication, in the first clause of v. 21, and who are then represented as adhering to him, notwithstanding the discouragement which they had met with. And these two disciples followed him, as one had offered and the other been commanded. But the usual or rather universal understanding of the words, and, therefore, the more obvious, as well as that

suggested by the parallels (Mark 4:36, Luke 8:22), refers them to those who were already his habitual attendants, such as Simon and Andrew, James and John (Mt 4:18–22), and perhaps Philip and Nathaniel (John 1:43–45), or the whole body of the twelve, if we suppose that Matthew here relates the incident by anticipation, and that its chronology is more exactly given by the other two evangelists. (See above, on v. 18.) Followed must then be taken, not in the higher sense of adherence or discipleship, but in the lower one of joint locomotion or companionship, nearly corresponding to attended or accompanied. Here, for the first time since the call of the two pairs of brothers (4:18–22), we have a threefold narrative of one occurrence, and shall make use of the parallel accounts, not to improve or even to complete the one before us, for it stands in need of neither process, but, as far as may be necessary, to illustrate and explain it. (See above, on v. 5.)

24. Behold (or lo!) as usual prepares the way for something new and unexpected.* Arose, was, began to be, or happened.† Tempest, Tyndale's version of a word which usually means an earthquake and is always so translated elsewhere,‡ but which, according to its etymology, means any great commotion, whether in the water, air, or earth. It is not the same with the storm of wind mentioned in both parallels (Mark 4:37, Luke 8:23), but rather its effect upon the waters of the lake, which were vehemently moved and shaken. (Wiclif: a great stirring.) Insomuch that, a now obsolete equivalent to so that, used below (v. 28) to represent the same Greek particle (στε), which serves to connect two verbs, when the second expresses the effect or consequence of the first. The last verb is usually in the infinitive, a form which may be retained in English when the verb is active (so as to cover), but when it is passive, as in this case (so as the vessel to be covered), must be modified as in the common version. This might seem to mean the occasional washing of the waves over a deck, or what is technically called in English sea-phrase, 'shipping seas;' but there was probably no deck to these boats, and we learn from the parallels that the one in this case was already filled, and therefore in great danger (Mark 4:37, Luke 8:23). But he, with emphasis, in contrast with the rest who were awake and full of terror. Was asleep, literally, slept, was sleeping, not merely in appearance, but in reality. His human nature was refreshed by sleep, like that of other men, while his divinity (as Calvin says) was watching. As this sleep, although natural, was subject to his will, we may assume that he indulged it for the very purpose of enhancing the impression to be made by the ensuing miracle.

25. Left to themselves in this extremity, they naturally look to Jesus for protection. For his disciples some editions read (without the pronoun) the disciples; others omit disciples altogether; while the very latest also omits coming to (him), on the authority of the Codex Vaticanus and several of the oldest versions. The text will then be simply, they awoke him, raised him up, aroused him. (See above, on v. 15, 2:13, 3:9.) Lord, the same indefinite expression, used so often in the Gospels and explained above (on v. 5), but here determined by the parallels to mean their own Lord, or Master, i. e. teacher (Mark 4:38) and overseer or prefect (Luke 8:24). Save us here means rescue us, deliver us from this impending danger; which differs only in its application or the nature of the peril from the higher sense of salvation. These two words (σ σον μ ς) are also omitted in the Vatican and Paris codices and in the latest critical editions. We perish, not in general, at some time, but at present, we are perishing, at this time, even while we speak. This word (πολλύμεα) is common to all three accounts, which is the more remarkable because the others vary, though without effect on the essential meaning. The verb itself is that used actively in Mt 2:13 (to destroy), and as here in 5:29, 30. It is equivalent to saying, we are lost, or we are going to destruction. The connection with the preceding verb is not the conditional or alternative one expressed in the refrain of Heber's beautiful hymn. Save or we perish. This is really implied but not expressed in the original, the last verb there denoting not a mere contingency, or even a certain futurity, but a present reality, to wit, that they were perishing already, as a reason for invoking him to save them.

26. The word here rendered fearful, has in Greek a strong and bad sense, that of cowardly or craven, so that in the dialect of Homer it is sometimes secondarily employed to mean wretched on the one hand or worthless on the other. There is a near approach to this in the only other instance of its use in the New Testament besides the one before us and its parallel in Mark 4:40, namely, Rev. 21:8. where it stands first in a catalogue of characters, whose portion is the lake of fire and the second death. But even there it has not so much the classical as the scriptural meaning, as suggested by the next word, unbelieving, which is not to be diluted into faithless or unfaithful, but taken in its usual and proper sense, as meaning destitute of faith, and thus explaining fearful which precedes it to mean fearful from that very destitution. This agrees exactly with the case before us, where the question implies censure and disapprobation, not because there was no danger, or because they had no right to be alarmed, but because their danger, although real (as expressly stated in Luke 8:53), and their alarm, although natural and not irrational, ought to have been neutralized and nullified by his presence, and by confidence in his ability and willingness to save them. This trust may have been weakened or suspended by the fact that he was then asleep; but this could only prove the Weakness of their faith in limiting his power to a wakeful state. Oh ye (supplied by all the English versions since Tyndale) of little faith, a single compound word in Greek, the same with that in 6:30, and here as there implying the possession of some faith, however feeble, which must be allowed to define and qualify the seeming intimation of the contrary in Mark 4:40, or fishermen would not have been alarmed and talked of danger: little faith is faith after all; but ought to become great faith.* Then, after thus rebuking their excessive unbelieving fear, which shows that the next word, although strictly meaning roused, does not relate here to his waking but to his rising, as in v. 15 above, and is therefore correctly given in the English version as to sense, although the form in Greek is participial (arising, having risen), belonging to the verb in the preceding verse. Rebuked, not merely in act, as the corresponding Hebrew verb does sometimes mean, but in word, as if addressed to rational agents, from which some infer that the storm was raised by Satan and his demons, who were then

the real objects of the objurgation. This may seem to be favoured, and was perhaps suggested, by the sameness of our Lord's words as recorded by Mark (4:39) and those addressed to a demoniac in the same gospel (1:25). There was, began to be, or came to pass, a great calm, i. e. a perfect stillness of the sea, so lately agitated by the wind. (Wiclif: a great peaceableness.) γαλήνη from γελάω. cf. leni plangore cachinni (Catullus), and κυμάτων νηριθμον γελασμα (Aeschylus).

27. Here again, the men might be supposed to mean the two new followers or disciples of vs. 19–22 (see above, on v. 23), so described to distinguish them from those of longer standing—'and the (two) men wondered.' This is certainty at first sight more natural than to apply the phrase to all our Lord's disciples, even if we understand the men to mean the (mere) men, as distinguished from himself. A third explanation, now perhaps the current one, at least among the Germans, understands by the men the crew or sailors of the vessel, as distinguished from the passengers. The objection to this is not that there were no such men there, which is a dubious assumption, but that in both the parallels (Mark 4:41, Luke 8:25), the same words seem to be expressly or by necessary implication put into the mouths of the same persons who had roused our Lord and been upbraided by him for their unbelieving fear. On the whole, therefore, it seems best to understand the men as a collective or indefinite expression for the whole ship's company, or all those present, without attempting to determine whether it consisted solely of our Lord's disciples, or whether among these are to be reckoned the two mentioned in the previous context. What manner (i. e. kind) of man is found substantially in Wiclif and exactly in Cranmer; whereas Tyndale has what man? and the Rhemish Bible what an one? The Greek word strictly means what countryman, belonging to what place or region, but as early as Demosthenes had got the wider sense attached to it in this place, though the other is not inadmissible, as they may possibly have meant to ask precisely whence or from what land he was. In either sense, the words are not unnatural or misplaced even in the mouths of the disciples, who are not then to be understood as expressing any ignorance or doubt as to the person of their master, but unfeigned astonishment at this new proof of his control, not only over demons and diseases, but also over winds and waves, which they had seen like human slaves, obey him at a word. How appropriate to fishermen! That seems here equivalent to so that, which is not however an authorized usage of the Greek word (τι), meaning properly because, and here perhaps assigning a reason for the question which precedes—'(We ask this) because the winds and sea obey him?' Even, or as Tyndale renders it, both winds and sea; but as the wonder was not that the wind as well as the sea obeyed him, for if one did the other might be expected to do likewise, but that the winds and sea, as well as demons and diseases, thus obeyed him, the best translation of the particle is too or also ('the winds and sea too obey him'), which is equally accordant with Greek usage, and only differs from the common version (even) in being more specific. Even the winds and sea (as well as other things not specified.) The winds and sea too (in addition to things previously mentioned). Obey, an expressive compound Greek verb originally meaning to hear under, i. e. to listen with submissiveness. The English verb is only deficient in suggesting the radical idea of the Greek one, that of hearing, which in Hebrew also often runs into the notion of obeying. This last clause may suggest the evangelist's reason for adducing this particular example of Christ's miracles, to wit, that he might thus complete his series of examples, not promiscuously taken but selected out of many, for the purpose of presenting in a new light his dominion over every form of evil, as well natural as moral.

28. All three evangelists agree in placing next to this miraculous stilling of the storm, as having actually and directly followed it in time, an extraordinary case of dispossession, claiming on several accounts to be selected and distinguished from the many cures of this sort which our Lord appears to have performed. (See above, on v. 16, and on 4:24.) Of the three accounts, Mark's is much the most detailed, and Matthew's the most concise, which shows that some of the particulars recorded by the others were not necessary for his purpose; and we are not at liberty to destroy the distinctive character of the narrative by embodying in its text what the writer chose or was directed to leave out, although we may employ it to illustrate and explain what is inserted. The grand peculiarity of this transaction, common to all three accounts, is that it consisted in the dispossession of a multitude of demons, and their entrance into lower animals, with Christ's permission, or at his command. The scene of this remarkable occurrence was on the east side of the lake called by Mark (5:1) and Luke (8:26) the land or district of the Gadarenes, so named from Gadara, a strong arid wealthy city of Perea, not mentioned in Scripture but described by Josephus as a Greek town, i. e. probably inhabited by Gentiles. It was attached to Herod's jurisdiction by Augustus, but annexed to Syria both before and afterwards. The highest modern geographical authorities identify it with extensive ruins at a place called Umkeis, on a mountainous range east of Jordon, near the southern end of the lake and overlooking it. The district appears to have had other names, derived from towns or tribes, one of which has been preserved by Matthew, though the reading here is doubtful. The common text is Gergesenes (Γεργεσην ν), probably identical with (Γεργεσαι ν), the Septuagint form of the Hebrew Girgashite (גִּרְגָּשִׁי), one of the Canaanitish tribes destroyed by Israel at the conquest of the Promised Land (Gen. 15:21, Deut. 7:1, Josh. 24:11). According to Josephus, only the name survived, and, therefore, might be used here to describe the tract or region, as that possessed by the Girgashites of old, without assuming the existence of a town called Gergesa, which seems to rest upon the unconfirmed authority of Origen, and may have been imagined or invented by him, to support his emendation of the text, consisting in the substitution of the present reading (Gergesenes) for what he represents himself as actual and ancient readings (Gadarenes and Gerasenes). The first of these, which he describes as found in only a few copies, is now the reading of the Vatican and Paris codices, of the Peshito or old Syriac version, and of the latest critical editions, which in Mark and Luke have Gerasenes. This last appears to have been the text of Matthew also, as exhibited by most old copies in the time of Origen, and still found in the Vulgate and Salcidic versions, and in citations of the verse by Athanasius and Hilary. It has reference to

Gerasa, a town of the Decapolis (see above, on 4:25), near the eastern frontier of Perea, and the edge of the desert, described by Josephus, as rich and populous, in which he is corroborated by existing ruins at a place which bears the slightly altered name of Jerash. The objection to this reading, that the town in question was too distant from the lake-shore where the miracle is said to have been wrought, can only be disposed of by assuming that a large tract, locally adjacent or politically subject to the city, bore the same name, which may seem to be confirmed by Jerome's statement, that in his day the name of Gerasa was given to the ancient Gilead. This whole question, although critically curious, is exegetically unimportant, since there can be no doubt as to the main fact, that what is here recorded took place on the east side of the lake and opposite to Galilee (Luke 8:26). Possessed with devils, literally, demonized, the same expressive participle used above in v. 16, and previously in 4:24. The statement here that there were two, is not a contradiction but a simple addition to the narratives of Mark and Luke who mention only one, but without excluding the idea of plurality, as Matthew does when he says one Scribe (v. 19), or one fig-tree (21:19). Had either of the parallels, in either of these cases, introduced two Scribes or two trees, there would have been at least some colour for the charge of inconsistency. But in the case before us, Mark and Luke employ no numeral but simply use the singular. No one pretends that this is a direct contradiction; but some urge the gross improbability that if there had been two, the others would have mentioned only one. A serious error, into which those sceptics who honestly insist upon this circumstance have fallen, is, that they require the construction put upon the passage to be perfectly natural and easy; whereas it is sufficient, in a case confessedly so dubious, and presenting but a choice of difficulties, to show the possibility of reconciling the accounts by any admissible construction of the language. The antecedent improbability of such a difference in such a case is more than outweighed by the improbability, that such a contradiction could have been misunderstood or overlooked by the early readers and assailants of the Gospels. That it was not fastened on before the days of Julian or Porphyry, shows clearly that the narratives were not originally looked upon as inconsistent, whether we are able or unable to ascribe specific reasons for the difference in question. That such reasons are not wholly wanting may be shown by two considerations, the first explaining how Mark and Luke could mention only one, the other why Matthew should have mentioned both. The first, is that one was really sufficient for the common purpose of all three historians, especially if one demoniac, as we may readily assume, although of course we cannot prove, was more ferocious and alarming than the other.* But if one was sufficient, why should Matthew mention both? First, because though one might be sufficient, two could do no harm, and the historian is not restricted to the statement of what is absolutely necessary to his purpose. Secondly, because, though Matthew's narrative, in this and many other instances, is less detailed than either of the others, it is one of his distinctive habits, not as some have strangely said to see things double, but to record them when they actually were so. (See below, on 9:27, 21:2.) This, though malevolently represented as a habitual departure from exact truth, is nothing more than a particular example of the general fact, that one observer naturally notes particulars, and classes of particulars, which others overlook, or less attentively consider, even when they see and know them. Other examples of the same thing are Mark's frequent mention of Christ's looks and gestures, Luke's of his personal devotions, John's of certain favourite expressions, such as the reduplicated Amen (Verily, Verily), precisely parallel to which is Matthew's accurate specification of the number two, even when unnecessary to his purpose and when omitted, although not excluded, by the other Gospels. This conformity to general experience and the laws of human nature may be even used to convert this seeming discrepancy into an unstudied but convincing proof of strict veracity in all the witnesses, each testifying in accordance with his own peculiar mode of observation, and not that of others. To him coming, i. e. as he landed (Luke 8:27), not merely after he had done so, which would admit of an indefinite interval, whereas the landing and the meeting were simultaneous or immediately successive. Met him, or came to meet him, possibly with some unfriendly purpose. Out of the tombs, a Greek word originally meaning memorials, then monuments, then tombs or sepulchres. As these were usually in the shape of houses, or of chambers hewn in the rock (see below on 27:60), they would easily afford a haunt and refuge in such cases as the one here mentioned. Thus far the case resembled multitudes of others which our Lord had previously dealt with, excepting in the circumstance suggested by the words, out of the tombs. But here we begin to see a fearful singularity in this case, as compared with all the other demoniacal possessions mentioned in the Gospel history, and accounting in some measure for its being singled out and separately stated. Elsewhere such cases are exhibited as aggravated forms of disease, preternaturally caused, but under the control and care of others. Here, on the contrary, the sufferers were outcasts from society, not only dwelling in the tombs, but wholly uncontrollable (as fully stated in the parallels), exceeding (or exceedingly, extremely) fierce, a Greek word strictly meaning hard, i. e. difficult, but specially applied in classic Greek to things which are hard to bear, and to persons who are hard to deal with, ill-disposed, malignant, cruel or ferocious. A graphic stroke is added to the picture, as minutely painted in the other gospels, by the circumstance here added, that these mad men were the terror of the country, so that no one was strong (enough) to pass by (i. e. journey, travel) through that road (or way). The original construction of the first verb and particle is like that in v. 24; the verb itself is that employed in 5:13, and there explained.

29. Behold is here almost equivalent to 'strange to say,' or 'who could have believed it?' namely, that these fierce demoniacs, who had long made the very roads impassable, instead of flying at the bold intruder, orally addressed him and acknowledged his superiority. But at the same time, they implicitly deny his right to interfere with them at present, by the question, what to us and to thee? i. e. what is there common to us or connecting us? Thy domain or sphere is wholly different from ours. What hast thou to do with that mysterious world of spirits, to which we belong, and which, though suffered to exert a physical and moral influence on man, are of a species altogether different, and therefore not amenable to thee? The plural pronoun (us) may be referred either to the evil

spirits, as a body or a race, distinct from that of man; or still more probably, because more simply, to the multitude of demons who possessed them (Mark 5:9, Luke 8:30), or perhaps to the plurality, not only of the demons but of the demoniacs, as described by Matthew. As to the title, Son of God, and the sense in which the demons here apply it, see above, on 4:3. Didst thou come here (or hither) is the proper form of the Greek aorist. Before the time should have stood next, as it does in the original and Wiclif's version. The article is not expressed in Greek, which therefore means before-time, i. e. prematurely or too soon, without direct reference to any set time in particular. To torment us, the active voice of the verb applied in v. 6 to excruciating pain of body. (For its derivation, see above, on 4:24.) It has here the wider sense of agonizing punishment, as applicable even to spirits without bodies. This interrogation is a vehicle of earnest and even insolent expostulation, and when taken in connection with the one before it, involves an indirect denial of our Saviour's right to interfere with them, which seems to show that even when they called him Son of God, they had no knowledge of his true divinity.

30. A good way off, in Greek a single word, afar, but really an adjective agreeing with way understood, and therefore nearer to the English form than it might seem at first sight. There is no contradiction between this account and Mark's (5:11), because there and nigh (literally, at, adjacent to) are relative expressions, and the same distance which is called far in a room would be considered nothing in a landscape or a journey. If the herd was beyond reach, it was far off; if in sight, it was near; if either, it was there. All these expressions might be naturally used by the same witness in succession, much more by two distant and independent witnesses. Nor would such a variation, when susceptible of such an explanation, be considered contradictory in any Anglo-Saxon court of justice, although so esteemed in many a German lecture-room. According to our rules of evidence, it might even serve to strengthen both accounts, as really though not ostensibly harmonious. Many swine, i. e. about two thousand (Mark 5:13). Feeding, or being fed, as the form may be either middle or passive, and we know from v. 33 that there were persons tending them. As swine's flesh was forbidden and the swine an unclean beast according to the law of Moses (Lev. 11:7, 8, Deut. 14:8); as the law in general, and especially its ceremonial distinctions, were punctually observed at this time; as the use of swine's flesh is eschewed by all Jews at the present day, and there is no trace of any other practice in the interval: it is highly improbable that these swine were the property of Jews, unless their consciences allowed them to provide forbidden food for Gentiles, and it is simpler to assume that the Gentiles provided it for themselves, which agrees well with the statement of Josephus, that Gadara, the chief town of this district, was a Greek city (see above, on v. 28). The question would be one of little moment if it had not been connected by some writers with their vindication of our Saviour's conduct upon this occasion (see below, on v. 34).

31. So, the usual connective (δὲ) rendered and in v. 30. Devils, i. e. demons, as explained above (on 4:24). How they communicated with our Lord is not revealed, but can create no more difficulty than the similar communication between him and Satan as the tempter (see above, on 4:3). As they were not yet driven out when this request was made, they may still have made use of the men's vocal organs, though they spoke no longer in their name but in their own. Matthew records the very words, and not the substance only, of this strange request. Mark also makes it a direct address (5:12), while Luke gives it indirectly (8:32), like the classical historians in reporting very short discourses. Mark's expression, send us, seems a peremptory demand, but involves a recognition of his power to dispose of them, which Matthew and Luke express by using the verb permit, and Matthew by recording the conditional expression, if thou cast us out. To go away (from the men) into the swine, and take possession of their bodies just as they had entered into the demoniacs (Luke 8:30). Those who laugh at this request as mere absurdity, and therefore never uttered, only show their incapacity to estimate the craft and cunning which suggested it. Having begged to be left undisturbed and been refused, they now apparently relinquish their pretensions to the human victims, and content themselves with leave to take possession of inferior natures. But this mock humility is only a disguise for their malignant wish to bring reproach and danger on their conqueror and judge. If it be asked, in what sense, and to what extent, could evil spirits take possession of a herd of swine, the answer is, precisely so and so far as the nature of the swine permitted. As that nature was not rational or moral, no intellectual or spiritual influence could be exerted; but the body with its organs and sensations, the animal soul with its desires and appetites, could just as easily be wrought upon by demons as the corresponding parts of the human constitution. The difficulty lies in admitting demoniacal influence at all, and not in extending it to lower animals, so far as they have any thing in common with the higher.

32. It is not improbable that they expected this request, like the first, to be refused, as they could scarcely hope to conceal from Christ the motive, whether mockery or malice, which had prompted it. But in the exercise of that divine discretion which so often brought good out of evil, making the wrath of men (and devils) to praise him, and restraining the remainder which would not have that effect (Ps. 76:10), he immediately permitted them, and no doubt actively coerced them into doing what they had themselves proposed. Go, a happy improvement on the older Protestant versions, which as usual have, go your ways! (See above, on vs. 4, 13.) And going out (from the demoniacs, or having gone out), they went away, entered into the herd of swine. The reality of this transition was evinced by a violent and sudden movement of the swine in the most dangerous direction, from which instinct, uncontrolled, would have preserved them. The whole herd rushed down the precipice (or overhanging bank, as the Greek word means according to its etymology) into the sea (or lake), between which and the hills (or highlands) they were feeding. Of all neological absurdities the silliest is the notion that this verse is a poetical description of madmen running through a herd of swine and driving them into the water! To destroy one thus would have been hard enough; but the evangelist describes a simultaneous movement of about two thousand, the number being introduced just here by Mark (5:13), to shut out all perversion or unfounded

explanation of the fact recorded. Perished, literally, died, of course by drowning or strangulation, as expressly mentioned in the parallels. It is a circumstance of some importance that they all without exception perished, an additional proof of supernatural agency in their destruction.

33. And those feeding them fled, astonished and affrighted at the sudden loss of their whole charge, and reported, carried back word to the place from which they came, i. e. into the town (or city) where the owners of the swine resided (compare Luke 15:15). There is something very significant in the original form of the last clause, all (things) and the (things or affair) of the possessed (or demonized). They told the whole story, and began no doubt with the destruction of the swine, but did not fail to add the extraordinary change which they had witnessed in the famous madmen or demoniacs.

34. And (καὶ) behold, introducing the last wonder to be told in this connection. The whole city, a natural hyperbole for its inhabitants, the same employed above in 3:5. To meet Jesus, on his way to the city, and prevent his entrance. Depart (pass, from one place to another) out of their coasts, in the old English sense of borders, bounds, or confines, often put for all that is contained within them. (See above, on 2:16.) This is so unlike the usual effect of our Lord's miracles and teachings that it seems to call for explanation, which may be derived from two considerations. The first is, that the miracle, although a signal miracle of mercy to the demoniacs themselves, was one of injury and loss to the owners of the swine; so that the whole mass of the population (Luke 8:37) was not only filled with awe, but apprehensive of some more extensive damage. The other is that Gadara was a Gentile city (see above on v. 28), and the great mass of the Gadarenes throughout the district either wholly heathen or extensively mixed with them. Now, although the influence exercised by Christ was not necessarily confined to Jews, yet as his mission was to them (see below, on 15:24), and they alone could fully understand his claims as the Messiah, it is not surprising that a Gentile population should have been less favourably impressed by this one miracle, the benefits of which extended only to two individuals, or at most to the circle of their friends, whereas the incidental evils, either actual or apprehended, were more general. We learn from the parallel accounts in Mark and Luke, that the miracle in question, while it led directly to our Lord's exclusion from this province, incidentally supplied his place by a zealous and devoted substitute, who would also have it in his power to counteract, if necessary, any false impressions with respect to the destruction of the swine. Our Saviour's agency in this destruction is not to be vindicated on the ground that Jews had no right to keep swine and were therefore justly punished by the loss of them. Even admitting that these men were Jews, their violation of the law would hardly have been punished so circuitously and without the slightest intimation of their crime. The act was one of sovereign authority, attested by the miracle itself, and so far as we can learn, not disputed even by the persons injured, however much they might lament their loss and wish to avoid its repetition. There is no more need of any special vindication here than in the case of far more serious inflictions of the same kind by disease or accident. The personal presence of the Saviour could not detract from his divine right to dispose of his own creatures for his own ends, even if these ends were utterly unknown to us, much less when they are partially perceptible. For, however sciolists and sceptics may deride this occurrence as absurd and unworthy of the Saviour, it answered an important purpose, that of showing his dominion over every class of objects, and of proving the reality of personal possessions, by exhibiting a case, in which the demons, abandoning the human subjects whom they had so long tormented, and leaving them entirely free from all unnatural excitement, instantaneously betrayed their presence and their power in a multitude of lower animals, impelling them, against their own instinctive dispositions, to a sudden simultaneous movement ending in their own destruction. Admitting the external facts to be as Matthew here describes them, they are wholly unaccountable except upon the supposition of a real dispossession such as he affirms, and the extraordinary novelty of which, without discrediting his narrative, explains his having given a conspicuous place in it to this signal proof of superhuman power.

CHAPTER 9

THE exemplification of Christ's miracles, begun in the preceding chapter, is continued through the one before us, but with more admixture of other matter associated with these in the writer's memory. After stating his return from the voyage mentioned in the previous context (1), the evangelist relates the healing of another paralytic at Capernaum, with the conversation which grew out of it (2–8); his own vocation as a follower of Christ, and a conversation which occurred in his own house, with respect to our Lord's treatment of the publicans and sinners (9–13); another conversation with John's disciples in relation to fasting (14–17); the resuscitation of a ruler's daughter, and the healing of a diseased woman on the way (18–26); the healing of two blind men (27–31), and of a dumb demoniac (32–34); after which we have another general description of our Lord's itinerant labours and his miracles in general, with a strong expression of his pity for the people and desire to relieve them (35–38). This narrative, taken by itself) would naturally seem to be chronologically arranged, and in parts is expressly said to be so; but by comparison with the other Gospels, we find that in several instances this order is departed from.' It might be sufficient, here as in the previous chapter, to account for this by simply referring it to Matthew's purpose, which required things of the same kind to be brought together, whether immediately successive or not. We have it happily, however, in our power to go further and explain, in part at least, why the existing order was adopted. This we shall attempt below in the detailed interpretation.

1. The division of the chapters here is very unfortunate, not only separating what belongs together, but creating an appearance of chronological inaccuracy which is instantly removed by putting this verse in its proper place at the close of the preceding narrative, completing the account of our Lord's visit to the east side of the lake and his return to Galilee. And stepping into, or embarking on, the same verb that is used above in 8:23, and there explained. A ship, as in that case, should be the ship (or boat), here referring to the one in which he came, and which was no doubt waiting for him. Passed over, crossed, a Greek verb commonly applied to the passage of seas or rivers, an idea here expressed in the Vulgate version (transfretavit). His own city, not that of his birth (Bethlehem), nor that of his early long-continued residence (Nazareth), but that which he had chosen as the centre of his operations (Capernaum), and the circumstances of his settlement in which have been already mentioned. (See above, on 4:13.) Here the narrative beginning at 8:18, closes, and the next verse opens one entirely different.

2. As already hinted in the introduction to the chapter, we are able to assign a more specific reason than in many other cases for the introduction of this miracle just here. The next in chronological order, as appears from a comparison of the three accounts, was the twofold or complicated miracle described below in vs. 18–26. But with that transaction Matthew had peculiar personal associations, from the fact, that when the ruler sought our Lord to heal his daughter (see below, on v. 18), he found him eating in the house of Matthew himself (see below, on v. 10), and engaged in a most interesting conversation, which was no doubt deeply graven on the memory of his entertainer. What could be more natural, therefore, than that the latter, before giving us the miracle, should record the conversation that preceded it, and that before doing this, he should record the fact of his own vocation, though it may have taken place much sooner. But this vocation, as we learn from all three gospels (see below, on v. 9), was immediately preceded by the healing of the paralytic, which accounts for his beginning with that miracle, though in itself sufficiently remarkable to find some place in any list or exemplification of our Lord's miraculous performances. This connection of the topics in the narrative before us is of some importance, as a proof that the evangelist, even when he seems to interrupt the chronological arrangement, does not do it at random, but for reasons which imply a definite purpose and a systematic method, and which, being sometimes, as in this case, ascertainable, may reasonably be assumed, even where we cannot trace it so distinctly. The separation of the first verse from its proper context (see above, on v. 1) necessarily produces the impression on the reader who is naturally influenced by these divisions, though entirely conventional and often wrong, that the verse in question gives the date of the occurrences that follow, or, in other words, that the healing of the paralytic took place on our Lord's return from the excursion, during which he stilled the storm and dispossessed the demoniacs of Gadara, as described in vs. 18–34 of the preceding chapter. But the first of these miracles is placed much earlier both by Mark (2:1) and Luke (5:17), namely, after the healing of the leper, which Matthew himself expressly represents as immediately following the descent from the mountain after the delivery of the Sermon on the Mount (see above, on 8:1). But if 9:1 belongs to the preceding context, there is no mark of time whatever in respect to the ensuing miracle, the first words of the verse before us simply meaning, that they (once) brought to him a paralytic. (See above, on 8:5, where there is a similar transition.) This may seem to be forbidden by the words and lo, apparently connecting what follows in the closest manner with what goes before. But this impression is occasioned partly by the false division of the chapters, almost forcing these two verses into intimate connection, and partly by a disregard of Matthew's settled usage, which exhibits many instances of similar appearance, where we know that the two things were not immediately successive, and where all suspicion of mistake or variant tradition is precluded by the fact that there is no chronological specification, but a mere presumption founded upon juxtaposition. Throwing the first verse back into the former chapter where it properly belongs, and regarding that before us as the opening of a new context, and is simply a historical connective resuming and continuing the narrative, according to the Hebrew idiom which employs it even at the beginning of a book, although the English version usually softens and to now or then.* Behold, merely indicating something new and unexpected, is as much in place at the beginning as in any other portion of the narrative, and here amounts to saying, 'another proof of his extraordinary power was afforded on a different occasion when they brought,' &c. It would seem, from an expression used by Luke (5:17), that other miracles of healing were performed at this time, but that one is recorded in detail, on account of the remarkable circumstances which attended it, and of the no less remarkable discourse to which it gave occasion. Of the three accounts, as in the case of the demoniacs at Gadara (see above, on 8:28), the most concise is Matthew's, one of many proofs that the ancient and still current notion as to Mark's abridging Matthew is entirely groundless. As in other cases of the same sort, we must carefully avoid confounding the three narratives and destroying the distinctive character of either, while endeavouring to make them interpret and elucidate each other. They brought to him, an indefinite expression, meaning certain persons, whom it was unnecessary further to describe, but whom we know from other sources to have been men (Luke 5:18) and four in number (Mark 2:3). The next six words represent a single Greek one, which might now be rendered no less briefly in English by the use of the word paralytic (see above, on 8:6). Lying, literally, thrown, or prostrate (as in 8:6, 14). A bed, or couch, any thing on which one lies for rest. According to oriental usage, it was probably no solid framework like our bedsteads, but a simple pallet, rug, or blanket. Seeing, not merely in the exercise of his divine omniscience, but perceiving by external signs, fully described in both the other gospels (Mark 2:4, Luke 5:18). Their faith, not merely that of the sufferer, though this may be included, which distinguishes this case from that of the centurion (see above, on 8:13). The faith directly meant in both cases is belief in Christ's ability and willingness to work the cure (see below, on v. 28). The commendation of their faith is not addressed to all, but to the sufferer alone, and in a form at once affecting and surprising. Be of good cheer, i. e. cheer up, take courage (Rhemish Bible, have a good heart). The same use of the same Greek word (θάρσει) occurs repeatedly in Homer, and sometimes in connection with the same endearing epithet. Son, or rather child, the Greek word

being neuter, and in usage common to both sexes, even when the reference is to one, as here, and in 21:28, Luke 2:48, 15:31. The same affectionate address is used by Christ to his disciples in the plural number (10:24, John 13:33), and a synonymous form elsewhere (John 21:5). It is here intended to express, not only kindness and compassion, but a new spiritual kindred or relation, which had just been formed between the speaker and the man whom he addressed. Be forgiven, like the Greek verb, is ambiguous, and may be either a command or an affirmation. It is now held by the highest philological authorities that the original word (φἐωνται) is an Attic, or more probably a Doric form of the perfect passive signifying something that is done already. Thy sins have (already) been remitted, the verb corresponding to the noun (remission) in 26:28 below. There is no need of supposing, as some do, that this man's palsy was in some peculiar or unusual sense the fruit of sinful indulgence; much less that our Lord conformed his language to the common Jewish notion, that all suffering was directly caused by some specific sin, a notion which he pointedly condemns in John 9:3, Luke 13:2–5. Bodily and spiritual healing was more frequently coincident than we are apt to think, the one being really a pledge and symbol of the other. Saving faith and healing faith, to use an analogous expression, were alike the gift of God, and often, if not commonly, bestowed together, as in this case, where the singularity is not the coincidence of healing and forgiveness, but the prominence given to the latter by the Saviour, who instead of saying, 'be thou whole' (compare 8:3,) or 'thy disease is healed,' surprised all who heard him by the declaration that his sins were pardoned. This paradoxical expression was no doubt designed to turn attention from the lower to the higher cure or miracle, and also to assert his own prerogative of pardon, in the very face of those whom he knew to be his enemies.

3. We here see for whom this unexpected declaration was intended, not for his friends and disciples, but for others whom he knew to be present as spies and censors of his conduct. Some of the Scribes, i. e. of the large class or profession mentioned in 2:4, 5:20, 7:29, 8:19. These expounders of the law, and spiritual leaders of the people, had already been invidiously compared with Jesus by the crowds who heard him, and were therefore predisposed to regard him as a rival. Those who assembled now on his return to Capernaum were not merely residents of that place, but collected, as Luke strongly phrases it (5:17), from every village of Galilee and Judea, as well as from Jerusalem. However hyperbolical these terms may be, the essential fact is still that these unfriendly Scribes came from various quarters, thereby showing the importance which began to be attached to Christ's proceedings, especially by those who were at once the jurists and the theologians, the lawyers and the clergy, of the Jewish nation. Within themselves might also mean among themselves, and here denote discussion, or an interchange of views (as in 16:7, 21:25, below); but this idea is excluded by the words in Mark (2:6), in their hearts, so that what is here described is not reciprocal communication, but the secret working of their several minds, unconscious of the eye that was upon them. This is commonly supposed to be contemptuous, being often in classic Greek equivalent to this fellow, and occasionally so translated in our Bible. (See below, on 12:24, 26:61, 71.) To blaspheme, in classic Greek, is commonly applied to evil speaking among men, such as slander or vituperation, but sometimes to irreverent or impious language to or of the gods, which last (in application to the true God) is its exclusive sense in Hellenistic usage. The ground of this charge, here implied, is expressed in both the parallels (Mark 2:7, Luke 5:21) namely, that the power to forgive belongs to God alone. The principle involved in this interrogation is a sound one, and appears to have been a sort of axiom with these learned Jewish Scribes, who were also right in understanding Christ as acting by his own authority, and thereby claiming divine honours for himself. A mere declaratory absolution they could utter too, and no doubt often did so, but the very manner of our Lord must have evinced that in forgiving, as in teaching, he spoke with authority, and not as the Scribes. (See above, on 7:29.)

4. These cavils and repinings, though not audible, were visible to him who had occasioned them, and now detected them by his omniscience without waiting till they were betrayed by word or action. Knowing, an idea borrowed from the parallels (Mark 2:8, Luke 5:22), where as the word here used means seeing, and is so translated in v. 2, as well as in all the older versions of the one before us. Why, literally, for what, i. e. for what cause or reason. Think, is stronger in Greek, meaning ponder or revolve, and according to the parallels to reason, reckon, calculate, a term implying coolness and deliberate forethought, not a sudden violent excitement. Evil is in Greek a plural adjective, evil (things), the same that is repeatedly employed above to denote both physical and moral evil. (Compare 6:23, 7:17, with 5:37, 6:13, 7:11.) Here it can only have the latter sense. In your hearts, not merely in your minds, but in your inner parts, or secretly. The question has the force of a severe rebuke, 'what right have you to entertain such thoughts?'

5. This is one of the most striking instances on record of our Lord's consummate wisdom in the use of what appears to be a strange and paradoxical method of reasoning or instruction. As instead of pronouncing the man healed he unexpectedly pronounced him pardoned, so, instead of meeting their objections by a formal affirmation of his own prerogative, he does so by a subtle but convincing argument, disclosing at the same time why he had so spoken. They denied his power to forgive sins, and could not be convinced of it by any sensible demonstration. But they might equally dispute his power to heal, unless attested by a visible effect. If then his commanding the paralytic to arise and walk should be followed by his doing so, what pretext could they have for doubting his assertion that the same man's sins were pardoned? For assigns the reason of his calling their thoughts evil. Which (in old English whether) is easier? You may think it easy enough to pronounce his sins forgiven, whether they be so or not; but it is equally easy to pronounce him healed, or to demand of him the actions of a sound man, and if this should prove effectual, you must acknowledge that the other is so too, although the pardon of sin cannot be made palpable to sense like the cure of a paralysis.

6. 'That you may know by what authority I tell this man that his sins have been forgiven, I will show you what authority I have over his

disease, that the possession of the one may demonstrate the existence of the other, for both belong to me as the Messiah.' Having stated his argument, he now applies it, by exhibiting the very proof of his authority to pardon sin which he had shown to be conclusive. To forgive sin and to heal disease are superhuman powers, to claim which is equally easy, and to exercise them equally difficult. If I pronounce this man forgiven, you may deny it, but you cannot bring my declaration to the test of observation, since forgiveness is a change not cognizable by the senses. But if I assert the other power, you can instantly detect the falsehood of my claim, by showing that the paralysis continues. If, on the contrary, it disappears at my command, the proof thus furnished of the truth of one claim may convince you that the other is no less well founded. Thus far he had addressed the Scribes; then turning to the palsied man, Arising (probably lying down and raised up), take up thy couch and go away into thy house.

7. Familiar as we are with this astounding scene, it is not easy to imagine the solicitous suspense with which both the enemies and friends of Jesus must have awaited the result. Had the paralytic failed to obey the summons, the pretensions of the new religious teacher were refuted by the test of his own choosing.

8. The effect upon the crowds was that they wondered, or according to another reading, found in the Vatican and Beza codices, as well as in the Vulgate and Peshito versions, were afraid, i. e. filled with a religious awe at such an exhibition of divine power over the worst forms of disease. Glorified God, or made him glorious by praising him (see above, on 5:16, 6:2). Which had given, literally, the (one) giving (or having given), such, not merely as to quality or kind, but so great, so much, which is the usage of the word in Greek. Power, including the ideas of physical capacity and moral right. (See above, on 7:29, 8:9.) This must here be understood as applying, not only to the miracle of healing, but to the forgiveness which it proved to have been also granted. Unto men, collectively or as a race, of which they looked on Jesus as the representative. (See above, on 8:20.) This expression seems to show that they had no conception of his divine nature. There is another explanation of the plural (men) as referring to our Lord and his disciples, the whole company of which he was the leader.

9. As the first four of his personal attendants were fishermen, so the fifth, whose vocation is recorded, was selected from among the publicans, and called from the actual discharge of his official functions. The three evangelists, by whom this interesting incident has been preserved, agree in making it directly follow the miraculous cure of the paralytic. Passing by or along, from Capernaum, where the preceding miracle was wrought (Mark 2:1) to the lake-shore (ib. v. 13), he saw a person acting as a publican. (See above, on 5:46.) Receipt of custom, or, as most interpreters explain the term, the place of such receipt, not necessarily a house, perhaps a temporary office or a mere shed, such as Wiclif calls a tolboth (toll-booth), a name transferred in Scotland to the common gaol. At this place, perhaps upon the waterside, he saw a person sitting and engaged in his official duties, whom he called to follow him, a call which he instantly obeyed, abandoning his former business (Luke 5:28). It is not affirmed, or even necessarily implied, that this was his first knowledge of the Saviour. The analogy of the calls before described (4:18–22) makes it not improbable that this man, like his predecessors, had already heard him, and perhaps received an intimation that his services would be required. It can scarcely be fortuitous in all these cases that the persons called, though previously acquainted with the Saviour, had returned to or continued in their former occupation, and were finally summoned to attend their Master while engaged in the performance of its duties. The person here called, Luke names Levi, Mark more fully, Levi, son of Alpheus. In none of the four lists of the apostles is the name of Levi found, but in one of them (10:3), a publican is mentioned by the name of Matthew, the very name which an old and uniform tradition has connected with that gospel as its author. The combination of these statements, which some German writers in their ignorance of practical and public jurisprudence, represent as contradictory, no judge or jury in America or England would hesitate or scruple to regard as proving that the Matthew of one gospel and the Levi of the other two are one and the same person. This same diversity exists in relation to the hypothesis or theory, by which the difference of name may be accounted for. While one class treats it as a mere harmonical device without intrinsic probability, the other thinks it altogether natural and in accordance with analogy, that this man, like so many persons in the sacred history, Paul, Peter, Mark, &c., had a double name, one of which superseded the other after his conversion. In this case it was natural that Matthew himself should use the name by which he had so long been known as an apostle, yet without concealing his original employment, and that Mark and Luke should use the name by which he had been known before, when they relate his conversion, but in enumerating the apostles should exchange it for his apostolic title. This hypothesis is certainly more probable than that of a mistake on either side, or that of a confusion between two conversions, those of Levi and Matthew, both of whom were publicans, and one of whom was an apostle, but confounded by tradition with the other!

10. Having gone back to record his own vocation, Matthew now reverts to what may have occurred long after, on our Lord's return from the eastern shore, where he had exorcised the demoniacs. The chronological order is here easily determined by the parallels (Mark 5:21, Luke 8:40), both which represent what follows as immediately subsequent to the return just mentioned, whereas Matthew gives no such specification and must therefore be elucidated by the others. It is only an apparent disagreement with them, that he puts the feast and conversation in immediate juxtaposition with his own vocation. He does not say they were immediately successive, and his order is readily accounted for by simply assuming, what is altogether natural, that Matthew, when about to mention what occurred in his own house, pauses a moment to explain how Jesus came to be there. This is still more natural when we consider that the feast in question was attended by a multitude of publicans, to which class Matthew had himself belonged. It is as if he had said, writing in his own person, 'I remember well when Jesus went with Jairus, for he left my own house where he had

been answering the cavils of the Pharisees against his keeping company with publicans, many of whom were at my table, as I had myself been one of them, and was actually serving as such, when the Master called me, as he came out of Capernaum after healing the paralytic.' The house might be either that of Jesus or of Matthew; but the ambiguity is solved by Luke (5:29) who tells us that the publican apostle made a great reception (δοχήν) for him in his house, a circumstance modestly omitted in his own account of these transactions. We have then a double reason for the fact that many publicans and sinners sat (reclined) at meat with Christ and his disciples; first, the one expressed by Mark, that this unhappy class was very numerous, and very generally followed Christ, to hear his doctrine and experience his kindness; and then, the one implied by Luke, that he who gave this entertainment was himself a publican, and therefore likely to invite or to admit his own associates in office and in disrepute. Sat at meat, literally, lay down or reclined, then the customary attitude at meals, as explained above (on 8:11).

11. The unavoidable publicity of almost all our Saviour's movements, and the agitated state of public feeling with respect to him, would necessarily prevent a private and select assemblage even in a private house. It is only by neglecting this peculiar state of things that any difficulty can be felt as to the presence of censorious enemies at Matthew's table or within his hospitable doors, if not as guests, as spectators or as spies. These unwelcome visitors were Pharisees or members of the great ceremonial party (see above, on 3:7, 5:20). Nothing could be more at variance with their hollow ceremonial sanctity than Christ's association with these excommunicated sinners and apostates, and especially his free participation in their food, on which the Jews of that age especially insisted as a means and mark of separation from the Gentiles (Acts 10:28), and from those among themselves whom they regarded as mere heathen (see below, on 18:17). Unprepared as yet to make an open opposition to the Saviour, and perhaps awed by his presence, they present their complaint in the indirect form of an interrogation addressed not to him but his disciples. The supposed extravagance of Christ's pretensions was aggravated, in the eyes of his accusers, by a seeming inconsistency of his behaviour with respect to friendships and associations. While he claimed an authority above that of any prophet, he consorted with the most notorious violators of the law, who were excluded by all strict Jews from their social and ecclesiastical communion.

12. The original construction is, but Jesus hearing. Though addressed to the disciples, the objection is replied to by our Lord himself, and as usual in an unexpected form, presenting the true question at issue, and suggesting the true principle or method of solution. Their reproach implied a false view of his whole work and mission, which was that of a physician; the disease was sin; the more sinful any man or class of men were, the more were they in need of his attentions. The very idea of a healer or physician presupposes sickness; they that are whole (or well, in good health) need no such assistance. Be and are must here be taken as exact equivalents, the former being in old English, an indicative as well as a subjunctive form, and no such distinction being made in the translation of the parallels, where are is twice repeated (Mark 2:17, Luke 5:31). In all three places the original construction is the participial one, so constantly avoided in our English versions, and in this case really forbidden by our idiom, those being strong, those having (themselves) ill. For the usage of this last phrase, see above, on 4:24 and 8:16.

13. It is highly characteristic of this Gospel that although it has thus far differed from the other two in this passage only by omitting some things which they give, it here makes an addition to their text, and one precisely like that in 8:17, consisting of a quotation from the prophet Hosea (6:6), which is introduced as something with which they were familiar in the letter, although culpably ignorant of its spirit and true meaning. Go, literally, going, or still more exactly, having gone (away for the purpose). This is not a pleonastic phrase, but adds to the severity of the reproach by sending them away, as if to school, or to their books, to learn what they should have known already, and what some of them were bound ex officio to make known to others. What that meaneth, literally, what (it) is, or connecting it directly with what follows, what is, I will have mercy. The sense is given in the English version, but without the peculiar form which is foreign from our idiom. The quotation is made in the words of the Septuagint version as given in some copies, though the Vatican (considered as the oldest) text retains the comparative form of the original (θυσίαν), rather (or more) than sacrifice. The strong negative in Matthew may be either an adoption of the version current among Greek readers, or an authoritative change enhancing the original expression, as if he had said, 'I not only desire sacrifice less than mercy, but not at all when they are incompatible.' Will have in the original is simply will, not as an auxiliary but an independent verb meaning to desire, like the Hebrew one which it translates. Sacrifice (originally slaying) is here put for all ceremonial services and in antithesis to mercy or the exercise of kindness and benevolence towards those who suffer, and on God's part towards his sinful and unworthy creatures. The application evidently is, that the Pharisees ignored or violated this great principle in censuring our Lord for his association with the very persons whom he came to save. The figurative description of his work, in v. 12, is now followed by a literal one. The oldest manuscripts and latest critics read, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners. This, taken by itself, would seem to mean simply that his errand was to sinners, that his message was addressed to them. But the parallel passage in Luke (5:32), as well as the received text of Mark and Matthew, adds the words, to repentance, thus giving to the verb call, at least in reference to the last clause, the specific sense of summoning, inviting, or exhorting. Some interpreters, suppose that this limitation of the meaning does not extend to the righteous, who are said to be called (or not called) in the vague sense above given—'I came not to address the righteous, but to summon sinners to repentance.' There is something very harsh, however, in supposing the same verb to have two senses in one sentence without being even repeated. A far more natural construction is to give it the same sense in relation to both classes, or in other words, to let the additional phrase (to repentance) qualify the whole clause. 'I came not to call the righteous to repentance, but sinners.' To this it is objected that repentance is not predicable of the righteous. This depends upon the meaning of

the latter term. If it denote, as some allege, comparatively righteous, i. e. less atrociously or notoriously wicked; or, as others think, self-righteous, righteous in their own eyes; then the righteous need repentance and the call to repentance just as much as others. If it mean absolutely righteous, i. e. free from sin, which is the proper meaning, and the one here required by the antithesis with sinners, it is true that such cannot repent, and need not be exhorted to repentance; but this is the very thing affirmed according to the natural construction. 'You reproach me for my intercourse with sinners, but my very mission is to call men to repentance, and repentance presupposes sin; I did not come to call the righteous to repentance, for they do not need it and cannot exercise it, but to call sinners as such to repentance.' By confining to repentance to the second member of the clause, the very thing most pointedly affirmed is either left out or obscurely hinted. Another error as to this verse is the error of supposing that our Saviour recognizes the existence of a class of sinless or absolutely righteous men among those whom he found upon the earth at his first advent. But the distinction which he draws is not between two classes of men, but between two characters or conditions of the whole race By the righteous and sinners he does not mean those men who are actually righteous, and those other men who are actually sinners, but mankind as righteous and mankind as sinners. 'I came not to call men as unfallen sinless beings to repentance, which would be a contradiction, but as sinners, which they all are; and I therefore not only may but must associate with sinners, as the very objects of my mission; just as the physician cannot do his work without coming into contact with the sick, who are alone in need of healing.' He does not mean of course that his errand was to Publicans (as sinners), not to Pharisees (as righteous), but simply that the worse the former were, the more completely did they fall within the scope of his benignant mission.

14. Near akin to the charge of undue condescension and familiar intercourse with sinners is that of a free and self-indulgent life, to the neglect of all ascetic mortifications. The disciples of John are by some regarded as worthy representatives of John himself, holding his doctrines and his relative position with respect to the Messiah. But this position was no longer tenable; the ministry of John was essentially prospective and preparatory; its very object was to bring men to Christ as the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world (John 1:29). Had all John's followers imbibed his spirit and obeyed his precepts, they would all have become followers of Christ, as some did. But even while John was at liberty, and in despite of his remonstrances, some of his disciples cherished a contracted zeal for him as the competitor of Christ (John 3:26), and afterwards became a new religious party, equally unfaithful to the principal and the forerunner. These are the disciples of John mentioned in the gospel, after his imprisonment and the consequent cessation of his public ministry. Of their numbers and organic state we have no information. From the passage now before us, where they are connected with the Pharisees, not only by the history but by themselves, it is probable that John's severe means of awakening the conscience and producing deep repentance were continued as a ceremonial form after the spirit had departed. A remnant of this school or party reappears in Acts 19:1–7, and with a further but most natural corruption in one or more heretical phenomena of later history. The neglect complained of would be equally offensive to the followers of John and to the Pharisees, however they might differ as to more important matters. For what, i. e. for what cause or reason? Fast, i. e. habitually, statedly, as a matter of observance, not as an occasional auxiliary to devotion, or a special means of spiritual discipline. The only stated fast prescribed in the Mosaic law is that of the great day of atonement, in which were summed up all the expiatory ceremonies of the year (Lev. 16:29–34). But before the close of the Old Testament canon, we find traces of additional fasts added by the Jews themselves (Zech. 8:19), and in the time of Christ an intimation by himself that the Pharisees observed two weekly fasts (Luke 18:12). The Jewish traditions, though of later date, confirm the general fact here stated. The fasts observed by John's disciples were either the traditional ones common to all other Jews, or formal repetitions of those used by John as temporary remedies, perhaps a servile imitation of his personal austerity and abstinence. We have no reason to believe, and it is highly improbable, indeed, that John himself established stated fasts, which would seem to be at variance with his intermediate position, as the last prophet of the old dispensation and the herald of the new, but commissioned neither to improve upon the one nor to anticipate the other. But thy disciples fast not, though a simple statement of a fact, derives from its connection a censorious character, as if they meant to say, how is this omission to be justified or reconciled with thy pretensions as a teacher sent from God? (John 3:2.) In this case they complain to him of his disciples, as in that before it they complain to them of him (v. 11), and in the first which Mark records merely condemn him in their hearts without giving oral expression to their censures (v. 3:4). This charge, though indirect and interrogative in form, may be regarded as confirming what we know from other quarters, and especially from Christ's own words below, that his life and that of his disciples were alike free from the opposite extremes of frivolous self-indulgence and austere moroseness.

15. The reply to this charge is as unexpected and original in form as either of the others, and made still more striking by its being borrowed from familiar customs of the age and country, namely, from its marriage ceremonies, and particularly from the practice of the bridegroom bringing home his bride accompanied by chosen friends of either sex, rejoicing over them and for them. These, in the oriental idiom, were styled children of the bridal chamber, i. e. specially belonging to it and connected with it, something more than mere guests or attendants at the wedding. The specific term sons, here used in all the gospels, designates the male attendants upon such occasions. The bridegroom is in Greek an adjective derived from bride and answering to bridal, nuptial. Used absolutely, it denotes the bridal (man), or bridesman, called in English bridegroom, and differing from husband just as bride does from wife. They may be here a double allusion, first, to the favourite Old Testament figure of a conjugal relation between God and Israel (as in Ps. 45, Isai. 54, Jer. 2, Hos. 3), and then to John the Baptist's beautiful description of the mutual relation between him and Christ as

that of the bridegroom and the bridegroom's friend (John. 3:29). The form of the question is highly idiomatic, being that used when a negative answer is expected. The nearest approach to it in English is a negative followed by a question—'they cannot—can they?' The incapacity implied is not a physical but moral one. They cannot be expected, or required to fast; there is no reason why they should fast. The general principle involved or presupposed is that fasting is not a periodical or stated, but a special and occasional observance, growing out of a particular emergency. This doctrine underlies the whole defence of his disciples, which proceeds upon the supposition that a fast, to be acceptable and useful, must have a reason and occasion of its own, beyond a general propriety or usage. It is also taught that fasting is not a mere opus operatum, but the cause and the effect of a particular condition, that of spiritual grief or sorrow. The duty of fasting being thus dependent upon circumstances, may and will become incumbent when those circumstances change, as they are certainly to change hereafter. The bridegroom is not always to be visibly present, and when he departs, the time of fasting will be come. To express this still more strongly, he is said to be removed or taken away, as if by violence. Then, at the time of this removal, as an immediate temporary cause of sorrow, not forever afterwards, which would be inconsistent with the principle already laid down, that the value of religious fasting is dependent on its being an occasional and not a stated duty. There is no foundation therefore for the doctrine of some Romish writers, who evade this argument against their stated fasts, by alleging that according to our Lord's own declaration, the church after his departure was to be a fasting church. But this would be equivalent to saying that the Saviour's exaltation would consign his people to perpetual sorrow. For he evidently speaks of grief and fasting as inseparable, and the two terms are here used as convertible.

16. Although Matthew has not yet recorded any of Christ's formal parables, he gives us in this passage several examples of his parabolical method of instruction, i. e. by illustration drawn from the analogies of real life. Having already employed some of the prevailing marriage customs to account for the neglect of all austerities by his disciples, he proceeds to enforce the general principle which he is laying down, by other analogies derived from the festivities of such occasions, and particularly from dresses and the drinks which were considered indispensable at marriage feasts. The first parable, as it is expressly called by Luke (5:36), is suggested by the homely but familiar art of patching, and consists in a description of the general practice of what everybody does, or rather of what no one does, in such a matter. This appeal to constant universal usage shows, that however we may understand the process here alluded to, it must have been entirely familiar and intelligible to the hearers. The essential undisputed points are that he represents it as an unheard-of and absurd thing to combine an old and new dress, by sewing parts of one upon the other. The incongruity, thus stated by Matthew and Luke (5:36), is rendered much more clear by Mark's explanation of a new dress, as meaning one composed of unfulled cloth, and therefore utterly unfit for the kind of combination here alluded to. Both the text and the construction of the next clause has been much disputed; but the true sense seems to be the one expressed in the common version, namely, that the new piece or filling up, by shrinking or by greater strength of fibre, loosens or weakens the old garment still more, and the rent becomes worse. The essential idea here expressed is evidently that of incongruity, with special reference to old and new. It admits of various applications to the old and new economy, the old and new nature of the individual, and many other contrasts of condition and of character. The primary use of it, suggested by the context and historical occasion, was to teach the authors of this charge that they must not expect in the Messiah's kingdom a mere patching up of what had had its day and done its office, by empirical repairs and emendations of a later date, but an entire renovation of the church and of religion; not as to its essence or its vital principle, but as to all its outward forms and vehicles. As the usages immediately in question were of human not divine institution, whatever there may be in this similitude of sarcasm or contempt, belongs not even to the temporary forms of the Mosaic dispensation, but to its traditional excrescences.

17. The same essential truth is now propounded in another parabolic form, likewise borrowed from the experience of common life. Instead of old and new cloth, the antithesis is now between old and new skins as receptacles for new wine, the fermenting strength of which distends the fresh skins without injury, but bursts the rigid leather of the old ones. Men, as in 5:15, and often elsewhere, represents the indefinite subject of the verb. The present tense denotes what is usually done in such a case. The word bottles is of course to be explained with reference to the oriental use of goat skins to preserve and carry water, milk, wine, and other liquids. The attempt to determine who are meant by the bottles, and what by the wine, proceeds upon a false assumption with respect to the structure and design of parables, which are not to be expounded by adjusting the minute points of resemblance first, and then deducing from the aggregate a general conclusion, but by first ascertaining the main analogy, and then adjusting the details to suit it. (See below, on 13:3.) This is the method universally adopted in expounding fables, which are only a particular species of the parable, distinguished by the introduction of the lower animals, as representatives of moral agents. In explaining Æsop's fable of the Fox and the Grapes, no one ever thinks of putting a distinctive meaning on the grapes, as a particular kind of fruit, or on the limbs of the fox as having each its own significance. Yet this is the expository method almost universally applied to the parables. By varying the form of his illustration here, without a change in its essential import, he teaches us to ascertain the latter first, and then let the mere details adjust themselves accordingly. The last clause furnishes the key to both similitudes. New wine must be put into new bottles. In religion, no less than in secular affairs, new emergencies require new means to meet them; but these new means are not to be devised by human wisdom, but appointed by divine authority.

18. We now come to the narrative of two great miracles, woven together in the history as they were in fact, the one having been performed by Christ while on his way to work the other. These things he saying to them fixes the succession of the incidents, which

is the same, though not so expressly stated, in the other gospels. Ruler, in Greek Archon, originally meaning one who takes the lead, applied in history to the chief magistrates of Athens. A certain, literally, one, the same unusual expression that occurs above in 8:19, and here as there must be definitely understood as meaning one among so many, one out of a greater number, as if he had said, 'among those who applied to him for aid was one belonging to the class of rulers,' or as Mark explains it (2:22), one of the archi-synagogues (or rulers of the synagogue), i. e. one of the national hereditary elders of the Jews, among whose functions was the local conduct of religious discipline and worship (see above, on 4:23.) The idea of a separate organization and a distinct class of officers appears to have arisen after the destruction of Jerusalem, and could not therefore be the model of the Christian Church which had its pattern not in later Jewish institutions, but in the permanent essential part of the old theocracy, including its primeval patriarchal eldership, one primarily founded upon natural relations or the family government and thence transferred not only to the Jewish but to the Christian church-organization. Of such rulers there was always a plurality in every neighborhood, but not a bench or council of elective officers, uniform in number, as in the later synagogues, when the dispersion of the people had destroyed the ancient constitution and the present synagogue arrangement had been substituted for it. But as this arrangement is without divine authority, nothing is gained but something lost by tracing the New Testament church polity to this source, instead of tracing it back further to the presbyterial forms of the theocracy itself. The elders who were ex officio rulers of the synagogue, i. e. directors of its discipline and worship, had, both by birth and office, the highest rank and social position. This application for assistance therefore came from the most respectable and influential quarter. The preservation of this ruler's name (Jairus) by Mark (5:22) and Luke (8:41), but not by Matthew, shows how far the others are from merely abridging or transcribing him. Worshipped him, or did him reverence, by falling at his feet (Mark 5:22, Luke 8:41). As to the import of this action, see above, on 8:2. Is even now dead, literally, just now died, a strong expression of his fear that she must be dead by this time, and therefore not at variance with the more deliberate expressions in the other gospels (Mark 5:23, Luke 8:42.) The request in the last clause implies a belief that personal presence and corporeal contact were essential to the cure. This was the popular belief, to which the faith of the centurion rose superior (see above, on 8:10), and which our Lord appears to have rebuked in a person of still higher rank. (See John 4:46–54.) That the parent's faith in this case was not wholly wanting, appears from the request itself, and from the strong expression, She shall (i. e. certainly will) live, which may either mean, still live if yet alive, or live again, revive, if dead already.

19. Rising up, literally, raised or roused, i. e. from table in the house of Matthew (see above, on v. 10), who would therefore naturally have a vivid recollection of the whole scene. His disciples, in the wide sense of adherents, or at least of personal attendants, those who followed him from place to place, which was done, however, in the present instance by a great crowd (Mark 5:24), probably of "publicans and others" who were eating with him (Luke 5:29). We have seen, however, that a crowd was seldom far off, even in our Lord's most solitary and sacred hours. (See above, on 8:1.)

20. While on his way to the house of Jairus he performs a miracle, the history of which is here inserted into that of the other by the three evangelists, precisely as it happened, a strong proof of authenticity and vivid recollection on the part of the eye-witnesses. A woman whose name, as usual, is not recorded (see above, 8:2, 5, 28, 9:2), that of Jairus being mentioned (in the parallels) on account of his official character and public station. Having a flow of blood, or hemorrhage, in Greek a single word of participial form. The precise nature of the malady, beyond this general description, is of no importance, even to physicians, much less to the mass of readers and interpreters. Instead of dwelling upon this point, the evangelist directs attention to its long continuance (twelve years). Coming up (or to him) behind, or more exactly from behind, i. e. approaching him in that direction, not by chance or from necessity, but for the purpose of escaping observation. His garment, not his clothes in general, which is the meaning of the plural elsewhere, but the robe or gown, which forms the outer garment in an oriental dress, and which the Greek word in the singular denotes. What she touched was not only this external garment, but its very edge or border, showing that her object was mere contact, so that the slightest and most superficial touch would be sufficient. The word translated edge is applied in the Septuagint to the fringe worn by the Jews at the corners of their garments (Num. 15:38); but there seems to be no reason here for departing from its general and classical usage. It is important, though it may be difficult, to realize the situation of this woman, once possessed of health and wealth, and no doubt moving in respectable society, now beggared and diseased, without a hope of human help, and secretly believing in the power of the Christ, and him alone, to heal her, yet deterred by some natural misgiving and by shame, perhaps connected with the nature of her malady, from coming with the rest to be publicly recognized and then relieved. However commonplace the case may seem to many, there are some in whose experience, when clearly seen and seriously attended to, it touches a mysterious cord of painful sympathy.

21. That she was not actuated merely by a sort of desperate curiosity, as might have been suspected from her previous history and present conduct, but by real confidence in Christ's ability to heal her, we are expressly taught by being made acquainted with her inmost thoughts before her purpose was accomplished. For she said (or was saying, as she made her way with difficulty through the crowd), not to others and aloud, but to or in herself. If I only touch, not may touch, which suggests too strongly the idea of permission or of lawfulness, whereas, the Greek expresses that of mere contingency. It is a slight but touching stroke in this inimitable picture, that she did not even choose the hem of his outer garment as the part which she would touch, but came in contact with it as it were by chance, desiring only to touch any of his clothes, no matter which or what. I shall be whole, literally saved, i. e. from this disease and this condition. The Greek verb is the one translated healed in Mark 5:23 a needless variation, and indeed

injurious to the beauty of the passage, as it mars the correspondence of these two expressions of reliance upon Christ, uttered almost simultaneously by persons probably entire strangers to each other.

22. Turning, or being turned, in Greek a passive form, but with an active or deponent sense. When he saw her, literally, seeing her, or looking at her. Be of good comfort, the precise word used in v. 2, and there translated, be of good cheer. In both cases, the affectionate address (son, daughter) is needlessly transposed in English. Made whole, literally, saved, as in the preceding verse. The essential part of this occurrence for Matthew's purpose was the healing wrought by simple contact with the Saviour's dress, which had precisely the same virtue as the touch of his hand in v. 25 below, and was afterwards renewed in the miracles of Paul (Acts 19:11, 12). He therefore passes over the interesting circumstance, added by the other two evangelists (Mark 5:30–33. Luke 8:45–47).

23. Here again Matthew passes over the message received by the father on the way (Mark 5:35, 36. Luke 8:49, 50), as he does a similar trait in the case of the centurion (see above, on 8:5), and hurries on to the principal occurrence, or the miracle itself. He does not even mention the three disciples whom he suffered to attend him, who are named in both the other gospels (Mark, 5:37. Luke 8:51.) It is a mere cavil to regard these omissions as implying that the facts were unknown to the writer or not found in the tradition which he followed. They only show that he selected his materials, instead of taking them at random, and so used them as form a compact and coherent narrative. The text of Matthew presents no deficiencies or chasms, and yet all the additions in the parallel accounts can be at once wrought into it. What stronger proof can be desired than that these writers used the same materials, but each with due regard to his own purpose? Coming into the ruler's house, and seeing the pipers, players on the flute, a common practice at the ancient funerals, and the crowd or promiscuous assemblage, making a noise (so Cranmer and Geneva) either that necessarily attending all crowds, or the uproar, clamour, such as commonly attend an oriental funeral.* Early burial was usual among the ancient Jews, because it was not properly interment, but a deposit of the body, frequently uncoffined, in tombs erected above ground, or lateral excavations in the rock, where the risk of death by premature burial was much less than it is among ourselves. Compare Acts 5:6, 10, where an additional security against such a mistake existed in the certain knowledge which the apostles had, that Ananias and Sapphira were completely dead.

24. He says to them, the mourners thus employed in noisy lamentation. Give place, withdraw, retreat, a verb which has repeatedly occurred before, but in a different application (see above, on 2:12, 13:14, 22:4, 12.) Damsel, a Greek diminutive of neuter form, but meaning a little girl. The word is confined in the older classics to the dialect of common life, as a familiar term of fondness and endearment; but the later writers use it in the more serious and elevated style. The Rhemish version has the old and now too coarse form wench. Is not dead, or did not die (when ye supposed), the same form that is used in Mark 5:35. But sleeps, is sleeping, or asleep, the present tense denoting actual condition, as the aorist before it, strictly understood, denotes a previous occurrence. She did not die but sleeps. These words admit of two interpretations, each of which has had its advocates. The first assigns to them their strictest and most obvious sense, to wit that this was merely an apparent death, but really a case of stupor, trance, or syncope, which might, almost without a figure, be described as a deep protracted slumber. The other gives a figurative sense to both expressions, understanding by the first that she really was dead but only for a time and therefore not dead in the ordinary acceptation of the term; and by the second that her death, though real, being transient, might be naturally called a sleep, which differs from death chiefly in this very fact and the effects which flow from it. This last is now very commonly agreed upon by all classes of interpreters, German and English, neological and Christian, as the only meaning which the words will fairly bear. In favour of this sense is the fact that Jesus used the same expression with respect to Lazarus and expressly declared that in that case sleep meant death (John 11:11–14), to which may be added that Mark is here recording signal miracles as proofs of Christ's extraordinary power, and that a mere restoration from apparent death would not have been appropriate to his present purpose. One of the best German philological authorities has paraphrased our Saviour's words as meaning, 'Do not regard the child as dead, but think of her as merely sleeping, since she is so soon to come to life again.' And they (i. e. the company, or those whom he had thus addressed) laughed at him (or against him), i. e. at his expense, or in derision of him. This idea is expressed in the English version by the added words, to scorn, which though not expressed in the original are not italicised because supposed to be included in the meaning of the compound Greek verb which, according to another usage of the particle with which it is compounded, might be understood to mean, they laughed him down, or silenced him by their derision.

25. The people, literally, the crowd, a word in Greek suggesting the idea of confusion and disorder, in accordance with the previous description. Put forth, literally cast out, or as we say, turned out, to describe a peremptory dismission, whether accompanied by force or not. It is the term commonly applied to the expulsion of intrusive spirits (see above, on 7:22, 8:16, 31, and below, on vs. 33, 34). Going in, or having gone in, to the chamber where the child was lying, probably the large upper room (περ ον), which seems to have been used on such occasions. (Compare Acts 9:37, 39.) Took her by the hand is not so strong as the original; which properly means seized, laid hold of. (Wiclif has, held her hand.) In condescension to the weakness of the father's faith (see above, on v. 18), our Lord here establishes a visible communication between himself and the person upon whom the miracle was to be wrought. For the same reason he made use of audible expressions serving to identify himself as the performer. These expressions, in the present case, have been preserved by Mark (5:41), not only in a Greek translation, but in their Hebrew or Aramaic form, as originally uttered.

Matthew, omitting all detail, records, in the most laconic manner, the result, to wit, that the maid arose, or retaining the exact form of the Greek, was raised, not only from her bed, but from a state of death. (See above, on vs. 5, 6, 7, 19.)

26. The first words are more exactly rendered in the margin of the English Bible, this fame, or report, the Greek word being that from which the English fame is derived through the Latin, but originally meaning simply word or saying, from the verb to say. It is used in a general sense for good or bad report, and not restricted to the former as our fame is excepting in the combinations common fame and ill fame. Went abroad, went out, not only from the house, but from the city. That land, or country, an indefinite expression which we neither need nor can define by geographical specifications.

27. Matthew here subjoins two miracles as following immediately the restoration of the ruler's daughter, without any contradiction from the other gospels, which omit them altogether. This freedom of insertion and omission shows that the evangelists, though working up the same material, do it not as abridgers or transcribers of each other, but as independent and inspired historians. The original construction is like that in 8:23, 28, beginning with a dative as the object of the verb, but followed by a pleonastic repetition of the pronoun, Jesus passing thence two blind men followed him. The first verb is the same as that in v. 9, from its etymology implying that he did not go alone but as the leader of others. (Compare another compound of the same verb in 4:23 above and v. 35 below.) The mention of two blind men has been added to the other cases of like nature (e. g. 8:28 above) in proof of Matthew's disposition to see double, or his imaginative fondness for the number two. But as the fact itself is altogether natural, to wit, that sufferers, and more particularly blind men, should resort to Christ in pairs, the circumstance in question only shows that something in his habits or his turn of mind led Matthew to observe and remember the precise number, even when without historical importance and perhaps unnoticed by others. Crying and saying, may either mean saying with a loud voice, by the figure which the Greek grammarians called hendiadys; or the first word may denote an inarticulate cry of lamentation or complaint distinct from any verbal utterance. (See above, on 8:29.) Have mercy, pity, show compassion, a verb corresponding to the noun in v. 13 above, and the adjective in 5:7, where the verb itself appears in a passive form. Son of David, his descendant and successor on the throne of Israel, a remarkable acknowledgment of his Messiahship, according to our Lord's own exposition of the 110th Psalm. (See below, on 22:41–45.) The title had been previously applied by the angel of the Lord to Joseph (see above, on 1:20), through whom, as the husband of Christ's mother, he derived a legal right to the succession, as he did a natural or real one from his mother herself. (See above, on 1:1, 16.)

28. They not only followed him along the way but into the house to which he was going; whether that of Peter, or some other, in Capernaum or elsewhere, cannot be determined and is wholly unimportant. We have here another instance of the same pleonastic syntax, which is one of Matthew's chief peculiarities of language. To (him) going into the house came to him the blind men. How is it that this form of speech is found in Matthew only, if inspiration did not leave the peculiar habits of the sacred writers undisturbed, but used them all as mere machines and vehicles of one unvaried revelation? This miracle is probably recorded to exemplify the way in which our Lord sometimes drew forth the profession of that faith which he prescribed as a prerequisite of healing. We thus learn what was really the object of that faith, to wit, his power or ability to work the wonder. (See above, on v. 22.) Yea, yes, the usual affirmative in Greek, though similar in form to one of our negative particles (nay). Cranmer avoids the use of it by a repetition of the verb (Lord, we believe).

29. Then has here the sense of afterwards, or in the next place, i. e. after he had drawn forth this profession of the blind. Touched their eyes, as the parts immediately affected, so as to connect the cure still more distinctly with the person of the healed. According to, not on account of, as a meritorious ground, but in proportion and analogy to their belief, which he perceived to be sincere. For a different expression of the same idea in the case of the centurion, see above, on 8:13. Be it, let it happen, come to pass, precisely the same form that is employed in the third petition of the Lord's Prayer. (See above, on 6:10.)

30. The restoration of sight is described in a natural but figurative form, their eyes were opened, the inaction of the organ being conceived of as a shutting of the eye, not in the ordinary sense of covering the pupil with the eyelid, but in that of being closed to the perception of external objects. Straitly (i. e. strictly) charged, in the original a Hellenistic verb denoting strong emotion, and particularly grief or indignation, as in Mark 14:5, John 11:33, 38. Here (and in Mark 1:43) it can only mean a threatening in case of disobedience, charging them on pain of his severe displeasure and disapprobation. The Vulgate and its copyists simply translated it threatened (comminatus est). The form of the injunction is the same with that in 8:4, but with the second verb in the third person. See (i. e. see to it, take care, be sure) that no man (more correctly, no one) know (it, or of it, as the older English versions have it).

31. The result was the same as in the case of the leper, as described by Mark (1:45), though not by Matthew (8:4). Such prohibitions were uttered by the Saviour, not in conformity to any fixed rule, but for the general purpose of preventing the precipitate occurrence of events which according to his plan were to be gradually brought about. Hence we find him varying his practice as the circumstances of the cases varied, with the same independent and original authority which marked his public teaching. (See above, on 7:29.) The evangelists describe him as exercising a divine discretion, which in every case determined whether the publication of his miracles required to be stimulated or retarded, though the grounds of the distinction may be now, and may have been at first, inscrutable to human wisdom. By this discretion the excessive zeal of those who witnessed his extraordinary works was checked

and chastened, although not entirely suppressed. It may have been particularly needed in those cases where a miracle was wrought among a people less familiar with such wonders, and the more prone therefore to extravagant activity in spreading them abroad. All that country differs only in case from the phrase translated all that land in v. 26, and has the same indefinite meaning.*

32. Matthew adds another miracle immediately ensuing, as they (the blind men) went out, literally, they going out or being in the act of doing so. Behold invites attention to this second case as not to be confounded with the first, nor indeed with another upon record, that in Mark 7:32–35 being obviously different both in time and circumstances. That was a case of deafness and difficult articulation without any intimation of a preternatural cause. This was a case of demoniacal possession rendering the victim dumb. The other cases which most nearly resemble it are separately given by Matthew on account of other circumstances which distinguished them. (See below, on 12:22, 17:14.) The word translated dumb is elsewhere correctly rendered deaf (see below on 11:5), and the classical usage is the same, which may be readily explained by the mutual relation of these two affections when congenital. In this case the sense of dumbness is required by the description of the cure (in v. 33). They brought, indefinitely, as in v. 2. A man dumb (and) demonized, implying that the one state was occasioned by the other. For the nature of the latter, see above, on 4:24, 8:16, 28, 33.

33. The demon having been cast out, the dumb (man) talked, is not a sequence in time merely (when it was cast out), but in causation. As the demon was the cause of the man's dumbness, his expulsion was the cause of his recovering his speech. The crowds wondered, as at a new phase or exhibition of our Lord's extraordinary power. Some explain the next clause to mean, never did he so appear, i. e. so great, so glorious; but this would seem to be forbidden by the added words, in Israel, which are then almost unmeaning and superfluous. The true construction is no doubt the common one, which makes the verb indefinite, if not impersonal. It never was so seen, or so appeared, i. e. there never was such a sight or spectacle before, in Israel, among the chosen people, or in their history, their memory as a nation. This does not refer to the intrinsic greatness of the miracle, as compared with others, either in reference to the power displayed or the effect produced, but to its peculiarity in kind, arising from the complication of two such affections, which was probably the reason of its being here recorded.

34. Another reason for recording this occurrence may have been, that it afforded an occasion for the first utterance of a blasphemous suggestion with respect to our Lord's miracles, which was afterwards repeated still more boldly, and led to a remarkable discourse recorded at full length below (12:22–37). Being here only mentioned, as it were, in passing, the minute explanation of its terms may be reserved until we reach the passage just referred to. It will here be sufficient to observe that the Pharisees are not the same, as some have represented, in all cases, but such representatives of that great party as might happen to be present on different occasions. This is the less improbable as the name included the great body of the unbelieving Jews. (See above, on vs. 11, 14 and on 3:7, 5:20.) Through the prince of the devils, literally, in the archon (chief or leader) of the demons (see above, on v. 18), i. e. in intimate conjunction with him and reliance on him. (Tyndale: by the power of the chief devil.)

35. This verse is almost perfectly identical in form, and altogether so in sense, with 4:23. The name Jesus there stands later in the sentence, and is wholly omitted by the Codex Vaticanus and the latest critics, as they also do the last words of the sentence, in (among) the people. For all the cities and villages we there have the whole (of) Galilee, a difference which merely serves to show what cities and villages (or towns of every size) are here intended. With these exceptions, the two verses are identical, and it becomes an interesting question, how are they related to each other in the structure of the history? One view of this relation, and perhaps the one prevailing among readers and interpreters, is that which makes the passages descriptive of two successive circuits made by Christ through Galilee, being the first and third in order, while the second is exclusively preserved by Luke (8:1–3). That Matthew, if he had described two, would most probably have introduced the third, although it cannot of itself refute this doctrine, certainly creates a strong presumption to its disadvantage, as the leaving out of one whole journey through the country is exceedingly improbable. And this presumption is strengthened by the use of the imperfect tense (περι γεν) and not the aorist, suggesting the idea of continued action, not on any one occasion, but in general. This has led us to conclude already (see above, p. 98.) that 4:23 is not an account of one particular mission, but a general description of our Lord's itinerant ministry, with its two great functions, working miracles and teaching. But if this be so, it seems to follow that the verse before us, with its marked similarity of form and substance, is a similar description of his ministry in general, and not that of a second or third circuit in particular. The question why this general description should be thus repeated almost totidem verbis may be readily answered, and the answer furnishes a key to the whole structure of this first great division of the history. The answer is, that Matthew, having executed his design of showing by examples how the Saviour taught and wrought in his great mission, now returns to the point from which he started in beginning this exemplification, and resumes the thread there dropped or broken by repeating his summary description of the ministry which he has since been painting in detail. This view of the connection is not only recommended by grammatical considerations, such as the imperfect tense and participles following in either case, but also by the clear light which it throws upon the structure of the book and the progress of the history. Even a mere hypothesis, which thus converts an incoherent series of details into a systematic well-compacted whole, can scarcely be denied as fanciful. According to this theory, the meaning of the verse before us is, 'and thus, or so it was, as I before said, that Jesus went about,' &c.

36. A plausible objection to the view just taken of the preceding verse may seem to be presented by its close connection with the one before us, which can scarcely mean that he was always thus affected, and was always saying what is quoted in the next verse.

This construction is indeed forbidden by the aorist (σπλαγχνίσθη) in one case and the present (λέγει) in the other. But this change of tense, always significant in Greek, affords the key to the whole difficulty, showing as it does that after speaking of the whole course of Christ's ministry, and using for that purpose the imperfect tense with its dependent participles, Matthew now proceeds, by means of the aorist and present, to describe what took place upon one particular occasion. 'Thus did Jesus go about all Galilee, teaching and healing, and at one time he was moved with compassion,' &c. This does not imply that he was usually free from this affection, but singles out a special instance for the purpose of recording what he said to his disciples. When he saw, precisely the same words employed in 5:1, and there more simply and exactly rendered seeing. The multitudes, the crowds, the promiscuous collections of the people from all quarters to attend his ministry, to hear his teachings, and to see his miracles. The particular point of time may be the same as that in 5:1, when the concourse had attained its height, and thus occasioned the original delivery of the Sermon on the Mount. The heart, though properly the name of a bodily organ, is used in various languages to signify the seat of the affections, and sometimes the affections themselves. But the Greeks extended this figurative usage to all the higher or thoracic viscera, the liver, lungs, &c., as distinguished from the lower or abdominal viscera, the former being also reckoned edible, the latter not. For want of a distinctive term, the English version uses the word bowels, even where the Greek noun (σπλάγχνα) has its figurative sense of feeling, and especially compassion. From this sense of the noun, later and Hellenistic usage formed a verb (σπλαγχνίζομαι) unknown to the Greek classics, and denoting, first the yearning of the bowels, or rather the commotion of the upper viscera, and then the emotion of pity or compassion. It is the passive participle of this verb that is here correctly paraphrased, moved with compassion. What excited his divine and human sympathy was not of course their numbers or their physical condition but their spiritual destitution. The figures of a shepherd and a flock to denote the mutual relation of religious guides and those who follow them are frequent in the Scriptures and too natural to need elucidation. On the other hand, the converse of this figure, or a flock without a shepherd, is the most affecting that can be employed to represent the want of nurture, guidance and protection, the extreme of weakness, helplessness, and imminent exposure both to force and fraud, dispersion and destruction. Fainted, in the margin, were tired and lay down. Both words in Greek are passive participles, the first, according to the common text (κλελυμένοι), meaning loosened out, and then relaxed, exhausted (as in 15:32, compare the figurative use in Heb. 12:3, 5, Gal. 6:9), but according to the reading now preferred (σκυλμένοι), vexed, troubled, harassed (as in Mark 5:35, Luke 7:6, 8:49). The other literally means thrown, cast, with the accessory ideas of being cast down, cast out, or cast about (scattered). The two together are intended to express the wretched state of sheep without a shepherd. At a later period, under similar impressions made by a great representative multitude, our Lord began immediately to teach them (Mark 6:34), showing what he reckoned their most urgent want, and also that although it was his miracles of healing that had prompted them to follow him (John 6:2), they were not without some just view of the intimate relations of his wonders to his doctrines, or at least not unwilling to receive instruction from the same lips which commanded with authority the most malignant demons and diseases.

37. Then, at that time, upon that particular occasion, when he thus felt particularly moved with compassion, as described in the preceding verse. Saith he, he says, the graphic present, calling up the scene as actually passing, but referring to the same time as the aorist in v. 36, and not to the whole period embraced in the imperfect tense of v. 35. His disciples, those acknowledging him as a teacher, or perhaps more definitely, those who now attended him from place to place. (See above, on 5:1, 8:21, 23:25, 9:10, 11, 14, 19). Our Lord's authority and independence as a teacher, are evinced by his mastery of figurative language and his freedom from rhetorical preciseness as to change and mixture in his illustrations. What had just been represented as a flock of sheep without a shepherd, is now set before us as a harvest perishing for want of reapers. The previous context leaves no doubt that these expressions are to be applied, like those before them, to the crowds or multitudes of people who were dying without faithful spiritual guides and comforters. The specific thoughts suggested by the image of a harvest, as distinct from that of sheep without a shepherd, are those of [value], great abundance, waste, and loss, unless prevented by a timely ingathering to a place of safety. (See below, on 13:30, and compare 1 Cor. 3:9.) The sentence has the balanced form so common in Greek prose, the antithesis being marked by the corresponding particles, indeed (μ ν) and but (δέ). The first expresses a concession or admission, 'it is true, the harvest is abundant, but of what avail is that, if there are not enough to reap it?' The few labourers must not be understood too strictly as referring to our Lord and his immediate followers, though they are certainly included and particularly meant, but under a description of much wider application, and denoting all who could be figuratively represented as engaged in watching and securing the Lord's spiritual harvest.

38. This verse prescribes the remedy or cure of the great evil which had moved our Lord's compassion. There must be more labour brought to bear upon the harvest, i. e. more extensive human agencies employed in saving those who were now perishing, not among the heathen, but the Jews themselves, the chosen people, the theocracy, the church of God. This additional labour must be looked for not from strangers or intruders, but from the Lord of the harvest, its proprietor, its owner, him to whom it rightfully belongs and who is able to control it at its pleasure. This description, although really and specially appropriate to Christ himself, was not in the first instance so understood, or meant to be so understood by his disciples. It was a part of his humiliation, that many things, which he might have said directly of himself, he said as of another, or as here of God without respect to his own Godhead. The assistance of this great Proprietor could only be obtained by prayer, the warrant and encouragement for which had been so powerfully set forth in the Sermon on the Mount (7:7–11). The verb here used originally means to need or want; and then, like the

latter verb in English, to feel the necessity, to desire, and lastly, by a no less natural transition, to express that feeling by request, to pray, which is its only use in the New Testament, where it is confined, with this exception, to the dialect of Paul and Luke. The last clause gives the subject or the burden of the prayer enjoined. Send forth, is in Greek much stronger, meaning literally cast (or drive) out, as in v. 25, and frequently applied to the expulsion of intrusive demons, whereas here it signifies an earnest, prompt, authoritative mission of new labourers, by the great proprietor or owner, into his own harvest, which as such may claim to be protected and provided for. Wiclif's translation of these two verses is an interesting specimen of English. "Soothly (truly) there is much ripe corn but few workmen: therefore pray ye the Lord of the ripe corn, that he send workmen into his ripe corn."

CHAPTER 10

HAVING described our Lord's ministry in general terms (4:23–25), and then exemplified its two great functions by select examples of his teaching (5–7) and his miracles (8–9), the evangelist now prosecutes his task by recording the organization of the twelve apostles, and the instructions under which they acted (10). We have first their general commission (1) and their names (2–4); then particular directions as to their immediate mission (5–15); and then a premonition of the treatment which awaited them thereafter, with appropriate instructions and encouragements (16–42). The last and largest portion of the chapter is peculiar to this gospel; the others are found both in Mark (6) and Luke (9). The position of this narrative is rather historical than chronological, that is to say, the writer's purpose is not simply to record certain incidents or acts in the order of their actual occurrence, but to present another striking feature in the ministry of Christ, to wit, the steps which he took towards the re-organization of the church, though not to be immediately accomplished by himself on earth for reasons which have been already given. (See above, p. 93.) These preparatory steps were first, the promulgation of the principles, on which his kingdom was to be established and administered; and secondly, the preparation of the men by whom it should be formally erected; which last is the subject of this chapter.

1. Besides continuing his own itinerant ministry, our Lord now takes another step of great importance, by actually sending out the twelve whom he had previously chosen for the twofold purpose of being with him as disciples and going forth from him as apostles (4:18, Mark 3:14). It should be observed, however, that the mission here recorded was not the permanent and proper apostolic work, for which they were not qualified until the day of Pentecost (Luke 24:49, Acts 2:1), but a temporary and preliminary mission, to diffuse still more extensively the news of the Messiah's advent and the doctrine of his kingdom, attested by the same credentials which he bore himself. Power, i. e. derivative or delegated power, authority, conferred by a superior, not to be employed promiscuously or at random, but so as to promote the end for which it was bestowed. Power of unclean spirits, i. e. relating to them, and by necessary implication, over them, which is not expressed, however, but suggested by the context. Unclean is added as a qualifying term, because the noun includes all spirits, good and evil, whereas they were to have power only over fallen angels. Here, as elsewhere, the evangelists give special prominence to such dispossessions as the most extraordinary miracles of healing, and as such representing all the rest which were equally included in this apostolical commission, as expressed in the other clause. To cast, or more exactly, so as to cast, defining the indefinite expression, power over unclean spirits. It formed, as we have seen, no part of our Lord's personal errand upon earth to reorganize the Church, as this change was to rest upon his own atoning death as its foundation. For the same reason, he did not develop the whole system of Christian doctrine, but left both these tasks to be accomplished after his departure, yet preparing the way for both, by teaching the true nature of his kingdom, and by training those who should complete the Church, both as to its organization and its creed. This preparatory process was a very gradual one, as we learn from the occasional and incidental statements of the history, which nowhere gives us a connected and complete account of it. The first step which we can trace is his reception of two of John's disciples, first as guests or visitors, and then no doubt as friends and pupils, but as yet without requiring their continual attendance on his person (see John 1:35–40). One of these two we know to have been Andrew (ib. 41), and the other is commonly believed to have been John the son of Zebedee, who never names himself in his own gospel. In pursuance of the Saviour's plan, each of these two introduced a brother (Simon and James). A fifth, directly called by Christ himself, was Philip (John 1:44), who in his turn brought Nathanael, recognized by Jesus as an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile (John 1:48), that is to say, a genuine, sincere adherent of the old theocracy, according to its true design and import as a preparation for Messiah's reign, and therefore ready to acknowledge him as soon as he should give some proof of his Messiahship (John 1:49, 50). A seventh, called immediately by Christ himself, was Levi or Matthew (see above, on 9:9). As the history of all these calls is only incidental, we may argue by analogy from one to the other, and as those first mentioned seem to have continued in their former occupations some time after their first introduction to their Master, it is not unlikely that the same happened in the other cases, though the writer's plan did not require it to be expressly mentioned. We have then two successive and distinct steps in the process of preparing men to organize the Church; first the personal vocation of at least seven persons into Christ's society, as friends and pupils; then a second call to constant personal attendance. The third step is that recorded here, to wit, the more formal designation of twelve persons to the Apostolic office. As we know that at least half of these had been previously called, and at least one fourth of them at two distinct times, it is highly probable that a like intimation had been given to the remaining six or seven. It would then be true of all, as it certainly is of those referred to, that the choice or calling here described did

not take them by surprise, but merely carried out a purpose previously made known to them. Mark connects this designation of the twelve with the immense concourse just described, but only by juxtaposition, without any express specification of time. Luke (6:12) does indicate the time, but very vaguely (in these days), and Matthew omits all mention of the twelve until he comes to their actual entrance on their work, which is a fourth stage in this gradual preparatory process. What is here described is neither the original vocation of the individual Apostles, nor their final going forth in that capacity, but the intermediate step of publicly embodying or organizing those who had been previously chosen one by one, or two by two, that they might now, as a collective body, be prepared for active service. This view of the matter is entirely consistent with Luke's statement that he chose them now (Luke 6:13), for this was not an act that could not be repeated, and with Mark's (3:13), that he called to him whom he would, which only excludes self-choice and popular election, but not a previous designation on his own part.

2. We have four independent lists of the Apostles in the New Testament, differing chiefly in the order of the names, but also as to several of the names themselves. One of these catalogues is given here by Matthew, one by Mark (3:16–19), and the remaining two by Luke (6:14–16, Acts 1:13). Bengel was probably the first to observe that although the arrangement of the names is so unlike in these four documents, the variation is confined to certain limits, as the twelve may be divided into three quaternions, which are never interchanged, and the leading names of which are the same in all. Thus Peter is invariably the first, Philip the fifth, James the ninth, and Iscariot the last, except in Acts, where his name is omitted on account of his apostasy and death. Simon called or surnamed Peter. We learn from John (1:43), that the change of name was made at Simon's first introduction to the Saviour. But there is no improbability in the supposition that the words were repeated upon this, as they were upon a subsequent occasion (see below, on 16:18). The name does not denote constancy or firmness, which were not peculiar traits of Peter's character, but strength and boldness, or the founding of the church upon a rock, as taught in the last cited words of Matthew. The new name did not wholly supersede the old one, as in the case of Saul and Paul (Acts 13:9); for we find the latter still employed by Christ himself (see Mark 14:37, and compare below 16:16, 17, 17:25, Luke 22:31, John 21:16, 17), as well as by the other Apostles (Luke 24:34, Acts 15:14). Throughout the Gospel of John (6:8, 68, &c.) and in the opening words of Peter's second epistle, both names are combined. The place assigned to Peter, in all the lists of the Apostles and expressly here, is not fortuitous, nor founded simply on his being one of those first called; for Andrew then would take precedence of him. That it does not, on the other hand, imply a permanent superiority of rank or office may be argued from the fact that no such primacy is anywhere ascribed to him; that he was frequently betrayed into the gravest errors, both of judgment and of practice, and repeatedly rebuked with great severity by Christ himself; and lastly, that he alone of the eleven went so far as to deny his Master, and continued under the reproach of that apostasy until the risen Saviour condescended to restore him (John 21:15–17). His true historical position is that of spokesman to the college of Apostles, like the foreman of a jury or the chairman of a large committee. This place was not assigned him for his own distinction, but for the convenience of his Master and his brethren, in whose name and behalf he often speaks, and is addressed in turn. He was qualified for the position, not by any moral superiority, but by his forwardness of speech and action, often accompanied by rashness and inconstancy of temper. Even after the effusion of the Holy Spirit, which corrected and subdued these constitutional infirmities, we find some trace of them in Peter's course at Antioch, reproved by Paul, and recorded in Gal. 2:11–14. James and John, whose call has been already mentioned in 4:21, 22. We here learn the name of their father, whom they then left with the hired men in the boat. James is described as the son of Zebedee, and John as the brother of James, apart from whom he is never mentioned. This is the more remarkable as James was the first and John the last of the Apostles who died. James was also the first martyr of the apostolic body (see Acts 12:2). These illustrious brothers Mark puts next to Peter, whose own brother Andrew is thereby transferred to the fourth place; whereas Matthew names the two pairs of brothers in the order of their previous vocation as recorded in 4:18, 21. Luke adopts the same arrangement in his gospel (6:14), but in Acts (1:13) agrees with Mark's.

3. One observable distinction between Mark's and Matthew's lists of the Apostles is, that the latter arranges them in pairs throughout, while the former enumerates them singly, and being inserted between every two names. Such points of difference, however unimportant in themselves, are not without their value as proofs of distinct and independent origin, excluding the hypothesis of mere transcription or abridgment. Andrew and Philip are old Greek names, the former being found in Herodotus, and the latter everywhere in ancient history. These Apostles probably had Hebrew names besides, which had been gradually superseded by the Greek ones. It was very common for the Jews of that age to have double names, one native and one foreign. (Compare Acts 1:22, 9:36, 12:12, 13:1, 9.) Andrew and Philip were among the earliest of Christ's disciples. Andrew having previously followed John the Baptist, by whom he was led to Jesus as the Lamb of God, and not only followed him, but brought his brother Simon (Peter) to him (John 1:41–43). Philip was called by Christ himself the next day, as he was about to remove from Judea into Galilee. Philip, though he seems to have been called in Judea, was a Galilean and a townsman of Andrew and Peter (John 1:44, 45). He was himself the introducer of Nathanael, upon whom our Lord pronounced so high a commendation (John 1:48), but who never afterwards appears by that name until after the resurrection, when we find him in company with four, and probably with six of the Apostles (John 21:2). This has led to the not improbable conclusion that Nathanael was the person called Bartholomew, in all the lists of the Apostles, and in three of them placed next to Philip (compare Mark 3:18, Luke 6:14), while the fourth only introduces Thomas between them (Acts 1:13). Nathanael was a resident of Cana in Galilee, the scene of Christ's first miracle (John 2:1, 4:46, 21:2). Matthew, whose previous vocation is recorded in 9:9, (Luke 5:27), where he is called Levi; but he calls himself Matthew, in describing that event, and

adds the publican, omitted by the others. Thomas was also called Didymus, the two names being Aramaic and Greek synonyms, both meaning a twin. Besides the lists of the Apostles, Thomas is named eight times in the Gospel of John (11:16, 14:5, 20:24–29, 21:2). James (the son) of Alpheus, as the ellipsis is no doubt to be supplied. The latter seems to be a Greek modification of an Aramaic name, of which Clopas (John 19:25), is supposed to be another form. Now, as Clopas was the husband of the Virgin Mary's sister (John 19:25), his son would be the cousin of our Lord, and might, according to a common Hebrew idiom, be called his brother. (See below on 13:55, and compare Gal. 1:19). Thaddeus occurs also in Mark 3:18; it is given as the surname of Lebbeus, a name only mentioned here. But as both evangelists omit the name of Judas (not Iscariot, John 14:22), which is given by Luke (6:16, Acts 1:13), it seems to follow that this Judas, Thaddeus, and Lebbeus were one and the same person. Some suppose the last two names to be synonymous, because derived from Hebrew or Aramaic words, meaning heart and breast; but this is doubtful. Luke describes him in both places as (the son) of James, if the ellipsis be supplied as in the case of James (the son) of Alpheus, or (the brother) of James, as most interpreters explain it and refer it to the James just mentioned. Judas may then be identified with Jude, the brother of the Lord, and the author of the short epistle near the end of the New Testament canon (see below, on 13:55, and compare Jude, v. 1).

4. Simon the Canaanite, not an inhabitant of Canaan (Cranmer), or of Cana (Tyndale), both which would be written otherwise in Greek, but a Zealot, as it is explained by Luke (6:15, Acts 1:13), and as the name itself, according to its Hebrew etymology, would signify. It may be descriptive of his personal character and temper, but much more probably of his connection with the sect or party of the Zealots, as fanatical adherents to the Jewish institutions and opponents of all compromise with heathenism, who assumed the right of executing summary justice after the example of Phineas (Numb. 25:7, Ps. 106:30), and by their sanguinary excesses caused or hastened the destruction of Jerusalem. To this party, of which traces may be elsewhere found in the New Testament (see below, on 27:16, and compare Acts 23:12), Simon may have been attached before he was named as an apostle. The juxtaposition of his name with those of James and Jude (see Luke, 6:15, Acts 1:13), exhibits a coincidence with 13:55, which can hardly be fortuitous, and naturally leads to the conclusion that this Simon was also one of our Lord's brethren. Iscariot has been variously explained as an appellative, but is now commonly agreed to be a local name, denoting man of Kerioth, as the similar form Istobos, used by Josephus, means a man of Tob. As Kerioth was a town of Judah (Josh 15:25), Judas is the only one of the Apostles whom we have any reason to regard as not a Galilean. Also, i. e. besides being an Apostle, or although he was one, which was a fearful aggravation of his guilt. (See below on 26:47, and compare Acts 1:17, 25). Betrayed, though necessarily implied, is not the exact import of the verb, which simply means to give up or deliver into the power of another, by judicial process (see above, on 5:25, 18:34), or by recommendation to his favour. (Acts 14:26, 15:40.) But its constant application to the act of Judas in betraying Christ, has given it a secondary sense equivalent to the stronger terms employed by Luke (betrayer, traitor). The choice of this man to be one of the immediate followers of Christ, with perfect knowledge of his character and foresight of his treason (John 6:64, 70, 71), is undoubtedly surprising, and at variance with the course which human wisdom would have marked out. But the foolishness of God is wiser than men (1 Cor. 1:25), and it may have been a part of the divine plan to illustrate by the history of Judas the sovereignty of God in choosing even his most honoured instruments, without regard to any merit of their own, as well as to forewarn the church that absolute purity, although to be desired and aimed at, cannot be expected even in her highest places during her militant condition, or at least to guard her against terror and despair, when such defections do occur, by constantly reminding her that of the twelve whom Christ selected to be with him and to go out from him (Mark 3:14), one was declared by himself to be a "devil," and a "son of perdition.' (John 6:70, 17:12.)

5, 6. Their original commission was not ecumenical or catholic, but strictly national and theocratical, because the Christian church was to be founded on the Jewish. Charging, a Greek word primarily used of a military watchword or countersign, and therefore specially appropriate in this place, where the twelve are for the first time going forth as representatives and aids to their great leader. The way of the Gentiles is paraphrased by Tyndale, the ways that lead to the Gentiles. The Samaritans are added as half-heathen, or as the connecting link between the Jews and Gentiles. They were a mixed or as some suppose a purely heathen race, introduced by the Assyrians to supply the place of the ten tribes (2 Kings 17:24), and afterwards partially assimilated to the Jews (ib. 25–41) by the reception of the law of Moses, and the professed worship of Jehovah on Mount Gerizim, involving a rejection of the sanctuary at Jerusalem, from the rebuilding of which, after the Babylonish exile, they were excluded by the restored Jews (Ezra 4:1–3). At the time of the advent they were expecting the Messiah, but only, it should seem, in his prophetic character (John 4:25), for which reason, and because of their entire segregation from the Jews (John 4:9), our Saviour did not scruple to avow his Messiahship among them (John 4:26, 29, 42), and to gather the first fruits of an extra-judaic church (ib. 39), with the promise of a more abundant harvest to be reaped by his apostles (ib. vs. 35–38). Of this promise the fulfilment is recorded in the eighth chapter of Acts; but as yet the apostles were restricted to the Jews. Lost sheep, wandering without a shepherd, in allusion to the figurative terms of 9:36. House of Israel, family of Jacob, his descendants in the aggregate, considered as the chosen people, and represented by the whole tribes of Judah and Levi, with such members of the rest as had been incorporated with them. A city of the Samaritans, in striking contrast with the fact recorded in Acts 8:5, where a kindred phrase is used (a city of Samaria) as if to show that the restriction here imposed had been removed by Christ's ascension and the giving of the Holy Ghost.

7. The first word in Greek is the participle of the verb in the preceding verse—go … and going, for the very purpose, and not as a

mere incidental thing, which may be the idea suggested to some readers by the common version (as ye go). Preach, proclaim, announce, as in 3:1, 4:17, 23. The subject-matter of the proclamation is the same too as in Christ's first preaching, namely, the approach of the Messiah's kingdom. This confirms what has been already said, that the original or primary mission of the twelve was a preparatory one, not only restricted to the Jews, but even with respect to them intended mainly to arouse attention and prepare the way for more explicit teaching.

8. This verse describes the miraculous credentials by which their commission was to be attested. It gives the very words of the commission which had been described in v. 1. The acts commanded are the same which have already been repeatedly ascribed to Christ himself. (See above, 4:23, 8:16, 9:35.) It is therefore a formal delegation of his own extraordinary powers to the twelve for a limited time and a specific purpose. It is also tacitly restricted by a reference to the circumstances under which they were to exercise these powers, namely, so far as they had occasion or were divinely guided. Raise the dead may, therefore, be a license which they never used, at least on this first mission, though the silence of the record as to such resuscitations, if they did take place, is easily explained by the consideration that the Gospel is the Life of Christ and not of his apostles, who are only introduced at all in order to complete his history. The words in question are omitted in most uncial manuscripts, while others place them before cleanse the lepers. Freely is properly an adjective meaning gratuitous, but like μακρὰν in 8:30, used as an adverb, corresponding to the Latin gratis, which is actually introduced here by the Rhemish version. This last clause is a necessary caution against all mercenary selfish use of their extraordinary powers, which were not their own but merely lent for the good of others.

9. To their main commission is now added a special charge in reference to two points, their equipment for the journey, and their conduct towards the people with whom they came in contact. Provide, acquire, get (as in the margin of the English Bible). The idea of money is expressed by naming the three metals, of which it was then, as now, composed; viz., gold, silver, and copper, which is the true sense of the word translated brass, an English term denoting the alloy of zinc and copper, which is said to have been unknown to the ancients, whereas that of tin and copper, commonly called bronze, was extensively employed, especially in works of art, and sometimes designated by the very word here used. In your purses, literally, into your girdles, the construction implying previous insertion, and the whole phrase a custom, still prevailing in the east, of using the belt which keeps the flowing dress together as a purse or pocket. Horace and Livy speak of money in the girdle, and Plutarch combines the very two Greek words employed by Matthew.

10. Not a scrip, an old word answering to bag, sack, wallet, used for carrying provisions. They were to take no such convenience with them into the road, or on their journey. Nor two coats, tunics, shirts, the inner garment of the oriental dress, worn next the skin and reaching to the knees. (See above, on 5:40.) The thing prohibited is not the coat itself, but the additional supply or change of raiment. The idea of duplicity or plurality is probably to be extended to shoes or sandals (see above on 3:11) and staves, as meaning extra or additional articles of that kind. The ground of these prohibitions is by no means an ascetic rigour, but the hurried nature of their errand, and the certainty that all their wants would be supplied by those who received their message and acknowledged their commission. Worthy of, entitled to, his meat, in the wide old English sense of food or, as the Greek word strictly denotes, nourishment. (See above, on 3:4, 6:25.) The meaning of the clause is that there could be no need of additional provision for their journey, since they were going forth as labourers (with obvious allusion to 9:37), and as such would of course be fed by those among whom and for whom they laboured.

11. What is here said is explanatory of the charge immediately preceding. They had no need of luggage or provisions because they would be hospitably entertained at every stopping place. Into whatever city or village, i. e. large or small town, in the proper English (not New England) sense of that term. Ye may go in, a contingent form implying that he left the precise route or itinerary to their own discretion. Inquire, a stronger word in Greek, denoting a laborious searching out or discovery of the truth. In it, i. e. in the town, whether city or village. Worthy, entitled by his character and hospitable habits to be the entertainer of Christ's messengers. There, in the house thus pointed out or ascertained as the proper place of their abode. Abide, not in the modern sense of permanently dwelling, but in the vaguer one of staying or remaining, without reference to time. Thence, not from the house, but from the town or neighbourhood. The meaning of this charge is that, although they would be cheerfully received and entertained wherever there were true disciples, they must give no unnecessary trouble and attract no unnecessary notice by removals from one dwelling to another in the same place. (Compare Luke 10:7.) They were not to be received as visitors but messengers or heralds, and must be content with what was absolutely requisite for their subsistence.

12. We have here more particularly stated than in either of the other gospels the precise mode in which the twelve were to take possession of their temporary homes. When ye come might be more exactly rendered coming (or going), i. e. in the very act of entering. An house should be the house, as the reference is specific and direct to the particular house ascertained and chosen in accordance with the previous directions (in v. 11). Salute it, greet it, a Greek word properly expressive of the welcome given to a person on his arrival, but here, by a natural inversion, used to denote the expression of a kindly feeling by the new-comer to his place of entertainment, and virtually therefore to his entertainers, though we need not formally assume a figurative substitution of the house for its inhabitants. The spirit of the precept is, express your good-will at the time of your arrival, and do not take possession of your quarters with a cold indifference, much less with an arrogant assumption of a right which does not really belong to you.

13. This sentence seems designed to obviate a silent or expressed objection on the part of the disciples, who might naturally feel unwilling to commit themselves by such a salutation till they knew by experiment how they would be received. ‘But what if the house should prove unworthy, an unfit place even for our temporary residence?’ The answer is that even in the case supposed, nothing would be lost by first saluting it. If the greeting did not profit those for whom it was intended, it would profit those who gave it. Peace means the peace which they had wished it, in allusion to the customary oriental form of salutation both in earlier and later times, namely, Peace be to you (or upon you). The salaam alaikom of the modern Arab is identical in letter and in spirit with the shalom lakem of the old Hebrew.* The future form adopted by the Vulgate, Luther, Tyndale, and some other versions (shall come, shall return), though really implied m the original, falls short of its full import. The imperative or hortatory form, correctly rendered in our Bible (let your peace come, let your peace return), conveys the additional idea, not suggested by the future, that they ought to let it be so, or consent to the result whatever it might prove. ‘Instead of anxiously withholding the expression of your good-will till you know how it will be received, impart it freely; and if they respond to it, let them enjoy the blessing you have called down on them; if they slight it or reject it, be content with having brought a blessing on yourselves by showing such a spirit and obeying my express command.’ This explanation seems to agree better with the strong and positive expression, let it turn back to you (or upon yourselves), than the negative interpretation, ‘let it be recalled, or consider it as unsaid.’ There may be an allusion to the similar expression in Ps. 35:13, as interpreted traditionally and no doubt correctly by the Jewish doctors.

14. The foregoing directions presupposed that they would everywhere be well received; but they are now prepared to meet with marked exceptions, not in families or houses merely, but in towns and whole communities (Luke 9:5). This we know was the experience of our Lord himself (see above on 8:34, and compare Luke 9:53), and he instructs the twelve how to act in all such cases. Whosoever shall not receive you, not as guests merely, but as teachers, neither hear you, speaking in my name, by my authority, and of my kingdom. When ye depart, or more exactly, going out, i. e. immediately when thus rejected. Shake off is the expression used by Luke (9:5), whereas that of Mark (6:11) and Matthew strictly means to shake out, though descriptive of the same act. Dust is also the expression used by Luke, while the one employed by Mark means strictly earth thrown up from any excavation, but appears to have acquired in the later Greek the sense of loose earth or flying dust. Of your feet, a supplementary specification, meaning that which adheres to the feet in walking. The act enjoined is a symbolical one, meaning that they would not even let the dust of the places where these people lived adhere to them, much less consent to come in contact with themselves, in other words, that they renounced all intercourse with them forever. The same essential meaning was expressed by the kindred act of shaking the garments. That both were practised by the apostles, even after Christ’s ascension, we may learn from Paul’s example at Antioch and Corinth (Acts 13:51, 18:6). The ancient Jews are said to have adopted the same method on returning to the Holy Land from foreign countries, to denote that they desired to abjure and leave behind all that cleaved to them of heathenism. In the case before us, it was reciprocal rejection of those by whom they were themselves rejected.

15. The meaning of this verse is that the guilt of those who thus deliberately rejected Christ when offered to them was incomparably greater than the most atrocious sins of those who had enjoyed no such advantage. The case of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 18:20, 19:24, 25) is a standing type in Scripture, both of aggravated sin and fearful retribution (Deut. 29:23. Isai. 13:19. Jer. 49:18, 50:40. Amos 4:11). The threatening here implied, if not expressed, has reference to the last appeal which Christ was now about to make, the farewell offer of himself and his salvation, by the aid of the apostles to the whole population of the country, or at least of Galilee, before the days of his assumption should be filled and his face set for the last time towards Jerusalem (Luke 9:51).

16. A question of some difficulty here arises, as to the connection of this verse with the foregoing context. The obvious and natural presumption is that it simply continues Christ’s discourse at the first sending forth of the apostles, and that the remainder of the chapter, like the former part, refers directly to their original and temporary mission. But on looking at the passage in detail, we find some things which scarcely admit of such a reference, especially the warning against persecution which runs through the whole, and which was never realized till after the close of our Lord’s personal ministry. This seems to point to the conclusion, that the charge relating to the first mission ends with the preceding verse, and that the one before us is the opening of a more general and prospective charge relating to their subsequent apostolical labours. This view of the connection is recommended, first, by its removing the apparent anachronism or incongruity already mentioned; then, by the slight but obvious appearance of a fresh start or a new beginning in the first words of this verse; and lastly, by the otherwise inexplicable fact, that neither Mark nor Luke records this latter charge, a circumstance which seems to favour the opinion that it was delivered on a different occasion, and only added here by Matthew, in accordance with his topical arrangement, to complete the history of the apostolical organization. But this, however probable, is not a necessary supposition, as the verse before us may be merely the transition from the immediate to the ulterior instruction of the twelve. Behold is then the mark of this transition, calling attention, as usual, to something new and unexpected. I, being expressed in Greek without grammatical necessity, must be emphatic and suggestive of the high authority by which they were commissioned. Send you forth is more significant in Greek, because the verb is that from which apostle is derived, and may, therefore, be regarded as equivalent to saying, ‘I ordain (or constitute) you my apostles.’ According to the view of the connection just presented, this expression may be still further amplified and paraphrased as follows: ‘But your work is not to end with this immediate proclamation of the kingdom and the miracles attesting it. Behold, I have commissioned you as permanent apostles, to re-organize

the church and to complete the revelation of its doctrine; and I now proceed to warn you of the treatment which you may expect, and of the conduct which you are to hold not merely now, but when I shall be taken from you.' The first fact stated, in the execution of this plan, is that the world would be their enemy, and that this relation would require peculiar qualities on their part. These ideas are expressed by figures borrowed from the animal creation, four species being mentioned, one to represent their enemies and three themselves. It is worthy of remark, too, even if fortuitous, that the symbols are borrowed from the three great classes of beasts, birds, and reptiles, and that both the familiar subdivisions of the first class (wild and tame) are represented. The contrast in the first clause is identical with that in 7:15, sheep and wolves being specified as natural enemies, but here with special stress upon the circumstance that one is helpless and the other cruel. At the same time, the use of the term sheep, as usual, suggests the idea of comparative worth or value, and of intimate relation to the shepherd or proprietor. With due regard to these distinct aspects of the images here presented, the essential meaning of the clause, divested of its figurative dress, is, that he commissioned them, as his own cherished followers and servants, to go forth unarmed, and in themselves entirely helpless, in the midst of powerful and cruel foes. The last clause states the duty thence arising, and the means of security amidst such perils. Therefore, because you are so precious, yet so helpless, and because your enemies are so superior in strength and malice. Be ye is in Greek much more expressive, meaning properly, become ye, or begin to be,* implying the necessity of change to make them what they were not by nature or by habit. The contrast here is not, as in the first clause, between them and those who should oppose them, but between two different and at first sight inconsistent qualities, which they must have and exercise, in order to their safety. These were prudence or discretion, and simplicity or guilelessness of character and purpose. The idea is again conveyed by figures, and of the same kind as before; but the comparison is more explicit. In the first clause, the analogy was the familiar one between sheep and wolves, requiring no specification, as in this case, where the terms of the similitude are more unusual, and therefore, in addition to the names of the animals employed as emblems, the respective qualities denoted are expressly specified. He does not simply say, as serpents, but wise as serpents. The allusion is not merely to a popular belief, but to a well-known fact, that this part of the animal creation is peculiarly cautious in avoiding danger. It is this self-defensive and preservative faculty, and not the malignant cunning of the serpent (Gen. 3:1), which is here presented as an emblem and a model to the twelve apostles. Doves, as a genus, without reference to nice zoological distinctions, have in all ages been proverbial emblems of gentleness and innocence, especially in contrast with the sanguinary fierceness of those birds of prey by which they are persecuted and destroyed. But here a more specific sense attaches to the emblem, as suggested by the very derivation of the epithet employed, which primarily means unmixed, and in a moral application, free from all duplicity and disingenuous complexity of motive, corresponding thus exactly in essential meaning with the “single eye,” of 6:22. Harmless is therefore an inadequate and inexact translation, and the true sense given in the margin (simple), of the character required is not mere abstinence from injury to others, but that perfect simplicity and purity of motive, without which all the wisdom of the serpent would be unavailing.

17. What had just been briefly said in figurative form, is now repeated fully and in literal expressions. The wolves of the preceding verse were human wolves, and they must therefore be upon their guard against their fellow-men. Beware of is exactly the phrase used above in 7:15, and there explained. The men is here generically used for mankind or the human race, as distinguished from the animals employed to represent them. As if he had said, ‘remember that the wolves among whom I am sending you are men, and as such you must beware of them.' Deliver you up into the power of the magistrate by accusation and arrest, the same judicial use of the Greek verb that occurs above in 5:25. (See also on 4:12, and on v. 4 of this chapter.) Into councils (not the councils), the Greek word of which, sanhedrim, is a Hebrew or Aramaic corruption, and elsewhere applied to the supreme court or national council of the Jews, but in the plural to their local or provincial courts, the organization of which is differently stated by the ancient writers, and is wholly unimportant here, where the meaning is simply, into courts of justice, the preposition signifying not mere transfer or delivery, but introduction to their presence or arraignment at their bar. Synagogues might here seem to have its primary and wider sense of meetings or assemblies (see above, on 4:23); but there are traces on the Jewish books of such a custom as the actual infliction of such punishments at public worship. The fulfilment of these warnings may be found recorded in the Acts of the Apostles (4:1, 5:17, 40, 16:23, 22:24).

18. Governors and kings are here put for the whole class of individual rulers as distinguished from collective bodies, such as courts and councils. For a testimony to them (see above, on 8:4), i. e. of the truth, and in behalf of Christ and his religion. Against is too specific and restricts the testimony to their unbelief and guilt; whereas it related chiefly to the truth which they rejected. Gentiles should here be nations, not only as the primary and strict sense of the Greek word (see above, on 4:15, 6:32), but as required by the obvious contrast between rulers and the nations over whom they ruled. The testimony thus borne was to reach not only to the head but to the body of the people.

19, 20. Such alarming premonitions required proportional encouragement; and this is here afforded in the promise of a special inspiration, to enable them to answer for themselves and for the truth when thus arraigned before judicial bodies or the masses of the people. (Compare Paul’s experience of both, in Acts 22 and 23) Take no thought (as in 6:25, 27, 28, 31, 34) means, be not solicitous, unduly anxious. How relates to the form, and what to the substance, of their public defences or apologies. The assistance promised should be so complete that they would be mere instruments or organs of the Spirit, who is called the Spirit of their Father, not merely as proceeding from him, but as given on account of their filial relation to God (see above, on 5:16, 45, 48. and ch. 6

passim). This is so far from being a promise of divine assistance to unprepared and off-hand preachers, that it is not given even to the twelve indefinitely or forever, but expressly limited to one particular emergency, not only by the first words of v. 19 (when they deliver you), but also by the words, in that hour, or at that precise time (see above, on 8:13, 9:22). This promise gives the highest authority to all the apostolical defences upon record, and precludes the supposition of unhallowed anger in such cases as that of Paul's reply to Ananias (Acts 23:3).

21. But, though they should be thus sustained, the trial would undoubtedly occur, and in the most distressing form, involving the dissolution of the tenderest relations. Deliver up is the same word and has here the same sense as in v. 17, of which this is a mere specification. The idea is not that of treachery but violence or open enmity, displayed by legal and judicial acts. The article inserted in the version weakens it. The literal translation (brother.… brother, father.… child) is at the same time more emphatic and impressive. To death suggests the thought of immediate execution; but the Greek phrase (ε ς θάνατον) that of the eventual result, or final object, as in 3:11, unto repentance, i. e. with a view to it, and in v. 18 above, for a testimony, in all which cases the preposition is the same. There is a climax in the last clause, where the hatred just ascribed to brothers is affirmed of children (not the children) with respect to parents (not their parents.) Shall rise up against is a correct but feeble version of a doubly compound Greek verb (παναστήσονται), found only here and in Mark 13:12, where the first verb is gratuitously rendered betray, although the original expressions are identical. Put to death, not directly, by killing them, but by occasioning their condemnation, to express which may have been the object of the periphrasis in the translation.

22. What had just been said in reference to the tenderest relations of domestic life is now repeated in a general and universal form, not exclusive of particular exceptions, but establishing the main fact, that the new religion was to meet with opposition, not in one place, or from one race merely, but throughout the world, because at variance with the natural corruptions of the human heart. Of all men, literally, by all, men being needlessly supplied by the translators. For my name's sake, on account of my name, does not mean merely for my sake or on account of me, nor even as bearing my name, or as Christians, but because of all that is denoted by that name, including his Messianic claims and his divinity, with all the sovereignty and absolute authority involved therein. The last clause shows that even this hostility would not be irresistible or necessarily destructive. He that endureth, not only in the sense of passively submitting to all these inflictions, but in the active one of persevering or persisting in the faith and conduct which provoke them. There is peculiar force in the aorist participle here used, the (one) having endured, i. e. the one that shall prove to have endured or persevered. To the end, not a fixed point but a relative expression, meaning the extreme or uttermost of the trials through which any one is called to pass. Saved, rescued, finally delivered from them. As this is a proverbial or aphoristic sentence, it is not surprising that our Lord should have employed it upon various occasions and in different connections, but without a change in its essential meaning (see below, on 24:13).

23. He now gives a particular direction how they were to exercise the wisdom of the serpent under such distresses, namely, not by fanatically courting danger, or gratuitously staying where they could accomplish nothing, but by so far yielding to the pressure as to save their lives for future service. This is evidently not a rigid rule of uniform or universal application, but the allowance of a sound discretion. They were not to fly as soon as persecution showed itself (see Acts 8:1, 13:51, 18:9, 19:23), nor always to wait for its appearance, but to act upon the general principle of husbanding their lives and strength for the service of their master. This city, not the one in which he was then speaking, but any one in opposition to another. The meaning of the last clause seems to be that there were towns enough in Israel (or Palestine) for them to visit in succession on the principle just laid down, without ceasing wholly from their work, until the danger should be over and the kingdom of Messiah finally established. Gone over is a needless and enfeebling paraphrase, the true sense being given in the margin (end or finish). There is another explanation of this clause which refers it to Christ's following the twelve in their first mission, as he did the seventy (Luke 10:1). The meaning then, is, that before they had fulfilled the task assigned them, he would be himself upon the spot to protect them or direct them further. The objection to this otherwise good sense is simply that it disregards the reasons which have been already given for considering this portion of the chapter as a subsequent or supplementary discourse relating not to the immediate mission then before them, but to later and more trying times. Until the Son of man come, an indefinite expression, meaning sometimes more and sometimes less, but here equivalent to saying, 'till the object of your mission is accomplished.'

24, 25. The object of this statement is to reconcile them to the trials just predicted, by reminding them that they were only to be sharers in the sufferings of Christ himself. Entire exemption from distress and persecution would give them an unseemly and unjust advantage over him. The sorest trials they had reason to expect would only put them on a level with him. They had every reason, therefore, to be satisfied with such companionship in sorrow. This general appeal to their affection for their master takes a more specific form in the last clause of v. 25, which gives a reason why they should especially submit to any kind or measure of misrepresentation and abuse, to wit, because this species of ill-treatment had been carried in the case of Christ himself as far as possible. The Son of God had been called Beelzebul, one of the most offensive terms that could be applied even to an idol or an imaginary being. This may either be a reference to something not recorded in the history, or to the charge of collusion with Beelzebul in working miracles recorded in ch. 12:24 below. If the latter, which appears more probable, it furnishes another reason for believing that this last part of the chapter is of later date (see above, on v. 16). Them of his household corresponds to one Greek

word, the nearest equivalent to which in English is domestics, now confined to servants, but originally signifying all the inmates of a house or members of a family.

26, 27. Here begins a positive and cheering exhortation not to be discouraged by the prospect of these trials, with a series of reasons drawn from various considerations. The first, suggested in these verses, is that this conflict with the world, however painful, was essential to the very end for which they were sent forth, and therefore could not be escaped without relinquishing the whole design. This was the promulgation of the truth or of the new religion. What they had learned of him in private was no esoteric doctrine to be cherished by a favoured few, but light to be diffused abroad for the dispelling of the universal darkness. (See above, on 5:14–16.) This is clearly the meaning of the charge or precept in v. 27, and must therefore determine that of v. 26, which taken by itself might seem to mean that the crimes now secretly committed by the enemies of Christ and his disciples should hereafter be made public. But though the words might naturally bear this meaning, it would here be quite irrelevant, not only because this assurance was unsuited to console those who experienced or expected such ill-treatment, but because the reference, throughout the passage, is not to secret but to public, and especially judicial persecution. The connection with the previous verses is not altogether clear; but on the whole, it is most probably the one already pointed out, to wit, that as the light must be diffused, and men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil (John 3:19), opposition cannot be avoided without utterly abandoning the very end for which Christ came himself and sent forth his apostles.

28. A second reason for not fearing even the most cruel and malignant human enemies, is that their power extends only to the body, leaving the nobler spiritual part, in which the personality resides, uninjured and untouched. Soul is the word correctly rendered life in 2:20, 6:25, but here determined to mean soul by the antithesis with body. But lest this should be understood as meaning that the soul is in no sense destructible, the last clause guards against this error, by expressly teaching that the soul may be destroyed, and that he who has the power of destroying it is properly an object of our fear. Another error here precluded is that of supposing that the body will escape in the destruction of the soul, whereas soul and body must eventually perish together. Besides this careful guarding against natural and common errors, there is great precision in the choice of terms, the term kill being only used in reference to the body as distinguished from the soul, while that employed in reference to the soul, even when reunited to the body, is destroy. Hell, the place of future torment. (See above, on 5:22.) This last clause does not mean indefinitely, fear one who can do what these enemies cannot do, without implying that there is such a being. This is forbidden by the definite expression, the (one) able. It is a very old opinion that the person here referred to is the devil; but an exhortation to fear him would be irrelevant and out of place in this connection; and the power here ascribed to him he only possesses as an instrument or agent of the wrath of God, who must be reckoned therefore as the ultimate destroyer. The exhortation to fear him is really an exhortation to avoid displeasing him by disobedience, and is here peculiarly appropriate. As if he had said, ‘instead of shrinking from your duty through fear of what these enemies can do to your bodies, be afraid of incurring God’s displeasure by neglecting it.’

29. A third reason for not shrinking from the execution of their great commission on account of the dangers which attended it. Not only was the power of their enemies restricted to the body, but their very bodies would be under God’s protection. This is stated in a very striking form, not unlike that in 6:26–30. Reduced to ordinary shape and order, the argument is this, that as God’s protective care extends to the most insignificant and worthless of the feathered tribe, it must and does extend to man, and will especially extend to those who have been honoured with a most important mission. The actual order of these thoughts is, first, the little value of the sparrows, as indicated by the market price, two being sold for an assarion, a coin intermediate in value between our cent and an English penny; then the care of which they are the object. Not one (in opposition to the two of the preceding clause) shall fall, shall ever fall, and so by implication, can fall. There is no need of giving this the too specific meaning of falling into a snare, or of falling down dead. The idea is more general, that of any change occurring to them. Without your father, without his knowledge and permission. Your father again brings to mind their filial relation. He who thus protects the sparrows is your father.

30, 31. This is a strong proverbial expression for minute knowledge and exact care. The hairs are numbered for the purpose of protection and careful preservation, so that if one be wanting, it is missed and looked for. It would be impossible to frame in human language a more forcible description of unerring oversight and sleepless care. 5:31 repeats the exhortation of v. 26, and formally propounds the reason really implied in the preceding verses, namely, the argument from less to greater, that as God takes care of sparrows, he will certainly take care of Christ’s apostles.

32, 33. Another reason for discharging their commission without fear of man is, that on their fidelity in so doing must depend their treatment by the sovereign who commissioned them. Whosoever therefore is in Greek still stronger, every (one) therefore, whosoever (he may be), as if to cut off all exceptions to the rule here laid down. Confess me, literally, in me, which appears to be a Hebrew idiom, like the one in 5:34, 7:2, 6; or the preposition may indicate the subject of confession, with respect (or in regard) to me. The act itself is that of owning Christ as Lord and Master, with particular reference to the twelve, who were to go forth as his aids and representatives. The reciprocal act ascribed to him is that of owning as his follower, disciple, or apostle. (See above, on 7:23, where the disowning act is itself called a confession.) Before my father, i. e. in heaven, not on earth; or at the final judgment; or perhaps more generally, in the most public, solemn manner. V. 33 repeats the same thing in the same words with respect to the denial or disowning of our Lord’s authority by word or deed.

34, 35, 36. Another reason for not shrinking from the fear of human opposition and divisions, is that these are not mere accidents hut necessary consequences of the promulgation of the truth, and therefore to be looked for and manfully encountered by its advocates. Think not that I came, the same form of expression as in 5:17, and in either case implying the existence of a disposition so to think, and act accordingly. Send is twice used to translate a much stronger Greek word meaning throw or cast, and here perhaps intended to suggest the idea of coercion or compulsion. 'I did not come to force men into peace and harmony.' But this can hardly be the meaning in the last clause where the same word governs sword. Another sense, admissible in both cases, is the figurative one of casting, violently throwing. The antithetical ideas of peace and war (or strife) are very differently expressed, the one literally, the other by a figure, but so natural and common as scarcely to be metaphorical. The reference is not to the legitimate effects of Christ's mission on the character and hearts of men, but to the abnormal consequences of their alienation and resistance. V. 35 is an amplification of the figurative term sword, as denoting separation and division of the tenderest relations, some of which are specified with antique and scriptural simplicity and force. The word translated daughter-in-law properly means bride, or young wife, but is here determined to a more specific sense by being placed in opposition to one meaning mother-in-law, the same that is translated wife's mother in 8:14, V. 36 is a summing up of the previous details in a general declaration, that the most violent hostilities will sometimes exist within the limits of a single household, and engendered by the very cause which ought to have prevented them, and would have done so but for man's perverseness. This fearful picture has been often verified in actual experience. A man's should be the man's, i. e. those of the man who faithfully confesses Christ. They of his own household (the same Greek word that occurs in v. 25), namely, those just mentioned, not another class to be added to them.

37. From this unavoidable division among near friends on the most important of all subjects would arise the painful necessity of choosing between them and Christ, and this would furnish an unerring test of their attachment to him, which in order to be genuine must be supreme. The principle propounded is the same with that in 9:22, but in a form more general and absolute, as well as more explicit and unequivocal. The (one) loving father or mother, here correctly given as in Greek without the article (see above, on v. 21). More than me, literally, above (beyond) me. Worthy of me, i. e. fit to be my follower or disciple, much less my apostle and official representative. The same thing is then repeated as to son and daughter, the parental and filial relations, as the nearest ties of nature, being put for every other, such as those of marriage and remoter kindred.

38. To the natural affections this was a hard saying, and might seem to ask too much of the disciple, since in many cases such a separation would amount to the severest punishment, and be in fact a sort of lingering death like that of crucifixion. But so far from recognizing this as an admissible objection or a valid ground of disobedience, Christ repeats it as a positive command, requiring just such crucifixion as a duty and a test of true discipleship whenever circumstances might demand it. Though the twelve may at the time have understood this merely as a beautiful allusion to the cross as an instrument of torture, or a mode of execution made familiar by its use among their Roman masters, we can now see, and they afterwards no doubt saw in it, a prophetic reference to his own death as the crown and consummation of his sufferings. He beholds himself as a convict on his way to crucifixion and his faithful followers bearing the cross after him. Whoever is not ready thus to share his sufferings, even at the cost of every natural affection, is not fit to be considered his disciple.

39. A faithful acting out of the preceding requisitions might result in the loss of life itself and thus defeat the very object of discipleship. But even this extreme case obtains no relaxation of the rule already laid down. Life itself is not to be valued in comparison with faithfulness to Christ, but abandoned for the sake of it. This requisition is so utterly repugnant to the natural love of life that it might seem like exhorting men to self-destruction. In reality however it is only calling them to sacrifice a lesser for a greater good. Lose is a much stronger word in Greek and means destroy, the true antithesis to save in this connection. The form of the sentence is proverbial, and, as in many other cases of the same kind, uses the same word in two senses, or rather in a higher and a lower application of the same sense. Life is the correct translation in both clauses, but the life referred to very different. The (one) finding his life (i. e. his natural life, or the life of his body, for its own sake, as the highest good to be secured or sought) will (by that very act not only lose but) destroy it. He cannot perpetuate his life on earth, and by refusing to look higher, forfeits life in heaven. The converse is then stated as no less true and important. The (one) who loses or destroys (i. e. allows to be destroyed if needful) his life (in the lower sense before explained) for my sake (in my service and at my command), not only now while I am present upon earth, but even after my departure, for the sake of the gospel, the diffusion of the truth, and the erection of my kingdom, he shall find his life in losing it, or only lose it in a lower sense to save it in the highest sense conceivable. The difficulty of distinguishing precisely between life and life in this extraordinary dictum only shows that the difference is rather of degree than kind, and instead of weakening strengthens the impression.

40. Having been led by a natural association into the previous discourse as to the test of true discipleship, our Lord reverts in conclusion to the principle laid down in vs. 24, 25, that what they did and suffered was as his representatives, and as identified with him. This is here applied to the authority with which they were to speak and act as his apostles, and the duty of receiving them as such. It is carried further than before, however, by applying the same principle to Christ's own ministry as one of delegated powers, so that they who acknowledged his apostles not only owned their commission as being sent from him, but his commission as being

sent from God.

41. There are two interpretations of this verse and its connection with the one before it. Some regard it as a mere continuation of the promise, and the words prophet and righteous man as epithets applied to the apostles. Others make it an allusion to some well-known maxim or proverbial saying. As he that receives a prophet is to have a prophet's reward, so he that gives to drink, &c. There is also some obscurity and doubt as to the meaning of a prophet's reward and a righteous man's reward. It may mean, shall be rewarded by the prophet or the righteous man whom he receives, i. e. shall reap the benefit of so receiving him. Or it may mean, shall be regarded as possessing the same character with him whom he receives. The word receive is here used to translate two different Greek verbs, the one denoting active recognition, the other passive reception.

42. The most trifling acts of kindness to themselves on his account, he himself would note, and as it were acknowledge. For whosoever shall (whoever may) give to drink, a single word in Greek, analogous to our verb to water, but derived from the noun drink, and applied both to plants (by Xenophon) and to men (by Plato). From the same root comes the following noun, cup, or any drinking vessel, the same word that is used in Mark 7:4, 8, and there explained. A cup (or bowl) of water is here mentioned as the cheapest of all bodily refreshments, and therefore suitable to represent the smallest acts of kindness done by man to man. Verily (Amen) I say unto you, implying that what follows is a certain and a solemn truth. He shall not, a particularly strong form of negation, being that employed in 5:18, and there explained. His reward, i. e. the benefit of such regard to Christ, proved by kindness to his followers. The doctrine of legal merit is no more involved in this expression than in the many passages which teach that men are to be dealt with in proportion to their works, although salvation is entirely gratuitous.

CHAPTER 11

IT was very important, in any history of our Lord's official life, to define his position with respect to John the Baptist. This had been done, at an early period of the narrative, so far as the beginning of his ministry was concerned (4:12), and also with respect to certain doctrines or practices of John's disciples (9:14). But as John's life lasted longer than his ministry, and as he had some further intercourse with Christ, it was important that their mutual relation should be clearly pointed out before John's final disappearance from the scene. To do this may be fairly represented as the object of the passage comprehended in this chapter. After a sentence which is properly the close of the preceding chapter (1), we have first John's message from the prison and Christ's answer (2–6); then a discourse to the people, in which John's position is defined and his character described (7–15); then a parabolical description of the way in which their several ministries bad been received (16–19). The unity of subject, and most probably of time, in this whole narrative is undisputed. Its connection with what follows, although not so obvious, is no less real. The ministry of John, though without miraculous credentials (John 10:41), left the people inexcusable who did not receive him; how much more the ministry of Christ, with all its glorious attestations, to reject which was to court a doom beyond that of the most corrupted heathen (20–24). That any should continue blind, while others saw the great light, was a mystery of human depravity and of divine sovereignty (25–27), in view of which the Saviour earnestly and tenderly invites those groaning under legal bondage, whether ceremonial or moral, to exchange it for his salutary and delightful service (28–30).

1. The conventional division of the text is as injudicious here as in the case of ch. 9, and with the same effect, that of confusing the chronology by making this verse give the date or fix the time of what immediately follows; whereas it is the natural conclusion of what goes before, and the next verse opens an entirely new subject, without any mark of time whatever, and therefore without any contradiction of Luke's more chronological arrangement, which puts the message of John the Baptist early in the narrative. The verse before us is a winding up of the preceding chapter by the statement that our Lord, after organizing and commissioning the twelve, did not allow that act to interrupt his own itinerant labours, but as soon as he finished charging or instructing them (a military term in Greek, originally denoting the array and disposition of armed forces), he passed on thence, i. e. from the place where these instructions were delivered, and which cannot now be ascertained, though commonly supposed to be Capernaum or its neighbourhood. (See below, on v. 20.) The design of this departure was not rest but labour, to teach and preach, or, as the Greek construction necessarily suggests, (for the purpose) of teaching and preaching, or proclaiming and announcing the Messiah's kingdom (see above, on 3:1, 4:17, 23, 9:35), in their towns (or cities), i. e. those of Galilee, the antecedent of the pronoun, although not expressed, being readily supplied from the whole preceding narrative, and more particularly from the previous descriptions of his ministry in 4:23 and 9:35, where the same form of expression is employed, a circumstance which shows that the writer here reverts to those descriptions of our Lord's itinerant labours, as the great theme of his narrative, which all the intervening statements were intended to illustrate and exemplify. This verse is therefore an important one, when replaced in its true position with respect to the preceding chapter, both as giving oneness and coherence to the whole composition, and as showing that, although the twelve were chosen and sent forth as aids and representatives of Christ in his announcement of the new dispensation, they were not intended to diminish, and did not in point of fact diminish in the least his own incessant and exhausting labours.

2. The bad effect of the unfortunate division of the chapters is diminished, although not entirely removed, in the English version by the use of the word now, suggesting a transition, or the introduction of a new subject, though the Greek word is only the usual connective (δὲ) elsewhere rendered and or but, and so translated here in all the older English versions, except Tyndale and Cranmer, who omit it altogether, making the transition still more marked and even sudden. It is very important that the reader should observe this relation of the verses, and should understand the second not as saying, that John then, i. e. after the mission and instruction of the twelve, sent two of his disciples, but that he did so once, or on a certain occasion, not exactly specified, but really anterior in date to the contents of the preceding chapter. There is nothing incorrect in this departure from the strict chronological order, or at variance with the practice of the best historians, when their purpose is not simply to detail events precisely as they happened, but to bring together illustrations and examples of some interesting topic, just as Matthew here defines our Lord's position with respect to John the Baptist, by recording facts which might have been introduced earlier or later, but are no doubt in their proper place with reference to his plan and purpose, or at least to that divine discretion in the exercise of which he placed them where they are and where we find them.* Having heard, through the report of his disciples (Luke 7:18), in the prison, i. e. as we learn from Josephus, the fortress of Machærus on the border of Perea and the desert. The fact of John's imprisonment had been already mentioned in connection with the opening of Christ's Galilean ministry (4:12), but without the particulars, which are given afterwards in speaking of his death (14:3). The works, i. e. the miracles (Luke 7:18), of Christ, not of Jesus as a private person, but of the Messiah, which he claimed to be, appealing to these very works in proof of his pretensions (John 10:38, 14:11, 15:24). The meaning then is, that John heard in prison of miraculous performances appearing and purporting to be wrought by the Messiah. His disciples, those who still adhered to him after his mission had been merged in that of Christ himself, whom they refused to acknowledge as superior to John in opposition to his own most solemn declarations. (See above, on 3:11, 14, 9:14, and compare John 1:20, 3:25–30.) This fact betrays an obstinate persistency in error, inconsistent with right religious feeling, and deprives these disciples of all title to the honour which some would put upon them, as sincerely pious and as almost Christians. It also favours the opinion, which has been the common one since Hilary and Chrysostom, that this message was intended to remove their doubts, and not to satisfy the mind of John himself. There would, it is true, be no absurdity in holding that his faith was shaken for a moment in captivity, not as to the person of the true Messiah, which had been divinely indicated to his very senses (see above, on 3:16, 17, and compare John 1:32, 33), but as to his method of proceeding, so remote from the usages and associations of the old economy, of which John was a minister. The possibility of such misgivings is enhanced if we suppose that John's inspiration ceased with his official work for which it was intended to prepare him (Luke 1:80, 3:2). There is still, however, something in the tone of this inquiry, if expressive of John's own doubts, that can scarcely be reconciled with his strong and almost passionate asseverations of his own inferiority already cited. The necessity of all such undesirable assumptions is precluded by the ancient and prevailing supposition, just referred to, that the message was intended to remove the doubts of his disciples, or to bring them into contact with our Lord himself, and thus afford an opportunity of showing them the signs of the Messiah, as he actually did on this occasion. The objections to this view of the transaction, although not without weight, are entirely inconclusive. The apparent insincerity of asking such a question in his own name when he knew the truth already, may be either ascribed to the conciseness of the record, which has not preserved all the explanatory circumstances, or defended as a lawful means of bringing his disciples into contact with the object of their sceptical and envious misgivings. (See John 3:26.) Though unwilling to resort to Christ as inquirers in their own behalf, they might consent to carry what appeared to be a challenge and expostulation from their master. There is still less force in the objection, that John would not have sent them to ask Jesus what he could have told them still more easily himself. He had already told them, but without effect, and he now wished to convince them, not by the words of Jesus merely, but by the "works of Christ."

3. Said, through his messengers, a form of speech common in all languages, and throwing light upon the difference between Luke and Matthew in the case of the centurion's servant. (See above, on 8:5.) Art thou the (one) coming, he whose coming has for ages been expected? This appears to have become almost a proper name of the Messiah. (See above, on 3:11, and compare John 11:27.) Do we look? is Cranmer's just correction of Tyndale's loose translation, shall we look? The contracted form in Greek (προσδοκ μεν) may be either subjunctive or indicative, and if the former, might be rendered may (or must) we look? But by far the simplest and most natural construction, and at the same time the most striking, is the usual one, are we looking? i. e. is it for another (not for thee) that we are looking? The phrase to look for is equivocal in English, being used to express the very different ideas of search and expectation. The latter predominates in early usage, and is here required by the unambiguous original. The sentence becomes still more pointed if we take another in the strong sense of the Greek word (τερον), as strictly meaning of a different kind, another sort, although in general and later usage, it denotes mere numerical difference (like λλος). The spirit of the question is, 'art thou indeed the Messiah, whose appearance Israel has so long expected?'

4. Instead of a direct and categorical reply in words, our Lord refers them to the testimony of their own senses, with a tacit reference to the prophecies which represent the Messiah as a wonder-worker (such as Isai. 35:5, 6, 61:1, &c.). The answer is addressed to John, from whom the question came, and therefore can determine nothing as to its true motive.

5. This is a mere specification of the (things) which ye hear and see, not exhaustive but illustrative by means of a few signal instances. The raising of the dead may have been among the miracles they actually witnessed, or the reference may be to the

resuscitation of the widow's son at Nain, which in Luke (7:11–17) immediately precedes the narrative before us, and appears to be included among "all these things" which John's disciple reported to him (ib. v. 18). It is hardly natural, however, to apply the verb hear in v. 4 to the report of this and other miracles not actually seen by the disciples, since it rather has respect to what is mentioned in the last clause of the verse before us. The poor are evangelized, a most expressive phrase, which has been variously rendered: the glad tidings is preached to the poor (Tyndale)—the poor receive the gospel (Geneva)—the poor receive the glad tidings of the gospel (Cranmer)—to the poor the gospel is preached (Rheims). Wiclif's version (poor men be taken to preaching of the gospel) seems to be founded on Theophylact's construction of the Greek verb as a neuter or deponent not a passive; the poor preach the gospel, which, however, would not be insisted on as something new or strange, and is besides at variance with the obvious meaning of the prophecy referred to (see Isaiah 61:1), where the Septuagint has the phrase (ε αγγελισάσθαι πτωχο ς). Poor is here to be taken in its pregnant and peculiar Hebrew or Old Testament meaning, as expressive, not of mere external destitution, but of that humility and sense of spiritual want which such a state often does and always should engender. (See above, on poor in spirit, 5:3.)

6. This is a part of the reply, and not a mere reflection added to it. It states a general truth, leaving the application to the hearer or receiver. It proves nothing as to John's intention or his state of mind, which must be determined, if at all, on other grounds already mentioned. (See above, on v. 1.) The words apply to John himself, if his own faith wavered, but only upon that supposition. They are equally appropriate to his disciples, if the message was intended for their benefit. Blessed, truly fortunate or happy, with particular reference to the divine favour. (See above, on 5:3.) Whosoever, a contingent expression, not necessarily implying that any one had actually been, but simply that some one might hereafter be offended, not in the popular or modern sense, displeased, but in the old sense, stumbled, made to fall, i. e. betrayed into sin and error. (See above, on 5:29, 30.) In me (Geneva), not by me (Tyndale, Cranmer), but in reference to me as an occasion or example. (For a like use of the same preposition, compare Acts 4:2.) This, though in form a beatitude or blessing, similar to those at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount (5:3–11), is, in substance and reality, a solemn warning against unbelief in the Messiahship of Jesus. At the same time, there is something truly admirable in the skill and delicacy, if we may apply such terms to the divine and gracious wisdom, with which Christ here treats the scruples and misgivings, whether of John himself or of his sceptical disciples. Without upbraiding, such as he employed soon after against open unbelievers (see below, on vs. 20–24), without even reasoning in direct opposition to the error which he has in view, he practically takes away its very basis, and benevolently warns against its ruinous results.

7. Having sent this answer to John's question, he proceeds to guard against all false conclusions from it, as if John's testimony had been now retracted. This he does by showing that John was neither a capricious humourist nor a flattering parasite, but an eminent prophet, and himself a subject of prophecy, belonging indeed to the old dispensation, but the harbinger and herald of the new. As they departed (Tyndale), literally, they departing, i. e. just as they were gone or going, so as neither to appear to flatter John through his disciples, nor to leave him for a moment in a false position before the people. Began is not a pleonasm, but a natural expression of immediate action consequent upon another. No sooner had he finished his reply to John than he began his vindication of him. To the multitudes or crowds, not merely the great numbers, but the mixed promiscuous assemblage, in whose presence he had answered John's inquiry, and among whom there were many who might either take advantage of this message to invalidate John's well-known testimony to the Messiahship of Jesus, or be led by others into such a misconstruction of it. Here again the wisdom of the Master is conspicuous. Instead of positive assertion, he appeals to their own vivid recollections of the time, when the whole population had gone out into the wilderness adjacent to the Dead Sea and the Jordan, to see and hear the very man who now lay captive in Machærus. What went ye out to see? refers not so much to their previous expectation as to their actual experience, and is tantamount to saying, 'What did you see when you went out into the wilderness?' The word translated see is not the one commonly so rendered, but that employed in 6:1, and denoting (as the etymon of theatre, theatrical, &c.) a more curious and eager gaze or contemplation. As if he had said, 'What spectacle or show did you go out to witness?' The question in the last clause is a virtual negation, 'Surely not a reed,' &c. There are two interpretations of the words themselves, one of which supposes a reed shaken with the wind (or more exactly, by a wind) to be referred to merely as an ordinary product of the desert of Judea, in one of its usual conditions. The meaning then is, that they surely had not gone out in such numbers to the wilderness merely to see its rustling reeds, which were always there and never worth seeing. It is therefore equivalent to saying, that they surely had not gone for nothing or without a motive. The objection to this explanation is, not that the sense which it affords is tame or flat, on which point tastes may naturally differ, but that it is not in keeping with the positive description in the next verse, which is evidently meant to be applied to John; and that it makes this verse irrelevant and useless as a part of our Lord's argument to prove that John's testimony to him had not been retracted or invalidated by his recent message. This required something more to sustain it than the bare fact that they went out to see something, or that John was not a mere nonentity or commonplace familiar object. It required an assertion of the fact that he was not a fickle, wavering, unstable character, who said and unsaid, or who now said one thing, now another. This is finely expressed, and in a way peculiarly adapted to impress an Oriental audience, by a figure borrowed from the very locality in question. 'When you went into the wilderness you surely did not find there one who wavered like its own reeds agitated by the wind.' With divine art he leaves them to apply the metaphor to John, who was notoriously any thing but such a reed, who on the contrary was well known to be firm, unbending, and unsparing in the work of his great office. The inference suggested, although not expressed, is that John was not the man to retract an attestation so deliberately, solemnly, repeatedly afforded. His message

therefore could not be intended to invalidate his former testimony. All this is perfectly consistent with the supposition that John's question was expressive of his own misgivings, if these related only to Christ's method of proceeding, and not to his personal identity as the Messiah, of which John had been so clear and so definite a witness. At the same time, it must be admitted that the language of the verse before us, although not irreconcilable with this hypothesis, is far more favourable to the other, namely, that the message was designed to solve the doubts of those who bore it, not of John himself. Scarcely one in a thousand of unbiassed readers would be led spontaneously to make the nice distinction between our Lord's Messiahship and Messianic working, or to understand him as admitting that John had experienced a lapse of faith as to the latter, and only denying such a lapse as to the former.

8. Supposing the question in v. 7 to be answered in the negative, he now puts an alternative interrogation. But, if not a reed shaken by the wind, what went ye out to see, or what did you see when you went out on that occasion? A man dressed in soft (i. e. luxurious) clothes, the very opposite to John's dress, as described in 3:4. That the reference, however, is not merely to ascetic and indulgent habits, is apparent from the next clause. Behold, an expression of surprise at the thought of finding such men in the wilderness. The place to seek them is the royal court, mentioned either in the general as the most luxurious form of human society, or with specific reference to the court of Herod. This suggests the idea of a courtier, proverbially akin to those of parasite and flatterer, a second character denied to John. As he was not a fickle changeling, blown about by every wind (Eph. 4:14), neither was he a polite and courtly flatterer, whose testimony, given from an interested motive, was withdrawn or contradicted when that motive ceased to operate. On neither of these pretexts was there any ground for questioning the truth or the continued force of John's attestation of the claims of Jesus.

9. Both the foregoing questions being negatived, a third hypothesis is now presented. But, if not a courtier, what then? What did you see when you went out into the wilderness? Discarding all ironical suggestions, he now anticipates the real universal answer to the question, 'We went out to see a prophet.' This he repeats in the form of an interrogation, as if about to question or deny it—'A prophet (do you say)?' but only for the purpose of a more emphatic affirmation. Yea, yes, most true; and what you thus say to me, I say to you in turn, and add to it what you cannot say with authority as I do, (something) more, literally, more abundant, more excessive than a prophet.

10. He was not only a prophet but a subject of prophecy, whose advent was predicted at the close of the Old Testament canon. This is he, or this it is, of (about, concerning) whom it is written, literally, has been written, in the perfect passive, a peculiarly expressive form, implying not only the existence of the passage and its ancient date, but its having been for ages upon record. (See above, on 2:5.) We have here a most authoritative declaration as to the meaning and fulfilment of a prophecy still extant in the Hebrew text of Malachi (3:1), and here quoted in a form varying, not only from the Septuagint version, but from the original, without change, however, of essential meaning. The words are here addressed to the Messiah himself as a pledge or promise, which though not expressed, is really implied in the original. I send, am sending or about to send, the verb from which apostle is derived, and suggesting (as in 10:16) the idea of a public and official, not a personal or private mission. My messenger, the Greek word commonly translated angel (which is a mere abbreviation or corruption of it), but here used in its primary and wider sense. The original passage predicts the advent of two messengers or angels, the Angel of the Covenant, also represented as the Lord of the Temple, and another who was to prepare his way before him. These two are here identified, the one expressly and the other by necessary implication, with our Lord and his forerunner. Before thy face is not in the original; before thee there is literally to my face, in the first person. Prepare, an expressive Greek verb meaning to make fully ready, to equip, to furnish. Thy way, thy advent or appearance. The for at the beginning introduces this quotation as a proof that John was more than a prophet, i. e. more than any other that preceded him because standing nearest to the time of the fulfilment, and as being the immediate precursor of Messiah.

11. Verily, I say unto you, prepares the hearer and the reader for a still stronger statement, one that in itself might seem to savour of exaggeration, and could therefore only become credible by being uttered with divine authority. (See above, on 5:18, 26, 6:2, 5, 13, 16, 8:10.) The paradoxical assertion thus enforced is, that John was not only more than a prophet, but equal to the greatest among men, not in personal qualities, however, but simply by position, from the rank assigned him in the history of the church and of the world. There has not arisen, or been raised up, called into existence (see below, on 24:11, and compare John 7:52). This is the first clause of the sentence in Greek and in most versions, the needless transposition in our Bible being introduced by Tyndale. Among, literally in (i. e. the number or the midst of) the (or those) born of women, an idiomatic phrase for mankind or the human race, the plural of one several times occurring in the book of Job.* A greater (man or person), or (one) greater, i. e. one more highly honoured by his relative position with respect to Christ himself. But, notwithstanding this exalted rank and unsurpassed pre-eminence. The superlative term least is one of the few groundless innovations introduced by the translators of King James's Bible, all the earlier versions, from Wiclif's to the Rhemish, having the literal translation, less. All that is really asserted is, that one inferior to John in some respect is greater in another. The most eminent Fathers, Greek and Latin, such as Chrysostom and Augustin, understand this of our Lord himself, who was John's inferior in the judgment of many, and really in age, to which the Greek word is frequently applied, though not in the New Testament, unless Mark 15:40 be an instance. Thus understood, the sentence is a simple repetition of what John himself so often said, that one coming after him in time was his superior in rank and power. (See above, on 3:11, and

compare John 1:15, 27, 30, 3:28–31). The other and more common explanation among Protestants applies the words indefinitely to any one belonging to the kingdom of heaven, the new dispensation, or the Christian Church. The common version (least) supposes a comparison with other members of that body, and declares the humblest and least favoured among these to be superior in light and privilege to John the Baptist. This construction is of course preferred by those who understand the question in v. 2 to express John's own misgivings, and the verse before us to be Christ's apology or method of accounting for them, on the ground that John, with all his eminence among the prophets, was still like them of the old economy, and therefore less acquainted with the new than the weakest and most ignorant of those who had been brought into it. But not to insist upon the fact that the change of dispensations was not accomplished; and that consequently there were none of whom this could be said, this whole interpretation is at variance with the letter of the passage, which says nothing of the least, but only of the less, i. e. the less than John, unless we arbitrarily explain the less as meaning less than every other in the kingdom of heaven. These last words may be grammatically construed either with what follows or what goes before, 'he that is less (in the old dispensation or among the prophets) is greater in the kingdom of heaven'—or—'he that is less (i. e. younger, later) in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.' On the whole, as greater refers not to age or chronological succession, but to dignity or rank, the collateral term less must have a corresponding import, and the most natural interpretation of the sentence is, that such would be the difference of light and privilege between the old and new economy, that one belonging to the latter, though inferior to John in every other particular, might in this, the most important, be considered greater.

12. The most probable connection here is that the eulogy on John the Baptist, interrupted by the last clause of the verse preceding, is resumed and continued by describing the effects of his ministry upon society at large. From the days of John the Baptist, i. e. from the time of his original appearance as a preacher of repentance and as Christ's forerunner. During this brief interval what changes had been wrought by the proclamation of Messiah's kingdom (Luke 16:16)! The whole Jewish world had been thrown into commotion, and in spite of the resistance of its party leaders and its ruling classes, the new theocracy was welcomed by the masses, not with enthusiasm merely, but with a furore which could only be compared to the conquest of a kingdom by the violent irruption of a hostile army. This appears to be referred to, not as something new but well known to the hearers, as a proof that John the Baptist had retracted nothing, that although his active ministry was ended, the great work which he had begun was still in progress, and it was absurd to think of his abandoning it now, when it was at its height.

13. As the for at the beginning of this verse assigns a reason for what goes before, it seems most natural to understand it as a general statement, that the whole preparatory system which preceded the Messiah's advent terminated in the person and the work of John, who therefore occupied a most peculiar and unique position in the history of redemption, as the last link in the long chain of Old Testament agencies, and in immediate contact with the first link of the new chain that succeeded and replaced it. This may be mentioned both as a further justification of the seeming paradox in v. 11, and as a further reason for believing that the man who held this high place in the scheme of the divine administration would not lightly undo all that he had done by retracting his official testimony to the person of his great superior. The form in which these ideas are expressed is peculiarly Judaic or Old Testament in character, but perfectly intelligible by the light of such associations. The law and the prophets, the Old Testament economy, the whole revelation of God's will in that form (see above, on 5:17, 7:12). Until John, as far as, down or up to John, as the last in the succession of such agencies. We have here another transposition introduced by Tyndale and retained by his successors. The sonorous close in the original is prophesied, i. e. executed their prophetic or preparatory office.

14. This whole discourse respecting John the Baptist is concluded by repeating the authoritative statement of v. 10, in reference to another part of Malachi's prediction (4:5, 6 in the Hebrew text 3:23, 24), at the very close of the Old Testament canon, where Elijah the Prophet is announced as the precursor of the "great and dreadful day of the Lord." This, we are here expressly told by Christ himself, was fulfilled in John the Baptist; and the same thing had been declared beforehand by the angel who announced his birth (Luke 1:17). Whether this fulfilment was exhaustive or is yet to be succeeded by another, is a question which may be more conveniently considered in another place. (See below, on 17:10–13.) The first clause of v. 14 implies that the prophecy was very differently understood, at least by many of our Saviour's hearers.

15. This idiomatic and proverbial formula, like many others of perpetual occurrence in our Lord's discourses, is never simply pleonastic or unmeaning, as the very repetition often tempts us to imagine. On the contrary, such phrases are invariably solemn and emphatic warnings that the things in question are of the most momentous import and entitled to most serious attention. They appear to have been framed or adopted by the Saviour, to be used on various occasions and in the pauses of his different discourses. There is something eminently simple and expressive in the one before us, which involves rebuke as well as exhortation. 'Why should you have the sense of hearing, if you do not use it now? To what advantage can you ever listen, if you turn a deaf ear to these admonitions? Now, now, if ever, he who can hear must hear, or incur the penalty of inattention!'

16. Having defined John's position, and by necessary consequence his own, our Lord, by a natural transition, now refers to the characteristic difference between them, and to the reception which, in spite of this difference, they had both experienced, from the Jews, or rather from their leading men, the Pharisees and Scribes or Doctors of the law (Luke 7:30). The conduct of the latter is presented in a parabolic form by means of an analogy derived from common life in one of its humblest and most familiar phases,

that of child's play or infantile sports, a striking instance of our Saviour's condescension to the habits and associations of his hearers, even in expounding the most solemn truths. To this their attention is directed by himself in the opening question. Whereunto, to what, shall I liken, make like by comparison, this generation, not the Jewish race in general, for the Greek word (γενεὰ) has no such meaning, but the contemporary race, correctly rendered generation. As if he had said, 'it is impossible to represent correctly the behaviour of these spiritual leaders without drawing a comparison from the caprice and petulance of children.' Markets are mentioned not as places of traffic but of public concourse, an idea suggested by the derivation of the Greek word (γορὰ from γείρω, to assemble). Sitting denotes not merely the position, but the idle habit, dwelling, spending time there.*

17. Nothing could be more true to nature and experience than this trait of childish character and manners, which is daily verified in every nursery and playground. The complaint of those who here speak is that the others, or their comrades, had refused to do their part in some boyish ceremony, probably a mock funeral and wedding. We piped, or played the flute, the customary music both on joyful and sorrowful occasions (see above, on 9:23), here restricted to the former by what follows, ye did not dance, to the music thus provided. (On the contrary) we wailed, a Greek word specially applied to lamentation for the dead, as performed by persons hired for the purpose, and ye (as the mourners) did not beat (your breasts), a common sign of grief on such occasions. It has been needlessly disputed which of the two sets of children here described represents the Scribes and Pharisees, and which our Lord and his forerunner. If the question required or admitted of an answer, it would be the one usually given or assumed, to wit, that the children introduced as speaking stand for John and Jesus, and those whom they address for the Scribes and Pharisees. The opposite hypothesis, ingeniously supported by some modern writers, turns the illustration upside down by making Christ himself the one who could be satisfied with nothing, and his enemies the party who complained of it. The reasons for preferring this ingenious paradox are wholly inconclusive, namely, that it is this generation that is said to be like the children speaking; that the saying of this verse must refer to the same subject as the say of the next; and that if Christ and John had been the speakers, the mourning would have come before the dancing. All this proceeds upon a false conception of the parable and an entire disregard of our Lord's practice with respect to it, which is to take the illustration as a whole and apply it as a whole to the thing signified. The same objections might be urged with far more plausibility and force against his own interpretation of the parable of the Sower (see below, on 13:18–23.) The whole conduct of the leading Jews is here compared to that of the children in the market, the precise points of resemblance being left to be determined by the hearer or the reader. As children are often hard to please even in their chosen sports, however varied, so the Scribes and Pharisees had treated John the Baptist and our Lord himself.

18. This is our Lord's own application of the illustration given in the two preceding verses. I liken them to such children, for, because, John came, i. e. appeared in his official character, as sent by God. (Compare the use of the same verb in 3:11, 5:17, 7:15, 9:13, 10:34, and vs. 3, 14 above.) Neither eating nor drinking, in the ordinary manner, and the customary meats and drinks of other men (Luke 7:33), but locusts and wild honey (see above, on 3:4). Another explanation of the words, as a hyperbolical description of John's abstinence, or of the small quantity of food which he consumed, is forbidden by its want of correspondence with what follows in relation to our Lord himself, which can not have respect to mere quantity. And they say, indefinitely, men say, people say, with special reference, however, to the Scribes and lawyers. A devil, or more properly, a demon, an evil spirit or fallen angel of inferior rank, permitted to invade the souls and bodies of men (see above, on 4:24, 8:16, 28, 9:32). We thus learn that the same charge was alleged against our Lord and his forerunner. (See John 7:20, 8:48, 10:20.) This shows that in John's case it was not a charge of demoniacal assistance in sustaining such a mode of life, but of demoniacal perverseness in adopting it. They may have thought it not unlike that of the Gadarene demoniacs as described above (8:28) and in the parallels (Mark 5:3–5. Luke 8:27).

19. The Son of Man, the Messiah (see above, on 8:20), of whom John was the forerunner, led a very different life as to external habits, and gave no occasion for the same reproach, and yet was equally condemned, though on another pretext. Came, appeared in his public and official character, as in v. 18. Eating and drinking, not simply more than John did, but like other men, subsisting on the same food, without any such ascetic singularity as answered an important purpose in the case of his forerunner. (See above, on 3:4.) The essential point of the comparison is rather negative than positive. It is not so much our Lord's participation in the ordinary food of his contemporaries that is here presented for its own sake, as his freedom from those personal peculiarities which brought on John the charge of demoniacal possession. But the spite of his opponents found another, resting on this very freedom from ascetic rigour. Because he ate and drank like other men, they called him a glutton (literally an eating man) and a wine-bibber, a felicitous translation of an Anacreontic word (ο νοπότης). That it was not the mere quantity or even quality of our Saviour's meat and drink that angered them, but rather his unrestrained association with the masses, may be gathered from the next words, a friend (not merely a well-wisher, but a comrade, an associate, and perhaps more specifically still, a boon-companion) of publicans and sinners, a proverbial combination which has been explained already. (See above, on 9:10–13.) The captious and unreasonable spirit of contemporary censors could not have been more vividly set forth than by thus pointing out their querulous dissatisfaction with two modes of life so utterly dissimilar as those of Christ and John the Baptist. When the one piped, there was no responsive joy, nor when the other wailed, responsive sorrow. Of the many senses put upon the last clause, there are only two which seem entitled to consideration; and these differ less as to the meaning of the words than in their application. The first, which is the common and most ancient one, regards this as a passing reflection of our Lord upon these spiteful and frivolous contemporary judgments, as compared with the true estimate of his course and of John's, as two successive and consistent parts of one great scheme, the proof and

product of celestial wisdom, but an estimate confined to the children of that wisdom, its disciples or adherents. The wisdom of God displayed in these apparent contradictions, though condemned by the wisdom of the Jewish leaders, was acquitted and approved by all the truly wise. The only objection to the otherwise good sense thus put upon the clause is by no means a conclusive one, namely, that it seems to be a cold and unnecessary winding up of so lively an invective. This objection, which is wholly one of taste, and may therefore affect different minds differently, can be entirely removed, however, by the other explanation which has been referred to, but which rests entirely on its own intrinsic probability, there being no weight of authority in its favour. It agrees with the other in explaining wisdom to be that of God, as exercised and shown in the apparent contradiction of the life of John and that of Jesus, and in the two great systems which they symbolized or represented. (See above, on 3:1.) They agree likewise in explaining her children to mean her adherents or disciples. But the explanation now in question differs from the other in applying this description, by a solemn irony, to the Scribes and Pharisees themselves, and in giving justify its earlier and wider sense of treating justly, doing justice. The clause will then be an indignant exclamation at the treatment which God's wise and gracious providence met with at the hands of those who claimed to be its reverent admirers and its authorized expounders. And (so) was Wisdom justified on the part of (πὸ) her (favourite and honoured) children. Such justice does she meet with at the hands of those who claim to understand her best and ought to be her chief defenders.

20. Then, though sometimes indefinite, has commonly its strict sense, at that time, or just afterwards; nor is there any reason for departing from it here, as the connection with what goes before is obvious and natural, and an unbroken continuity appears to be required by the verb began, which is never wholly pleonastic (see above, on v. 7, and on 4:17), and which would be misplaced at the beginning of an entirely new context. The connection seems to be, that he had no sooner ended his rebuke of the contemporary Jews for their unreasonable captious judgments with respect to John the Baptist and himself, than he began a more severe denunciation of those places, which had been particularly honoured by his presence and his miracles since the beginning of his Galilean ministry. That some of the expressions here used were repeated to the Seventy disciples (Luke 10:13–15, 21, 22) is entirely in keeping with our Saviour's practice (see the introduction to the Sermon on the Mount, p. 105), but admits of another explanation, namely, that a part of what was actually spoken to the Seventy is given here by Matthew on account of its affinity with what precedes, and because the mission of the Seventy, as being something altogether temporary and without distinctive character, is nowhere else recorded in this Gospel. To upbraid, or cast reproach upon, including moral disapprobation and indignant feeling. The word is elsewhere used in a bad sense to denote the expression of human enmity and malice (see above, on 5:11, and below, on 27:44), but is here applied without essential change of meaning, to the mingled grief and anger of the Son of God (see Mark 3:5) provoked by the impenitence and unbelief of those who had enjoyed the rarest opportunities of hearing his instructions and witnessing his miracles. Mighty works, literally powers, the cause being put for the effect. (See above, on 7:22.) The most, in number, on account of his more frequent presence in the chief towns of the province. Were done, literally, were, became, or happened, came to pass. (See above, on 1:22, 4:3, 5:18, 6:10, 16, 8:13, 9:16, 10:16, 25.) Repented, changed their minds, i. e. their judgments and their feelings, as to sin and their own sin, with a corresponding change of life. (See above, on 3:2, 4:17.)

21. The upbraidings described by the evangelist in v. 20, are now exemplified by quoting Christ's own words, addressed to three towns of Galilee, then flourishing, but now, and for ages past, no longer in existence. Chorazin, a name variously written in the oldest copies, and by Origen as two words (Χώρα Ζὶν), the land of Zin, a place known only from this passage and its parallel in Luke (10:13), its very site being now uncertain. That assigned by Jerome (two Roman miles from Capernaum) is probably conjectural, the place having disappeared before his time. It is enough to know, however, as we do from this verse, that it was near enough to be grouped with Bethsaida and Capernaum, as salient points in the field of our Lord's Galilean ministry. Bethsaida (or Bethsaidan, as it is here written in the Greek text) is explained by the best geographical authorities to be the name of two towns, one on each side of the Sea of Galilee. This is the less surprising as the name denotes a fishery, and therefore would be apt to be repeated in a region so devoted to that business. The Bethsaida named in Luke, 9:10. Mark 6:45, 8:22, was at the north-east end of the lake. The one here mentioned and in Luke 10:13. John 1:44, 12:21, was on the west side, near Capernaum, the birthplace, or at least the former residence of three apostles, Philip, Andrew, and Peter (John, 1:45). The last clause is a strong hyperbolical expression of the thought, that they were more obdurate even than the heathen. The question why our Saviour did not preach in Tyre and Sidon, if he knew that such would be the effect, was answered long ago by Augustin, because their inhabitants were not of the elect, and much more recently by a learned Romish writer, because his mission was at first to the Jews only (see below, on 15:24). Both replies seem to assume, that the reference is here to the contemporary residents of Tyre and Sidon; but the mention of Sodom in the context seems to show that Tyre and Sidon are also used as historical types of the divine judgments, and as places which had already been destroyed in fulfilment of old prophecies. The reference then is not (as in Acts 12:20) to the Tyre and Sidon which had risen from the ruins of the old, but to the old themselves, and long ago must be taken in a strong sense, as relating not to months or years but ages. Tyre and Sidon were the two famous cities of Phenicia, the narrow strip of sea-coast north of Palestine, distinguished in the ancient world for its maritime commerce. Sidon (or Zidon) was the more ancient, being mentioned both in Genesis (10:19, 49:13) and Homer, but was afterwards eclipsed by Tyre (Josh. 19:29. Isai. 23:8. Ezek. 27:32). As the whole importance of Phenicia was derived from these two sea-ports, it is often designated by their joint names (Joel 3:4. Jer. 47:4. Zech. 9:2. Acts 12:20). Sackcloth, the coarsest kind of hair-cloth used for bags, and also for mourning, which in ancient times did not consist in finery of a certain

colour, but rather in squalidity and seeming indifference to dress. Ashes, in which the mourner sat or with which he was sprinkled, as a sign of grief and desolation (see 2 Sam. 13:9. Job 2:8. and compare Josh. 7:6. 2 Sam. 1:2). These familiar badges of affliction were extended to religious sorrow and humiliation, and here used as symbols of repentance (Joel 1:13. Jonah 3:8).

22. This is a simple repetition of the formula employed in 10:15, to express the idea, that the guilt of unbelief in those who saw and heard Christ was immeasurably greater than it could be in the case of such as had enjoyed no such advantage. But, at the beginning of the verse, is not the usual connective (δέ), which occupies the same place in v. 16, nor the stronger adversative (λλά) which holds the same position in vs. 8, 9, but a still stronger particle originally meaning more, nay more, and here equivalent to saying, 'but I say still more than this; not only is your sin more heinous than the sin of Tyre and Sidon, but your punishment shall be proportionally more severe.'

23, 24. Even Chorazin and Bethsaida, guilty as they were, were not the guiltiest of Galilean cities. There was one which Christ had chosen, in preference to Nazareth, his early home and second birthplace, as the seat and centre of his missionary labours, whence he went forth and whither he returned from his circuits of benignant toil (see above, on 4:13), and where we know that he performed, not only several of the miracles recorded in detail, but multitudes of others which are only mentioned in the gross (see above, on 8:5, 14, 16, 9:2, 18, 25, and below, on 17:24). The place thus highly honoured contained some true followers of Christ; but the mass of the people seem to have remained unmoved. And thou (or thou too), not as sharing merely in the guilt and condemnation of the other cities, but as far surpassing them, and therefore singled out for a distinct upbraiding.* The exaltation here referred to cannot be mere secular prosperity, but must be that resulting from the residence of Christ; and this determines the true meaning of what follows, thou shalt be brought down, or, according to the critics, shalt descend (or go down). Hell is not the word so rendered in 5:22, 29, 30, 10:28, and meaning the place of future torment, but another (δης) which, according to its etymology and usage in the classics, means the unseen world, the state of the dead, the world of spirits, without regard to difference of character or condition. This is also said to be the meaning of the old English hell, though now used only in the sense of gehenna, which has led some to retain the Greek word hades in translation as a necessary means of avoiding error and confusion. It is here used simply in antithesis to heaven, and must be explained accordingly, as meaning the extremest degradation and debasement of a moral kind, but not perhaps without allusion to the loss of all external greatness, and oblivion of the very spot on which the city stood. The last clause and the next verse thus apply to Capernaum and Sodom what was said in vs. 21, 22, of Chorazin and Bethsaida, as compared with Tyre and Sidon,

25. If there were any chronological difficulty here in assuming an immediate succession, there would be no objection to our giving the words in that time a wider meaning. But as no such difficulty does exist; as the word translated time is one which strictly means a point or juncture, not a period; and as the nexus between this verse and the one before it is an obvious one; the only safe course is to give the terms their proper meaning as denoting that our Lord made this confession at the same time when he uttered the upbraiding just recorded. As the latter comprehended in its scope many learned and authoritative scribes, of whom there were some in every town of Galilee (see Luke 5:17), it would naturally lead to precisely such reflections as are here recorded in the solemn form of an address to God. Answering, a word often used in Scripture without any words preceding (see below, on 22:1, 28:5, and compare Luke 14:3, John 2:18, 5:17), and by some explained as perfectly synonymous with saying; but as this is almost always added, there would then be a deliberate tautology without example. Some suppose the answer to have reference to the thoughts, looks, or actions of the other party. Some prefer a wider reference to the occasion, whatever it may be, which bears the same relation to the words recorded, that an answer bears to the preceding question. In the case before us, on the supposition of unbroken continuity, the words of Christ are a reply to the impenitence and unbelief which called them forth. Thank is the verb correctly rendered by confess in 3:6, and often elsewhere.* A more exact equivalent, however, is acknowledged, which may be applied both to sins and favours, in the sense of praise or thanks. It is here a most significant expression readily suggesting at the same time the ideas of praise, thanksgiving, and assent or acquiescence (as in Luke 22:6, where it is translated promised, as the uncompounded verb is in 14:7 below). It is not mere gratitude that Christ expresses as a man, but approbation and concurrence as a divine person. 'I acknowledge to thee that thou hast done all things well.' He addresses God, first, as his Father, then as Lord of heaven and earth, thus claiming the most intimate personal relation to the sovereign ruler of the universe. This character or aspect of the divine nature is made prominent because he is about to cite a signal instance of God's sovereign independence of all human wisdom and authority. That thou didst hide away, conceal, these (things), an indefinite expression, but with obvious reference to something previously said or done, and thus confirming the conclusion that this is not a new context, but a direct continuation of what goes before. These things most probably means all that made the difference between the classes here contrasted, i. e. spiritual knowledge of the truth, susceptibility of right impressions, and a just foresight of the consequences flowing both from faith and unbelief. The hiding here ascribed to God is only positive as being the fulfilment of his righteous judgment against sin, but negative as being only the withholding of that grace without which these things are invisible. The wise and prudent (or intelligent), not only in their own conceit but really in other matters, not excepting the letter of the law, of whose true spirit they knew nothing. To babes, infants, properly denoting children who have not yet learned to talk, and therefore an appropriate but strong description of the ignorant and weak, and more especially of such as feel themselves to be so in all spiritual matters, until God reveals them.

26. Even so is Tyndale's version of the word translated yea in v. 9, and in 5:37, 9:28, and corresponding to the modern English yes, as a simple particle of affirmation. It may either be considered as expressive of assent, in which case our version is correct, or of emphatic repetition, with a verb to be supplied from the preceding verse. 'Yes (I do thank thee) that it has so pleased thee.' The latter explanation is preferred by the exact philologists; the other is the current one, in consequence of which this verse has now become a standing formula of acquiescence in the absolute and sovereign will of God. So it seemed good in thy sight is perhaps as near as we can come in English to the idiomatic form of the original, which strictly means, so it became (or was) good pleasure (or complacency) before thee. The Greek noun (ε δοκία) expresses independent volition, sovereign choice, but always with an implication of benevolence, which sometimes becomes the predominant idea, as in Luke 2:14.*

27. The emphatic recognition of the Father's sovereignty in the preceding verse required some definition of the speaker's Sonship to prevent all misconception of his own authority. This relation involves not merely delegation of authority in time, but community of nature from eternity. All (things) were delivered (or transferred, imparted) to me by my Father, i. e. all that he possesses in himself, except what constitutes the personal distinction between us. There is no inferiority implied in the reception, which is an eternal one. It follows, as a necessary consequence, that no one can be cognizant of this relation, that is, know it thoroughly (πιγινώσκει) except those who are parties to it. The idiomatic use of man for one, which is no longer required by English usage, almost stultifies the sentence to the modern reader by appearing to call God a man. The last clause draws attention to the great and glorious truth, that as the Father, in that character, gives all things to the Son, it is a personal function of the Son, as the Divine Word, to reveal the Father.

28. As the last words of the preceding verse implied the possibility of man in some sense knowing God the Father, but only through the intervention of the Son, and at his sovereign pleasure (he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him), our Lord offers, as it were, to exercise this gracious function, by inviting men to come to him, not in the way of speculation but of penitent submission, not as philosophers to be enlightened, but as sinners to be saved. There is exquisite beauty in this sudden but not harsh transition from the mysteries of the Godhead to the miseries of man. The Son is the revealer of the Father, not to stimulate or gratify a mere scientific curiosity as to the mode of the divine existence, but to bring the Godhead into saving contact with the sin-sick ruined soul. Having laid the foundation for what follows in his own eternal sonship and community of nature with the Father, he now turns the doctrine to a practical account, and calls men to avail themselves of its provisions. Come, the same invitatory adverb that was used above in 4:19, and there explained as strictly meaning, Here (or hither) after (or behind) me! So in this place, with another preposition (πρός), it may be rendered, Here (or hither) to me! The invitation, although formally addressed to a certain class distinctly specified, is truly universal, since the qualities described belong to all men just so far as their consciences are sensible and active. Ye that labour, not in the mild sense of working, but in that of toiling, working hard, and suffering in consequence, all which is the essential meaning of the Greek word (κοπι ντες). There may be no intentional allusion to self-righteousness, or efforts to work out our salvation in our own strength; but to nothing are the terms of the description more appropriate, not only as to this word, but the next, heavy laden, in Greek a single word applied in classical usage to the loading of a ship or beast of burden, and in this connection necessarily suggesting the idea of one weighed down by a burden far beyond his strength. Though exactly descriptive of man's general condition, as bound and yet unable to fulfil the law, and therefore groaning under its intolerable penalty and condemnation as a crushing load, this figure is peculiarly expressive of that form of legal bondage which oppressed the ancient Jewish church, and to which the same figure is applied by our Lord elsewhere (see below, on 23:4), and by Peter in the council at Jerusalem (Acts 15:10). Give you rest, another single word in Greek, and so translated in the older English versions (ease you). The exact sense is still more expressive, I will make you cease, i. e. cease to suffer from this thankless toil and this intolerable burden.

29. As in the Sermon on the Mount (5:17), our Lord here guards against the natural tendency of all men to expect relief from legal bondage in the abrogation of the law itself. But what he there does by explicitly denying that he came for such a purpose, he does here no less effectually, although less directly, by inviting sinners, not to throw off the yoke entirely, but to take his yoke upon them, not a new law substituted for the old, but the old as interpreted and magnified by him, no longer as a method of salvation, but forever as a rule of life. The verb translated take has here its primary and proper sense of taking up and carrying, as in 4:6, 9:6. Learn of me, seems to mean, receive instruction from me, which is the idea probably conveyed to most English readers. But why should it be given as a reason for this precept that the teacher is meek and lowly in heart? However precious such a character may be, the main qualification of a doctrinal instructor must be wisdom, knowledge, and capacity to teach. The Greek suggests a somewhat different idea. 'Take a lesson from me,' as in 24:32 below, where the same verb and particle occur together—'learn a parable of the fig-tree,' i. e. borrow an illustrative analogy from it. So here, take a lesson from my example. I am meek and lowly in heart, why should you refuse to be the same? I have condescended to be made under the law in its severest form and requisitions. Why should you scruple to submit to it with me as its interpreter and your assistant? Do this, and you shall find what you are vainly seeking elsewhere, rest, repose, relief, a Greek noun corresponding to the verb in v. 28. To (or for) your souls, not merely for your bodies, but relief from spiritual burdens and distresses which are otherwise incurable.

30. Lest they should still imagine that they are invited only to exchange one hard yoke and one heavy burden for another, he assures them that his yoke is easy, a word elsewhere rendered good (1 Cor. 15:33), kind (Ephes. 4:32), gracious (1 Pet. 2:3), but

originally meaning good for, i. e. useful, beneficial, and never perhaps used without some reference to this its etymological import. This might seem to be its only meaning here, ‘my yoke is good (for you), will do you good, however hard it may be.’ But that the word was also meant to suggest the idea of gentleness and mildness, as opposed to harshness and severity, is evident, not only from its usage in the other places cited, but from the parallel expression in the other clause, my burden is light, the last word being wholly unambiguous and certainly the opposite of heavy, as appears, for example, from the antithesis in 2 Cor. 4:17. The inconsistency which some have found between this declaration and the one in 7:14 above, arises wholly from confounding the natural repugnance of the human heart to God’s commandments with the weakness of the new man in obeying them. The former must be conquered or we cannot be saved. The latter needs only to be strengthened by divine grace, and the yoke of duty becomes easy to the humbled neck, the load of obligation light to the invigorated shoulders. This delightful invitation, still addressed to all who answer the description in the text, is remarkable, not only in itself as an expression of divine benignity and condescension, but historically also, as exactly suited to the time and circumstances in which it was uttered, after our Lord’s appearance as a teacher, and yet long before his great atoning sacrifice. Without anticipating therefore what was not to be disclosed till after that great critical event, it nevertheless says enough to win the heavy-laden sinner, and to us, who read or hear it now contains the germ of all that has been since revealed.

CHAPTER 12

IT entered into the design of all the Gospels to exhibit the reception which our Saviour met with both from friends and enemies. The dark side of the picture has already been presented in the history before us, but only in occasional glimpses, as when it records the objection to his claiming the power of forgiveness, to his intercourse with publicans and sinners, to his free mode of living, and supposed neglect of all ascetic duties. In the present chapter the evangelist brings together other symptoms of increasing enmity, without much regard to chronological arrangement, but with great effect in showing from what quarters and by what means the opposition to our Lord’s preliminary work proceeded. He first relates a charge of Sabbath-breaking brought ostensibly against his disciples, with his answer (1–8); then a second charge, connected with a miracle, and also followed by an answer (9–13); then the organized opposition to which this led, and our Saviour’s consequent retirement from the public view, without relinquishing his work, in which the evangelist points out the fulfilment of a signal prophecy (14–21). Another miracle, which led to a general inquiry whether he were not the Messiah, also led to a blasphemous charge of collusion with the Evil One, and this to an argumentative defence on his part, and a solemn warning against the unpardonable sin (22–37). Another form of opposition was the demand of a sign or miraculous proof of his Messiahship, which he refused, referring them to cases drawn from the Old Testament, as aggravations of their own misconduct, and concluding with a fearful and mysterious prediction of the ruin that awaited them (38–45). To these instances of opposition from his enemies, the historian adds one of interruption from his friends, which gave occasion to a memorable speech defining his social and domestic relations (46–50).

1. Matthew here resumes the history of the opposition to our Saviour which he had noticed incidentally before (see above, on 9:3, 11:14), in reference to his power of forgiveness, his intercourse with publicans, and his neglect of fasting. Another charge or ground of opposition to the Saviour, on the part of the more scrupulous and rigid Jews, was his alleged violation of the Sabbath, either in person or by suffering his followers to do what was esteemed unlawful. This divine institution, as already mentioned (see above, on 4:23), being chiefly negative in its observance, was less affected by a change of outward situation than the legal ceremonies, most of which were limited to one place, and could not be performed without irregularity elsewhere. Hence the Jews in foreign lands, being cut off from the offering of sacrifices and the formal celebration of their yearly festivals, were chiefly distinguished from the Gentiles among whom they dwelt by two observances, those of circumcision and the Sabbath, and especially the latter, as the more notorious and palpable peculiarity of their religion. Hence the prophets who predict the exile, lay peculiar stress on the observance of the Sabbath, as the badge of a true Israelite. (Isa. 56:2, 58:13. Lam. 2:6. Ezek. 44:24. Hos. 2:11.) After the restoration, when the same necessity no longer existed, the people were disposed to exaggerate this duty by gratuitous restrictions, and by pushing the idea of religious rest (which was the essence of the Sabbath) to an absurd extreme, at the same time losing sight of its spiritual purpose, and confining their attention to the outward act, or rather abstinence from action, as intrinsically holy and acceptable to God. One of the Jewish books enumerates thirty-nine acts, with many subdivisions, which were to be considered as unlawful labour, and the Talmud gives the most minute specifications of the distance which might be lawfully passed over, even in the greatest emergencies, as that of fire. With these distorted and corrupted notions of the Sabbath, they would soon find something to condemn in the less punctilious but more rational and even legal conduct of our Lord and his disciples. Two such attacks, with their historical occasions, are recorded here by Matthew. It is also given by Mark (2:23–28) and Luke (6:1–5), less minutely, and with some variation as to form and substance, but without the least real inconsistency. One of the points of difference is in the chronological arrangement. Matthew connecting what is here recorded with his previous context by the general formula, in that time, while Luke specifies the very Sabbath upon which it happened. As Mark has no indication of time whatever, it is clear that he is putting things together, not as immediately successive in the time of their occurrence, but as belonging to the same class or series, that of the

objections made by the censorious Jews, on legal grounds, to Christ's proceedings. Hence this topic occupies an earlier place in Mark than in either of the other gospels, and when taken in connection with their marked agreement, even in minute forms of expression, proves that while they used the same material and aimed at the same ultimate design, each was directed to pursue his own plan independently of both the others. Corn, literally sown (fields), i. e. sown with corn, in the proper English sense of grain or breadstuffs, with particular reference to wheat and barley. That the corn was grown and ripe, though not expressly mentioned, is implied in all that follows. On the Sabbath day, literally, the Sabbaths, which may seem to indicate that this particular occurrence took place more than once, or that this clause is descriptive of a customary action. But the plural form of the Greek word is purely accidental, and arises either from assimilation to Greek names of festivals (compare John 10:22), or from the fact that the Hebrew word Sabbath (שַׁבָּת) in its Aramaic form (שַׁבְּתָא) resembles a Greek plural (σάββατα), and is often so inflected, although singular in meaning. His disciples, his immediate personal attendants, probably those whose call has previously been recorded, Peter and Andrew, James, and John, and Matthew, perhaps with the addition of some others who received his doctrine, and were therefore his disciples in a wider sense. Our Lord appears to have been seldom free from the society of others, either friends or foes, so that he was sometimes under the necessity of escaping from them for a time, especially for devotional purposes. (See below, on 14:22.) Began is not a pleonastic or superfluous expression, but suggests that they were interrupted, or that while they were so doing, the ensuing dialogue took place.

2. The Pharisees, i. e. certain of that class who seem to have been near at hand whenever Christ appeared in public. This will be less surprising if we consider that the Pharisees were not a small and select body, but the great national party, who insisted on the smallest points of difference between Jews and Gentiles, and most probably included the mass of the nation. (See above, on 3:7.) The expression here used, therefore, is nearly equivalent to saying, certain strict punctilious Jews who happened to be present. Mark and Matthew represent them as complaining to the Master of his disciples; while according to Luke, the objection was addressed to the latter. Both accounts are perfectly consistent, whether we suppose Luke to describe the indirect attack upon them as a direct one, or, which seems more natural, assume that both our Lord and his followers were thus addressed by different persons, either at once or in succession. See, behold, implying something strange and hard to be believed. The simple act of plucking and eating was expressly allowed by the law of Moses (Deut. 23:25). The unlawfulness must therefore have consisted either in wanton waste or in doing on the Sabbath what on any other day would have been lawful. But of waste or damage to the grain, the text contains no trace or intimation. It was therefore not the act itself, but the time of its performance, that gave occasion to the charge before us, as we learn from Maimonides that the tradition of the fathers reckoned the act here described as a kind of harvesting or reaping, and as such forbidden labour on the Sabbath.

3, 4. By a combination of the three accounts we learn that Christ defended his disciples from this frivolous and malignant charge by five distinct arguments, two of which have been preserved by all three gospels, one by Mark alone, and two by Matthew alone. The first place is assigned by all to the same answer. This is drawn from the Old Testament history, and presupposes their acquaintance with it, and their habit of reading it. It also presupposes their acknowledgment of David as an eminent servant of God, all whose official acts, unless divinely disapproved, afford examples to those placed in similar situations. The narrative referred to is still extant in 1 Samuel 21:1–6, which is thus proved to be a part of the canon recognized by Christ. The house of God, in which he dwelt among his people, an expression no less applicable to the tabernacle than the temple, As the ancient sanctuary, under both its forms, was meant to symbolize the doctrine of divine inhabitation and peculiar presence with the chosen people, it was moveable as long as they were wandering and unsettled; but as soon as they had taken full possession of the promised land, which was not till the reign of David, the portable tent was exchanged for a permanent substantial dwelling. At the time here mentioned the tabernacle was at Nob (1 Sam. 21:1). The shew-bread, literally, bread of presentation, called in Hebrew, bread of (the divine) face (or presence), consisted of twelve loaves or cakes placed in rows upon a table in the Holy Place or outward apartment of the tabernacle, and renewed every Sabbath, when the old were eaten by the priests on duty (Lev. 24:5–9). Whatever may have been the meaning of this singular observance, it was certainly a necessary and divinely instituted part of the tabernacle-service, resting on the same authority, though not of equal moment with the Sabbath. The relevancy of the case here cited is enhanced by the probability that David's desecration of the shew-bread was itself committed on the Sabbath, as the loaves appear to have been just renewed (1 Sam. 21:6). It was not lawful, i. e. not according to the law of Moses, which our Lord and his disciples were accused of breaking. In either case, the positive observance, though legitimate and binding, must give way to the necessity of self-preservation.

5. Another argument against their formal and mechanical observance of the Sabbath, is that it was violated by the ritual itself, which they acknowledged to be no less binding. If all work on the Sabbath was forbidden absolutely, then sacrifices offered upon that day were unlawful, though required by express divine authority. This reductio ad absurdum, although perfectly consistent with the other arguments employed, has been preserved by Matthew only. Profane, make common or accessible to all. Blameless, because they are obeying an explicit divine precept.

6. If the service of the temple justified a seeming violation of the Sabbath, how much more the presence and authority of one who was superior in dignity and value to the temple, because he realized in his own person what was only prefigured by the sanctuary, namely, the presence of God among his people. (Compare John 2:21.)*

7. Here the Saviour quotes a second time the words of God as recorded by Hosea (6:6), and declaring the superior importance of benevolent affections to mere ritual observances however binding (see above, on 9:13, where the words occurred before and were explained). That they were really uttered in both cases, is apparent from the different mode of introducing them. Before he told his enemies to go and learn the meaning of the prophet's language. Here he says that if they had known its meaning they would not have condemned the guiltless, the same word that is rendered blameless in v. 5, a needless variation which impairs the force, though it does not change the meaning of the sentence. The plural form refers to the disciples, who were the ostensible object of attack, although the censure was intended for their master, as sanctioning their conduct by his presence, if not his participation. (See above, on 9:11, where the charge is made against himself, although addressed to his disciples).

8. For the Son of man is lord (not only of all other things affecting human happiness, but also or even) of the Sabbath, which you might suppose to be exempt from his control. Grotius and others have endeavoured to explain Son of man, in this place, as denoting any man or man in general. The sense will then be that as the Sabbath was appointed for man's benefit, it is his prerogative to regulate and use it for his own advantage. But to this construction, although specious, there are two invincible objections, one of form and one of substance. The sentiment expressed is not in keeping with the tenor of the Scriptures, which everywhere deny to man the right of abrogating or suspending a divine institution for his own good and at his own discretion. Such a prerogative can belong only to a divine person, i. e. to God as God, or to God incarnate in the person of Messiah. Besides, it is only to this person, the Messiah, that the usage of the Scriptures will allow the title Son of Man to be applied. (See above, on 8:20.) The meaning of the sentence therefore must be, that the Sabbath having been ordained for man, not for any individual, but for the whole race, it must needs be subject to the Son of Man, who is its head and representative, its sovereign and redeemer. This implies that though the Sabbath, in its essence, is perpetual, the right of modifying and controlling it belongs to Christ, and can be exercised only under his authority. This sentence differs from the parallel in Mark (2:28), only in the collocation of the words, the last words here being Son of Man.

9. Matthew records another charge of Sabbath-breaking, probably to show how various were the outward occasions of such opposition; to illustrate the variety of Christ's defences; and to mark the first concerted plan for his destruction. The synagogue, most probably the one in Capernaum. The absence of any more specific note of time shows that exact chronological order was of small importance to the author's object. There is more precision as to this point in the parallel account of Luke (6:11). There is no ground in the text of either gospel for the conjecture of some writers, that the presence of this sufferer had been contrived in order to entrap Christ. The constant application for his healing aid precludes the necessity of such a supposition, and indeed suggests that this was only one of many miracles performed at this time, and is recorded in detail on account of its important bearing on the progress of Christ's ministry.

10. Withered, literally, dried, or dried up, elsewhere applied to liquids, (Mark 5:29. Rev. 16:12), and to plants (Mark 4:6, 11:20. James 1:11), but also to the pining away of the human body. The passive participle in Mark (3:1), adds to the meaning of the adjective (dry) employed by Matthew and Luke, the idea that it was not a congenital infirmity, but the effect of disease or accident, the more calamitous because it was the right hand that was thus disabled (Luke 6:6.) A similar affection, preternaturally caused, was that of Jeroboam (1 Kings 13:4–6). We have here a striking indication that the opposition to our Saviour was becoming more inveterate and settled, so that his enemies not only censured what he did, but watched for some occasion to find fault with him. Questioned, or catechized, the vocal expression corresponding to the watching mentioned by Mark (3:2). Whether he would, literally, if he will, a form of speech which represents the scene as actually passing. On the Sabbath days, literally, the Sabbaths, a form used above in v. 1, and there explained. The motive of their asking was not simply curiosity, but a deliberate desire to entrap him. That they might accuse him, not in conversation merely, but before the local judges, who were probably identical with the elders or rulers of the synagogue, or at all events present at the stated time and place of public worship. The subject of the verb is not expressed by Mark and Matthew, although easily supplied from the foregoing context (v. 2), and from the parallel account in Luke (6:7), where the Scribes and Pharisees are expressly mentioned.

11, 12. He exposes their formality and inconsistency, by showing that the right which they denied to him in public, and in reference to human subjects, they habitually exercised in private, and in reference to the lower animals. Whether this were done from disinterested kindness, or from regard to the value of the object, the conclusion was clear and irresistible in favour of extending the same practice to a suffering man. This conclusion is suggested in the first clause of v. 12, while in the other it is formally applied in answer to their captious question. To do well, does not mean to do right, which is always lawful, but to do good, to confer a benefit or favour upon others.

13. There is here no mention of external contact, nor of any other order or command than that to stretch out the hand, which could only be obeyed when the miracle was wrought, and is therefore not required as a previous condition. This is often and justly used to illustrate the act of faith, which is performed in obedience to divine command and by the aid of the same power which requires it. Whole, in the old English sense of sound or healthy.

14. One of the most important circumstances of this case, for the sake of which it was perhaps recorded, is the effect which it

produced upon the Pharisees or High-Church Jewish party, whose religious tenets brought them into constant opposition to the Sadducees or latitudinarians (see above, on 3:7). Took counsel is a phrase peculiar to Matthew (12:14, 22:15, 27:1, 7, 28:12), Mark's equivalent to which is made counsel, i. e. consultation. How they might destroy him, not for any past offences, but how they might take advantage of his words or acts to rid them of so dangerous an enemy. The motives of this concerted opposition were no doubt various, religious, political, and personal, in different degrees and cases. That it should have been deliberately organized at this time, out of such discordant elements (Mark 3:7) and in the face of such conclusive evidence, can only be ascribed to the infatuation under which they acted (Luke 6:11).

15. In consequence of this combination and the dangers which arose from it, our Lord withdrew from Capernaum and other towns of Galilee, to the shores of the lake, where he would be less exposed to craft or violence, and better able to escape without a miracle. This retreat before his enemies was prompted, not by fear, but by that wise discretion which was constantly employed in the selection and the use of the necessary means for the promotion of the great end which he came to accomplish. As it entered into the divine plan that his great atoning work should be preceded by a prophetic ministry of several years' duration, the design of which was to indoctrinate the people in the nature of his kingdom, to prepare the way for its erection, and to train the men by whom it should be organized, it formed no small part of his work to check and regulate the progress of events, so as not to precipitate the consummation, but secure and complete the requisite preparatory process. That the movement here recorded was intended to elude his enemies, whose influence was greatest in the towns, and not to escape the concourse of the people, may be seen from the actual result as Mark describes it (3:7). And he healed them all, i. e. all who needed and sought healing at his hands.

16. This general statement is not inconsistent with the more specific one in Mark (3:12) in reference to evil spirits. Mark has simply selected, in accordance with his previous details, which Matthew does not give, a single class out of many who were thus forbidden. While the sick in general were required not to make him known by giving undue or premature publicity to what they had experienced, a particular restriction was imposed upon the more specific testimony borne to his Messiahship by evil spirits. The word here rendered charged means originally to estimate or value; then to impose a fine by way of punishment; then to punish by reproof, which in its usual meaning (see above, on 8:26, and below, on 16:22, 17:18, 19:13, 20:31). Here it can only mean to threaten with severe rebuke in case of disobedience.

17, 18. It is characteristic of this gospel, that while it passes over the minute details of Mark (3:7–9) as to the concourse upon this occasion, it again pauses in the narrative to point out the fulfilment of an ancient prophecy, still extant in the writings of Isaiah (42:1–4). The original passage exhibits to our view the servant of Jehovah, as the messenger or representative of God among the nations, and describes his mode of operation as not violent but peaceful, and the effects of his influence as not natural but spiritual. The quotation varies so entirely from the Septuagint version, eyen in expression where the meaning is the same, that it must be regarded as an independent and direct translation from the Hebrew. The literal meaning of the first verse is as follows:—"Behold my servant, I will hold him fast, my chosen one (in whom) my soul delights; I have given (or put) my spirit upon him; judgment to the nations shall he cause to go forth." The word servant, here as in the Septuagint, is the one employed above in 8:6–13, and suggesting the idea both of son and servant, thus furnishing a link between the prophecy and its fulfilment. The only variation from the Hebrew in this sentence is the substitution of the verb to choose for one that means to hold fast for the purpose of sustaining. But this has no effect upon the general sense, and may be readily resolved into an authoritative modification of the text by a second inspired writer, as a sort of gloss or comment, expressing what is really implied in the original, and bringing out more prominently what was latent. Thus we learn in this case, that the servant of Jehovah was sustained because he was a chosen instrument or agent set apart for a specific service. There is an obvious allusion to this verse, or rather a direct application of it made by God himself, in the descent of the Holy Spirit on our Saviour at his baptism, and in the words pronounced from heaven then and at his transfiguration (see above, on 2:17, and below, on 17:5). The word judgment has been variously explained, but the most satisfactory interpretation is the common one, which understands the word as a description of the true religion, and the whole clause as predicting its diffusion. That Christ was sent to the Jews and not the Gentiles, is only true of his personal ministry on earth (see below, on 15:24), and not of his whole work as continued by his followers (see below, on 28:19). All that is here important is, that the evangelist applies to Jesus the prophetic description of the Messiah as a messenger from God to man.

19. This is the main quotation, to which the preceding verse is merely introductory. The variations from the Hebrew are either wholly unimportant or explicable on the principle before laid down. Instead of two verbs meaning nearly the same thing, to cry and to raise (the voice), only one is given and the other is replaced by the verb to strive, an intimation that the thing denied is not mere noise, but quarrelsome commotions. The quotation has sometimes been referred to our Saviour's mild and modest demeanor, but it rather has respect to the nature of his kingdom, and the means by which it was to be established. His forbidding the announcement of the miracle is not recorded simply as a trait of personal character, but rather as implying that a public recognition of his claims was not included in his present purpose.

20. This verse continues the description of the mode in which the Messiah was to bring forth judgment to the nations, or in other words to spread the true religion. It was not to be by clamor or by violence. The first of these ideas is expressed in the preceding verse, the last in this. That such is the true import of the words, is clear from the addition of the last clause, which would be

unmeaning if the words related merely to a compassionate and sympathetic temper. That this verse is included in Matthew's quotation, shows that he did not quote the one before it as descriptive of a modest and retiring disposition. For although such a temper might be proved by Christ's prohibiting the publication of his miracles, this prohibition could not have been cited as an evidence of tenderness and mildness. The only way in which the whole quotation can be made appropriate to the case in hand, is by supposing that it was meant to be descriptive, not merely of our Saviour's human virtues, but of the nature of his kingdom and of the means by which it was to be established. That he was both lowly and compassionate is true, but it is not the truth which he established by his conduct upon this occasion, nor the truth which the evangelist intended to illustrate by the citation of these words. As well in their original connection as in Matthew's application of them, they describe that kingdom which was not of this world; which came not with observation (Luke 17:20); which was neither meat nor drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost (Rom. 14:17); which was founded and promoted not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord (Zech. 4:6); and of which its founder said (John 18:36), If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews, but now is my kingdom not from hence. And again (John 18:37), when Pilate said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest (rightly) that I am a king; to this end was I born, and for this cause I came into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth; every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. How perfectly does this august description tally with the great prophetic picture of the Servant of Jehovah, who was to bring forth judgment to the nations, and in doing so was not to cry or raise his voice, or let men hear it in the streets, nor by brutal force to break the crushed reed or quench the dim wick, but to conquer by healing and imparting strength. Here again the variation from the Hebrew is explanatory, the obscure phrase (לֶאֱמֶת) by or for the truth being exchanged for the explicit one, to victory, triumphantly, the other idea having been sufficiently expressed in v. 18. This condensation and elucidation of the prophecy shows clearly that the changes in its form are not fortuitous nor inadvertent, but intentional and full of meaning. It is somewhat remarkable that the word in the original which means dim or feeble is translated smoking both in the Septuagint and Gospel, but by Greek words altogether different (καπνιζόμενον and τυφόμενον).

21. With the same disposition or determination to avoid the repetition of synonymous expressions, Matthew passes over the first clause in the next verse of Isaiah (42:4), and closes his quotation with a paraphrase of the second. In his name shall the Gentiles hope is really equivalent in meaning for his law shall the Gentiles wait. The essential idea in both cases is the absolute dependence of the world at large upon the mission of Messiah for salvation. As the first part of the prophecy was cited as an introduction, so this last part is added to give roundness and completeness to the whole quotation. At the same time, these supplementary expressions, although not what the author meant especially to quote, serve the incidental but important purpose of suggesting, in the language of a prophet, the extent of the Messiah's mission and the ultimate conversion of the Gentiles.

22. Then is here to be indefinitely understood as meaning either at that time, referring to the whole period of Christ's public ministry, or afterwards, and on a different occasion. This is not only agreeable to Matthew's usage and the method of his history, but removes all seeming discrepancy with the other gospels as to the date of the occurrence, which is here recorded as another instance of malignant opposition on the part of the Jewish leaders. The occasion was a miracle sufficiently remarkable even in itself considered, but which probably would not have been recorded in detail but for the reason just suggested, and the memorable warning which it drew from the lips of Christ. This is the more probable because of the resemblance which it bears to the miracle in 9:32, 33, where demoniacal possession was combined with dumbness, to which blindness was added in the case before us.

23. Another reason for particularly mentioning this miracle was the effect it produced upon the people, not merely filling them with wonder, so that they were out of their normal state and as it were beside themselves (ξίσταντο), but leading them to ask whether this were not the Son of David, his descendant and successor, which, as we have seen (above, on 9:27), had become a standing designation of the Messiah. This alarming question, showing whither the popular impressions were now tending, affords an explanation, not contained in Mark's account (3:22), of the sudden and malignant accusation mentioned in the next verse.

24. The speakers are described by Luke (11:15) as some of the multitude by whom the miracle was witnessed; by Matthew more definitely as the Pharisees, or members of the rigorous Jewish party; but by Mark (3:22) still more precisely, as the Scribes who had come down from Jerusalem, perhaps on hearing of our Lord's return from his itinerant labours to Capernaum. The expression is too definite to be explained of a mere accidental presence, or a coming down on other business. Nor is it in the least unlikely, that the general agitation and excitement of the public mind by Christ's extraordinary words and works had now alarmed the rulers of the Jewish church, and led them to regard it as a public question of the highest national importance. This is rendered still more probable by John's account of the proceedings in the case of John the Baptist, when a deputation went into the wilderness to ask him whether he was the Messiah (John 1:19, 24). The very answer which they then received (ib. 27, 28) must have made them more solicitous and watchful against new pretenders to the Messianic office. It is highly important to remember that our Lord did not appear abruptly on the scene as a new personage, entirely unconnected with the previous history of Israel, but claimed, first tacitly and then more openly, to be the great deliverer promised in the ancient Scriptures, and for ages looked for by the chosen people. Hence the growing agitation which his ministry occasioned was not regarded as a transient popular disturbance, but as the beginning of a national and spiritual revolution. But although the motive was the same in either case, the course now taken by the leading Jews was not entirely the same with that before adopted. Then, the messengers were sent directly to John, and demanded

categorically who he was, or what he claimed to be (John 1:19). Now, they are merely sent to watch our Lord's proceedings, and if possible to stem the mighty current of opinion which was setting in his favour, by insidious suggestion or malignant slander. Then, the persons sent were priests and Levites; now they are only Scribes, but in both cases Pharisees, and sent directly from Jerusalem (compare John 1:19, 24). It is possible, indeed, that even in the other point, though not expressly mentioned here, the deputations were alike; for as the Scribes, as the traditional expounders of the law, were mostly if not always Pharisees, so they were no doubt often, if not usually, priests or Levites, as the sacerdotal tribe was specially entrusted with the conservation and interpretation of the law (Lev. 10:11. Deut. 24:8. 2 Chr. 15:3, 35:3. Neh. 8:7. Jer. 18:18. Ez. 7:26, Mal. 2:7). It is a serious error to suppose that these descriptive titles are exclusive of each other, and denote so many independent classes, whereas they only denote different characters or relations, which might all meet in one and the same person, as being at the same time a priest and Levite by descent and sacred office, a Scribe by profession, and a Pharisee in sentiment and party-connection. These Scribes who had come down from Jerusalem, unable to deny the fact of the miraculous healing, used the only other means at their disposal to discredit him who wrought it, by malignantly accusing him of impious collusion with the very demons whom he dispossessed. This, while it shows their growing enmity and malice, also proves the weakness of their cause, and the reality of Christ's miraculous achievements, which they surely would have questioned if the evidence had not been overwhelming. Their very charge against him, therefore, may be rockoned as involuntary testimony to the truth of his pretensions to a superhuman power; and their failure or refusal to acknowledge this as an abundant confirmation of his Messianic claims can only be ascribed to their infatuation and judicial blindness (compare Luke 6:11.) Beelzebub, or as it is written in all Greek manuscripts, Beelzebul. The latter is either a euphonic or fortuitous corruption of the former, or an intentional derisive change, like that of Sychem into Sychar (John 4:5). On the latter supposition it is commonly explained as meaning Dung-god, an expression of contempt for Beelzebub, the Fly-god of the Philistines (2 Kings 1:2, 3, 6), either so called as protecting his worshippers from noxious insects, or as being himself worshipped under an insect form. This contemptuous description of a heathen deity is perfectly agreeable to Jewish usage, and its application in the case before us a conclusive proof of the extreme to which these Scribes had carried their contempt and hatred of the Saviour, when they chose the grossest nickname of a false god to describe the unseen power by whose aid he wrought his miracles. The preposition (in, not by) denotes not mere alliance or assistance, but the most intimate personal union, such as existed in all cases of possession (9:34.) 'It is by virtue of his union and identification with the ruler of the demons that he casts them out.' The word translated prince is properly a participle, meaning one who goes first, takes the lead, presides, or governs. As a noun, it denotes magistrates in general, and in Grecian history the Archons, or chief magistrates of Athens. It is applied in the New Testament to Moses, as the national leader (Acts 7:35), to members of the Sanhedrim or national council (John 3:1, 7:50), and to the local elders or rulers of the synagogue (Luke 8:41), but also to the Evil One, or leader of the fallen angels, as the "prince of this world" (John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11), as the "prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2), and as the "prince of the devils" (9:34). This last word is an inexact translation, as the Scriptures recognize only one Devil, but a multitude of demons (see Mark 5:9, 15). The former is one of the names given to the Evil One by way of eminence, as the slanderer or false accuser of mankind, whereas Satan represents him as their enemy or adversary. (See above on 4:1, and below on v. 26.) The other term, commonly translated devils, is properly an adjective, and originally means divine, or rather superhuman, comprehending all degrees and kinds of gods belonging to the Greek mythology, but specially applied to those of an inferior rank, and bearing some particular relation to individual men as their good or evil genius, in which sense Xenophon employs it to describe the tutelary monitor of Socrates. It is perhaps on account of this specific usage of the word that it is used in the New Testament to designate the fallen angels, or evil spirits, as connected with the history of our race, and especially as active in those singular affections which derive from them the name of "demoniacal possessions." Of these demonia or demons, Satan the Devil, is here called the prince or chief, but under the derisive and disgusting name Beelzebul, or Dung-god. It is a possible, though not a necessary supposition, that this application of the name was customary and familiar. It is more probable, however, as we do not find it in the oldest Jewish books now extant, that it was devised for the occasion, as a bitter sarcasm against Jesus, whom it virtually represents as united in the closest manner to the most unclean of spirits, and by his authority and power dispossessing his inferior agents. This view of the matter is important, as implying a terrific aggravation of the sin committed by these Scribes and Pharisees in representing the immediate acts of God as operations not of Satan merely, but of Beelzebub, which, though applied to the same being, is peculiarly insulting, as it identifies him with the Fly-god of the old Philistines, and the Dung-god into which this idol had been changed by the bitterness of Jewish controversial satire.

25. The first illustrative comparison is taken from a kingdom, a state, a body politic, implying not a mere aggregation of men, but organic life and unity of principle and interest. The fact alleged is not that all intestine strife or division is destructive to a state, which is not universally or always true, but that a state which wars against itself, so far as in it lies, contributes to its own destruction. If such a policy in human kingdoms would be justly reckoned suicidal, and at variance with the end for which the state exists, how can that which would be folly in a human sovereign be imputed to the most astute and crafty, as well as the most spiteful and malignant being in the universe? The argument involved in this comparison is not merely that the course supposed would be injurious, or ruinous, and therefore Satan cannot be supposed to take it, but that it would be self-contradictory and foolish, and at variance with the very end for which he has been plotting and deceiving since the world began. He is not too good to pursue such a course, but he is far too cunning. Every kingdom, thus divided and at war against itself, is brought to desolation, or as Mark has it (3:24), cannot stand, an expression also used by Matthew in the latter clause of this verse, and more significant in Greek, because the form is

passive, and although in usage substituted for the active, still retaining something of its proper force, and therefore suggesting the idea, that it cannot be established, made to stand, by such a process. The use of this expression shows still further, that the reference is not so much to strife between the subjects of a kingdom, which may sometimes be essential to its welfare, but to its waging war against itself, the state (as such) opposing its own interests and aiming at its own destruction. Such a case may be impossible, or never really occur; but if it should, the state would be its own destroyer. So would Satan, if he should do likewise. But that he who is called Apollyon, as the destroyer of others, should attempt self-destruction, is entirely inconceivable. Among men, suicide implies an utter ignorance or disbelief of all futurity; but no such incredulity or error is conceivable in one who knows already in his own experience what it is to perish and yet continue to exist; for as to this, as well as to the being and the unity of God, “the devils also believe and tremble” (James 2:19). The same thing is true within a sphere still narrower, for instance in a family or household, when not only divided, i. e. composed of hostile and discordant members, but divided against itself, i. e. arrayed as a whole, or as a body, against its own interest or existence. That this is the true point of our Lord’s comparison, is shown by the circumstance that both his illustrations are derived not from the case of individuals at strife, but from communities or aggregate bodies, large or small. The only analogous case that could have been adduced from the experience of a single person, is the strange one of a man divided against himself and striving for his own destruction. But leaving this to be completed by his hearers, he proceeds in the next verse to apply what he has said already.

26. What is thus true of a kingdom and a household among men is no less true of Satan; for if he has risen up against himself, and been divided, he cannot possibly be made to stand, but has an end, or ceases to be what he is. Had the idea of division, in these various illustrations, been the simple one of some opposing others, our Lord would no doubt have applied his argument or principle to Satan’s kingdom rather than himself; but as he here presents the paradoxical idea of Satan as an individual divided into two, and one arrayed against the other, we may safely infer, that this very paradox was meant to be the point of his whole argument. If they had said, Neither man nor devil can be thus divided so as to make war upon himself, he might have answered, How absurd then upon your part to allege such a division, by accusing me of being in alliance with my opposite! If Satan could be thus divided, he would not be Satan, but would have an end. (Mark 3:26.)

27. This is a second refutation of their charge, to wit, that by parity of reasoning it extended to their own exorcists, which they would not have been willing to admit. The Fathers understood by your children the Apostles; but it is not easy to see why they should be so called, or what force the argument could have in that case, since the twelve avowedly derived their miraculous power from their Master. On the other hand, the fact is certain, both from Scripture and Josephus, that exorcism was a common practice with the Jews. See Acts 19:13, where itinerant (not vagabond) exorcists are found at Ephesus, the seven sons of a high priest, which may throw some light upon the term sons (or children) in the verse before us. It is of little moment whether they really exercised this power or not. If they professed and were believed to do so, this is all that is required to give force to the argument ad hominem. ‘On what ground can you venture to accuse me of collusion with the devil, when your own sons claim to exercise the self-same power? Therefore they shall be your judges, to convict you of injustice and malignity in ascribing what I do to demoniacal collusion, when you make no such charge against them and their real or pretended dispossessions.’

28. But, on the other hand, a terrible alternative to these calumnious blasphemers, if I cast out demons, not by any such collusion as you impiously charge upon me, but in (possession of and union with) the Spirit of God (not merely as an attribute or influence, but as a divine person), then has come upon you suddenly, or unawares, surprised you by its unexpected coming, the kingdom of God, the reign of the Messiah, which the nation had been eagerly expecting for ages, but had now lost sight of its true nature, and were therefore liable and likely to be taken by surprise. Come unto you is entirely too weak a version both of the verb and preposition, one of which means always to prevent or anticipate, and the other implies superiority of some kind. There was solemn irony in this suggestion to the leading Jews, that in spite of their unwillingness to see or own it, the Messiah and his kingdom might be come after all.

29. He adds an illustration from the experience of common life, to show the conclusion which they must have drawn in an analogous case, and which they therefore should have drawn in this. When a rich man, able to protect his goods, is robbed, no one imagines he has robbed himself, but every one regards it as the work, not only of an enemy, but also of an enemy superior in power. So, too, when they saw Satan’s instruments and agents dispossessed and driven out by Jesus, instead of arguing that he and Satan were in league together, they ought rather to have argued that the prince of this world was cast out and judged (John 12:31, 16:11), that he had met his match, or rather come in contact with his conquerer. What clearer proof could be demanded, both of Christ’s superiority and enmity to Satan, than the havoc which he made of Satan’s instruments and tools, to which there may be some allusion in the word translated goods, which properly means vessels, utensils, or implements of any kind (see Mark 11:16. Luke 17:31. Acts 27:17,) and may be well applied to those inferior demons of whom Satan was the prince and leader. Or else is in Greek simply or, and introduces a new supposition, as in v. 5, and in 7:4, 9. ‘Or if this analogy does not convince you, take another.’

30. This is a proverbial expression, here appealed to as embodying the common sense of men upon a certain point, to wit, the fact that mere neutrality may sometimes be the worst hostility. In other circumstances the converse may be also true, and is accordingly embodied in another proverb (Mark 9:40). So far are these two aphorisms from being contradictory, that both may be exemplified in

the experience of the very same persons. For example, Nicodemus, by refusing to take part with the Sanhedrim against our Lord, although he did not venture to espouse his cause, proved himself to be upon his side; but if he had continued the same course when the crisis had arrived, he would equally have proved himself to be against him. The pretence of inconsistency between the words of this verse and the saying recorded in Luke (9:50), is therefore as absurd as such a charge would be against Solomon's twin maxims (Prov. 26:4, 5).

31. Thus far the Lord has been refuting the absurdity of their malignant charge, without regard to its peculiarly offensive form; and as he uses the word Satan, not Beelzebub, it might appear that he intended to pass over the gross insult without further notice. But he now rebukes it, indirectly it is true, but with so awful a severity, that few can read the words and even partly understand them without shuddering. This passage, with its parallels in Luke and Mark, has been always and unanimously reckoned one of the most shocking and alarming in the word of God; but it acquires a new solemnity and terror when considered in its true connection with what goes before, and not as a mere insulated and detached expression of a mysterious and fearful truth. The Scribes had represented him as in collusion with the devil, under an unusual and most offensive name, importing that the spirit which possessed Christ was himself an unclean, nay, a filthy spirit. Instead of formally reproving them for this unparalleled affront to himself and to the Spirit who was in him, he describes to them the nature of the sin which they had almost, if not quite, committed, and the doom awaiting it hereafter. Wherefore, literally, for (or on account of) this, not what immediately precedes, but the whole foregoing context. As if he had said, 'in view of all this, and because your charge against me is so groundless and malignant.' I say unto you is an expressive formula too often overlooked as pleonastic, but containing two emphatic pronouns, 'I the Son of God, and yet the Son of Man, declare to you, my spiteful enemies and false accusers.' All manner, i. e. every kind, an explanation rather than a simple version of the Greek words, every sin and blasphemy shall be remitted, pardoned, left unpunished, unto men, not all the sins of every individual, but every kind of sin to some one. There is no sin (with the subsequent exception) so enormous that it shall not be forgiven to some sinner who commits it. This is said, not only of sin in general, but of a single class of sins, among the most appalling that can be committed or conceived of. (For the origin and usage of the words blaspheme and blasphemy, see above, on 9:3.) This is specified, not merely to enforce the previous declaration by applying it to sins directly against God, and in the last degree insulting to him, but also to connect it with the case in hand, or the occasion upon which it was pronounced. The last clause gives the fearful and mysterious exceptions. The blasphemy of the Spirit, i. e. against the Holy Ghost, as more explicitly stated in the next verse. The solemn repetition or inversion of the formula in this clause gives it the impressive tone of a judicial sentence.

32. This is a more explicit repetition of the statement in v. 31. The distinction here made seems entirely unaccountable if made between the second and third persons of the Godhead, simply as such, without any thing to qualify or specify the statement. This difficulty disappears, however, on observing that the person mentioned in the first clause is not the eternal Word or Son of God, but the Son of Man, and this, as we have seen (above, on 8:20, 9:6), describes the Saviour in his humiliation, in the form of a servant, as he was while resident on earth. To say a word against him while his Godhead was thus veiled and as it were in abeyance, was a very different offence from speaking with contempt and malice of the Holy Spirit in his clearest manifestations, especially those furnished by the words and works of Christ himself. The antithesis is then between contemptuous disparagement of Christ as he appeared in his humiliation, and the same treatment of him when his character and mission were attested by the Holy Ghost. This world and the world to come are common phrases with the Jews to denote the whole of existence or duration, as divided into two great parts or periods, the present and the future. They are here combined to produce an absolute negation and convey the idea that the sin described shall NEVER be forgiven. The word translated world properly denotes duration, sometimes definite, as an age, a lifetime, or a dispensation, but when limited by nothing in the context, indefinite and even infinite duration. This strongest sense would be implied here even if these words were not expressed. If some sins will be forgiven and some not, the latter must be co-extensive with the former; and as those forgiven are forgiven to eternity, those un-forgiven must eternally remain so.

33. There is here an obvious recurrence to the principle laid down by Christ himself in the Sermon on the Mount (see above, on 7:16–20), and there applied to the same class of persons whom he is addressing here. The obvious presumption therefore is that the same application is intended, and that the verse before us is an exhortation to bring their lives and their professions into harmony. But such a warning against false professions and appearances would seem to be misplaced in this connection, where the subject of discourse is open blasphemy, and after so terrible a warning against the unpardonable sin. Some writers therefore understand the words as a direct continuation of what goes before, and as having reference to their false estimate of Christ himself. Either admit the effect to be bad or the cause to be good. If the works which I perform are good works, how can they spring from collusion with the Evil One? The sense thus put upon the verb to make is supposed to be justified by John's use of it in several places. (See John 8:53, 10:33, 19:7. 1 John 1:10, 5:10.)

34, 35. Having thus rebuked their slanderous and blasphemous suggestions, he now, by a sudden apostrophe, declares them to be necessary products of their evil nature. Generation (brood) of vipers is the phrase applied by John the Baptist to the Pharisees and Sadducees who came forth to his preaching, and is here used to designate some of the same persons as belonging to the seed of the serpent (Gen. 3:15), with whom Christ was necessarily in conflict, and over whom he must eventually triumph. How can ye, of yourselves, remaining as you are. The implied impossibility is then referred (in v. 35) to the general fact or principle, that language is

the outflow, or as it is beautifully represented here, the overflow of inward dispositions, whether good or evil. This is then amplified and formally affirmed of either class (in v. 36). Bringeth forth, literally, casts out, expels, as if by an involuntary movement. Treasure is here used in its earlier and wider sense of store, deposit, without reference to value, so that it is applicable both to good and evil. These descriptions are of course not to be understood exclusively, but only in the general of the spontaneous expression of the inward dispositions in the language, when unrestrained by fear and undisguised by hypocritical professions, as appears to have been the case with these blasphemers.

36. This seems to be an answer to the tacit or audible objection, that too much stress was thus laid upon men's words as distinguished from their actions. The spirit of the answer is that language, for the reason just assigned, is an important criterion of character, and therefore a necessary element of judgment. Idle, unemployed, without work, is the proper meaning of the Greek word (ργου) as applied to persons. (See below, on 20:3, 6.) As here applied to words, some understand it as a strong meiosis or litotes like unfruitful in Eph. 5:11. We have then a simple statement, that for every wicked word like that which they had just uttered against Christ, men must give account as well as for their overt acts. Most readers probably understand by idle, trifling, frivolous or foolish. A third interpretation makes it still mean trivial, but in the sense of unimportant. Even for such words men are held responsible.

37. Here, as in vs. 35, 36, what had been previously stated is reduced to the form of a general proposition. By does not convey the exact meaning of the Greek preposition, which is from or out of, as the source from which the judgment is to be derived. The meaning is not that the words of men are to be taken as the sole criteria of their character, to the exclusion of their other actions, which would be absurd and put it in the power of any man to settle his own destiny by sheer talking or profession. The meaning is the same as in v. 36, more formally propounded; namely, that the words, so far as they are real exponents of something inward, will be taken into the account in making up an estimate of each man's character, and not excluded or ignored, as many seem to imagine.

38. Though the word then by itself would prove nothing as to chronological succession, its being before combined with answered makes it altogether probable that what is here related followed immediately the incidents recorded in the previous context. The speakers here are of the same class that blasphemed him, but not the same individuals (Luke 11:16). The connection seems to be that they were not yet satisfied respecting the expulsion of the demons, and now ask a sign from heaven, as opposed to a sign from hell or one on earth, in proof of his Messiahship, before they would acknowledge his pretensions. Their addressing him as Master, i. e. Teacher, may be either hypocritical, intended to cajole and flatter, or ironical, intended to insinuate their doubts of his commission and authority. We would see, to a modern English reader, conveys very imperfectly the force of the original, the Greek word (θἐλομεν), according to the lexicons, expressing not mere willingness or even inclination, but a decided choice and act of will, as if they had said, 'we choose (or we demand) to see a sign from heaven, in addition to these miracles on earth and possibly from hell.'

39. The answer, though addressed to them, is in the third person, as intended for a greater number, and because this form of speech has something disrespectful and contemptuous. He calls them a generation, as representing the great mass of the contemporary Jews. To the general term evil (i. e. wicked), he adds the specific one adulterous, literally, adultress, and in apposition with the feminine noun generation. This is not to be literally understood in reference to the prevalence of this particular iniquity, to which there is no allusion in the context, or any statement elsewhere in the Gospels. It is the well-known figure running through the Old Testament Of a conjugal relation between God and the chosen people. Idolatry is often represented as a breach of this relation or as spiritual adultery. When idolatry ceased among the Jews, the same description would be naturally applied to other forms of unfaithfulness by which it was succeeded. There is no need of assuming (with Theophylact) that demons take the place of idols in this later usage. Seeketh after, an emphatic compound (πιζητε), used above (6:32) to express the inordinate craving of the heathen after temporal advantages and comforts. A sign shall not be given them, i. e. such as they demand, to wit, a miracle of the kind prescribed or ordered by themselves, as the only proof of his Messiahship by which they would consent to be convinced. This refusal was justified, not only by the sovereign will of him who uttered it, but by the insolence of the demand itself, by the blasphemous aspersion which it presupposed, and by the general principle, continually recognized in the divine administration, that no one has a right to superfluous evidence of what has been sufficiently evinced already. (See below, on 21:23–27, and compare Luke 16:31.) The last clause is a sort of solemn irony equivalent to saying, 'unless they will accept the case of Jonah as such a sign.' It is not meant that it was such a sign as they demanded, but merely adds point to the previous refusal.

40. Instead of giving them a sign from heaven such as they demanded, he refers them to the sign of his own burial and resurrection, which he connects in an enigmatical manner with a well-known incident of Old Testament history, partly, no doubt, for the sake of the comparison that follows in the next verse. There are then two reasons for selecting this particular occurrence, first, the actual coincidence of outward circumstances, and secondly, the opposite effects in the two cases. The external resemblance was the burial for three days both of Jonas (the Greek form of Jonah) and of Jesus. Whale is gratuitously used in all the English versions for a Greek word meaning any great fish or sea-monster; so that the physiological objection, founded on the structure of the whale, is swept away. Three days and three nights are to be computed in the Jewish manner, which applies that formula to one whole day with any part however small of two others. This is not an invention of Christian apologists, but laid down as a rule in the Talmud: one hour more is reckoned as a day, one day more as a year. The existence of the usage may be seen by comparing the terms "after three

days” and “until the third day” in 27:63, 64 below. (See also Esther 4:16, 5:1). The heart of the earth is not hades (see above, on 11:23), but the grave, so called in allusion to the words of Jonah (2:2, 3. where midst is literally rendered in the margin, heart).

41. Besides the outward similarity just mentioned, there was a moral antithesis or contrast in the cases, which our Lord makes use of, to enhance the condemnation of the unbelieving Jews. The heathen to whom Jonah preached repented and were spared: the Jews to whom Christ preached were impenitent and perished. This of course has reference to the Scribes and Pharisees whom he addressed. The form of expression is similar to that in 10:15, 11:22, 24. Rise in judgment does not mean rise from the dead at the day of judgment, but stand at the bar to be tried. With, not against, but at the same time, or in company. Condemn them, not in words but by example. The last clause is similar in form and argumentative force to that of v. 6.

42. As the mention of Jonah suggested the repentance of the Ninevites, in contrast with the unbelief of Christ’s contemporaries, so the mention of the Ninevites suggests another case, not of repentance but of admiration for the wisdom of a mere man, as contrasted with the scorn of Scribes and Pharisees for that of a divine teacher. The Queen of the South, called in the Old Testament the Queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10:1), supposed to be the southern part of the Arabian peninsula. From the ends of the earth, a hyperbole, found also in the best Greek writers, for a great distance. It may here be intended to suggest a difference of race and of religion.

43. As the preceding threatenings and denunciations had respect to the contemporary Jews, our Lord here gives a fearful view of their condition as compared with former generations. The similitude which he uses for this purpose is derived from demoniacal possessions, and is not to be regarded as a fiction but a fact, of real though perhaps of rare occurrence. The case described is that of a relapse into the demonized condition with its fearful aggravations and its hopeless issue. Is gone out, or more simply, goes out, either by a voluntary act or by coercive dispossession, a question of no moment in relation to what follows. Walketh, a more specific term than the original which means no more than goes, or passes through. Dry, unwatered, without water, desert. It appears from the Apocrypha (Tobit 8:3, Baruch 4:35) that such places were regarded by the later Jews as the abode or the resort of demons, and the same thing is said of ruined Babylon in Rev. 18:2. We have neither right nor reason to regard this as a mere superstition or poetical embellishment. Our Saviour’s language, in the verse before us, warrants the belief that there is some mysterious fact at the foundation of all such allusions. Rest, not, as some suppose, another victim, or the pleasure of a new possession, but more generally, satisfaction and repose. The state described is that of restless discontent with present circumstances, urging to a prompt return to what preceded, as expressed dramatically in the next verse.

44. My house, home, previous abode, to wit, the body and the soul of the demoniac. The description in the last clause has been variously understood. Some suppose the victim to be represented as entirely free from the Satanic influence, and in a state of spiritual health and purity; while others hold the opposite opinion, that he is described as, ready for the re-possession; empty, and swept clean, not of demoniacal conditions, but of all that would prevent them; garnished, set in order or arranged, not for some higher end, but for the use of the returning demon. The former supposition makes the contrast more striking and the issue more terrific, by describing the reconquest as occurring just when every thing appeared to promise permanent deliverance. But the other agrees better with the application to the Jews, whose spiritual state before the great catastrophe could not be represented even comparatively as a pure one, unless we assume a specific reference to their freedom from idolatry, of which we may have more to say below.

45. Then, when he sees the victim thus prepared for his reception. He goeth away in search of his companions. Seven, either as a definite number in some real case to which our Lord alludes, or as a proverbial form for an indefinite plurality, as in 18:21, 22 below. Worse, more wicked, more of evil spirits, not collectively but severally. Enter in, a term used elsewhere to describe demoniacal possession. (See above on 8:31, 32, and compare Mark 5:12, 9:25). Dwell, a Greek verb meaning properly to settle, take up one’s abode, whether for a time or permanently, which last is here suggested by the context. Last state, literally, last (things), circumstances, or conditions. This fearful picture, drawn perhaps from some notorious or well-remembered case of repossession, is expressly applied, in the last clause, to the contemporary race of Jews. It seems to be agreed on all hands that their last state was that following the national rejection of Messiah, and immediately preceding the destruction of Jerusalem, the dissolution of the Hebrew state, and the dispersion which has not yet ceased. We learn from their own historian that the people, and especially their leaders, were at that time filled with a fanatical insanity, not unlike that produced by demoniacal possession. The only difficulty is in ascertaining what is represented by the interval of dispossession, or in other words, when the unclean spirit can be said to have gone out of them. There are two ways of answering this question, one of which assumes a reference to some specific period in the history of Israel, and most probably to that which succeeded the Babylonish exile, one of the most singular effects of which was to extinguish idolatry among the people, who before were continually lapsing into it. The obvious objection to this explanation is that there was no return to idolatrous corruption, even in the last state of the Jewish nation, which in that respect was better and not worse than the first. To this it may be answered, not without some plausibility, that idolatry was not itself the demon that went out and afterwards returned, but only the specific temporary form of the possession, which might cease forever though the unclean spirit of malignant disobedience and unfaithfulness to God returned and showed itself in new and more atrocious forms of horrible

corruption, such as worldliness, hypocrisy, cupidity, blindness to the truth, and rejection of their own Messiah. It might still be objected that the Jews would then be represented as entirely free from all corruption after the captivity; but this, though not absolutely true, was so far so as to justify the parabolical description, the design of which was simply to exhibit two successive changes, one for the better and the other for the worse. This is the ground assumed in the other explanation, which supposes what is here described to be no specific period in the history of Israel, but simply a process of deterioration, with occasional vicissitudes and fluctuations, but resulting in a state far worse than any that had gone before it. This is certainly the general impression made by the particular case stated, and it certainly applies with terrible exactness to the downward progress of the Jews, with partial interruptions, till the time of the great national catastrophe, the last generation being of course most severely punished, not only for their fathers's sins but for their own. (See below, on 23:35).

46. Having been led by a natural association under divine guidance to give some account of the effect produced by Christ's increasing popularity upon his most malignant enemies, the writer now returns to the effect upon his friends, especially those nearest to him. This view of the connection throws some light upon the conduct of his mother and his brethren, in disturbing him while publicly engaged in teaching. That they would venture to do so without a reason, or on ordinary business, or from personal affection, or from pride in their connection with him, although not impossible, is far less probable than that they were actuated by an anxious care for his own safety, and called for him in order to arrest what they regarded as a wild and dangerous excitement, both on his part and on that of the assembled masses. (Compare Mark 3:21.) It may be difficult for us, with our habitual associations, to appreciate the motives of these anxious friends; but at the juncture here described, nothing could be more natural and pardonable than precisely such solicitude, which is perfectly compatible with true faith and affection, but imperfect views both of his person and his mission. The principal actor in this scene is his mother, the brothers merely following or attending her, but joining in her message and request. It has been a subject of dispute for ages, whether these brothers of our Lord were sons of Joseph and Mary, or of Joseph by a former wife, or nephews of either, all of which hypotheses have been maintained by high authorities. Some of the questions in relation to this topic will recur below (on 13:55), and some have been considered in the exposition of 1:25. All that is necessary here is to observe that they were certainly his near relations, and either by birth or by adoption members of his mother's family, so that they constantly attended her and acted with her upon this occasion. Without, either outside of the house, or more probably beyond the circle of his hearers in the open air.

47. As there was a crowd about him (Mark 3:32), they probably said it one to another till the nearest finally reported it to Jesus. There is no ground, therefore, for the singular opinion, that this person wished to interrupt our Lord's discourse as too alarming, by directing his attention to his friends who were present and inquiring for him.

48. Our Lord takes occasion from this incident to teach them that his relative position in society was wholly different from that of others, his domestic ties, though real, being as nothing in comparison with those which bound him to his spiritual household. This is the meaning of the question here recorded. 'Do you think that my condition is the same as yours, and that the wishes of my mother and my brothers are as binding upon me as those of your own households are and ought to be on you?' There is no doubt an implied negation of the proposition thus suggested, as if he had said, 'You are mistaken in supposing that my family relations are the same as yours, or that my mother and brothers are what you express by those endearing names.' The contemptuous meaning put by some upon the words, as if he had intended to say, What are they to me? or what care I for them? is wholly foreign from the text and context.

49. Mark and Matthew have preserved to us each a look or gesture of our Lord on this occasion. He looked round about on them which sat about him (Mark 3:33), no doubt with affectionate and tender recognition, and he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, as if to point them out to others. See, behold, (these are) my mother and my brothers, i. e. my family and nearest kindred. I am not bound, as you are, to a single household, but embrace as equally allied and dear to me, this vast assembly.

50. Lest the comprehensive statement which immediately precedes should lead any to imagine that mere outward attendance on his teaching would entitle them to this distinction, he emphatically adds, that it belonged to none but those who acted out as well as listened to this doctrine. It was only he who did the will of God, as Christ announced it, that could claim the honour of this near relationship. But where this condition was complied with, even the poorest and most ignorant, and in themselves the most unworthy of his hearers, were as truly members of his household, and as affectionately cherished by him, as his highly favoured mother, who was blessed among women (Luke 1:28), or his brothers and his sisters according to the flesh. This delightful assurance, far from abjuring his natural relations, only makes them a standard of comparison for others. Far from saying that he does not love his mother and his brethren, he declares that he has equal love for all who do the will of God. Such a profession from a mere man might be justly understood as implying a deficiency of natural affection, since so wide a diffusion of the tenderest attachments must detract from their intensity within a narrow sphere. Of Christ alone can it be literally true, that while he loved those nearest to him with a love beyond all human experience or capacity, and with precisely the affection due to each beloved object, he embraced with equal tenderness and warmth the thousands who composed his spiritual household, and will continue so to do forever. The implied reproof of his friends' interference with his sacred functions, was intended only for themselves. What he said to the multitude, instead of disparaging his natural relations, magnified and honoured them by making them the measure of his spiritual friendships; and even if

he meant to say that those who did the will of God were the only relatives whom he acknowledged, he must still have given a high place among them to his mother, notwithstanding her anxieties on his behalf, and to his brothers also, if believers. If brothers be here taken in the wide sense of near relatives, or even in the narrower one of cousins, it is easy to imagine that while some belonging to this class were unbelievers (see John 7:5), there were others at this time enrolled among his disciples, and some already known as his apostles. (See above, on 1:25, and below, on 13:55.)

CHAPTER 13

THIS division of the narrative is chiefly occupied with samples of our Lord's parabolic mode of teaching, of which seven are here brought together, in an order at once topical and chronological. In addition to the parables themselves, we have his own interpretation of two of them, not only enabling us to understand them in particular but also throwing light upon the true method of interpreting parables in general. The first and longest, that of the sower, shows the various receptions which the word or doctrine of the kingdom would meet with in the hearts of men (1–9). This is followed by a statement of his reason for employing this mode of instruction (10–17), and a formal explanation of the parable just uttered (18–23). The second parable is that of the tares, showing the mixed condition of the visible church, and the proper mode of dealing with it (24–30). This is followed by a double parable (the mustard-seed and leaven), showing, as usually understood, the expansive nature of the true religion (31–35). Then comes his private explanation of the tares to his disciples, at their own request (36–43). To these Matthew adds the parables of the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price, showing how the gospel should be valued and secured (44–46), and concludes the series with that of the net, of kindred import with the tares, but not without peculiar features of its own (47–50), and a brief conversation as to parables in general (51–53). The remainder of the chapter might have been connected with the next, as it has no relation to the Saviour's parables, but records his rejection by his old neighbours and acquaintances at Nazareth (54–58).

1, 2. Like Luke (8:4) and (Mark 4:1), Matthew records, as a sort of epoch or important juncture in his history, the beginning of our Saviour's parabolical instructions, as a part of the preparatory process by which he contributed to the reorganization of the Church, although he did not actually make the change during his personal presence upon earth, because, as we have seen, it was to rest upon his death and resurrection as its corner-stone. The other part of his preparatory work consisted in the choice and education of the men by whom the change was to be afterwards effected. (See above, on 4:18, 9:9, 10.) He had already taught the people publicly with great effect, but now began to teach them in a peculiar manner, with a special purpose to elucidate the nature of his kingdom, for the benefit of those who were to be his subjects, but without a too explicit and precipitate disclosure of his claim to the Messiahship. By the sea-side, or along the sea, i. e. the lake of Tiberias or Galilee (see above, on 4:15), not only near it, but upon the very shore. Multitudes, or crowds, the Greek work indicating not mere numbers, but promiscuous assemblages (see above, on 4:25). The situation is like that described in Mark 3:9, where we read that he directed a small vessel to be ready, if the crowd should be so great as to prevent his standing on the shore with safety or convenience. Here we find him actually entering into (or embarking in) the boat, no doubt the one already mentioned as in readiness, and sitting there, i. e. upon the surface of the lake, while his vast audience was on the shore or beach. The scene thus presented must have been highly impressive to the eye, and still affords a striking subject for the pencil.

3. Many things, of which only samples are preserved, even by Matthew, showing that the writer's aim was not to furnish an exhaustive history, but to illustrate by examples the ministry of Christ. In parables, i. e. in the form and in the use of them. Parable is a slight modification of a Greek noun, the verbal root of which has two principal meanings, to propound (throw out or put forth), and compare (throw together or lay side by side). The sense of the noun derived from the former usage, that of any thing propounded, is too vague to be distinctive, comprehending as it does all kinds of instruction, which, from its very nature, must be put forth or imparted from one mind to another. The more specific sense of comparison, resemblance, is not only sanctioned by the usage of the best Greek writers (such as Plato, Aristotle, and Isocrates), but recommended, not to say required by the employment of a corresponding Hebrew word (מָשָׁל from מָשַׁל to resemble) in precisely the same way. In its widest sense, a parable is any illustration from analogy, including the simile and metaphor as rhetorical figures, the allegory, apologue, fable, and some forms of proverbial expression. In a more restricted sense, the word denotes an illustration of moral or religious truth derived from the analogy of human experience. In this respect it differs from the fable, which accomplishes the same end by employing the supposed acts of inferior animals, or even those ascribed to inanimate objects, to illustrate human character and conduct. The only fables found in Scripture, those of Jotham (Judg. 9:8–15) and Joash (2 Kings 14:9), are given on human, not divine authority. The parable, in its more restricted sense, as just explained, is not necessarily narrative in form, much less fictitious, although this is commonly assumed in modern definitions of the term. There is good reason to believe that all the parables of Christ are founded in fact, if not entirely composed of real incidents. They are all drawn from familiar forms of human experience, and with one exception from the present life. This creates a strong presumption that the facts are true, unless there be some positive reason for supposing them fictitious. Now the necessity of fiction to illustrate moral truth arises, not from the deficiency of real facts adapted to the purpose, but from the

writer's limited acquaintance with them, and his consequent incapacity to frame the necessary combinations, without calling in the aid of his imagination. But no such necessity can exist in the case of an inspired, much less of an omniscient teacher. To resort to fiction, therefore, even admitting its lawfulness on moral grounds, when real life affords in such abundance the required analogies, would be a gratuitous preference, if not of the false to the true, at least of the imaginary to the real, which seems unworthy of our Lord, or which, to say the least, we have no right to assume without necessity. In expounding the parables, interpreters have gone to very opposite extremes, but most to that of making every thing significant, or giving a specific sense to every minute point of the analogy presented. This error is happily exposed by Augustine, when he says, that the whole plough is needed in the act of ploughing, though the ploughshare alone makes the furrow, and the whole frame of an instrument is useful, though the strings alone produce the music. The other extreme, that of overlooking or denying the significance of some things really significant, is much less common than the first, and for the most part found in writers of severer taste and judgment. The true mean is difficult but not impossible to find, upon the principle now commonly assumed as true, at least in theory, that the main analogy intended, like the centre of a circle, must determine the position of all points in the circumference. It may also be observed, that as the same illustration may legitimately mean more to one man than to another, in proportion to the strength of their imaginative faculties, it is highly important that, in attempting to determine the essential meaning of our Saviour's parables, we should not confound what they may possibly be made to mean, with what they must mean to attain their purpose. In addition to these principles, arising from the nature of the parable itself, we have the unspeakable advantage of our Saviour's own example as a self-interpreter. Behold! lo! see! both in Hebrew and Hellenistic usage, introduces something unexpected and surprising. Some take it even in its primary and strict sense, look! see there! implying that the object indicated was in sight or actually visible; in other words, that Christ was led to use this illustration by the casual appearance of a sower in a neighbouring field; and this is often represented as the usual occasion of his parabolic teachings. It seems, however, to regard them as too purely accidental, and too little the result of a deliberate predetermination, such as we cannot but assume in the practice of a divine teacher. A safer form of the same proposition is the one already stated that our Saviour's parables, though not invariably suggested by immediate sights or passing scenes, are all derived from the analogy of human experience, and in most instances of common life. Thus three here given by Matthew are designed not only to exhibit different aspects of the same great subject, the Messiah's kingdom, but to exhibit them by means of images derived from one mode of life or occupation, that of husbandry, with which his auditors were all familiar, and in which, most probably, the greater part of them were constantly engaged. But besides these objections to the general supposition that our Saviour's parables were all suggested casually, such an assumption is forbidden in the case before us by the form of expression used by all the evangelists with striking uniformity. It is not as it naturally would be on the supposition now in question. See, a sower goes (or going) out, but with the article, and in the aorist or past tense, lo, the sower went out. The Sower, like the Fox and the Lion in a fable, is generic, meaning the whole class, or an ideal individual who represents it. Went out, as we say in colloquial narrative, once upon a time, the precise date being an ideal one because the act is one of constant occurrence. As if he had said, 'a sower went out to sow, as you have often done and seen your neighbour do.' To sow, distinguishes his going out for this specific purpose from his going out on other errands. The sower went out as such, as a sower, to perform the function which the name denotes.

4. As he sowed, literally, in the (act of) sowing, and, therefore, in the field, not merely on the way to it. By the way must, therefore, mean along the path trodden by the sower himself and hardened by his footsteps, not along the highway leading to his place of labour. This idea is distinctly expressed by Luke (8:5), and it was trodden down, i. e. it fell upon the path where he was walking. Some is understood by every reader to mean some of the seed which he was sowing, the noun, although not previously mentioned as it is in Luke (8:4), being necessarily suggested by the kindred verb, to sow, in sowing. The principal circumstance in this part of the parable is not the treading of the seed, which Luke only adds to specify the place, but its lying exposed upon the trodden path, and there devoured by the birds. Fowl, now confined to certain species of domesticated birds, is co-extensive in old English with bird itself. The birds which his hearers well knew were accustomed to commit such depredations. The familiarity of this occurrence, and of those which follow, must have brought the illustration home to the business and bosoms of the humblest hearers, and, at the same time, necessarily precludes the idea of a fiction, when real facts were so abundant and accessible. It is idle to object that this particular sower never did go forth, when the opposite assertion can as easily be made, and when the terms employed, as we have seen, may designate the whole class of sowers, including multitudes of individuals, or any of these whom any one of the hearers might select as particularly meant, perhaps himself perhaps some neighbouring husbandman. Such a use of language, when applied to incidents of every-day occurrence, is as far as possible remote from fiction.

5. Others, i. e. other seeds fell upon stony (or rocky places), plurals equivalent to Mark's collective singulars (4:5). The reference is not to loose or scattered stones, but to a thin soil overspreading a stratum or layer of concealed rock. Immediately, by Mark also, is emphatic, the rapid germination being a material circumstance, and seemingly ascribed to the shallowness of the soil, allowing the seed no room to strike deep root, but only to spring upwards. The same idea is suggested by the verb itself, a double compound meaning to spring up and forth. The cause assigned by Luke (8:6), is not that of the speedy germination, but of the premature decay that followed it, as Matthew describes more fully in the next verse.

6. There is a peculiar beauty in the Greek here, which cannot be retained in a translation, arising from the use of the same verb (but in a less emphatic form) to signify the rising of the plant and of the sun, as both are said in English to be up, when one is above the

surface of the earth and the other above the horizon. Scorched (or burnt) and withered (or dried, see above on 12:10) are different effects ascribed to different causes. The first is the evaporation of the vital sap or vegetable juices by the solar heat; the other their spontaneous failure from the want of a tenacious root. Together they describe, in a manner at once accurate and simple, the natural and necessary fate of a plant without sufficient depth of soil, however quick and even premature its vegetation.

7. Others, as in v. 5. Into the thorns, or in the midst of them, as it is more fully expressed by Luke (8:7). The thorns, which happened to be growing there, or which are usually found in such situations. Came up, appeared above the surface, an expression constantly employed in English to denote the same thing. Choked, stifled or deprived of life by pressure. This word, though strictly applicable only to the suffocation of animal or human subjects (see Luke 8:42), is here, by a natural and lively figure, transferred to the fatal influence on vegetable life of too close contact with a different and especially a ranker growth. Matthew uses an emphatic compound of the Greek verb, corresponding to our own familiar phrase choked off.

8, 9. Others, as in vs. 5, 7. It is a minute but striking proof that the evangelists wrote independently of each other, and that their coincidence of language arose not from mutual imitation, but from sameness of original material, that in these three verses Matthew always says upon (πί), Mark into or among (ε ς). Good ground, in Greek, the earth, the good, earth or soil properly so called in distinction from the beaten, rocky, thorny places before mentioned. Some, the proportion stated being that of the seed sown to the ripe grain harvested. The productiveness ascribed to the nutritious grains in this place is by no means unexampled, either in ancient or modern times. It is indeed a moderate and modest estimate compared with some recorded by Herodotus, in which the rate of increase was double or quadruple even the highest of the three here mentioned, and the recent harvest in our western states affords examples of increase still greater. The particular attention of the hearers is invited to the parable in v. 9, by a formula occurring in 11:15 above, and there explained.

10. Disciples, not in the strict sense of apostles, but in that of friendly hearers and adherents. This is clear from Mark's description (4:10) those about him with the twelve, i. e. those who in addition to the twelve were in habitual attendance on his person, following him from place to place; or those who, upon this particular occasion, still remained about him after the dispersion of the multitude. Explained in either way, the words are probably descriptive of the same class, and imply that what now follows was addressed neither to the vast mixed multitude, nor to the twelve apostles only, hut to an intermediate body, smaller than the first and larger than the second, but composed entirely of disciples (Luke 8:9) or believers in his doctrine. They appear to have proposed to him two distinct inquiries; first, the general one, why he taught in parables at all; and then, the more specific one, what this first parable was meant to teach (Luke 8:9). It is observable that Mark, although he gives the question in a single form, and that a vague one, gives the answers to the two inquiries really involved in it; a circumstance which all but hypercritical sceptics will regard, not as discrepancy, but agreement. The question thus interpreted shows that the parabolic method of instruction, as applied now for the first time to the doctrine of the kingdom, was obscure or unintelligible even to the more enlightened of our Saviour's hearers; a deficiency which furnished the occasion of his own authoritative exposition, making known not only the precise sense of the parable to which it was immediately applied, but also the more general principles and laws which are to govern the interpretation of all others.

11. We have here the answer to the first inquiry, namely, why he spake in parables at all. In answer to this question, he informs them that a sifting, separating process had begun already and must be continued, with the unavoidable effect of throwing all his hearers into two great classes, those within and those without the magic circle of his enlightening and saving influence. The difference between these classes was not one of personal intrinsic merit, but of divine favour. To you it has been given, the perfect passive form, implying an authoritative predetermination, being common to all three accounts, as in our Lord's assurance to the paralytic, Thy sins have been forgiven thee (see above, on 9:2). Given, not conceded as a right, but granted as a favour. To know, i. e. directly, by explicit statement, either without the veil of parable, or with the aid of an infallible interpretation. Mysteries, in the usual sense of that word as employed in scripture to denote, not the intrinsic nature of the things so called, but merely their concealment from the human mind until disclosed by revelation. The mystery in this sense here particularly meant is that of the kingdom of God, to be erected by Messiah in the heart of man and of society, and to receive its final consummation in a future state of glory. The use of this expression (of the kingdom), common to all three accounts (see Mark 4:11. Luke 8:10), is not without importance, as evincing that the parables of Christ had reference, not merely to personal duty and improvement, but to the nature of his kingdom and the mode of its establishment, a reference too often overlooked or sacrificed to mere individual edification. To those without the sphere or scope of this illuminating influence, it is not given, i. e. in the same way, but by parables. (Mark 4:11.)

12. This aphorism Luke (8:18) agrees with Mark (4:25) in placing at the close of this important admonition. The question of arrangement is of less importance, as our Lord appears to have pursued the subject both before and after he explained the parable of the sower, and the only difference is in this relative position of the sentence. We may either suppose therefore that he uttered the words twice, or regard it as a matter of indifference whether they preceded or followed his infallible interpretation of the Sower. Applying the same rule of exposition as before, to wit, that the specific application of such maxims is to be determined by the context in every given case of their occurrence, we shall find that the one here uttered has respect not to grace or spiritual influence in general, but to illuminating grace or spiritual knowledge in particular. Our Lord exhorts them to attend to what he says, and lays it

down as the foundation of ulterior attainments; for in this sense, too, it may be said, Whoever has, to him shall be given, i. e. whoever takes, keeps, and uses, what I tell him now, shall know still more hereafter. And the converse is, of course, true, he who has not (in possession and in use what I have previously taught him), even what he has (of previous knowledge and attainment, or even of this, as a mere speculative intellectual possession) shall be taken from him. This involves a threatening of divine retribution, but is strictly and directly the announcement of a general law, both intellectual and moral, namely, that the only choice is between loss and gain, advancement and recession; that there can be no stagnation or repose; that the only method of securing what we have is by improving it, the failure to do which is tantamount to losing it or throwing it away. It is only another aspect of the same important lesson, no doubt uttered by our Lord in some discourse upon this subject, and most probably in that before us, that we find in Luke's report of it (8:18), namely, that the value of Previous attainments in religious knowledge, unless thus improved and advanced upon, is only specious and apparent, and that even this, in case of failure to increase and grow, will be withdrawn, or seen in its true colours, for whoever has not (in possession and in use what I have taught him, but imagines that he can retain it as it is without its growing either more or less), even what he (thus) seems to have (or thinks he has of spiritual knowledge) shall be taken from him, not as an arbitrary punishment inflicted by authority, but as the necessary intellectual and moral product of his own neglect.

13. Therefore, literally, for this, i. e. for this cause or reason, may refer grammatically either to what follows or what goes before. If the latter, it would seem to mean, 'according to the principle just laid down, or because to him who hath shall be given, &c.' If the latter, the expression simply means, 'I will tell you why I speak to them in parables.' In favour of the first construction is the intimate connection then existing between this verse and the one before it; while according to the other the transition is somewhat abrupt. Thus far it might have seemed that the obtuseness of the hearers to divine instruction was a mere misfortune, having no connection with their moral character and state. But now the Saviour represents it as the consequence of sin, left by God in his righteousness to operate unchecked in one class, but gratuitously counteracted in another. The terms of the description here are borrowed from that fearful picture of judicial blindness in Isaiah 6:10. The quotation is recorded by the three evangelists, but much more formally and fully by Matthew. In this verse he anticipates it by a description of the actual condition of the people, showing that the prophecy applied to them. To see and not to see, hear and not hear, was a paradoxical Greek proverb, used by Demosthenes and Æschylus to signify a mere external sensuous perception without intellectual or moral conviction, as expressed in the last clause of the verse before us.

14. Having first described their spiritual state in terms derived from Isaiah, he now quotes the prophecy itself, and declares it to be verified in them, but with a marked variation in the form of the expression. What the Prophet puts into the form of an ironical command or exhortation to do the very thing which would destroy them, our Lord, as Matthew here reports him, turns into a warning or prediction that they would so do. This is certainly involved in the original, and only drawn out here into a paraphrase. The Hebrew idiom is retained, which uses two forms of the same verb for intensity or more exact specification. Seeing indeed, or seeing still, or seeing clearly, so far as concerns the outward object. Hearing indeed, or still, or clearly, yet they hear not, with effect or to any useful purpose. Neither do they understand (or apprehend) the things heard in their spiritual import.

15. The description of v. 13 is repeated, but with more exact adherence to Isaiah's words, which are given with little variation in the language of the Septuagint version. Waxed gross, grown fat, here a figure for inveterate insensibility. Their ears are dull of hearing is a paraphrase, the Greek words literally meaning they have heard heavily with their ears. Closed, literally, shut down, shut fast, or refused to open. The last clause gives the judicial end or purpose of their being thus abandoned, lest at any time (or some time), they should see and hear and understand and turn (or be converted), and be healed of their spiritual malady, or sin, by forgiveness, as the figure is explained by Mark (10:12).

16, 17. In contrast with the spiritual blindness and stupidity of unbelievers he congratulates his own disciples, not the twelve, but all who acknowledged his authority, that their eyes see and their ears hear the glorious things revealed by him. In this they were more fortunate or highly favoured, not only than the blinded scribes and Pharisees around them, but also in comparison with better men of former times, who would have seen and heard these very things with thankfulness and joy, but died before the time. Prophets and just men seem to be combined as a description of the truly pious, or of good men, as in 10:41 above.

18. You, therefore, my disciples, as distinguished from the unbelieving world, and also from your less favoured predecessors, hear the parable of the sower, i. e. hear my explanation of it which you have requested. This explanation is not only in itself a model of conciseness, clearness, and superiority to all conceits and forced analogies, but from its source and author an invaluable rule and guide in all cases of the same kind, where we have not the advantage of an infallible interpretation. It becomes us, therefore, in the two authoritative expositions here recorded for our learning, to observe not only what our Saviour does but what he leaves undone, the neglect of which has led to the excesses and absurdities of ultra-allegorical interpretation. These are left without excuse by our Lord's condescending here to teach the fundamental principles of parabolical interpretation. It is impossible to overrate the value of this clew to guide us through the labyrinth of various and discordant expositions, or its actual effect, when faithfully employed, in guarding the interpreter against the opposite extremes of meagre generality and fanciful minuteness. It was not only placed here in the history, but uttered when it was, that it might serve as an example and a model in interpreting those parables which Christ has

not explained himself. Some of the errors thus forbidden and condemned, if not prevented, will be noticed in expounding the ensuing verses.

19. The characters about to be described are those whose case is represented by the falling of the seed upon the path. This is he (literally) sown by the way. The incongruity, alleged by some, of making the seed represent the man, and not the word is a mere rhetorical punctilio, and presents no difficulty to the mind of any unbiassed reader. The parable has answered its design for ages, notwithstanding this alleged flaw in its imagery, which probably occurs to none but hypercritics. When they (the persons represented in this portion of the parable) hear (or have heard) the word (just represented as seed sown), immediately comes the Evil One, elsewhere called the Devil (Luke 8:12), and Satan, or the Adversary (Mark 4:15). Catcheth away, in reference to the picking of grain by birds (see above on v. 4). Sown in his heart, a mixture of the sign and the thing signified, producing no confusion, and objectionable only on the ground of rhetorical preciseness. The influence here ascribed to Satan must be strictly understood as really exerted by him in the case of those who hear the word, but only as a persuasive, not a coercive power, and, therefore, exercised by turning the attention from the word as soon as uttered, and diverting it to other objects.

20. He now identifies the second class of fruitless and unprofitable hearers, those represented in the parable by the falling of the seed on stony places. Here again he seems to make the seed the emblem of the man himself, and not of the word preached to him, but with as little disadvantage to the force and clearness of the illustration as before, and in the exercise of that discretionary license which distinguishes original and independent thinkers, even among mere men, from the grammarians and rhetoricians. Every ordinary reader understands, without instruction, that the (one) sown upon the rocky (places) means those whose character and state are represented by the falling of the seed upon the rock, and not that the seed itself specifically represents the persons. The paraphrastic version in our Bible is entirely gratuitous. This portion of the parable, like that preceding it, exhibits a distinct class of hearers, and the influence exerted on them by the doctrine of the kingdom. The difference between the cases is that these go further, and not only hear the word, or passively receive it, but accept it as the word of God, and that not merely with a cold assent or forced submission, but with joy, as something addressed to the affections, no less than the reason and the conscience, and received accordingly, at once, immediately, which, though a favourite expression of Mark (1:10, 18, 31, 42, 2:2, 3:6), is attested as genuine, not by his report alone (4:16), which would have been sufficient for the purpose, but by that of Matthew. The obvious gradation in the parable not only renders it more perfect in a literary point of view, but increases its discriminating power as applied to individual and general experience, so that every class of hearers, even now, and still more in the time of Christ, might see itself as in a mirror. Indeed, nothing shows the wisdom of our Lord's instructions more impressively than the fact, confirmed by all experience for 1800 years, and receiving further confirmation every day, that all varieties of human and religious character may be reduced to some one or more of his simple but divine descriptions.

21. While the first seed was not even buried, but removed while on the surface, the second was not only sown, but came up prematurely and without a root, which same expression our Lord now applies to the class here represented, namely, those who have no root in themselves, i. e. what in our religious phraseology (here founded upon Job 19:28) is called "the root of the matter," i. e. a principle of true religion, including or implying faith, repentance, and the love of God, producing an analogous external life. This shows in what sense Luke describes them (8:13) as believing for a while, i. e. professing or appearing to believe while really without the root of true conviction and conversion. Matthew expresses the same thing more concisely in a single word, temporary, made up of the noun and preposition here employed by Luke, and elsewhere rendered temporal (2 Cor. 4:18, as opposed to eternal), or paraphrased, for a season (Heb. 11:25). Distress or persecution, kindred but distinct terms, one originally signifying pressure, and the other pursuit, the former comprehending providential chastisements the latter denoting more specifically evils inflicted by the hands of human enemies. For (because or on account of) the word, the doctrine of Christ's kingdom, which they had so joyfully embraced, and for a time so openly maintained. Ariseth is in Greek an absolute construction, being, beginning to be, coming to pass, happening. Immediately, both in Matthew and Mark (4:17), but with a difference of form (ε θ ς and ε θέως), the repetition showing that the real change for the worse is as sudden and as easy as the apparent change for the better. Offended, not in the ordinary modern sense of being displeased or alienated in affection, but in the Latin and old English sense of stumbling or being made to stumble. The nearest root or theme to which it can be traced in classic Greek, denotes a trap or snare, but in the Hellenistic dialect a stumbling block or hindrance in the path, over which one may fall. In like manner the derivative verb means to make one fall or stumble, a natural figure both for sin and error, and often representing both as commonly connected in experience. Another explanation of the usage, leading to the same result, gives offend its modern sense, but in reference to God, to offend whom is to sin, and then takes the verb here in a causative sense, they are made to sin, or betrayed into sinning against God. As the sin here meant is not such as even true believers may commit but one arising from the absence of a root in the experience, Luke (8:13) describes it by the stronger term, apostatize (or fall away), not from a previous state of grace or true conversion, which would imply the very thing explicitly denied in the preceding clause, to wit, the possession of a root, but from their ostensible and false profession.

22. Another class of fruitless hearers represented in this parable are those sown among the thorns, i. e. those whose case is symbolized or emblematically set forth by the falling of a portion of the seed among thorns. The form of expression is the same as in

vs. 19, 20, and is uniform in all the gospels, a sufficient proof that it is not an inadvertence or mistake of the historian, but at least in substance a deliberate expression of our Lord himself. Common to this with the other classes here described is the hearing of the word, because the very purpose of the parable is to exhibit different ways in which it may be heard with the effect upon the hearer. Some suppose the climax or gradation to be here continued, and this third class of hearers to be represented as going further than the second. But it seems more natural to make the two co-ordinate as different divisions of the same class, i. e. of temporary converts or believers, the difference between them being not that one continues longer than the other, but that one is scandalized by violence, the other by allurement or seduction. While the former yield to distress and persecution, these are rendered fruitless by the cares and pleasures of the world. Care, undue solicitudes, anxieties, and fears, as to the interests of this life, The corresponding verb (translated in our Bible by the old English phrase to take thought, i. e. to be over anxious) is applied by our Lord elsewhere in the same way (see above, on 6:25–34, and compare Luke 10:41). Of this world (or, according to the critics, the world), the same Greek word that was explained above (on 12:32), as meaning properly duration or continued existence, either definite or indefinite, finite or infinite, according to the context. Some suppose it here to mean the old economy or dispensation, to which secular anxieties were more appropriate, and even necessarily incident, than to the new. But it is more natural to understand it of the present life, with its temporary interests and pleasures, as opposed to the future and eternal state. Besides the cares or anxious fears belonging to this mixed and in a certain sense probationary state, and relating chiefly to the means of subsistence, our Lord specifies another danger, the deceit of wealth, including both delusive hope and fanciful enjoyment, and applying, therefore, both to those who make haste to be rich, as being the true source of happiness, and those who reckon themselves actually happy because rich already. Choke the word, as in the parable itself (v. 7) the thorns choked the seed, another mixture of the sign and the thing signed, but still less confusing than in vs. 19, 20, because even in the parable to choke is a strong figure as applied to plants, requiring little modification to adapt it to spiritual subjects. The same thing substantially is true of the remaining clause, and it becomes unfruitful, i. e. the word or truth considered as a seed, because intended to produce beneficial effects upon the life and character of those who hear it.

23. Having thus applied the three ideal cases of unfruitful sowing to three well-known forms of human experience, our Lord concludes his exposition of the parable, by doing the same thing with respect to the one favourable case which it presented, but which really includes a vast variety, at least in the measure or degree of fruitfulness, denoted by the ratio or proportion of the fruit or ripe grain to the seed or sown grain. The (one) sown, as in v. 22, i. e. whose case is represented by the sowing upon good ground. These, like all the others, hear the word, receive instruction in the doctrine of the kingdom, and like two of the preceding classes, actively accept it, with assent and approbation, but unlike them all, escaping or resisting the occasions of unfruitfulness before described, retain it (Luke 8:15) and bear fruit, not merely for a time, but in continuance, with perseverance, and yet with great diversity of actual attainment, corresponding to the different proportions which the crop bears to the literal seed sown, which Luke omits, but Mark and Matthew here repeat, though not in the same order (Mark 4:20. thirty, sixty, a hundred). Even the most unreflecting reader cannot need to be reminded, that the numbers thus selected are intended to convey the general idea of proportional diversity, and not to limit that diversity to three specific rates. Hence our Lord, in expounding this part of the parable, simply repeats what he had said in the parable itself, without attaching a specific import to the several amounts, a lesson and example to inferior expounders, not only here but in all analogous cases. The same thing might be said in substance of the three cases of unfruitfulness, except that there is reason to believe that they are not given merely as selected samples, but as comprehensive heads to which all particular occasions of unfruitfulness in spiritual husbandry may be reduced.

24. There is here no mark of time or of immediate succession, as in v. 1, and although the general presumption is in favour of the latter, yet the practice of Matthew and the structure of his gospel leave us at liberty to suppose that this parable was uttered on a different occasion, and only introduced here to complete the exemplification of our Saviour's parabolic mode of teaching. At the same time there is nothing to require this supposition but strong reasons for the contrary assumption, as we shall see below. Put forth, laid before (or by) them, a verb often used in reference to food (Mark 6:41, 8:6, 7. Luke 10:8, 11:6. Acts 16:34. 1 Cor. 10:27), and, therefore, specially appropriate in its figurative application to the furnishing of intellectual and spiritual aliment. This parable, like that before it, and another which occurs below (vs. 31, 32), is derived from the processes of husbandry, in which a large proportion of the hearers were no doubt employed, and with which all would be more or less familiar. The kingdom of heaven, as usual in this history, denotes the reign of the Messiah, or the new economy, with special reference, in this case, to its inception and its earlier stages. Is likened, literally, was (or has been) likened, which can hardly mean compared, or likened in discourse, as in 11:16, where the active voice and future tense are used, but rather actual assimilation by the progress of events. The kingdom of heaven, even in that early stage of its development, had already begun to exhibit the unwholesome mixture which this parable describes. A third form of expression, which occurs below in 25:1, refers the parable to changes not yet fully realized. To a man, that is, to the case, conduct, or condition of a man. The attempt to press the phraseology, as meaning that the man himself specifically represents the kingdom, is as false in taste as it is inconsistent with the masterly freedom of our Lord in the use of parabolic imagery. (See above, on v. 19, and on 9:37.) Which sowed, literally, sowing, here expressive not of a habit or a custom, but of an act performed on a particular occasion, as appears from the whole narrative that follows. Good seed, not merely good of its kind, but of a good kind, of the right kind, some nutritious grain, as opposed to the poisonous or worthless weeds which are mentioned in the next verse.

25. Literally, in men's sleeping, not on that occasion merely but in general, as a specification of the time, when men sleep, namely, in the night. It is not, therefore, an implied censure of the farmer or his servants, who in that case would have been more clearly pointed out, both in the parable itself and in the explanation of it. (See below, on vs. 38, 39.) The meaning obviously is, at the time when men as usual were sleeping, and in consequence unable to discover or prevent it. His enemy, no doubt an unfriendly neighbour, such as too often may be found in rural districts, as well as in the populous city. Tares, according to the Rabbins, a grain very similar to wheat, and not only worthless but injurious in its effects. Modern writers understand the Greek word as denoting a species of the darnel. The botanical question is of no importance to the meaning of the parable. Among is in Greek a strong expression (ν μέσον) meaning through (or up and down), the midst (or middle) of the wheat. And went away, as secretly as he had come, without detection or discovery. This would also suggest the idea, that the work was done, the mischief was accomplished, and required no further care or labour, as the wheat did.

26. But (δέ), in contrast with this silent secret operation. Or the particle may be translated and, as in v. 7, and often elsewhere, and be taken as a mere connective. Blade, the word translated grass in 6:30. but denoting in both places, that stage in the progress of the plant when it resembles grass externally. In 14:19. grass is used correctly in its usual or proper sense. Was sprung up, came up, germinated, sprouted, and brought forth, literally, made, produced, fruit. Appeared, in Greek a passive form, was brought to view, was rendered visible, was made to appear, but constantly employed as a deponent, corresponding to the English word here used.

27. So, the same connective (δέ) that is rendered but at the beginning of v. 25. The English word is also here used, not in its comparative and proper sense, but as a resumptive or continuative particle of constant use in our familiar narrative style. Servants, slaves, with special reference to those employed in field-work. The interrogation presupposes an affirmative answer, and is, therefore, equivalent to a positive assertion, which is made the ground of the ensuing real question, i. e. one intended to elicit information. Whence, from what source or quarter, by what means or agency? Then, therefore, since it had been sown with good seed. Has it (does the field contain and now exhibit) tares (as well as wheat)? There is something lifelike in the very simplicity of this brief dialogue, entirely in keeping with the supposition that this parable like all the rest relates a real incident. (See above, on v. 3.)

28. The particle translated so at the beginning of v. 27, is here omitted altogether. This was probably a mere inadvertence on the part of Tyndale, carelessly retained by Cranmer and the common version. It has no effect upon the sense, but renders the construction more abrupt than is usual either in Greek or Hebrew narrative. An enemy, in Greek, an enemy (or hostile) man, the first word being properly an adjective, though absolutely used, i. e. without a substantive, from Hesiod downwards. Man is here not simply pleonastic, but equivalent to saying, one who is an enemy or hostile, thus making somewhat prominent the attitude or character of enmity, whereas an enemy would put the emphasis upon the person. Did this, and by implication, did it at a certain time, to wit, before the wheat had come up. Wilt thou, is it thy desire or wish, not merely, art thou willing? (See above, on 12:38.) The construction here is foreign from our idiom, though the sense is clear. Wilt thou going we may gather them (i. e. the tares)?

29. But, the particle omitted in v. 28, and rendered so in v. 27, but in Greek having precisely the same force in all these cases, namely, that of a connective or continuative particle. Nay, in modern English, no, in Greek and Latin, and some modern languages identical with not, and in all the correlative or opposite of yea, yes (ναί, 5:37, 9:28, 11:9, 26). Lest, that not, a compound particle originally meaning, lest at any time (or some time), and correctly so translated in 4:6, 5:25, and v. 15 above, but sometimes used with little or no reference to time, as in 7:6, 15:39, 25:9. and the verse before us. While ye gather, literally, gathering, a favourite Greek construction and entirely consistent with our idiom, though almost constantly avoided in the old English versions. Root up, literally, root out, tear out by the roots, eradicate. Also is not expressed in Greek unless included in the adverb (μα) meaning at the same time, simultaneously, which here and often elsewhere has the force of a preposition governing the dative (α το ς), together (at the same time) with them. The wisdom of this agricultural reason for refusing to allow the extirpation of the tares, is not without importance in its bearing on the spiritual application. (See below, on v. 40.)

30. Let, permit, suffer, but in Greek suggesting the original idea of the verb, which is to leave or let alone. (Compare 3:15, 5:40, 7:4, 8:22, with 4:11, 20, 22, 5:24, 8:15.) Grow together is in Greek peculiarly emphatic, as being one compounded word (συναυξάνεσθαι). Harvest, a Hellenistic noun formed from the verb to reap or mow, here denoting not the season merely but the act or operation, as appears from the expression in the next clause, time of harvest. (Wiclif translates the first word, reaping time, the second, time of ripe corn.) Reapers, though entirely unlike in English, is a collateral derivative from the same Greek verb (θερίζω, θερισμός, θεριστής). Another pair of cognate words (δήσατε, δέσμας) is exactly and felicitously rendered by a corresponding pair in English (bind and bundles). As to the burning of the weeds, see above, on 6:30. First, before the wheat is reaped, which was probably the customary order. But, when the worthless vegetation has been thus disposed of. Gather, not the same verb with the one in the first clause, but synonymous in usage, one originally meaning to lay or place, and the other to lead or bring, together. Barn, granary, or storehouse (see above, on 2:12, 6:30. in the former of which places it is rendered garner).

31. This is a third parable derived from agricultural experience, to which Mark (4:26–29) adds another, but omits that of the tares. This shows the independent choice of the evangelists in working up the same materials, and also the abundance of our Saviour's illustrations drawn from common life, of which these are probably mere specimens or samples. The kingdom of heaven is here itself

said to be like a grain of mustard-seed, a form of expression which, as we have seen (on v. 24), is not to be unduly pressed, but which may here be strictly understood, as the truth taught is the expansive nature of religion, or of Christ's kingdom both in society at large and in the hearts of individuals. A grain of mustard seed, or single seed of mustard. Botanists are not agreed as to the plant here meant; but it is certain that an herb, of more than ordinary size, and bearing fruit resembling mustard, has been found by modern travellers in the Holy Land. Taking sowed, a pleonastic form, or rather fulness of description, not uncommon in colloquial narrative. Field is not exclusive but inclusive of what we call a garden, the Greek word denoting not the size but the fact of cultivation.

32. This is not a botanical dictum but a popular hyperbole, or rather a relative expression, meaning the smallest of domestic garden seeds in proportion to the size of the plant which it produces. Greatest, as in 11:11, is an English superlative used to represent a Greek comparative. The literal translation is, greater than the herbs, i. e. the pot-herbs, garden vegetables, raised for domestic use. Even this phrase is substantially, though not in form, superlative, the meaning obviously being, greater than the (other, and by implication, all the other) herbs. But the form of expression in English is much stronger, and, therefore, not exact as a translation. Becomes, the true sense of the verb so often rendered by our verb to be (see on 4:3, 5:45, 6:16, 9:16, 10:16, 12:45. and v. 22 above). A tree, as distinguished from a mere plant or garden-herb in size. Birds of the air, literally, of heaven, as in 6:26, 8:20, where this form of expression is explained. Come, resort to it by choice as a convenient resting-place. Lodge, find shelter, the verb corresponding to the noun in 8:20. The sense given in the older English versions (Tyndale, build; Cranmer, make their nests) is too specific, and at variance with the fact as stated by the Spanish commentator Maldonatus, who observes that he had sometimes seen large groves of sinapi (or oriental mustard) and the birds sitting on the branches, but had never seen their nests there. Though we have not the advantage of our Lord's authoritative exposition of this parable, as in those of the sower and the tares, we have another, that of general and even universal agreement among all interpreters, that this one was intended to set forth, by lively and familiar images, the rapid progress of the true religion from what seemed to be feeble and contemptible beginnings, calling forth a repetition of the prophet's question. "Who hath despised the day of small things?" (Zech. 4:10.) As this process, though in progress, was as yet very far from its completion, our Lord uses neither the past tense (as in v. 24) nor the future (as in 25:1), but the comprehensive present, it is like, (already,) and will be still more like hereafter.

33. To the three agricultural analogies just given, Matthew adds one borrowed from domestic life and female industry, as if to leave no part of every-day experience unemployed in the elucidation and enforcement of religious truth. The introductory formula is like that in vs. 24, 31, without chronological specification. Nor can any inference be drawn from the resemblance of this parable to that before it, since this very similarity may possibly have led to their juxtaposition without any chronological connection. The resemblance lies in the essential meaning, which is evidently that of an expansive spread or diffusion, corresponding to the growth of the mustard-plant. The figure here is that of leaven, yeast, or sour dough, with its familiar effect upon the meal into which it is kneaded. The measure mentioned is described by the rabbins as the third part of an ephah, and by Jerome, in his comment on this passage, as equivalent to one modius or Roman bushel (see above, on 5:15) and a half. The precise capacity is unimportant to the meaning of the passage, though it may be worthy of remark, that three seahs or an ephah would seem to have been a customary quantity in household baking. (See Gen. 18:6. Judges 6:19.) The word translated meal is used in the classics to denote wheat flour, as distinguished from ground barley or other inferior grains. Until determines nothing as to the rapidity or slowness of the process, which is therefore not included in the import of the parable, or left to be supplied by the experience of the hearers. The whole was (or it was all) leavened, or retaining the Greek collocation, it was leavened all (of it), or leavened wholly. This complete diffusion of the leaven, rather than the time required for the process, seems to be the main point in the parable. There is still an interesting question with respect to it, and one which admits of being plausibly argued upon both sides. Does this parable, like the one before it, set forth the diffusive quality or tendency of truth, and of the true religion, or the corresponding character of falsehood and corruption? In favour of the former supposition is the obvious presumption springing from the similarity of form, the want of any intimation to the contrary, the sameness of the prefatory formula, and chiefly the express use of the leaven to symbolize or represent "the kingdom of heaven." The two first of these reasons being negative, may be neutralized of course by positive considerations on the other side. The others, although strong, are not entirely conclusive, since the "kingdom of heaven" may be used, as in the Tares, to represent the whole state of the church in its present mixed and militant condition. In favour of the other explanation is the very strong fact, that leaven always in the Scriptures elsewhere (except Lev. 23:17), is a figure for corruption, either in doctrine or affection. This usage, probably arising from the physical fact that fermentation is incipient putrefaction, may be traced in the exclusion of all leaven from the passover and other sacrificial rites of the Mosaic law, as well as in its figurative application both by Christ and Paul. (See below, 16:6, and compare Ex. 12:15, Lev. 2:11, 1 Cor. 5:6–8. Gal. 5:9.) The usage is indeed so uniform and easily accounted for from rational considerations, that nothing can outweigh it but the equally uniform judgment of interpreters and readers in all ages that this is an exception to the general rule, and that leaven, in this one place and its parallel (Luke 13:21), denotes the spreading or diffusive quality of truth and of the true religion. This alleged exception to so uniform an usage may seem less improbable if stated thus, that leaven, even in the other cases, is an emblem, not directly of corruption, but of fermentation and diffusion, and that this, which happens to be elsewhere applied only to false doctrine, or hypocrisy, or sin in general, is here no less properly applied to truth and goodness. The essential meaning of the symbol is unvaried, and the only difficulty in its applications is the very slight one which

arises from the circumstance, that we have one example of the favourable sense and nearly half a dozen of the other. If this be so, the usual interpretation is entitled to the preference, as the safest on account of its antiquity and general adoption, while intrinsically it is scarcely if at all less eligible than the other.

34. As these words do not necessarily relate to what was spoken upon any one occasion, they determine nothing as to the precise chronology of what precedes them, but might be considered as descriptive of our Saviour's customary method of instruction. The last clause must then be understood as meaning that he did not at the same time employ both the methods; or in other words, that when he taught in parables, he did not at the same time give the meaning in plain terms to the promiscuous multitudes, but only to his own disciples, in the wide sense of the term, in private and at their request, of which we have two instances in this one chapter (see above, on v. 10, and below on v. 36). The more obvious meaning of the clause, to wit, that he at no time taught the people without parables, is plainly contradicted by the whole course of the history before and afterwards. There is, however, a third explanation, which avoids this discrepancy no less than the first, and is perhaps more natural and easy, while it certainly agrees still better with the statement in v. 36, considered as relating to the time when the preceding parables were uttered. This explanation takes the last clause of the verse before us as referring only to that one occasion, and is recommended by its readily enabling us to hold fast the chronological as well as topical succession in this chapter, and at the same time to account for the crowding of so many parables in one discourse. It was the formal opening or inauguration of this method of instruction. See above, on v. 3, which he, therefore, exemplified by chosen samples, so that on this particular occasion, here remarked by the historian as a deviation from his ordinary practice, "he spake to the multitude in parables, and without a parable spake he not unto them."

35. Here again, as in 12:17, the evangelist pauses in his narrative to point out the fulfilment of an ancient prophecy. The one here cited is the second verse of the seventy-eighth Psalm. The form of the quotation implies a knowledge of the Septuagint version without a necessary dependance on it, the first clause being taken from it word for word, the other varying in every word except the preposition (πό) from. As the sense remains the same, this variation is important only as it shows the independence of the writer. The plural form, parables, occurring in both versions, is correct as representing a collective singular. The parallel term, riddles, translated in the Septuagint problems, is paraphrased by Matthew, hidden (things). Instead of utter, he employs a much stronger word, originally meaning to vomit or belch forth, but in later usage fairly representing the Hebrew verb, which means to pour forth, or to cause to flow. The concluding words, of old, are strengthened by the Seventy, from the beginning, and still more by Matthew, from the foundation of the world, but without a material change of meaning. These are here described as the words of a prophet, of the (well known) prophet, i. e. Asaph, who is named as the author in the title or inscription (Ps. 78:1), and spoken of in history (2 Chron. 29:30) as a seer, an ancient synonyme of prophet (1 Sam. 9:9). They seem at first sight inappropriate as an introduction to a psalm so purely historical; but this impression is removed when we consider, that the facts there stated had a typical significance and bearing on the advent and the reign of the Messiah, which is also the ground of what is here said by Matthew as to their fulfilment.

36. Here, for the first time since the beginning of this chapter, there is a distinct indication of immediate chronological succession. (See above, on vs. 24, 31, 33, 34.) Then, by itself, might be indefinitely used; but the succeeding words can only be referred to the multitudes mentioned in the first verse, and the house from which he there came forth. This establishes the oneness of the narrative from that point, and makes it in a high degree improbable, if not impossible, that any of the intervening parables were not delivered on the same occasion. (See above, on v. 34.) Sending away, or letting go, permitting to depart. The house, most probably the one where he resided at Capernaum, perhaps that of Simon and Andrew. (See above, on 8:14, and compare Mark 1:29.) His disciples, not the twelve alone, but "they that were about him with the twelve" (Mark 4:10), i. e. such as acknowledged his authority and owned him as a teacher come from God (John 3:2). As this was not an organized body, it might here be represented by a few, who in addition to the twelve continued with him, and presented this request for further explanation. Declare, literally, phrase (φράσον), i. e. express in other words, that we may understand it.

37. We have here a second model of parabolical interpretation from the lips of Christ himself, and like the former (see above on vs. 18–28), remarkable for clearness, brevity, and freedom from those fanciful inventions and infinitesimal minutiæ, which disfigure many uninspired expositions of these matchless lessons. Point by point, with one exception to be noticed presently, he goes through the parable, explaining its essential features in the fewest words possible. The (one) sowing the good seed, as related in v. 24. The Son of Man, our Lord himself as the Messiah, in his state of humiliation. (See above, on 8:20, 10:23, 11:19, 12:8, 32, 40.) This agrees with the past tense in v. 24, implying that the mixture represented in the parable had already taken place.

38. The field, in which the wheat and tares were both sown (vs. 24, 25), is the world, the present state of things, in the midst of which the church was to be planted. An apostle, writing at a later period, might have said the Church; but this was not yet organized upon its Christian basis, and is only mentioned rarely by prolepsis or anticipation. (See below, on 16:18, 18:17, the only two examples of the word κκλησία in the Gospels.) The children of the kingdom, its possessors, not by mere hereditary claim (as in 8:12), but by divine right and the grace of God. These are identified with the good seed, not as in the parable of the sower (see above, on v. 19), by a disregard of nice precision in the treatment of the figures, but in the strict sense of the terms, the good seed being really the emblem of the righteous. The wicked (one), the name applied in v. 19 to the Devil. His children, those partaking of his nature, and belonging to him, as the seed of the serpent (see above, on 3:7, 12:34), and destined to be sharers in his punishment (see below, on

25:41).

39. The enemy that sowed them, as related in the parable (v. 25). The Devil, slanderer, and false accuser (see above, on 4:1), just described by his moral quality as the Evil or Wicked One, i. e. pre-eminently wicked in himself, and in some sense the author of all sin in others. The act here ascribed to him is that of introducing his own children and dependents among the children of the kingdom, which must be within the kingdom, i. e. the pale of the visible church. This extraordinary juxtaposition is among the most remarkable conditions of the church in this world, and naturally prompts the inquiry why it is permitted. And yet it is precisely here that our Saviour's exposition passes over a prominent feature of the parable, and leaves it unexplained. The proposition of the servants to destroy the tares, and the refusal of the master, with the reason for it, are omitted in the commentary before us. We are, therefore, under the necessity of reasoning from analogy, and trying to explain this passage for ourselves, upon the principles propounded and exemplified by Christ himself. If the field is the world, or the present mixed condition of the church, and if the good and bad seed are the children of the kingdom and the wicked one respectively, the meaning of the dialogue in vs. 28–30 would appear to be, that such a mixture of the righteous and the wicked in society is not to be entirely avoided, and that any violent attempt at separation would be worse in its effects than their continued coexistence. The bearing of this doctrine upon church discipline has been a subject of dispute for ages. In the Church of Rome it has been made a question whether the tares and the children of the wicked one specifically mean heretics, and if so, whether their excision is forbidden in this passage. The most moderate have come to the conclusion that heresy is only one of many evils here denoted, and that excommunication is permitted where the wheat and tares are easily distinguished, the very thing which the parable itself represents as impossible. Among Protestants the question has been agitated, how far rigid discipline is reconcilable with what is here taught. Some reject it altogether, but the more judicious and considerate have always held in substance, that although the church is bound to aim at perfect purity, she is not to expect it as the product of mere discipline, nor ever to employ brute force, ecclesiastical or secular, in order to secure it. The entire separation of the two discordant elements, like that of the wheat and tares in the parable before us, however much to be desired and sought, is not to be expected till the harvest. This our Lord explains to be the end or consummation of the world, not the word so rendered in the verse preceding, though substantially synonymous, the one relating more to time, the other to place, but both denoting the present or existing state of things, including the material universe with its inhabitants (κόσμος), and time with its great divisions, whether natural or moral (α ὼν). Of these two worlds, or of the world in these senses, the completion, consummation, winding up, denouement, or catastrophe, will be coincident if not identical. Then comes the time of clear discrimination and of final separation between those who are now mingled in society and even joined in one religious profession. The reapers in this harvest, or the agents in this sifting and dividing process, are to be, and are already by divine appointment angels (not the angels), i. e. spirits of a higher order, and exempt from all the complications and corruptions of our mortal state.

40. The resemblance is to hold good, not only with respect to the discrimination, but to the destruction following. The correspondence here between the sign and the thing signified is pointed out more fully and distinctly in the form of a regular comparison. Therefore, since the points already mentioned correspond with such exactness, so must the remainder. As the tares are gathered and burnt with fire, a fact not expressed in the parable, but clearly implied in the command to bind them into bundles for that purpose. (See above, on v. 30.) So, in like manner, with a similar coincidence between the sign and the thing signified. It shall be in the end of this world, i. e. of the present creation and of time, not only as to what has been already mentioned, but in all that is to follow.

41. The sovereign agent in this final process is the Son of Man, the same despised Messiah who was now addressing them. The angels are now spoken of as his angels, subject to his orders and employed in executing his commands. Send forth, officially, the verb from which apostle is derived. (See above, on 10:5, 16, 40.) The angels are on that great day to act as his apostles, his official aids and representatives. Scandals, the noun corresponding to the verb in 5:29, 30, 11:6, and strictly meaning snares or stumbling-blocks, whatever one falls into or falls over in his walk through life. It here means guilty causes or occasions of transgression on the part of others. That the reference is to persons, though the noun is neuter, may be gathered from the nature of the case, no other objects being liable to punishment, and also from the words that follow, them that do (those doing) iniquity or lawlessness, whatever is at variance with the law as the expression of the will of God. (See above, on 7:3.) The only question as to this last phrase is whether it describes the same class as the word before it or another quite distinct. If the former, we must render the words, making iniquity, i. e. causing and promoting it in others, and the and must indicate a simple apposition, nearly equivalent to even, as it sometimes does. If we adopt the other and more obvious construction, and retains its usual connective force, and doing iniquity means practising, committing it, as something different from causing it in others.

42. This is a simple but fearful amplification of the figure in v. 40. The wicked, like the tares, are to be cast into a furnace of fire, i. e. heated, burning, and destructive. As the form of the threatening is here suggested by the burning of the tares at the harvest, it may be considered as a figure for the most intense, intolerable sufferings, whether caused by material fire or not. It is worthy of remark, however, that the fire is here mentioned, not in the parable but in the exposition, and that if the Son of Man, the world, the children of the kingdom and the wicked one, the end of the world, and the angels, must be strictly understood, it would be arbitrary and confusing to suppose this one figure to denote itself, or in other words, that the figurative fire of the parable (v. 40) means a figurative

fire in the explanations of the verse before us. But even granting a distinction, as in all the other cases, we have still no certain intimation of what is meant by a furnace of fire at the end of the world, beyond the vague but terrible idea of unutterable torment, which is further expressed, as in 8:12, by the natural tokens of extreme distress, weeping and gnashing of teeth.

43. Then, when the wicked have been thus disposed of, shall the last stroke of the parable be verified, the gathering of the wheat into the barn (v. 30). This is here expressed by another figure, as the only explanation possible. The good seed, wheat, or children of the kingdom, are here called the righteous, as conformed to the divine will and enjoying his favour. Their future blessedness and glory is described as a resplendent shining like that of the sun, which may include not only the extreme of splendour but the accessory notion of imparting light to others. This glory is to take place in the kingdom of their Father, implying their hereditary and filial claim to it, and possibly the great mysterious truth revealed in 1 Cor. 15:24, that when all Christ's enemies have been subdued, "he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father."

44. The preceding verse forms so solemn a conclusion to the previous discourse, that one is tempted to regard what follows as a sort of appendix, adding certain parables not uttered on the same occasion, but appropriate to the writer's purpose of exemplifying this peculiar method of instruction as practised by the Saviour. But besides the general presumption in favour of continuous succession, and the reasons which have been already given for his uttering so many parables at once (see above, on vs. 34, 36), we have below (in v. 53) another statement, that can only be referred to a particular occasion, and would seem to imply the continuity and chronological arrangement of the intervening matter. It is safer, therefore, in the absence of all countervailing evidence, to hold fast to the natural presumption that the parables were uttered as they are recorded. If so, it will follow from v. 36, that those remaining were addressed to the disciples in the house, after the explanation of the Tares. But this is not at all unnatural, and is even rendered highly probable by an expression used below (in v. 51). Again does not mean that he said so on a different occasion, but that in the same discourse, he thus distinguished the successive parables, in order to avoid confusing the disciples by so rapid an enumeration (see the previous use of the same adverb in 4:7, 8, 5:33, and compare John 16:16, 17, 19:22–28. Rom. 15:10, 11, 12. Heb. 1:5, 6, 2:13, 4:5, 7). The kingdom of heaven has of course the same sense as in all the previous parables, (See above, on vs. 19, 24, 31, 33.) Is like, the same expression that is used in the parables of Mustard Seed and Leaven, more indefinite than that in the Tares, and not confined to any period in the progress of the kingdom. What is really here likened to a hidden treasure is the personal possession and enjoyment of the kingdom with its honours and immunities. The form of expression is not to be so strictly understood as in v. 38, but more so than in v. 19, where the character described is said to be himself the seed sown. Here, again, the image is derived from the experience of common life, such occasional discoveries of treasure being common in all ages, and in some productive of insane avidity, indulged in life-long searches after gold. It is not improbable that in the case before us there is reference to some recent case of treasure-trove, familiar to Christ's hearers. This hypothesis is favoured by the form of the original, in which the first verb is an aorist, finding hid (again), referring to what actually happened at a certain time, and thus determining the verbs that follow to be graphic presents, calling up the scene as actually passing, and not vague descriptions of what men usually do on such occasions. The case described is that of hidden treasure found, and then concealed again in order to secure it until legally acquired by purchase. The immorality, which some have seen in this transaction, even if real, would not vitiate the parable, which makes the man a model or an example only as to one point, the avidity with which he gave up all in order to secure this treasure. This makes the application easy, even in the absence of a formal exposition by our Lord himself, to the eagerness with which men ought to seek, and often do seek, for admission to the kingdom of heaven. (See above, on 6:33.) This, it will be observed, is an idea not directly suggested by any of the preceding parables, and therefore not a needless repetition, but an instructive variation of the one great theme; a circumstance which favours the opinion, that these parables were all delivered on the same occasion.

4546. Again, once more, to give you still another sample of this method of instruction. This parable resembles that before it very nearly, and was probably suggested by it; but they differ in one interesting point, the first representing the fortuitous discovery of treasure without seeking it, the second the success of a professional pearl-merchant in discovering a sample of extraordinary value, after which he does precisely like the other, i. e. gives up all in order to secure this single acquisition. While they both agree in this essential point, they differ as to the occasion, which admits again of easy application to men's conduct with respect to religion or salvation, when convinced of its paramount necessity and value, one apparently by accident or sudden revelation, another as the fruit of long-continued search, yet both alike renouncing all in order to secure it. The word translated merchant properly denotes a shipper or importer, but in later Greek a trader or trafficker in general, either of which senses would be here appropriate.*

4748. Our Lord concludes the series of his parables with one resembling that of the Tares in meaning and design, yet differing from it in its images or figures, which are borrowed not from husbandry but fishing. This circumstance may help us to account for the addition of a parable so similar in import to one previously uttered on the same occasion. The mere difference of figurative dress would not sufficiently explain this, since the others might as easily have been thus varied. But he may have been induced, at least in part, by a desire to bring home this method of instruction to those of his disciples who had formerly been fishermen; and this we know to have been true of the four first who were called to actual attendance on him (see above, on 4:18–22). As they were to be fishers of men (4:19), such a parable as this would be peculiarly appropriate to their position. There may even be allusion to the very

draught of fishes which accompanied the call of these disciples, as described by Luke (5:1–11), which would account for the aorists in v. 48, more numerous than in v. 44, and here retained in the translation. The net here meant is a large seine or drag-net thrown into the sea and then drawn to the shore. Every kind, a popular hyperbole for various kinds, not only bad and good in quality, but actually different species. The scene so vividly presented in v. 48, is no doubt one often witnessed on the shore of Genessaret at the present day. Bad, literally rotten or decayed, but here used in a secondary wide sense, as in 7:17, 18, 12:33 above, where it is applied to living and productive but worthless trees. Vessels, a generic term, including baskets and all other receptacles employed for such a purpose.

49, 50. To this last parable our Lord seems to add an explanation; but it is only by repeating that appended to the Tares with little variation. The first clause of v. 49 is the last clause of v. 40, with the omission of the word this before world; and even this slight change is wanting in the Vatican and Beza copies. The remainder of v. 49 is only an abridgment of v. 41, from which the Son of Man, as the prime agent, and the particular description of the wicked, are to be supplied. The sending of the angels there corresponds to their going forth here to execute their dread commission. The only new trait is the final separation of the wicked from among the righteous, which is really the very burden of the other parable, and necessarily implied in the interpretation of it. v. 50 is identical with v. 42, thus giving to the passage a rhythmical or strophical unity by means of a refrain or burden. This not only finishes the proof that what we have before us is a regular discourse delivered at one time, but restores the solemn and sonorous close which seemed to have been lost by the addition of the last three parables. It was for the sake of this conclusion that he added a brief explanation of the net, and not because it needed formal exposition more than those preceding it.

51. This verse discloses why the last three parables were added after the interpretation of the Tares, namely, as a sort of exercise or lesson in the heavenly art which he was teaching his disciples. Having given only an apparent explanation of the last, and none at all of the two others, he now asks them whether they had understood all these things, i. e. all these parables, not only those which he had formally expounded, but the others, also, and they answer no doubt truly, that they had, thus showing that his gracious condescension was not unavailing.

52. Having taught them, both by precept and example, the divine art of parabolical instruction, and ascertained, by the inquiry in v. 51, that the experiment had been successful, he now intimates the use which he expected them to make of all such acquisitions. As he fed them, so they were to feed others, with the bread of truth and saving knowledge, and for this end were to lay it up in store and to dispense it, not indiscriminately or at random, but with a sound discretion and a bountiful economy, consulting the necessities of every person, and the exigencies of the times and seasons, so as to provide not only with abundance but variety for all whom they were called to serve. All this is beautifully set forth by the figure of a householder (i. e. a housekeeper or the head of a family) drawing from his treasury (or storehouse) things both new and old. Such a housekeeper must be every scribe, i. e. every official or professional expounder of the Scriptures, who is (not merely instructed but) discipled, introduced as a disciple, into the kingdom of heaven, or the church of the new dispensation, and employed there as a teacher. An allusion to the actual conversion of educated Scribes, as already past or future, such as that of Paul, although not essential to our Saviour’s meaning, may appear to be suggested by his speaking of one who is a scribe already, being introduced into the church as a disciple. But the mere order of the words does not forbid the supposition that the discipleship precedes the scribeship. There is no one sentence in the Bible more instructive as to the duties of the ministry considered as a teaching office. It is connected by a therefore, or for this (cause), with the previous context, as the practical improvement of the whole preceding lesson in the art of parabolical instruction.

53. This verse affords a final proof that the preceding parables were actually uttered upon one occasion, by referring to them all collectively (these parables) without distinction or discrimination; by saying that he finished them, in Greek an aorist referring to some one time; and by adding that he then departed thence, implying unity of place also. Here the chapter should have ended, as already too long for convenience but containing one complete and undivided context, all relating to our Saviour’s parables, and forming a fine counterpart or supplement to the previous example of his teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. By some inexplicable error of judgment, the divider of the text gratuitously added to the length of this division, and destroyed its unity of subject, by subjoining an occurrence which has no direct connection with what goes before.

54. This verse is not to be read as a direct continuation of the one before it, although actually printed so in some editions. The and at the beginning is the particle used even in the opening of books in the Old Testament (see above, on 9:2), and, therefore, can prove nothing as to the connection here. And coming, as in many other cases, means no more than coming once, or at a certain time not specified. There is, therefore, no discrepancy between this narrative and Mark’s (6:1–6), which gives the following occurrence in immediate succession to the raising of the daughter of Jairus, which Matthew has recorded long before (see above, on 9:18–26). The truth is, that neither of the two evangelists asserts an immediate consecution of events, but only, at the most, that one happened after the other, without saying that no other event intervened. It is only by neglecting this distinction that most charges of discrepancy between the Gospels can be rendered even plausible. Not the least striking and affecting part of Christ’s humiliation was the treatment which he met with from his nearest friends, or those who might have been supposed to be such, either from natural relationship or from long association and acquaintance. We have already met with several indications of imperfect faith and narrow views upon the part of such; but the history of his mission would have been defective without a more detailed account of one

extraordinary scene, in which the same thing took place on a larger scale and still more publicly. This was his reception on returning to the place where he had spent his childhood, and from which he came to be baptized in Jordan (see above, on 2:23). The precise chronology of this transaction is of little moment, except as involved in the question of its identity with that recorded in a different connection by Luke (4:16–31). As the scene of both is Nazareth, and the principal incident in both our Lord's rejection by his old acquaintances and neighbours there, the first presumption is, of course, in favour of their sameness. But this presumption of identity, is happily removed by Matthew, who affords a parallel to both the others in very different connections, thus establishing the fact of their diversity. Luke's account of the affair at Nazareth closes (4:31) with a statement that he went thence to Capernaum, another town of Galilee, which formal and particular description shows that he is speaking of our Lord's removal to that place as the appointed centre of his future operations. Now this same removal is recorded with more brevity by Matthew, in immediate connection with our Lord's withdrawing from Judea into Galilee on John's imprisonment (see above, on 4:12, 13). But here, much later in his narrative, he records a visit and rejection of our Lord at Nazareth, in terms almost identical with those of Mark (6:1–6). It was, therefore, a second occurrence of the same kind, which is so far from being in itself improbable, that it would have been strange and out of keeping with the whole tenor of the Saviour's conduct, if in the course of his perpetual circuits through all Galilee, he never had revisited his old home and renewed the invitations which the people there had once rejected. Luke's silence in relation to this second visit is explained by his particular account of the first, whereas Matthew, having merely noted the removal, without any indication of the reasons, could describe the second visit without irksome repetition. The different connection in which Mark and Matthew introduce this narrative is unimportant, as the mere chronology was nothing to their purpose of exemplifying the reception and effect of our Lord's ministry in various cases. His country (fatherland, πατρὶς from πατήρ), not in the wide sense now attached to this term, but in that of native place, ancestral residence. This description applied elsewhere (John 4:46) to all Galilee, as distinguished from Judea, is here used, with equal propriety, to distinguish one town of Galilee from another. In the same sense that Galilee was his native province, Nazareth was his native town; for though not actually born in either, his parents (Luke 2:27, 41) had resided there before his birth (Luke 1:26, 27, 2:4), and he had been brought up there from his infancy (2:23, Luke 2:51, 52), so that he was universally regarded as a Galilean and a Nazarene. In their synagogue, or stated meeting for religious worship, the Greek word, like its English equivalent and several others, such as church, court, school, being sometimes, but not necessarily or always, transferred to the place and even to the building. For a clear view of this natural transition, compare Luke 7:5. where it could not be the meeting that was built, with Acts 13:43. where it could not be the building that was broken up. We find here exemplified two of our Lord's habits, that of personal attendance on the synagogue worship, and that of official or authoritative teaching upon such occasions. This was allowed partly in accordance with a customary license of instruction, not entirely unknown among the modern Jews, but chiefly on account of Christ's miraculous credentials as a teacher come from God and recognized as such by other teachers even of the highest rank when free from party-spirit and malignant prepossession. So that they were struck (with wonder or amazement), the same phrase and descriptive of the same effect as that recorded in 7:28. but very different as to the conclusion drawn from it. For in the former case it led the hearers to contrast him as a teacher with the Scribes very much to his advantage, while in this his old acquaintances compare his miracles and teachings with his humble origin and early residence among themselves, as a pretext for disparaging if not rejecting his pretensions. This unfriendly prepossession is expressed indirectly by their sneering questions. Whence to this (one) this wisdom, and these powers, thereby acknowledging his inspiration, but not without a sneer at his wisdom as belonging to another rather than himself. Nor do they venture to deny his miracles, but by wondering at them really bear witness to them. This is only one of many proofs that the reality of Christ's miraculous performances was never called in question either by his unbelieving friends or by his most malignant enemies (see above, on 12:24). That this admission left them inexcusable both intellectually and morally for not receiving Jesus as the true Messiah, far from proving that they could not thus have spoken, only shows that their affections, envy, jealousy, and malice, were too strong for their rational convictions, so that in the very act of wondering at the proofs of his divine legation, they rejected and denied it. This inconsistency, instead of being "unpsychological" or contradicted by the laws of human nature, is continually verified in every day's experience, contributing with many other proofs to show the irrationality of unbelief and sin in general.

55, 56. The general expression of contemptuous incredulity is followed by a still more invidious allusion to his connections and associations, equivalent to saying, 'we know all about this boasted wonder worker and instructor, who and what he is, and whence he drew his origin, that is, among ourselves, to whom he now assumes such vast superiority.' This is the language not of reason but of passion, since the circumstances mentioned only served to enhance the proof of that superiority which they repined at, though they could not question or deny it. Is not this the carpenter's son? The Greek word sometimes means an artisan or artificer in general, which some lexicographers consider its original import as indicated by its etymology (connecting it with τἐχνη, art), and by its combination with the names of certain metals, to denote those who are constantly employed about them. Others explain this as a mere occasional extension of the usual and strict sense, which is that of any workman in wood, and still more specifically, a carpenter or joiner, which an uniform tradition represents as Joseph's occupation. It is not here spoken of as even a comparatively mean employment, that of building having always been regarded as among the most respectable and even intellectual of manual occupation. There was no intention, on the part of those here speaking, to put Jesus lower than themselves, but simply on a level with them. What they tacitly repudiate is not his claim to be their equal, but their better or superior in an infinite degree. This pretension, though attested by acknowledged miracle and inspiration, they endeavour, in a natural but foolish manner, to invalidate

by urging his original equality in rank and occupation with themselves. Or rather it is not an argumentative objection, but a mere expression of surprise, like that which would be felt, though in a less degree, in any obscure neighbourhood, at the appearance of an old acquaintance in the new condition of a rich man or a nobleman. The immemorial dispute as to the brothers of the Lord has been already mentioned (see above, on 12:46). Those who interpret that expression as denoting brothers in the strict sense, i. e. sons of the same mother (fratres uterinos), lay great stress upon the passage now before us and its parallel in Mark 16:3. But even taken in the strictest sense it only proves that these were sons of Joseph, not necessarily by Mary, but perhaps by a former marriage, a traditional interpretation running back into remote antiquity. Others insist upon the wide use of brother, in the oriental idiom and in Scripture, to denote almost any near relation, whether natural or moral, such as that of fellow-men, otherwise called neighbours (5:22), that of friends and associates (5:47), that of fellow-Jews (Acts 2:29), that of fellow-christians (Acts 1:16), that of fellow-ministers (1 Cor. 1:1). A word admitting of such various applications cannot of itself determine which is meant in any given case. Nor is there any principle or general law of language which forbids our giving to the term as here used the same meaning that it obviously has in Gen. 13:8, 14:14, 16. that of a near relative or kinsman. The presumption, however, here and elsewhere, is in favour of the strict construction; nor would any have doubted that the brothers of Christ were the sons of Mary, but for certain adventitious and collateral objections to that obvious interpretation. These are chiefly two, the one of great antiquity, the other of more recent date. The first is a repugnance to admit that Mary was the mother of any but of Christ himself. This repugnance, although found in connection with many superstitious notions in the Church of Rome, is not confined to it. Not only do the symbols or standards of the Lutheran and of some Reformed churches teach the perpetual virginity of Mary as an article of faith, but multitudes of Protestant divines and others, independently of all creeds and confessions, have believed, or rather felt, that the selection of a woman to be the mother of the Lord, carries with it as a necessary implication that no others could sustain the same relation to her; and that the selection of a virgin still more necessarily implied that she was to continue so; for if there be nothing in the birth of younger children inconsistent with her maternal relation to the Saviour, why should there be any such repugnance in the birth of older children likewise? If for any reason, whether known to us or not, it was necessary that the mother of our Lord should be a virgin when she bore him, what is there absurd or superstitious in assuming as a part of the divine plan that she should remain a virgin till her death? If, on the other hand, there be no real incongruity in holding that the mother of our Lord was afterwards an ordinary wife and parent, what incongruity would there have been in putting this extraordinary honour on the married state, by choosing one who was already in the ordinary sense a wife and mother? The question is not why it did not please. God thus to order it, with which we have no right to intermeddle, but why the same minds which regard the perpetual virginity of Mary as a superstition, shrink with equal superstition from the bare suggestion that Christ might have been born of any but a virgin. The same feeling which revolts from one hypothesis in some revolts from both hypotheses in others, and the difference between them, as to this repugnance, is reduced to that of one and two, before and after, or at most to that of a consistent uniformity and arbitrary variation. After all, it is not so much a matter of reason or of faith as of taste and sensibility; but these exert a potent influence on all interpretation, and the same repugnance, whether rational or merely sentimental, which led fathers and reformers to deny that Christ had brothers in the ordinary sense, is likely to produce the same effect on multitudes forever until the question has received some new and unequivocal solution. The other and more recent ground of opposition to the strict sense of brothers in the case before us is the theory, by some connected with it, of extraordinary honours paid to one of these uterine brethren as such, though not one of the twelve apostles, i. e. James the brother of the Lord, whom Paul groups with John and Peter as a pillar of the church, and even names him first in the enumeration, which is natural enough if he was one of the apostles, and the one who specially presided in the church at Jerusalem; but if (as many now maintain) he was one of the Saviour's unbelieving brethren (John 7:5), converted by our Lord's appearance to him after his resurrection (1 Cor. 15:7), and then placed upon a level with the twelve on account of his relationship to Christ, the apostolical prerogative is sensibly impaired, and the door thrown open for an endless license of conjecture as to the men who were apostles, although not so dignified by Christ himself. An unwillingness to come to this conclusion has undoubtedly confirmed some in the old belief, that the brother of the Lord, of whom Paul speaks, was James the Less or James the son of Alpheus, at once an apostle and a relative of Christ, whether he were such as a nephew of the Virgin Mary, or of Joseph, or a son of Joseph by a former marriage. The additional hypothesis, that James and his brothers lived with Joseph after the decease of their own father, is not a necessary consequence of what has been already said, but merely an ingenious explanation of the fact that these brothers of Christ appear in attendance on his mother as members of her household. (See above, on 12:46. and compare John 2:12. Acts 1:14.) In favour of identifying James the brother of the Lord (Gal. 1:19) with James the son of Alpheus (see above, on 10:3.) is the singular coincidence of names between the lists of the apostles and the passage now before us. In all we find a James and a Simon near together, and in Luke's two catalogues a Jude or Judas (not Iscariot), making three names common to the list of the apostles and of Christ's brothers. This may no doubt be fortuitous, the rather as the names were common, and the fourth here mentioned, which was less so, does not appear in any list on the apostles. Still on most minds the coincidence will have some influence, in spite of the objection that in John 7:5. we are expressly told that his brethern did not believe on him. But if brethren means his near relations, surely some of them might be apostles, while the rest were unbelievers, even granting, what may well be questioned, that by unbelief in John 7:5. we are to understand an absolute rejection of his claims and doctrines, rather than a weak contracted faith, with which he seems to charge his mother upon one, occasion (John 2:4), and the twelve on many. (See above, on 6:30, 8:26. and below, on 14:31, 16:8.) His sisters, is of course to be interpreted according to his brothers, the wide and narrow senses being applicable equally to either sex. Here with us (literally at us, close to us), i. e. still resident at Nazareth, which probably

remained the permanent home even of his mother.

57. Offended in him, i. e. made to stumble, or without a figure led into sin and error with respect to him. For the origin and meaning of the Greek term see above, on v. 21. Instead of resenting this reception as a personal offence and insult, which it certainly was, our Lord treats it merely as a single instance of a general and familiar fact, that God's most highly honoured instruments and agents are not only liable to be dishonoured by their fellow-men, but to be least respected on the part of those who know them best, and who would seem to be particularly bound to do them honour. The implied reason is that strangers judge of such a person only by his public acts or his official conduct, while his friends and neighbours, even the most friendly, have their minds so occupied with minor matters, that the greater are obscured if not distorted to their view. It is like looking at some noble structure from a distance where itself alone is visible, and near at hand, where the adjoining houses both distract the eye and lower the main object; so that he who sees the most in one sense sees the least in another. This familiar lesson of experience, and as such reduced to a proverbial form, is here applied especially to prophets, either because it had been actually verified in their experience more than that of others, or because it was our Lord's prophetic ministry and office which had been so contemptuously treated by his countrymen.

58. The sad effect of this reception was the paucity of miracles at Nazareth, compared with those at other towns of Galilee, particularly at Capernaum (see above, on 8:16, 9:35). The people, having no faith in his healing power, or disdaining to receive the favours of one whom they knew so well, and were so unwilling to acknowledge as superior, did not present themselves as in other places. This is certainly more probable and pleasing than the supposition that our Lord, in this case, refused what he seems to have granted in all others.

CHAPTER 14

THE next incident recorded is the death of John the Baptist, introduced to explain the effect of our Lord's miracles on Herod (1–12), and followed by a new and most stupendous miracle, the feeding of five thousand (13–21), which was followed in its turn by that of walking on the water (22–27), to which Matthew adds the attempt of Peter to do the same, omitted in the other gospels (28–32), and concludes with a brief statement of our Lord's ensuing visit to the region of Gennesaret, and of the miracles performed there (33–36). It will be perceived, from the detailed interpretation of this chapter, that the chronological arrangement is adhered to with unusual exactness, and that it winds up what may be regarded as the first great division of the history, the second opening with a new series of assaults, and a fresh concourse of the multitudes to see and hear him.

1. This was Herod Antipas, the second son of Herod the Great (2:1, Luke 1:5), and bearing the abbreviated name of his grandfather, Antipater, the Edomite or Idumean who had been the minister or confidential counsellor of Hyrcanus II., the last of the Maccabees or Hasmonean Kings, under whom, or rather through whom, Pompey the Great obtained possession of the Holy Land, and virtually, although not ostensibly, reduced it to a Roman province. Antipater, however, still continued to enjoy the favour of the conquerors, and his son Herod, after fleeing from the country to escape a sentence of the Sanhedrim, returned in triumph, having being acknowledged by the Senate, and crowned in the Capitol as king of the Jews. After reigning many years as a vassal of the empire, he bequeathed his kingdom to his three sons Archelaus, Antipas, and Philip, the first of whom was soon displaced by Roman governors, while both the others reigned much longer, as tributary sovereigns, but without the royal title, for which Augustus substituted that of tetrarch, which originally signified the ruler of a fourth part, or one of four associated rulers, as in ancient Galatia, but was afterwards applied in a generic sense to any ruler, and especially to tributary kings, immediately dependent on the Roman emperor. Hence Antipas, though usually called the tetrarch (14:1, Luke 3:1, 19, 9:7, Acts 13:1), is by Mark repeatedly described as king, which, though it seems at first sight an inaccuracy, really evinces his exact acquaintance with the titular rank of Herod, both in common parlance and in the actual arrangements of the empire. This prince, whose dominions comprised Galilee, Samaria, and Peræa, resided usually at Tiberias, a place from which the sea of Galilee derived one of its names (see above, on 4:18), but which is not itself named in the New Testament, perhaps because our Saviour did not visit it, in order to avoid precipitating the catastrophe or crisis of his history, by being brought into collision with the court or person of this wicked ruler. But although they had not met, Herod, as might have been expected, heard the fame, literally, (hearing) of him, first by means of his own words and deeds incessantly reported far and wide by those who witnessed them, although this process was in some degree retarded by occasional injunctions not to make him known, and then by the preaching and the miracles of the twelve apostles who were sent forth for the very purpose.

2. The effect produced by this increasing fame of Jesus on the mind of Herod, although strange, is not incredible, but true to nature and experience. His conclusion was that this was John the Baptist, who was indeed dead, but as the conscience-stricken king imagined, had been raised from the dead, from among them, their condition and society, not from death as an abstraction or a mere condition without reference to persons. The doctrine of a resurrection, although veiled, or only partially disclosed in the Old Testament, was now an article of faith with all the Jews except the Sadducees, who seem to have rejected it on philosophical rather than scriptural grounds. Even Herod, who seems elsewhere to be called a Sadducee (see Mark 8:15), was either less incredulous

on this point, or was scared out of his unbelief by guilty fear. This idea was the more strange because John performed no miracle (John 10:41), and therefore miracles could be no proof of his resuscitation. But even as to this point the evangelist suggests without developing an explanation. Therefore, literally, for (or an account of) this, i. e. because he has appeared again, with some new message or authority, perhaps to punish those who would not hear him, or who slew him when he came before. Such an imagination was not wholly destitute of colour, since the prophecy of Malachi respecting John suggests the idea of successive advents, which might well be misconceived by Herod as relating to distinct appearances of one and the same person. (See above, on 11:10, 14.) The expressions of the last clause are particularly strong in the original. For this (cause) energize the powers in him, i. e. miraculous or superhuman powers, not only show forth themselves (which conveys too little, and is neither the exact idea nor the form of the original), but are busy, active, energetic, which last is a word of kindred origin with that here used. The English version gives to powers the secondary meaning which it sometimes has of miracles, or mighty works, as the effects and proofs of superhuman power (see above, on 13:54, 58); but the primary meaning is entitled to the preference as such and on account of its conjunction with a verb requiring it, as may be seen from the change which the translators have been forced to make in it, in order to retain their customary version of the noun, since a miracle cannot be said to act or to be active, which can be asserted only of the power that produces it. All that need be added as to this point is that, out of twenty places where the same Greek verb occurs in the New Testament, this and the parallel passage in Mark (6:14) are the only ones in which it is not strictly rendered as expressive of efficient action. Thus explained the phrase before us is still more significant of Herod's guilty fears, occasioned by the very rumour of our Saviour's miracles, and uttered to his servants, literally, boys, or young men, for which usage see above, on 8:6, 12:18.

3. One of the characteristics of a well-ordered history, as distinguished from mere chronicles or annals, is the way in which the writer interweaves his materials instead of simply throwing them together, going back to take up what has been allowed to drop, and introducing topics even out of their precise chronological arrangement, when required to complete or to illustrate the main narrative. The best historians in every language are remarkable for this constructive skill, which is rather natural than artificial, and is, therefore, often greatest where it shows the least. Some of the best samples of this quality are furnished by the sacred writers, whose simplicity is not, as some imagine, the effect of ignorance and inexperience, but of perfect skill; their artlessness is not opposed to art but to artifice, and often where the condescending critic pities the deficiency of purpose and coherent plan, it is the perfectness of both which has deceived him. Many instances of this kind are afforded by the gospels, one of which is now before us, in the different but equally artistic mode in which the writers introduce the narrative of John's imprisonment. Matthew and Mark defer it till they come to speak of Herod's terror when he heard of Jesus, where they are naturally led to give the causes of that strange impression by relating the whole story in connection. Luke relates the perplexity of Herod in the same way, but had no occasion to recount his previous treatment of the Baptist, having recorded it already in his narrative of John's appearance and official ministry. Now as both these methods are entirely natural and in accordance with the theory and practice of the best historians, and while the difference may serve to show the independence of the writers who exhibit it, the charge of incoherence against either is as groundless as against the best digested portions of Polybius or Gibbon. The for at the beginning of this verse refers to the phrase risen from the dead in the one preceding. To one acquainted with the previous facts this expression would need explanation, and Matthew now proceeds to give it. Laid hold, literally, seizing (or arresting), the verb explained above (on 9:25, 12:11) as denoting either violent or friendly seizure. Bound, either in the strict sense of fastened, chained, or in the wide one of confined, imprisoned, which the Greek sometimes seems to have. In prison, literally guard or ward, which may either mean the place or the condition of confinement. For (on account of) Herodias, the daughter of Aristobulus, son of Herod the Great, was married by her grandfather to his son Philip, not the tetrarch mentioned in Luke 3:1, but another, who appears to have occupied no public station. Leaving him she married, in direct violation of the law, her uncle and brother-in-law Herod Antipas, who had divorced his own wife the daughter of Aretas, an Arabian king, supposed to be the same of whom Paul speaks in one of his epistles (2 Cor. 11:32). This divorce involved him in a war from which he could be extricated only by the Roman arms. Enough has now been said to show the character not only of Herodias and of Antipas, but also of the whole Herodian race, whose history is stained with many odious imputations of adultery and even incest under the pretence of marriage.

4. It is not without reason that Matthew speaks of John as being thrown into prison because Herod married Herodias; for John said to Herod, it is not lawful (or permitted) either by the law of nature or the law of Moses, to have (or hold in thy possession) the wife of thy own brother (Mark 6:18). There is something very pleasing in this incidental glimpse of John's consistency and faithfulness in reproving sin without respect of persons, to which Christ himself seems to refer when he describes John as neither a reed shaken by the wind, nor a courtier in soft raiment 11:7, 8, Luke 7:24, 25). This description is emphatically verified by John's appearance in the scene before us, where the austere preacher of the wilderness, who so severely scourged both Pharisees and Sudducees, though enemies and rivals, as alike belonging to the seed of the serpent (Gen. 3:15), or generation of vipers (3:7, 12:34), appears reproving Herod on his throne for his incestuous connection with his brother's wife, and all his other sins, of which this was the most flagrant and notorious, until he crowned all by his treatment of John himself (Luke 3:19, 20).

5. We learn from Mark (6:20) the interesting fact, that John the Baptist made a powerful impression upon Herod when brought into contact with him, and that Herod acknowledging his personal excellence and also his divine legation, kept or saved him for a time from the malice of Herodias, and did many things of those which John required or recommended. These promising appearances,

however, were but temporary. Herod, whose character was weak as well as wicked, soon yielded to the constant influence of Herodias, and at length desired himself to kill John, but was deterred by his immense popularity and credit as a prophet. These accounts are perfectly consistent with each other and with the statement of Josephus, that Herod was afraid of some political excitement as the fruit of John the Baptist's preaching. Such men, in such emergencies, are usually actuated, not by simple but by complex motives, and the choice made by the different historians is just which might have been expected from their several views and purposes in writing. Here again the German notion of a contradiction between Mark and Matthew, is entirly at variance with our principles and practice as to evidence in courts of justice.

6. Birth-day is in Greek a word used by the older writers to denote a day kept in memory of the dead, but in the later classics and the Greek of the New Testament, confounded with a kindred form (γενέθλια) which means a birth-day, or rather its festivities, and, therefore, written in the plural. The daughter of Herodias, whose name, according to Josephus, was Salome, danced, not with others but alone, the dancing here intended not so much resembling the favourite amusement of the social circle as the professional exhibition of the theatre, and, therefore, never practised in the east or among the Greeks and Romans by women of respectable condition, so that this display was really a sacrifice of dignity and decency, intended to prevail upon the king by the seductions of an art, which he probably admired, and in which Salome may have had extraordinary grace and skill. All this is in the form of a preamble or preliminary statement of the circumstances in which the event about to be recorded took place.

7. The extravagance of Herod's admiration was evinced by his inconsiderate and lavish promise or agreement. (For the usage of the Greek verb, see above, on 7:23, 10:32.) Ask (for herself) as the middle voice in Greek denotes. Not content with this rash promise, he confirmed it by an oath.

8. Before instructed, or rather, instigated, put forward, which agrees with Mark's account that there had been no previous understanding or agreement between them, but that the mother had employed the daughter's dancing to excite the liberality of Herod, whose infirmities she well knew, with the purpose of afterwards giving it the direction which she most desired and he least expected. The prompt laconic answer shows not only a predetermined plan, but a vindictive temper and an iron will. Her sanguinary purpose was expressed still more distinctly by requesting not the death of John the Baptist as a favour, but his head as a material gift. Here, on the spot, and by implication, now, without delay, as expressed in Mark (6:25). In a charger, an old English word for a large dish, so called according to the etymologists from the load that it sustained. The Greek word originally means a board; then among other special applications of the term, a wooden trencher; and then any dish, without regard to the material. As Mark does not record this as a part of the suggestion of Herodias, it was probably added by the daughter of her own accord, as a hideous jest implying an intention to devour it.

9. This abrupt return of Herod to his senses is almost as clear a sign of intellectual and moral weakness as his foolish promise and his wicked oath. It also shows the motive of the eager promptitude with which his offer was embraced and acted on. This single scene affords a glimpse into the private life and character of this abandoned couple, fearfully in keeping with the history of their family as given by Josephus, though a flattering and interested writer. But Herod's sorrow, although probably sincere, was not sufficient to undo the mischief which his levity had done. For this, two reasons seem to be assigned, his conscience and his honour, a mistaken sense of duty and a feeling of false shame in reference to those around him. For (because of, on account of) the oaths, which may be taken either as a generic plural, equivalent in meaning to the singular, or as an inexact description of the promise and the oath (distinctly mentioned in v. 7) by a name strictly applicable only to the latter; or as referring to an eager repetition of his oath, not unlikely to have happened although not recorded. And those reclining with him (at his table, as his guests), before whom he had made the promise, and who may have affected to applaud his generosity and gallantry, and, therefore, might be probably expected to despise his fickleness and meanness if he broke it. The simplest construction is to take these as two distinct motives, a sincere belief that he was bound to keep his oath, and a morbid cowardly regard to the opinion of his company. It may be, however, that the two are to be more completely blended, and the one allowed to qualify the other, when the sense will be, that he considered his oath binding because publicly uttered, and that if it had been sworn in private he would not have scrupled to retract or break it. In either case the oath was an unlawful one on two accounts, because it was gratuitous, and, therefore, taking the Lord's name in vain (5:34 Ex. 20:7), and because it was dangerous, granting in advance what he might have no right to give, as the event proved to his sorrow and his cost. Although he could not, therefore, have broken his promise without guilt, he could not keep it without greater guilt, a choice of evils in which no man has a right to implicate himself by rash engagements.

10. And sending he beheaded him, through an executioner (Mark 6:27), but virtually with his own hands (see above, on 8:5, 11:3), in the prison, which, according to Josephus, was the fortress of Machærus on the southern frontier of Peræa near the Dead Sea. We must, therefore, either assume an interval of several days between the order and the execution, or suppose this feast to have been held at the fortress, during a visit of the tetrarch to that part of his dominions. The objection to the latter supposition, which is otherwise the most satisfactory, is that the company described by Mark (6:21) are the lords, high captains, and chief estates, not of Herod's kingdom, but of Galilee, its north-western province, who would hardly be assembled on the southern frontier of Peræa, even if Herod would be likely to select a military station near the desert for the celebration of his birth-day.

11. This verse records the punctual performance of Herod's promise, and the exact execution of his orders, not excepting the dish, which with its ghastly contents was presented to the dancing-girl, whose fee it was and by her to her mother, who, although behind the scenes, was the principal actor, or at least the manager of this whole tragedy. It may here be added, that she afterwards involved her husband in a ruinous attempt at further elevation, which was thwarted by her brother Herod Agrippa (the one whose death is recorded in the twelfth chapter of Acts), and resulted in the exile both of Herod and Herodias, first to Gaul, and then to Spain, where the former and most probably the latter died. Salome, true to her Herodian instincts, was married twice to near relations; first to her father's brother (and namesake) Philip the Tetrarch (see above, on v. 3, and compare Luke 3:1), and after his death to Aristobulus, son of Herod king of Chalcis, to whom she bore three children. These facts are stated by Josephus, the contemporary Jewish historian; the story of her death, preserved by the Byzantine writer Nicephorus, is commonly regarded as a later fiction.

12. His disciples, which might possibly mean those of Jesus, can have no such meaning in Mark (6:29) where Jesus is not mentioned till the next verse, and in obvious connection with another subject. It must, therefore, signify John's own disciples, either those who had once been so before his imprisonment, or those who still professed to be so under some mistaken notion as to the relation which he bore to the Messiah, or some sceptical misgiving as to Jesus (see above, on 9:14, 11:2). It is possible however that it has a wider sense than either of those just proposed, and means some of the many who, without having ever been his personal attendants or disciples in the strict sense, had received his doctrines and his baptism. Of such disciples the whole land was full, and even on the outskirts of Peræa there could not be wanting some to pay this last respect to his decapitated body, and to announce his death to Jesus, who may now have been recognized by many for the first time as the Baptist's legitimate successor.

13. We learn from Mark (6:30) and Luke (9:10), that the retreat here mentioned was immediately subsequent, not only to the death of John the Baptist, but to the return of the twelve from their first mission, and was partly intended to afford them some repose after their labours. He withdrew, retreated (see above, on 2:12, 4:12, 9:24, 12:15) into a desert place by ship, or rather (in) a ship, i. e. the one provided by our Lord's direction for his own exclusive use (Mark 3:9). Apart, in private, privately, relating not so much to the mode of their departure as to its design and purpose. We know from other sources that the place to which they went was an unfrequented spot belonging to a town called Bethsaida (Luke 9:10), on the other (or eastern) side of the sea of Galilee or Tiberias (John 6:1). We are now approaching an occurrence so remarkable that all the four evangelists have given a detailed account of it. This not only furnishes a richer source of illustration than in any former case, but creates a strong presumption that the matter thus contained in all the gospels is, for some reason, worthy of particular attention. We have here a striking proof that our Saviour's popularity had not begun to wane when this occurrence took place; for not only did the multitudes still throng him when at home (Mark 6:31), but no sooner had he pushed off in his boat to seek a momentary respite elsewhere, than the masses put themselves in motion to pursue or rather to outstrip him, so that when he reached his place of destination they were ready to receive him, and soon surrounded him as if he had not left them. As they went on foot, it is of course implied that they went by land, and some regard this as the meaning of the Greek word (πὲζη) which is sometimes used in opposition to a voyage by water in Herodotus and Homer. But even in these cases the idea of a land-march or journey is rather necessarily implied than formally expressed. From the towns or cities in that region, not excluding the adjacent rural districts, which are generally represented as dependent on the nearest cities, as for instance in the case of Bethsaida and its desert (Luke 9:10). We learn from John (6:4) that all this happened just before the Passover, i. e. the third during our Lord's public ministry. (See John 2:13, 23.)

14. As these were not strangers or new-comers, but the same crowds who had pressed to see and hear him on the west side of the lake, their eager importunity excited our Lord's pity. Going out (from his boat, or from the place of his retirement, which however he had scarcely reached, as they outwent him) he saw much people (literally, crowd or concourse), and was moved with compassion toward (or over) them, the same peculiar idiom that was used above in 9:36, and there explained. What excited his divine and human sympathy was not of course their numbers or their physical condition, but their spiritual destitution. At the view of this representative multitude, drawn from so many quarters, and perhaps swelled by the yearly stream of pilgrims to the Passover (John 6:4), our Lord began without delay to teach them (Mark 6:34), thereby showing what he reckoned their most urgent want, and also that although it was his miracles of healing that had prompted them to follow him (John 6:2), they were not without some just view of the intimate relation of his wonders to his doctrines, or at least not unwilling to receive instruction from the same lips which commanded with authority the most malignant demons and diseases.

15. When his discourse was ended, or perhaps while it was yet in progress, his disciples, i. e. the apostles (Luke 9:12) began to be uneasy at the presence of so vast a multitude in a place which had been chosen for the very reason that it was secluded and remote from thoroughfares, though not cut off from all communication with the surrounding cultivated country. Evening being come, a verb employed before (8:16) in reference to the lapse of time, and there explained. His disciples came to him, probably while he was stlli engaged in teaching, with a view to interrupt him. Saying desert is the place (where we are now assembled) and now (already, or by this time), the time is now past. The word translated time is identical with the Latin hora and the English hour, but used in Greek with greater latitude of meaning, ranging from hours or even moments to the seasons of the year and time in general. (See above, on 8:13, 9:22, 10:19.) Here it may either have the Latin sense or that of daytime. This anxious statement as to the lateness of the hour is followed by a proposition. Send the multitude away, dismiss, dissolve them as an audience or congregation

(as the same verb means in Acts. 19:41, 28:25). This confirms the previous supposition that our Lord was still discoursing when the twelve made this suggestion, which was, therefore, tantamount to saying that he was detaining them too long, that it was time to pause and give them daylight to disperse in. The hint was no doubt well-meant and regarded by the men who made it as pre-eminently wise and prudent, little suspecting that their master, far from being at a loss as they were, had pursued this very course in order to convince them and others how little he depended on the ordinary means of subsistence. The disciples add a still more specific proposition, that the people be dispersed among the nearest farms and villages to buy provisions for themselves. Buy, in Greek a word peculiarly appropriate, because it originally means to market, and has primary reference to the purchase of provisions.

, 16, 17, 18. We learn from John (6:6), that Philip was the spokesman upon this occasion, and that our Saviour in this conversation tried the faith of his disciples, i. e. their confidence in his power to provide for all emergencies. John's additions to the narrative are not excluded, much less contradicted, by the others. They (the multitude) have no need to depart (or go away in search of food). Give to them yourselves (μεϛ emphatic in itself and by position). In answer to their natural objection, that they have scarcely a sufficient provision for themselves (17), he simply orders it to be produced and placed at his disposal (18).

19. Having ordered the multitudes (or crowds) to sit down, literally, lie down, or recline, the customary posture even at table (see above, on 8:11, 9:10), but especially convenient in the open air, and when the food was spread upon the ground. On the grass, literally, grasses, a circumstance which not only adds to the beauty of the picture, and betrays a vivid recollection of the scene described, perhaps that of Peter (compare John 6:10), but explains the word desert previously used (v. 13) as denoting not a barren waste, but only an unfrequented solitude, most probably an untilled pasture-ground, to which the corresponding Hebrew word is frequently applied in the Old Testament (e. g. Ps. 65:13. Joel 2:22.) He took the five loaves in succession, blessing each or all together. Bread and loaf are expressed by the same word in Greek as they are in French (pain, pains). Looking up is a natural and scriptural gesture in addressing God, whom all men as it were instinctively regard as dwelling in some special sense above them. Heaven denotes that distant place of God's abode, but also the visible expanse which seems to separate us from it (see above, on 3:2, 16, 5:26.) Blessed, a verb originally meaning to speak well of, but in usage applied to God's conferring favours upon men (25:34), to men's invoking such favours upon others (Luke 2:34), and to men's praising God particularly for such favours (Luke 2:28). In the case before us these three senses may be said to meet; for as a man our Saviour gave thanks and implored a blessing, while as God he granted it. The intervention of the twelve in this distribution, while it answered the important but inferior purpose of securing order and decorum, also enabled them to testify more positively both to the scantiness of the provision and to the sufficiency of the supply. The particularity of this description corresponds to the deliberate and formal nature of the acts themselves, intended to arouse attention and preclude all surmise of deception or collusion. Nothing, indeed, could less resemble the confusion and obscurity of all pretended miracles, than the regular and almost ceremonious style in which this vast crowd was first seated and then fed, without the least disorder or concealment as to any part of the proceedings.

20. The unequal division of the verses here is arbitrary and capricious and should serve to remind us that this whole arrangement is the work of a learned printer in the sixteenth century, and not entitled to the least weight in deciding the construction of a sentence or connection of a passage. Did all eat is in modern English an emphatic form, the auxiliary strengthening the verb, as if the fact had been denied or doubted; but it here represents the simple past tense, all ate, or retaining the Greek collocation, ate all, implying that the miraculous supply of food was limited only by the number of consumers. Nor was it a mere nominal supply in each case, but a full satisfaction of the appetite, even in the case of the most hungry. Filled, satisfied or sated, a Greek verb anciently confined to the feeding of the lower animals, but in the later writers (such as Arrian and Plutarch) extended to the human subject. We have here a remarkable example of our Saviour's provident discretion, even in the exercise of his almighty power. Had this miracle left no trace of itself except in the memory of men, it might have seemed like a dream or an illusion. But against this Jesus guarded in the most effectual manner, by commanding his disciples who had aided in the distribution, to collect the fragments which were left over after all were filled (John 6:12). And they took up, and away with them, both which ideas are suggested by the usage of the Greek verb, and are equally appropriate, not only here but in 9:6, 13:12. and v. 12 of this chapter. The abounding, surplus, or excess of the fragments (from frango, to break, like κλάσματα from κλάω), broken pieces, scraps, or what are called in common parlance "broken victuals." The design of this command was threefold, first to discourage waste and teach a wise economy even in the lesser things of this life; secondly to show that in this case as in miracles of healing, the miraculous effect was to be instantly succeeded by the usual condition and the operation of all ordinary laws (see above, on 8:15), so that although they had just seen a vast concourse supernaturally fed, they were themselves to use the fragments for their subsequent support; and thirdly, to preserve for some time in their sight and their possession the substantial memorials of this wonderful event, which was attested and recalled to mind by every crust and every crumb of which the company partook until the fragments were exhausted. And accordingly we find that our Lord, when afterwards reminding them of this great wonder and another like it, speaks expressly of the quantity left over after all were filled, as one of the most memorable circumstances in the case (see below, on 16:9). It only remains to be considered whether these fragments were the refuse left by each partaker in the place where he had eaten, or the portions broken by our Lord for distribution and remaining untouched because more than was required to supply all present. The latter is not only a more pleasing supposition, but equally consistent with the terms of the narrative and the other circumstances of the case. That Jesus should have furnished an excessive or superfluous supply is not at variance with his wisdom or omniscience, as he may have done it for the very

purposes before suggested. The word translated basket is used in a Latin form (cophinus) by Juvenal, as the usual baggage of the Jews when travelling. The number twelve has reference to the twelve apostles, so that each filled one, perhaps with some allusion to the symbolical import of the miracle.

21. This may either mean that there were none such present, or merely that they are not comprehended in the total of 5000. The latter is no doubt the true solution and to be explained by a fact already mentioned (see above, on 8:11), that the men in ancient times as in the east at present ate together, and reclined at their repasts, while the women and children ate apart from them and in the ordinary sitting posture. Hence the companies or messes upon this occasion would be composed of men exclusively, and they alone could be numbered with facility from their distribution into fifties and hundreds (Mark 6:40). It is not to be supposed, however, that the women and children would be overlooked in this benevolent provision, whether many or few, as some suppose upon the ground that the multitude was chiefly composed of pilgrims on their way to the passover (John 6:4), which only males were required to attend (Ex. 23:17. Deut. 16:16.) But how is this to be reconciled with their having no provisions (see above, on v. 15, and compare Mark 6:36), which seems rather to imply a concourse of people drawn too far from home by the excitement of pursuit (see above, on v. 13), and probably composed of men, women, and children. But whether these were few or many, it seems clear that they were not included in the number stated for the reason above given, whence it follows, either that those least able to dispense with food were thus provided, or that the number fed far transcended that recorded, which is without (i. e. exclusive of) women and children. Five thousand therefore is the minimum of those supplied by this stupendous miracle, being merely the number that could be determined at a glance from the methodical arrangement of the messes. Even at this rate, the original supply was only that of one loaf (and probably a small one) to a thousand men (besides women and children). But the greatness of the miracle consists not merely in the vast increase of nutritive material, but in the nature of the process which effected it, and which must be regarded as creative, since it necessarily involves not merely change of form or quality, or new combinations of existing matter, but an absolute addition to the matter itself. The infidel pretence that Christ is here described as visibly multiplying loaves and fishes in his own hands, so that every particle distributed was separately given out by him, is as groundless and absurd as it is impious in spirit and malignant in design. No such process of increase was presented to the eyes of the spectators, who saw nothing but the fact that the leaves and fishes still continued to be served until the whole multitude had been supplied. (Compare the miracles in 1 Kings, 17:14, 2 Kings 4:1–7.) Equally groundless yet instructive are the efforts of some sceptical interpreters to get rid of this miracle as originally a parable afterwards transformed into a history, or a myth founded on the story of the manna, or of Elijah fed by angels and ravens (1 Kings 17:6, 19:5), or on the doctrine of the living bread as taught by Christ (John 6:48) and his apostles (1 Cor. 10:16.) However specious these hypotheses may be, they are at bottom as gratuitous and hollow as the one or older date, now laughed at even by neologists themselves, that this is not recorded as a miracle at all, but merely as a figurative statement of the fact that by inducing his disciples to distribute their own scanty store, Jesus prevailed on others present who were well provided to communicate with others who had nothing. The only rational alternative is either to refute the overwhelming proof of authenticity and inspiration, or to accept the passage as the literal record of a genuine creative miracle, the first and greatest in the history, and therefore perhaps fully detailed in all the gospels.

22. The effect of this transcendent miracle which, more than any that preceded it, appears to have convinced men of our Lord's Messiahship (John 6:14), was immediately followed by another, more especially intended to confirm this impression on the minds of his disciples. This restriction of the circle of spectators was occasioned by his knowledge of a movement in the multitude to assert his regal claims as the Messiah (John 6:15). To escape this dangerous and mistaken view of his pretensions, he withdrew himself at once into the highlands, on the verge of which the multitude had just been fed (John 6:3). But first he constrained (compelled or forced) his disciples to enter (or embark upon) the ship, which waited on him for the purpose (Mark 3:9), and go before him (literally lead forward, lead the way) to the other side, i. e. to Bethsaida of Galilee (Mark 6:45). He compelled them, i. e. ordered them against their will, as they would naturally be averse to leave him, both on his account and on their own, a repugnance probably increased by the prospect of a nocturnal voyage on the lake where they had once been rescued from destruction by his presence (8:23–26). Some assume, as an additional reason for sending the disples away, that they were disposed to join in the popular movement for making him a king. However this may be, he stayed behind until he should dismiss (dissolve, break up) the crowds, the same verb that is used above in v. 15. This was probably a matter of some difficulty, and requiring the exercise not only of authority but also of a superhuman influence.

23. Having sent them away he departed, went away, into the mountain (not a mountain, but the highlands or hill-country), which has been already several times mentioned (5:1, 8:1), and in which he was already (John 6:3), so that he is only represented as penetrating further into its recesses, not for safety or repose, but to pray, a striking incidental notice of our Lord's devotional habits also given here by Mark (6:46), and so far from being inconsistent with the statement made by John (6:15) of his motive for retiring, that the two things were probably connected in the closest manner, as the plan for making him a king may have been both the occasion and the burden of his prayers at this time. There is something striking in the last words of this sentence: Evening being come, he was alone there. This double mention of the evening being come, both before and after the great miracle (see v. 15), has been misrepresented as an inadvertence springing from forgetfulness; whereas, it is in perfect keeping with the Jewish practice of reckoning two evenings (Ex. 12:6, 29:39, 41. Lev. 23:5. Num. 9:3, 5, 28:4), one begining at the first decline and the other at the

setting of the sun. With this may be compared among ourselves the occasional or local use of evening to denote the afternoon.

24. Now, already, while he was still upon the shore. In the midst of the sea, not in its mathematical centre, or exactly half-way over, but out at sea, away from land, i. e. twenty-five or thirty stadia or furlongs (John 5:19). Tossed, a very inadequate translation of a Greek word meaning properly tormented (see above on 8:6, 29), here applied to the convulsive agitation of a vessel in a troubled sea and with an adverse wind. The same verb is applied by Mark (6:48) to the disciples and translated toiling. The last clause gives the reason of their trying situation, for the wind was contrary, i. e. from the west or northwest.

25. The fourth watch of the night, according to the Roman division of the night into four watches of three hours each, which from the time of Pompey's conquest had supplanted the old Jewish division into three (Judg. 7:19. Ps. 90:6). The time here meant would be the three hours immediately preceding sunrise or perhaps the break of day, say from 3 to 6 o'clock A. M. He came away from the land to (or towards) them, where they were detained by the adverse wind, and making painful efforts to advance. Walking, originally walking about, or to and fro (hence peripatetic), but in the Greek of the New Testament simply walking, as opposed to other attitudes or motions. On the sea, not on the shore, as some absurdly fancy; for although the phrase sometimes has that meaning in both languages (as when we speak of a house or a town upon the sea), the other is equally justified by usage, is entitled to the preference, where other things are equal, as the primary or strict sense; and is required by the whole connection, by the obvious intention to relate a miracle, and by the fright of the disciples, which could not be owing to the sight of a man walking on the shore, even if he seemed to be walking in the water.

26. Seeing him, not merely when they saw, but in the very act of seeing him. Were troubled, i. e. violently agitated and disturbed at this most unexpected and inexplicable sight. Saying that (excluded by our idiom) it is a phantom. This last word is a corruption of the Greek word here employed (phantasma), both equivalent in meaning to the Latin apparition, i. e. an unreal appearance of a real person whether dead or living, commonly the former, but in the present case the latter. Spirit is here used in the specific sense, now attached to the synonymous term ghost, except when applied to the third person of the Trinity. Cried out (or cried aloud) for fear, the verb used elsewhere to describe the unearthly cries of evil spirits or of those whom they possessed. (See above on 8:29, and compare Luke 4:33, 8:28.) These particulars are given both as vivid recollections of the memorable scene and as indications that the twelve, even after their first mission, still remained in statu pupillari, with many crude and childish views and even superstitious feelings, which were not to be entirely subdued till afterwards.

27. Although Jesus suffered them for wise and holy reasons to be momentarily alarmed, he did not leave them in this painful situation, but immediately (a circumstance here noted both by Mark and Matthew spake or talked to them, no doubt in his usual colloquial tone, with which they were now so familiar, and by which their superstitious fears would be instantly allayed, especially when uttering such cheering, reassuring words as those which follow. Be of good cheer, and be of good comfort, are the paraphrastic versions given in our Bible, of a single fine Homeric word (θάρσει pl. θαρσε τε), which might also be translated cheer up, or take courage. (See above, on 9:2, 22. and compare Luke 8:48. John 16:33. Acts 23:11, and 28:15, where the corresponding noun appears.) It always presupposes some alarm or apprehension previously expressed or necessarily implied. It is I, literally I am, and therefore once translated I am he (John 4:26), which is really the meaning in the other places also, i. e. I am (he that I appear to be, or he with whom you are so well acquainted). The coincidence of this familiar phrase with the divine name I AM (Ex. 3:14) is extremely striking, even if fortuitous. (Compare Mark 14:62.) Be not afraid, or frightened, fear not, an exhortation which implies, as something well known to them by experience, that his presence was enough to banish every danger.

28. The narrative which follows is found only in this gospel, which is certainly remarkable, as Mark is supposed to have been aided by the memory of Peter, and as John has at least in one case supplied the name of that apostle when omitted by the others. (Compare John 18:10 with Matt. 26:51. Mark 14:47. Luke 22:50.) But even if this circumstance were more suspicious here than in the many other cases where a fact is only given in one gospel, all misgiving must be done away by the characteristic truth of the whole narrative so perfectly agreeable to what we know of Peter otherwise, that if the name had been omitted, it could be supplied at once by almost any reader. It is characteristic of the man, though perhaps belonging also to his office as the spokesman of the twelve, that he should answer first, and by a sort of challenge to the Master to make good his own identity on certain terms prescribed by Peter. If it be thou, literally, if thou be, corresponding to I am in the preceding verse. Bid me, order or command me, the verb used above in vs. 9, 19. Water, literally, waters, the origin of which plural form was explained above (on 5:3).

29, 30. Coming down from the ship, Peter walked upon the water, to go (i. e. intending or desiring so to do). Or the word may mean that he was actually going when his faith failed. Seeing the wind strong, the more exact though less emphatic marginal translation. Boisterous, however, conveys no idea not implied in the original. He was afraid is strictly passive both in Greek and English, where the last word is originally not an adjective (fearful), but a participle (affrayed, frightened). This alarm is perfectly in keeping with the character, of Peter, which was more distinguished by impulsive ardour than by steady courage, whether physical or moral. To sink is also properly a passive, to be sunk, to be submerged, to be drawn beneath the surface. That his faith did not utterly forsake him is apparent from his cry for help to him who was at hand to give it.

31. Stretching forth the hand caught him, an expressive word in the original suggesting the idea that he seized him for himself, or took possession of him. (See above, on 6:13.) O thou of little faith, a correct but necessarily diffuse translation of a single Greek work (see above, on 6:30, 8:26). The faith in which Peter was deficient was not justifying faith, nor general confidence in Christ's protection, but that specific faith which was essential to the miracle, a firm belief that what Christ had just commanded could be done and done by him and at that moment. (See above, on 8:10, 9:2, 22, 29, and below, on 15:28, 17:20, 21:21.) Wherefore, not the ordinary phrase translated why 11 (9:14, 13:10), but one occurring only here and meaning strictly, as to what, in reference to what cause, or from what consideration? Doubt, a Greek word, properly suggesting the idea of distraction or duplicity of mind and the uncertainty arising from it. It occurs in the New Testament but once besides, and that in this same gospel (see below, on 28:17). After this most interesting episode, Matthew falls in with the narrative of Mark as if there had been no interruption.

32, 33. They coming, in the very act, or while they were so doing. Ceased, a most expressive word in Greek, denoting weariness or rest from labour, and employed by Mark not only here (6:51), but in his history of the previous stilling of the storm (4:39). The same evangelist describes, in very strong terms, the astonishment of the disciples at this double miracle, while Matthew speaks of those in the ship, which must either mean the passengers or crew, if any such there were besides them, as doing reverence to Jesus and acknowledging not merely his Messiahship, but his divinity. Truly, really, implies that he had previously claimed to be the Son of God. Such an acknowledgment might seem too much for any but his most enlightened followers, if it had not been already made by evil spirits. (See above, on 8:29, and compare 4:3, 6.) It is not easy to determine in such cases, how much meaning was attached to this mysterious title. On the whole, however, it is probable that those whom Matthew calls the (people) in the ship were identical with those whom Mark calls the disciples. (See above, on 8:27, where a kindred form of speech is used by Matthew.)

34. And having crossed (the lake, from east to west) they came to (or upon) the land of Gennesaret, a small district four miles long and two or three wide, on the west side of the sea of Galilee, or lake of Tiberias, to which it gave one of its names. (See above, on v. 1 and on 4:18.) Josephus describes this district as the garden of the whole land and possessing a fertility and loveliness almost unparalleled. Capernaum appears to have been in or very near this delightful region, so that John (6:17) describes this same voyage as a voyage to Capernaum.

35. The men of that place knowing (or recognizing) him, whom they had often seen before, as they lived so near his home and the centre of his operations. (See above, on 4:13, 11:23.) It is an interesting thought, very often incidentally suggested in the gospels, that during the three years of our Saviour's public ministry, his person must have become perfectly familiar to the great mass of the population, at least in Galilee. This, with the certainty that he retains his human body, and is to appear in it hereafter upon earth as he already does in heaven, should preserve us from a tendency to look upon all sensible and bodily associations with the person of our Lord as superstitious and irreverent, an error into which some devout believers are betrayed by their aversion to the opposite extreme of gross familiarity and levity in speaking of his glorified humanity. That whole surrounding country, an expression used in Mt 3:5, and there explained.

36. This desire was only superstitious so far as it ascribed a magical effect to the mere touch, or regarded contact as essential to the healing power of the Saviour's word. It may have been his purpose to reach greater numbers in a given time without destroying all perceptible connection between the subject and the worker of the miracle. (Compare Acts 5:15, 19:12.) This is not a mere repetition of the statement in 8:16 but designed to show that throughout the course as well as at the opening of our Saviour's ministry, his miracles were many, those recorded in detail being only a few selected samples, and also that his constant practice was to heal all who needed and desired it. Made perfectly whole, literally, saved through, brought through safe, i. e. through the danger or the suffering to which they were subjected. We are here brought back to the main theme of the history, to wit, the itinerant ministry of Christ in Galilee, to which the evangelist repeatedly reverts, as soon as he has finished any of the special topics comprehended in the plan of his gospel. We have such a description after the preliminaries in the four first chapters (Mt 4:24); after the sermon on the mount and the series of miracles which follows it (Mt 9:35); after the organization and commission of the apostolic body (Mt 11:1); and now again after the formation of a systematic opposition, the exemplification of our Saviour's parabolic teaching, the death of John the Baptist, the great creative miracle of feeding the five thousand, and the threefold miracle of walking on the water, saving Peter, and delivering the ship from danger. We have thus reached a resting-place, at which, without capricious violence, the book may be conveniently divided.

CHAPTER 15

AFTER the manner of the best historians, Matthew now resumes the history of Christ's relations and behaviour to his enemies, especially the great Pharisaic party, taking up the subject where he laid it down, at the close of the twelfth chapter, for the purpose of exemplifying his peculiar mode of teaching the doctrine of his kingdom. He now records a fresh attack of the Pharisees and Scribes upon his unceremonial practice with respect to their traditional exaggeration and perversion of the Levitical purifications, with a full

report of our Lord's authoritative teachings on the subject, both in public and private, to his own disciples (1–20). Connected with this, not only by immediate chronological succession, but in historical design and import, is the narrative of his one recorded visit to the Gentile world, with a miracle of dispossession there performed upon a Gentile subject, and among the most interesting in the Gospels, both for this and other reasons (21–28). Departing from his ordinary practice of detailing only select miracles, and those the most dissimilar, the evangelist here records a second instance in which Christ miraculously fed a multitude of people, for the very reason that the repetition of a wonder so stupendous entitled it to be again related (29–39).

1. The immediate succession of events is not explicitly affirmed but highly probably from the marked chronological character of the whole context both in Mark and Matthew, though the first words here (then came to Jesus), in themselves considered, might refer to an entirely different time and occasion. Scribes and Pharisees, not wholly distinct classes, but the great religious party previously mentioned, with its official or professional leaders. The Scribes, or guardians and expounders of the law, were generally Pharisees and often Priests or Levites. See above, on 2:4, 5:20, 12:38, and compare John 1:19, 24.) 'Then came to him the Scribes and (other) Pharisees.' They are both described as from Jerusalem, which may either mean belonging to the Holy City (see above on 2:1, 4:25), or recently come down from it, as expressly stated by Mark (7:1). It has even been supposed to denote a formal deputation from the Sanhedrim like that to John the Baptist (John 1:19), and to Christ himself long afterwards (see below, on 21:23). But this, though possible, is not the necessary meaning of the words. To Jesus may suggest, though it does not formally express, the idea of hostility (against him).

2. While Mark (7:3–5) states with great particularity the Pharisaic usage as to washings, Matthew assumes it as already well known to his Jewish readers. This is one of many proofs that they wrote immediately for different classes. Why, literally, for (i. e. on account of) what (cause or reason), as in 9:11, 14, 13:10. Thy disciples, pupils, learners, so called because taught by thee, for whose behaviour thou art consequently answerable. This is the obvious spirit of the question, though civility or cowardice restricted it in form to the disciples. The question, as in all such cases (see above, on 9:11, 14), though professedly a mere request for explanation, is in fact a challenge or demand by what right they thus acted, and by implication a denial that they had any right to do so. Whether disciples has its wider or its stricter application, is a point of no exegetical importance, as the meaning of the question is the same in either case. Transgress, violate, a form of expression claiming the authority of law for these traditions of the elders. Tradition means originally any thing delivered, in the way of precept (see 1 Cor. 11:2, 2 Thess. 2:15, 3:6), but is specially applied to what is orally transmitted through successive generations. Elders may here have its official sense and designate the natural hereditary chiefs of Israel, as in 16:21 below and often elsewhere. It will then denote the contemporary rulers of the Jews, by whose authority these uncommanded customs were enforced. More probably, however, there is reference also to the fathers of the nation, from whom the oral law had been transmitted. (See above, on 5:21, and compare Gal. 1:14.) For (introducing a specification of this general charge) they wash not their hands when they eat bread, in the strict sense, or partake of food in general, as bread was its principal though not its sole material in the case of the disciples. (See above, on 4:3, 4, 6:11, 7:9.) The reference in this whole context is to washing, not as a means of cleanliness, but as a ceremonial or religious act, an uncommanded and traditional perversion of the legal ablutions or levitical purifications, as prescribed in Lev. 12–15, and restricted to certain states of body representing the defilement of sin, but by the so-called oral law extended without meaning to the most familiar acts of life and even to the furniture of houses. (See Mark 7:3, 4.)

3. Without denying their charge, he retorts it, with a fearful aggravation. 'What if my disciples do break the tradition of the elders; you do infinitely worse by breaking God's commandment for the sake of that tradition.' Ye also, you too, as well as they, are chargeable with such a violation, and that not of a human usage, but of a divine law. By your tradition, an inaccurate translation, founded upon that of Tyndale (thorowe your tradition), whereas all the other English versions (except that of the Geneva Bible) give the true sense of the preposition (διά) with the accusative (Wiclif and Rheims, for; Cranmer, because of). The meaning of the common version is a good one, but not that of the original, which represents their tradition as the motive, not the means, of their transgressing the divine commandment. The same idea is otherwise expressed by Mark (7:9), "ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition." Both forms of speech may have been actually used; or both may simply give the substance of our Saviour's answer; or one may give its substance and the other its form.

4. Not only in this one case of ceremonial baptisms did they thus reject and nullify God's precept, but in others of far more importance, because relating not to rites but moral duties, not to the abuse of positive and temporary institutions, but to the neglect of the most tender natural relations. Of this he gives a single instance, but a most affecting one, which utters volumes as to the spirit and the tendency of Pharisaic superstition. The sum and substance of it is that the observance of their vain tradition was considered and enforced by them as more obligatory than the sacred duty which the child owes to the parent, by the law of nature and the law of God. For God commanded, i. e. through Moses (Mark 7:10). In these two parallels we have the clearest recognition of the code or system quoted in the next clause as the work of Moses and the law of God. He then quotes the first or preceptive clause of the fifth commandment (Ex. 20:12. Deut. 5:16), leaving out the promise or inducement as irrelevant to his present purpose, which relates exclusively to the precept, but substituting for it the severe law inflicting capital punishment on those who carried filial disobedience to the length of cursing or reviling, literally, speaking evil of, the opposite, both in etymology and usage, of the verb

employed above in 5:44, 14:19, and there explained. Though here in strong antithesis to honour, it does not directly mean to dishonour, but denotes specifically one of the easiest and worst ways of doing so, to wit by abusive and insulting language. Whoso curseth, literally, the (one or the man) cursing (or reviling) father or mother, an indefinite form used by both evangelists, and differing alike from the original and the Septuagint version, both which have the pronoun (thy). This exact agreement in so slight a difference is not to be explained by the hypothesis of servile imitation or transcription on the part of either, but by the supposition that these were the very words (or their exact equivalents) which Jesus uttered, and which therefore must have some significance, however faint the shade of meaning which they may express. That they do express one must be felt by every reader even of a literal translation, though it is not easy to subject it to analysis or definition. Perhaps it may be simply stated thus, that the definite expression in the other clause (thy father and thy mother) and in the original of this clause (his father and his mother) is designed to individualize, before the mind of every hearer or reader of the law, the very pair to whom he owes allegiance, while the vaguer phrase here used (father or mother) rather calls up the idea of parents in general as a class or species, but so as rather to enhance than to extenuate their claims upon their children, by presenting those claims in the abstract and the aggregate. As if he had said, 'he who can dishonour by his curses such a sacred object as a father or a mother.' Let him die the death, Cranmer's imitation of the Hebrew idiom which combines a finite tense and an infinitive of the same verb to express intensity, repetition, certainty, or any other accessory notion not belonging to the essential import of the verb itself. In the original passage our translators have expressed the qualifying adjunct (that of certainty) without copying the form (shall surely he put to death), while here the form is rendered prominent by a pretty close approximation to the Hebrew in the combination of the cognate verb and noun, a modification of the idiom not unknown in other languages. The imitation is indeed much closer than in Greek, where the verb is not the ordinary verb to die, but one which originally means to end or finish, often joined with life, and then elliptically used without it to express the same idea (that of ending life or dying). The strict translation of the whole phrase therefore would be, let him end with death; the meaning both of it and of the Hebrew, let him surely die. Tyndale has simply, shall suffer death; the Rhemish version, dying he shall die.

5. The antithesis is still kept up between what God said and what they said, both being put into the form of a command or law. Having given that of God, with its tremendous sanction in the verse preceding, he now contrasts with it that of the traditional or oral lawyers. But (on the other hand, on your part) ye say, not in so many words, perhaps not formally at all, but practically by what you encourage and allow, both in yourselves and others. It pleased our Lord to put the spirit of their conduct and of the system upon which it rested into this technical and formal shape, in order more completely to expose its wickedness and folly. Shall say is too categorical and positive a version of the aorist subjunctive which denotes a hypothetical contingency, or something which may happen or may not. To his father or mother, literally, the father or the mother, the pronoun being still omitted, as in v. 4, but the article inserted. A gift, a word denoting gifts in general but specifically used in Homeric and Hellenistic Greek to mean a votive offering or a gift to God. In this restricted sense it answers to the Hebrew corban, here retained (Mark 7:11), which according to its etymology means any thing brought near or presented, but in usage what is thus brought near to God. In this sense, it is applied, like the corresponding verb, to ail the offerings of the Mosaic ritual, animal and vegetable, bloody and bloodless. (See Lev. 2:1, 4, 12, 13, 7:13, 9:7, 15.) In the later Hebrew and Chaldee, it was applied still more extensively to all religious offerings, even those not sacrificial, but not to these exclusively, as some allege. This one word seems to have been the prescribed form in such cases, so that by simply saying "Corban," a man might devote the whole or any part of his possessions to religious uses, i. e. to the maintenance of the temple service by the purchase of victims or the sustentation of the priests and Levites. Whatever thou (the parent thus addressed) mightest be profited by me (i. e. whatever assistance or advantage thou mightest have derived from me) is Corban or devoted to religious uses like a sacrificial victim. That such things were permitted and applauded may be proved by certain dicta of the Talmud, and especially by a famous dispute between Rabbi Eliezer and his brethren, in which the very act here described was vindidicated by the latter.

6. The division of the verses varies here in the editions of the Greek and English text, the former making what is here the first clause of v. 6 the last clause of v. 5, without effect upon the sense, but with advantage to the syntax. The English version makes this clause a part of what they said, and still dependent on the conditional phrase, whosoever says (or shall say). 'Whoever says this to his parents and refuses or neglects to honour them.' There is then an instance of the figure called aposiopesis, in which the apodosis, or logical conclusion of the sentence, is suppressed or left to be supplied by the reader. Such constructions, whether beauties or defects, occur in the best classical writers. The thought here supplied by the translators (in italics) is, he shall be free (i. e. to do so, or from punishment), in other words, he does no wrong, he does his duty. Another construction, found in Tyndale's version, and preferred by some philological authorities of later date, makes this clause our Lord's own statement of the consequence (and so shall he not honour). This, however, still supposes an aposiopesis in a different place, i. e. before instead of after the clause now in question. Having given this revolting instance of the practical result to which their treatment of God's precepts tended, he returns to the generic charge which it was stated to illustrate. Thus (literally and) made void, invalidated, nullified, a verb not used in classic Greek, but formed directly from an adjective familiarly applied by Plato and Thucydides to laws, and representing them (according to its etymology) as destitute of force, invalid, null and void. This was the actual effect, whatever may have been the purpose, of their ceremonial and traditional morality, by which they practically nullified the divine commandment. By your tradition should again be for (the sake or on account of) your tradition. The address may be either to the whole race as represented by his hearers, or to

themselves as delivering and enforcing these traditions by authority.

7, 8. Hypocrites, a Greek noun originally meaning one who answers or responds, with particular allusion to oracular responses, explanations, and advices; then one who answers in a colloquy or conversation, with particular allusion to dramatic dialogue; then one who acts upon the stage, an actor; then metaphorically one who acts a borrowed part, and lastly, a dissembler, a deceiver, one whose words and actions do not indicate his real thoughts and feelings. This last sense of the noun, the only one which it retains in modern languages, is not found in the classics; but the primitive or corresponding verb meant to dissemble at least as early as Demosthenes and Polybius. It is doubtful, however, whether the noun, even in the Greek of the New Testament, has always the strong sense which later usage puts upon it, and which sometimes does not seem entirely appropriate, as in Luke 12:56, and here, in both which places the connection agrees better with the older sense of one who acts a part, who wears a mask, who is contented with an outside show, including not deliberate deceivers merely, but the self-deceived, or those who really mistake the outward for the inward, the apparent for the real. Well, not truly or correctly, which would be superfluous as an encomium on an inspired prophecy, both here and in Acts 28:25, where Paul applies the same term to the Holy Ghost himself; but finely, admirably, or appropriately, exactly, in allusion to the singular coincidence between Isaiah's inspired description of his own contemporaries and the character and conduct of their children's children in the time of Christ. It is not however a mere accommodation of the passage to a foreign subject, since Isaiah's words are not confined to those whom they immediately described; but this very fact, that a description could be so framed as to represent with equal fidelity originals who lived so many centuries apart, is itself a proof of inspiration and a ground for the applause and admiration here expressed. Esaias is the Greek form of Isaiah, like Elias for Elijah in 11:14. As Isaiah itself is a modification of the Hebrew form (Jeshaiah, Jeshaiahu), it would have been better to employ either it or the Greek Esaias in the version of both Testaments, the variation of the name confusing uninstructed readers. This is still more true of Jesus, the Greek form of Joshua, when used to designate the Son of Man (as in Acts 7:45. Heb. 4:8). Did Isaiah prophesy, of old, so long ago. Of (i. e. about, concerning) you, should be connected with the adverb, well. The meaning is not that the Jews of Christ's time were the formal and the direct theme of the prophecy, which would not have been spoken of as so remarkable, but rather that in speaking of his own contemporaries, he drew an admirable picture of their children in the time of Christ. But although this does not require us to interpret the original passage as a specific and exclusive prophecy respecting Christ's contemporaries, it does require us to interpret it so as to include them, which can only be secured by making it descriptive of the unbelieving Jews, not at one time merely, but throughout the period of the old dispensation, an assumption perfectly confirmed by history. The quotation is a free one from the Septuagint version of Isa. 29:13, the variations being unimportant to the Saviour's purpose. Is far from me, in Hebrew, it removes far from me; but this variation is found also in the Septuagint.

9. But (or and), the usual connective (δὲ), in vain they worship me, a thought implied though not expressed in the original, and therefore not improperly supplied by the Seventy and sanctioned by our Lord or his biographers. The literal translation of the Hebrew words is, and their fearing me (i. e. their worship) is (or has become) a precept of men, a thing taught. This taken by itself might seem to mean that they served God merely in obedience to human authority, and would then imply no censure on the persons thus commanding, but only on the motives of those by whom they were obeyed. But in our Saviour's application of the passage to the hypocrites of his day, he has reference particularly to religious teachers, as corrupting the law by their unauthorized additions.

10. Thus far he had addressed the Scribes and Pharisees themselves, but now invokes a larger audience. And calling to the crowd, i. e. addressing them, or calling the crowd to (him), as in 10:1, which does not necessarily imply a change of place, but merely a request for their particular attention, as expressed in the last clause. Still less is it implied that the multitude at large had not heard what is said in the preceding context. All that is meant is that, after having answered the demand of his opponents in the presence of the people, he now calls the attention of the latter to the same great subject, as one of practical and universal interest, because relating to the very principle of all morality. Hear me, listen to me, not an unmeaning form, but a distinct intimation that he had something of importance to communicate (see above, on 11:15, 13:9, 18, 43). And understand, give intelligent attention, not merely to my words but to their meaning.

11. Having exposed the folly of the prevalent ceremonial superstition as to uncommanded baptisms or religious washings, and its wickedness in setting aside moral obligations, the Saviour now pursues the same course in a still more public manner with respect to the most prevalent and favourite of all merely ritual distinctions, that of clean and unclean meats, which had then become, and still continues, the chief bar to social intercourse between Jews and Gentiles. The very object of the law upon this subject (as recorded in Lev. 11 and Deut. 14) was to separate the chosen race from every other by restrictions on their food which should render it impossible for them to live together, or to interchange the ordinary courtesies of life, without a constant violation, upon one side, of religious duty. This effect had been abundantly secured for ages in the practice of all conscientious Jews, but with the necessary incidental evil of a constant disposition, even on the part of such, to mistake a positive and temporary regulation for a perpetual invariable law, and to regard the forbidden meats as having an intrinsic efficacy to defile, not only ceremonially but morally. In opposition to this groundless and pernicious error, Christ propounds the simple truth, but in a form adapted to arrest the popular attention and impress itself upon the memory by something of antithesis and even paradox. A man, literally, the man, which may either be the Greek equivalent to our generic "man" without the article, or be taken strictly as denoting the particular man eating or

receiving food in any supposed case. Entering into the mouth, i. e. as food or nourishment. Defiles him, literally, makes him common or profane. This expression is derived from the ceremonial law, by which the Jews were separated from the other nations, and their sacred rites and utensils from all things, even of the same kind, which had not been thus sanctified or set apart to sacred uses as distinguished from all secular and common uses. Hence arises the antithesis, at first sight so surprising, between holy and common. But (the other branch of the antithesis) the (thing) coming out of, proceeding from (the exact correlative or opposite, in form as well as sense, of the preceding verb), the mouth in language, or more generally in conduct, as the expression of thoughts and character. The paradoxical character of this important statement arises from its solemnly affirming in a moral sense, what was not true if taken in a ceremonial sense, and therefore might at first sight seem, and did no doubt to many seem, directly contradictory to an express divine commandment. But this only deepened the impression of the true sense when discovered or revealed, as in all the paradoxes which may be said to form a striking characteristic of our Saviour's teachings, but which no mere man, at least no uninspired man, can imitate without the risk of doing far more harm than good, and of adding one more instance to the many which illustrate and confirm the fact that "fools rush in where angels fear to tread." What our Saviour here denies is not that the partaking of forbidden meats was ceremonially defiling, i. e. subjected those who did so to certain ceremonial disabilities and rendered necessary certain rites of purification; for all this was explicitly revealed in scripture and embodied in the practice of the Jewish church from the very beginning of the ceremonial dispensation, which was not yet at an end. Nor does he here deny that by transgressing this part of the law a man incurred the moral guilt of disobedience, which would have opened a wide door to lawless and ungodly license. It is not the authority or obligation of the precept that he calls in question, but its ground and purpose, as usually apprehended by the people and expounded by their spiritual leaders. Certain meats had been prohibited by Moses under the divine direction, for a temporary end of great importance but ere long to be forever superseded, i. e. to secure the separation of the Jews from other races till the change of dispensations, and in the mean time to symbolize the difference between heathenish corruptions and the holiness which ought to have adorned the church or chosen people. But by gradual departure from this clearly revealed purpose of the legal prohibitions now in question, they had come to look upon the unclean meats as per se morally defiling, and by necessary consequence, upon the strict use of the clean meats as intrinsically purifying, or at least meritorious in the sight of God. This is the error here refuted or condemned, and not obedience to the dietetic laws of Moses while the system was still binding, upon which these words of Christ have neither a remote nor an immediate bearing, as some eminent interpreters imagine, and as many of his hearers no doubt thought at that time, notwithstanding the admonitory warning against inattention and misapprehension, which we learn from Mark (7:16) though not from Matthew, that he uttered upon this as on so many other similar occasions.

12. Then, i. e. after he had thus addressed the crowd or multitude at large, but in the presence of his Pharisaic censors. Coming up, or coming to (him), his disciples, either in the wider sense of those who took his part, were on his side, received his doctrine; or in the more specific sense of those who now attended him from place to place as learners. These, with their Jewish habits and associations, would naturally be disturbed at hearing the unfriendly and disparaging remarks of the leading men who were present in the audience, and would no less naturally tell their master, both as a warning to him and a relief to their own feelings. Knowest thou, in modern English do you know, are you aware? The question may perhaps imply that if he knew it, he would surely not continue to exasperate the enmity of such important men. After they heard, literally, having heard or hearing not by subsequent report or information, but upon the spot and with their own ears. Offended, i. e. stumbled, shocked, the figure being that of an obstacle or hindrance lying in the path. (For another application of the same essential meaning, see above, on 5:29, 30, 11:6, 13:21, 41, 57.) Wiclif: thou knowest that if this word be heard, the Pharisees ben sclaundrid (are slandered)! The stumbling-block to these censorious hearers was the seeming nullification of the laws of clean and unclean food, as enacted by Moses and enlarged by the tradition of the elders.

13. Our Lord's reply is twofold. In the first place, he assures his anxious followers that he had not spoken rashly or at random, but advisedly, in execution of a settled purpose to destroy the credit of these oral lawyers and traditional expounders, whose whole system of additions to the law was founded upon no divine authority, and therefore must be utterly destroyed to make way for the purer doctrine of the kingdom. This necessity is stated in a figurative form drawn from the vegetable world, and not unlike that used in several of the parables before recorded (chapter 13). Plant seems to designate the individual, whereas Wiclif's version, planting, more correctly applies it to the whole traditional or Pharisaic system, theoretical and practical.

14. This is the second part of our Lord's answer to the warning in v. 12. Although it was his purpose to destroy the credit of the Scribes and Pharisees as religious teachers, there was no need of violence, nor even of dispute, to bring about the end which he desired. It was enough to let his enemies alone in order to secure their ruin, and, alas, that of many whom they influenced and guided. Both were destitute of spiritual vision, and must therefore share the consequences of that destitution. The physical effect was not more certain in the case supposed (of blind men guided by a blind man) than the moral effect in the real case represented by it. Let them alone, or more exactly, let them (go on), let them (do as they are doing), leave them (to themselves), without attempting either to arrest or to accelerate their progress. (For the usage of the Greek verb, see above, on 3:15.) Be is an indicative form common in old English and exactly equivalent to are. The ditch (or rather pit, hole), i. e. the one crossing the path in the case supposed.

15. Peter here speaks in the name of the disciples, and in the house after they had left the multitude (Mark 7:17). Declare, the same verb that is so translated in 13:36 above, though more emphatically rendered in the Romish versions by the word expound. It strictly means to phrase, or express in words, the idea of explanation being really suggested by the context. This parable might seem to mean the metaphor or simile just used in the preceding verse, to which the word is strictly applicable, as denoting an illustration from analogy (see above, on 13:3). But our Lord's answer (in the following verses) seems to show that the inquiry has respect to his public declaration in v. 11, which can be called a parable only in the vague sense of something enigmatical, not obvious in meaning. (See above, on 13:35.) It is possible, however, although not so probable, that Peter did intend to ask why our Lord compared the Pharisees to blind guides, and that he answers indirectly but emphatically by exposing the error which they entertained respecting the effect of food, and in which the disciples were still sharers. The plural form (unto us) shows that Peter spoke for all the rest; which agrees with Mark's account, and also with our Lord's reply, which was addressed not to Peter, but to the whole company.

16. Although this is not a harsh reproof, it certainly involves a censure on the followers of Christ for their continued share in the prevailing error which he had just refuted and denounced. This implies that what they failed to understand was not a mystery requiring special revelation to disclose it, ignorance of which could not have been condemned as culpable, but something clear already, if not from the nature of the case, from the word of God. Jesus said to them (in answer to their question or request for explanation). Even ye (or ye also) my most favoured and enlightened followers. Yet, the accusative of the noun acme, meaning full time; an adverb, just now; in later Greek, as here, yet, still. Without understanding, in Greek a single word which might be rendered unintelligent (the opposite in form as well as sense of that employed in 11:25. Acts 13:7. 1 Cor. 1:19). It is applied by Paul (Rom. 1:21, 31) to the irrationality of sin, but also in the same epistle (10:19) to the ignorance and unintelligence of heathen or barbarians.

17. Do ye not perceive, a verb applied by Homer and Xenophon to bodily vision, but in the Greek of the New Testament to intellectual perception only, sometimes with the accessory notion of attention (see below, on 24:15, and compare 2 Tim. 2:7), which may also be included here (and in 16:9 below). 'Are you not sufficiently attentive to perceive &c.?' This again implies that what they misconceived was no mysterious secret but an obvious and patent truth, which they could not have attentively considered without justly apprehending it, as almost self-evident, although the people had lost sight of it, and even the disciples did not see it clearly. Food does not affect the mind or soul, but only the corporeal organs, which are not moral agents or susceptible of moral changes. The belly, not the entire body, nor the abdomen exclusively, but the whole interior cavity (the Greek word originally meaning hollow), in which are lodged the organs of digestion here especially referred to, namely, the stomach and intestines. Mark has preserved the negative statement that the food never goes beyond the body or reaches the mind or soul, by suggesting that the whole course of the aliment, received through the mouth into the stomach and intestines, can be traced as all exclusively corporeal, from its entrance to its exit. How absurd then to imagine that the moral and spiritual state of man can be affected by the food which he consumes. Draught, drain, sink, or privy, a word belonging to the later Greek.

18. This completes the antithesis, by adding to the negative account of what does not defile a man the positive description of what does. The (things) coming out of the heart, i. e. proceeding from it in a moral sense. The double out (κ) prefixed in Greek both to verb and noun adds strength to the antithesis or contrast. And they (κε να, an emphatic pronoun meaning not what I have just described) profane the man (make him common or unholy in the proper sense). 'Food, when it enters, enters not into the soul but the stomach and the bowels; but there is something, in another sense proceeding from man, which does really defile him.' What it is, he teaches in the next verse.

19. Out of the heart, the soul, the seat both of the intellect and the affections. Proceed, come out or forth, the same verb that is used in the preceding verse. Thoughts, not mere ideas or incoherent notions, but reasonings, calculations, plans, or purposes, implying action both of mind and heart in the restricted sense. Of these he now enumerates particular examples, in the plural number, either to denote the multitude of sinful acts included under each description or the variety of forms and circumstances under which each sin may be committed. Murders, unlawful and malicious homicides. Adulteries, violations of the marriage vow; fornications, violations of chastity by unmarried persons; both being breaches of the seventh commandment (Ex. 20:14) as interpreted by Christ himself (see above, on 5:28). These crimes, interpreted with proper latitude, include the worst offences against human justice and the order of society. Thefts, including all surreptitious violations of the property of others, and according to later Greek usage even those of a more violent and open nature, highway-robbers being still called klephts (essentially the same word here employed) in modern Greece. The opposite change has taken place in English, thieves and robbers being never now confounded as they often are in our Bible (see above, on 6:19, and compare Luke 10:30). In the place of covetousness (Mark 7:22) Matthew substitutes false testimonies, both (or their equivalents in Aramaic) having probably been uttered by our Saviour, as well as several others here omitted but preserved by Mark. Blasphemies, another outward manifestation used to represent an inward disposition, namely, proud and spiteful anger, that which finds expression in reviling and abusive words not only against man but God (see above, on 12:31). The allegation that Mark adds to Matthew's catalogue a number of irrelevant particulars, is perfectly gratuitous, as no rule can be laid down for determining how many might be given, and our Saviour may have uttered a still greater number, out of which one evangelist selected more, the other less, as best adapted to his own immediate purpose.

20. The enumeration of particulars is followed by a summing up or repetition of the general statement which they were intended to exemplify. These are the things (defiling) the man (desecrating, rendering unholy), not ceremonially, but morally. To this is added, not by Mark but by Matthew, a correlative negation as to the effect of ceremonial washings or their omission, winding up the whole discourse and at the same time bringing it back to the point from which it set out in the first verse. But to eat, or the (act of) eating, with unwashed hands, i. e. ceremonially unwashed, without a previous ritual ablution, does not profane (or desecrate) the man (who so eats), or render him unholy in the sight of God.

21. Thence, i. e. from the place where the foregoing words were uttered. But where was this? The last particular place mentioned was Gennesaret (14:34), but Mark speaks of his visiting “that whole surrounding country,” and entering into “villages, cities, and fields” (Mark 6:55, 56). This may seem to cut off the connection and prevent our ascertaining the locality referred to here. But as thence implies a definite place previously mentioned, and as Mark’s statement is incidentally and parenthetically introduced, and relates not so much to what occurred at any one time as to the general and constant practice, as appears from the use of the imperfect tense, it is still most probable that the reference is here to the land (or district) of Gennesaret, or to the neighbouring city of Capernaum (see above, on 4:13, and compare John 6:17). Departed, or more exactly, withdrew, retreated (see above, on 2:12, 4:12, 12:15, 14:13), from the malice of his enemies, as some suppose, or as others, from the crowd and bustle even of his friends and followers. It is probable, however, that a higher and more important motive led to this retreat, to wit, the purpose to evince by one act of his public life that, though his personal ministry was to the Jews (see below, on v. 24, 26, and compare Rom. 15:8), his saving benefits were also for the Gentiles. It is important to remember that these movements were not made at random or fortuitously brought about, as infidel interpreters delight to represent, and some of their believing admirers do not venture to deny, but deliberately ordered in accordance with a definite design, the reality of which is not affected by our being able or unable everywhere to trace it in the history. Into (not merely to or towards, which would be otherwise expressed). The parts, i. e. bordering or frontier parts (Mark 7:24). Tyre and Sidon, the two great sea-ports of Phenicia, put for the whole country, which apart from them had no importance (see above on 11:21). The whole phrase does not mean the region between Tyre and Sidon, but the boundary or frontier between Galilee and Phenicia.

22. The remarkable circumstance in this case, which in part accounts for its insertion in the history, is that the woman here described was a Gentile, not only by residence, but by extraction. A Canaanitish woman, so called because Phenicia was peopled by the sons of Canaan, who had not been driven out as they were from Palestine. This is perfectly consistent with Mark’s description of the same woman as a Syrophenician, i. e. a native or inhabitant of that Phenicia which was contiguous to Syria and dependent on it as a Roman province, and also as a Greek, in the Hellenistic sense of Gentile, even where the language was not actually spoken, as it may have been in this case. Out of those borders, i. e. frontier regions, the parts mentioned in the first verse. This phrase is not necessarily dependent in construction on the verb which follows it in Greek but comes before it in English. It may mean coming out of those parts, but it may also mean belonging to them (compare the like use of the preposition aus (or out of) in German), or residing in them. Coming out will then have reference to her house or place of residence. ‘A woman from that region going forth (to meet him).’ Cried, clamoured, made a noise. Son of David, a familiar name of the Messiah (see above, on 1:1, 9:27, 12:23), in which character this Gentile woman recognizes Jesus. The last six words in English correspond to two in Greek which strictly mean is badly demonized, a verb repeatedly employed before by Matthew. (See above, on 4:24, 8:16, 28, 33, 9:32, 12:22.) Wiclif’s version of the phrase is, evil travailed of a fiend.

23. Another singularity of this case, which suggests a further reason for its being so minutely stated, is our Lord’s refusal to perform the miracle, of which this is the first and only instance upon record. Even here, however, it was not an absolute and permanent refusal, but a relative and temporary one, designed to answer an important purpose, both in its occurrence and in the historical account of it. Matthew here records a circumstance not found in Mark, to wit, that her request was at first received in silence. He did not answer her a word, i. e. a single word or one word. The same expression occurs again in 22:46 below, and the converse of it in 8:8, 16 above. It here means simply that he did not answer her at all, in consequence of which she followed him continuing her outcries. This is not inconsistent with Mark’s statement (7:24) that he went into a house, which relates only to his first arrival in those parts, and cannot mean that he continued there indefinitely. His disciples, probably the twelve, who were again in attendance on him after their return from their temporary mission. (See above, on 14:13, and compare Mark 6:30.) Coming up, or coming to (him), i. e. nearer to him (as in v. 12). Besought him, literally, asked him, i. e. asked him whether he would not dismiss her, an absolute use of the verb to ask very common in Hebrew and the Greek of the New Testament. Send away, discharge, dismiss, a verb applied above (14:15, 22, 23) to the dissolving of a large assembly, but elsewhere (1:19, 5:31, 32) to a single person. In itself it might here mean dismiss her without granting her petition; but our Lord’s answer in the next verse presupposes that they asked him to get rid of her by granting it. She crieth after us is not, as it is sometimes represented, an expression of mere selfish regard to their own ease, as it may also indicate a care for the honour and the comfort of their master. Indeed there is no necessary reference whatever to the mere inconvenience of her crying after them. These words may be intended simply to describe her importunity and grief as a reason for granting her request. Thus explained they are equivalent to saying, ‘Give her what she asks so earnestly, and with such evidence of suffering as well as of believing expectation.’

24. This is another interesting circumstance which Mark omits. Our Lord before answering the woman answers the disciples by reminding them that what they asked was not a thing of course or of usual occurrence, being not like his other miracles of healing and of dispossession a part of his ordinary work and mission, which was intended for the Jews and not the Gentiles. Sent, commissioned by my Father, in my Messianic character and office. The same application of the verb occurs above in 10:40, while in vs. 5, 16 of the same chapter, it is applied to the apostles, whose official title is derived from it.* There seems to be an obvious allusion to their own commission as recorded in 10:5, 6, as well as to the description in 9:36. As explained by these analogies, the words may thus be paraphrased. 'How can you expect me to turn from the sufferers of my own race to strangers, when I forbade you to go to the Samaritans or Gentiles?' This is not a reason for refusing their request, but an intimation that in granting it he would be transcending the formal bounds of their commission and his own.

25. Not content with crying after him or to him from a distance, she drew near to him and worshipped him or did him homage (see above, on 2:2, 4:9, 8:2, 9:18, 14:33). This may imply that he had stopped or stood still to receive her prayer. Lord is here a title of the most profound respect, if not a recognition of his deity. Help, rescue, a Greek word suggestive of extreme distress or danger, originally meaning to run in answer to a cry for succor.

26. Meet, i. e. suitable, becoming, handsome, which approaches nearest to the strict sense of the Greek word, namely, fair or beautiful, though commonly applied in Scripture to excellence or beauty of a moral kind. To take, not pleonastic, as it often is in English, but to take away from them and bestow it upon others. The children's bread, the bread intended and provided for them, and when actually given belonging to them. Dogs, a diminutive supposed by some to be contemptuous, like whelps or puppies, but by others an expression of affectionate familiarity, like little daughter (a Greek word of the same form) in Mark 7:25. This question is connected with another, as to the sense in which dogs are mentioned here at all, whether simply in allusion to the wild gregarious oriental dog, regarded as an impure and ferocious beast, or to the classical and modern European notion of the dog as a domesticated animal, the humble companion and faithful friend of man. The objection to the former explanation is not only its revolting harshness, and the ease with which the same idea might have been expressed in a less unusual manner, but the obvious relation here supposed between the children and the dogs, as at and under the same table, and belonging as it were to the same household. John, it is true, uses dogs in the offensive sense first mentioned; but his language is "without are dogs" (Rev. 22:15), apparently referring to the homeless dogs which prowl through the streets of eastern cities (and compare Ps. 22:20, 59:6. See above, on 7:6, Phil. 3:2); but here the dogs are represented as within, and fed beneath their master's table. The beauty of our Saviour's figure would be therefore marred by understanding what he says of savage animals, without relation or attachment to mankind. Cast, throw away, a term implying waste of the material as well as some contempt of the recipient. Like most of our Lord's parables or illustrations from analogy, this exquisite similitude is drawn from the most familiar habits of domestic life, and still comes home to the experience of thousands.

27. There is no dispute as to the meaning of this admirable answer, which might almost be applauded for its wit, if Christ himself had not ascribed to it a higher merit, as an evidence of signal faith, combined with a humility no less remarkable. There is, however, some dispute as to its form, particularly that of the first clause, which some explain as a denial of what he had said, and others more correctly as a partial affirmation or assent, but followed by a partial contradiction, as in our translation. The best philological interpreters are now agreed that yet is not a correct version of the Greek phrase (κα γὰρ), which can only mean agreeably to usage, for or for even. The meaning of the answer then will be, 'Yes, Lord (or Sir), it is true that it would not be becoming to deprive the children of their food, in order to supply the dogs; for these are not to eat the children's bread, but the crumbs (or fragments) falling from the table.' The whole is therefore an assent to what our Lord had said, including his description of the Gentiles as the dogs beneath the table, and a thankful consent to occupy that place and to partake of that inferior provision. Of (literally from) the crumbs is not here a partitive expression, as it sometimes is, but simply indicates the source from which the nourishment is drawn. The idea suggested by an ancient and adopted by a modern writer, that the word translated crumbs here means the pieces of bread which the ancients used as napkins, is not only a gratuitous refinement, but a needless variation from the usage of the word, which is a regular diminutive of one itself denoting a crumb, bit, or morsel, especially of bread. Their masters, owners, or proprietors, either the children mentioned in v. 26, or the parents of those children (compare Mark 7:28).

28. Here again, as in the case of the centurion (see above, on 8:10), our Lord commends the faith, not of the sufferer but of her representative and intercessor. It is worthy of remark that both the persons thus distinguished by the Saviour's praise were Gentiles. It was not however merely as such, or for Gentiles, that their faith was great, but even in comparison with the more highly favoured Jews. Be it (let it come to pass or happen) to thee as thou wilt, as thou desirest (Tyndale). Healed, i. e. delivered from the morbid state arising from the presence of the demon. (See above, on 4:24.) From that hour, in the vaguer sense of time or the more specific one of moment. (See above, on 8:13, 9:22, 10:19, 14:15.) Tyndale's version of the preposition (at) is not only inexact, but fails to convey the idea of continuous or permanent recovery suggested by the strict translation (from). Very (Tyndale, the same) is an admissible but needless addition.

29. Passing (or removing) thence, from that place, i. e. from the region of Tyre and Sidon, where the preceding miracle was wrought. The point of departure and the route are more particularly specified by Mark (7:31). Along (Wiclif, beside) the Sea of Galilee,

otherwise called the lake of Tiberias or Genessaret. (See above, on 4:15, 18, 14:34, and compare Luke 5:1. John 6:1, 21:1.) A circumstance which Mark omits is here recorded, namely, that on coming into these parts, he went up into the mountain (or the high lands) not a mountain (see above, on 5:1, 8:1, 14:23), and sat there, which would seem from the ensuing context, to denote, not the momentary act of sitting down on one occasion, but a more protracted period of residence or rest, an idea readily suggested by the verb to sit in Greek and Hebrew. (See above, on 4:16, 11:16.) As usual, however, this retirement and repose was soon interrupted by the never distant multitude, and by a great variety of cases for the exercise of healing power, one of which is singled out and related in detail by Mark alone (7:32–37), while Matthew gives a general account of all the miracles performed at this time in the mountains of Decapolis.

30. As in other cases, where he wishes to describe the variety and number of our Saviour's miracles of healing, Matthew here names certain classes of disease or suffering and adds a general expression. Thus in 4:24, he specifies the palsy, lunacy, and demoniacal possession, in connection with "divers diseases and torments," and the still more general terms, "every disease and every infirmity. In 8:16, he adds to a particular case of fever the two great classes of demoniacs and sick. In 11:5, he introduces Christ himself as enumerating to the messengers of John the Baptist, the blind, lepers, deaf, and dead, as the subjects of his healing and resuscitating power. So here the evangelist distinctly mentions, as the subjects of miraculous healing, the lame, blind, deaf, and maimed, a Greek word strictly meaning crooked, then more generally crippled by disease, in which sense it is joined with χωλός by Hippocrates. That these are only specimens or samples, may be seen not only from the other cases just referred to, but from the express addition of the vague but comprehensive phrase, and many others. The vast number of the cases may be gathered from the mention of those bringing them as great multitudes (or many crowds), the same expression as in 4:25, 8:1, 18, 12:15, 13:2, and the plural form of that in 14:14. Having with them, i. e. bringing from their homes in the surrounding country, which would seem from this description to be one not previously visited. Some infer that they were rude mountaineers from the statement that they cast (or threw) them down at Jesus' feet. Others, however, understand this merely as a sign of haste and eagerness to bring as many as they could within the reach of our Lord's healing power. That this power was exercised in every case presented, may be safely gathered from the last clause, and he healed them. The miracle recorded here by Mark is taken from the third class specified by Matthew, and is one of the very few peculiar to Mark's Gospel.

31. This verse describes the effect of the miracles on the multitudes, by whom the cases were presented. It would scarcely have been mentioned so particularly if the field were not a new one. The four classes mentioned in v. 30 are repeated in a different order, with the change wrought on each by the miracle of healing. A description similar in form but differing in details is given by our Lord himself in 11:3 above. The effect itself was wonder, leading them to glorify or praise the God of Israel, a remarkable expression as applied to Jews, and almost justifying the conclusion, that these mountaineers were Gentiles, perhaps inhabiting the same tract where the demons took possession of the swine, and where our Saviour was desired by the people to depart on that occasion. (See above, on 8:34.) If so, the passage has peculiar interest, as recording his return to the same region, and his joyful recognition by the people, not as a destroyer but a healer, which may possibly have ended in their general conversion to the true religion.

32. I have compassion, I am moved (or yearn) with pity, the peculiar idiom explained above (on 9:36, 14:14). The proposition is here made by Christ himself, as in John's account of the former miracle (John 6:5), with which that of Matthew (14:15) is perfectly consistent. Because already three days they continue with me, or according to the latest critics, three days now continue, i. e. the third day is passing. The three days are probably to be computed in the Jewish manner, i. e. reckoning each portion as a whole day, so that three days do not necessarily include more than one whole day and portions of two others. To send them away, dismiss, dissolve them (see above, on 14:15, 22:23), not as individuals merely, but as an assembly or a congregation, which implies that according to his custom he had taught as well as healed on this occasion. Fasting, hungry, without eating, without having eaten, a word found only in this passage and the parallel (Mark 8:3). I will not, i. e. am not willing, do not choose to do so. Lest they faint, or be relaxed, debilitated, literally loosened out, a kindred verb to that translated send away, but strictly meaning to dissolve. The reference is, therefore, not to fainting in the modern sense of swooning, but to weakness occasioned by the want of food. In the way, in (or on) the way home.

33, 34. Whence, not merely how, but more specifically, from what source or quarter? (Are there, or can there be) to us, i. e. how should we have so much bread (so many loaves). Fill, i. e. in the physical corporeal sense of satiating, filling the stomach, appeasing the desire for food. (For the primary and secondary usage of the Greek verb, see above, on 5:6, 14:20.) In a (not the) desert, which would therefore seem to mean a barren waste, and not a mere uncultivated solitude (see above, on 3:1, 4:1, 11:7). The strangeness of the fact, that the disciples should have spoken thus after the first feeding of the multitude, though not to be denied, is not to be exaggerated. It is not said that they forgot the other miracle; but what right had they to expect its repetition, or what reason to believe that he would choose what was in some respects his most stupendous miracle to be repeated? Besides, the in consideration of Christ's followers is always represented as extraordinary, almost preternatural, until they had received the Holy Spirit, And yet Moses represents himself as guilty of the same oblivion or unbelief (see Num. 11:21, 22, and compare Ps. 78:19, 20); and Israel displayed it upon all occasions from the departure out of Egypt till the entrance into Canaan. Even those who now reject the statement as incredible would probably have done the same if similarly situated. Now that we know Christ's purpose to renew the

miraculous provision, it is easy to exclaim at those who did not know it and had really no reason to expect it. The number of loaves is here greater than before (14:17), and the fishes are mentioned as few and small. These variations are exceedingly adverse to the hypothesis of one occurrence divided by tradition into two.

35, 36. On the earth is substituted here for on the grass (14:19), which might be regarded as substantially synonymous but for the expressions in v. 34 implying that this was a desert in the strict sense, i. e. wholly destitute of vegetation. Another circumstance omitted here in both accounts is the symmetrical arrangement of the multitude in companies or messes, which may either have been really dispensed with on this occasion, or left to be supplied from Mark (6:39, 40). Another is the act of looking up to heaven (14:19), while for that of blessing is here substituted that of giving thanks, unless both be considered as describing the same service, like the corresponding English phrase, to say grace. The usual and simple verb to break here takes the place of the emphatic compound used before.

37. Instead of twelve baskets full of fragments, we have here the remnant (excess, superfluity) of fragments, seven baskets. Besides the difference of construction and of number, the word for baskets is entirely different in both evangelists from that before used (11:20); and this distinction is observed in our Saviour's subsequent allusions to these two great miracles (see below, on 16:10). The notion of some modern sceptics, that this difference betrays a difference of source or traditional authority, proceeds upon the monstrous supposition, that a writer capable of framing such a history as we have found this to be, could either ignorantly or deliberately introduce into his narrative, without the slightest intimation to the reader, two discordant statements of the same occurrence, with their variations both of form and substance, in a perfectly crude and unadjusted state. Such a postulate would not have been so long endured by Christian readers but for the unfortunate impression even among them, that the gospels are mere bundles of materials, out of which we are to frame a history, instead of being well-digested histories themselves. The consistent and uniform distinction made between the baskets makes it highly probable that different kinds were used upon the two occasions, though the difference itself may now be lost, as it certainly is wholly unimportant. Chrysostom suggests, however, that the baskets in the second case were probably larger, which makes the disproportion less, and seems to be confirmed by Acts 9:25.

38. It is worthy of remark that this second narrative, so far from being an exaggeration or embellishment of the first, not only makes the numbers fed absolutely smaller, but the ratio or proportion to the food provided, thus diminishing the miracle so far as mere quantity is concerned. On what supposition can this strange fact be accounted for, except the supposition of historic reality, the simple supposition that the two events occurred precisely as Matthew here relates them? Had the two miracles been given each by one evangelist, there might have been some colour for the charge of two irreconcilable traditions; but as if to sweep away the very ground of such an allegation, both are recorded both by Mark and Matthew, so that the points of difference, instead of serving to discredit either, only prove that the events themselves were altogether different. The points are indeed as many and as marked as they could well have been, supposing that the same essential miracle was twice performed. The time, place, numbers, and proportions are all different; and it is surely not to be regarded as surprising that the people in both instances were hungry, that the food provided was their ordinary diet, that they leaned or lay upon the ground, that Christ pronounced or asked a blessing on the food, and employed the twelve disciples in its distribution. For how could any of these circumstances vary if he did repeat the miracle? His reasons for repeating it are not revealed, and need not be conjectured; but among them may have been the very feeling which now prompts the question. We have seen it already to be not improbable, that some of the accompanying acts in other miracles were varied for the purpose of evincing his own liberty and absolute discretion, as distinguished from the uniform routine to which men would have tied him. May he not, for the same reason, have repeated in a less imposing form, what they would rather have expected to see standing by itself in its unique sublimity, as something that could happen only once, and was wholly sui generis? But this may be undue refinement, and it may be better simply to regard it as an instance of authoritative action, independent of our finite views of what is right or needful. That both these miracles have been recorded notwithstanding their resemblance, is explained by that which seems to call for explanation. It is no doubt the practice of the sacred writers to avoid the repetition of identical or nearly similar events; but in a case of such surprising repetition of the acts themselves, the very sameness was a reason for recording both.

39. Entered (embarked, went on board) not a ship but the ship (or the boat,) i. e. the one before mentioned as attending him (see above, on 8:23, 24, 9:1, 13:2, 14:13, 22), in which he made his voyages from one point to another, and from which he sometimes taught the people. The coasts (borders, neighbourhood) of Magdala, the site of which has been determined on the west shore of the lake, a few miles north of Tiberias. The Codex Vaticanus and the Vulgate have Magadan.

CHAPTER 16

RESUMING his account of the concerted opposition to our Lord, Matthew now represents the two great rival sects or parties as uniting in a fresh demand for a certain kind of miracle, which they chose to make the test of his Messiahship, but which he again

refused to furnish (1–4). A remarkable mistake of the disciples serves to show their backwardness in learning under such a teacher, and affords an opportunity of further admonition and instruction (5–12). During a circuit in the northern portion of Perea, he inquires into the opinions of his followers respecting him, and draws forth from the twelve a formal acknowledgment of his Messiahship (13–20). He then imparts to them, more clearly than before, the painful doctrine of his passion, and rebukes Peter for resisting it (21–23). This gives occasion to a public statement of the duty and necessity of self-denial, and the danger of denying Christ (24–27), winding up with a solemn and mysterious intimation of his coming in his kingdom as at hand (28). All these topics are connected by the twofold tie of chronological succession and of a natural association, proving anew the methodical coherence and organic oneness of the composition. There is a parallel in Mark to this whole chapter, and in Luke also to the latter part, though Matthew has in several places words and incidents not found in either of the others. The order of the topics is the same in all the Gospels.

1. The Pharisees, his prominent opponents, as the zealous adherents of the oral law or traditional theology, now combine with their own enemies and rivals, the sceptical and scoffing Sadducees (see above, on 3:7, and below, on 22:15, 23), in renewing a demand which had been made already by the Pharisees and Scribes on a previous occasion (see above, on 12:38). Tempting, not in the ordinary sense of urging or enticing him to sin, but in the primary and wide sense of trying, putting to the proof, a process necessarily implying either doubt or unbelief of his pretensions. In this sense man is said to tempt God, who is incapable of tempting or being tempted in the other (James 1:13). Desired him, literally, asked or questioned, as in 12:10. A sign from (literally, out of) heaven, as distinguished from a sign on earth, such as his miracles of healing were, or a sign from hell, as they declared his dispossessions of the demons to be (see above, on 12:24). To show them, i. e. to exhibit it for their satisfaction or conviction. This demand may have been prompted by a real belief that the Messiah's advent was to be announced by strange celestial phenomena; or it may have been a mere subterfuge, a cavilling demand for more proof when they had enough already, an attempt to escape from the convincing power of his miracles on earth by demanding one from heaven.

2. Before repeating his refusal uttered on the previous occasion (12:39), and here subjoined immediately by Mark (8:12), our Lord rebukes their inconsistency or disproportionate regard to lower interests, by pointedly contrasting their facility and skill in judging of the weather, with their real or pretended want of evidence in his case. We have here another striking instance of his condescending wisdom in enforcing moral truth by illustrations drawn from the every-day experience of common life. Evening being come, or at the close of day, in reference no doubt to the later evening of the Jews (see above, on 8:16, 14:15, 23), or the interval from sunset until dark. Ye say, i. e. often or habitually say, are wont to say. The words thus put into their mouths were no doubt often heard in conversation, as the weather has in every age, despite the ridicule of mock-philosophers, afforded one of the most interesting subjects of colloquial discourse. What all men everywhere and always talk about, cannot be wholly unimportant or unworthy of attention. Fair weather is a single word in Greek, and a sort of exclamation, just as we say "a fine day!" without a verb expressed or understood. Here, however, there is more ground for assuming an ellipsis, as the reference is not to the present but the future. Is red, a Hellenistic verb (πυ ὰζει) derived from a classical Greek adjective (πυ ὸς) which properly means fiery in colour, and is peculiarly appropriate to the bright or flaming red with which the sky is often coloured at or after sunset.

3, 4. In the morning, one Greek word (πρωϊ), corresponding to the Latin mane and the English early, but more specific than the latter, which may be relatively used in reference to any portion of the day or night, whereas the Greek and Latin terms are restricted to the morning. The same description is repeated, but with an additional expression, lowering or frowning, which retains the participial form of the original, but may be rendered adjectively, sullen, angry. The original construction is, reddens frowning, without the and supplied in English, which conveys the true sense but enfeebles the expression.* We may either understand our Lord as meaning that these two appearances were usual at these two times of day respectively, or simply that they both occurred at both, and are only distinguished for the sake of the emphatic repetition. There is nothing answering in Greek to O ye, which is no more necessary here than in ch. 23 (13, 14, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29), where the very same word is seven times translated simply hypocrites. This word has been here supposed to have the milder sense of persons wholly occupied with what is outward, in allusion to its primary (or secondary sense) of a masked actor or performer. But the usual unfavourable sense of a dissembler or deceiver is entirely appropriate to these men, who could confidently foretell the changes of the weather by its dubious and variable signs, and yet were constantly demanding some addition to the proofs already given that the fulness of the time was come, and that Jesus was the Christ long promised in the Scriptures and expected by the people. Discern (distinguish) the face, or outward appearance as Cranmer renders it. (Tyndale and Geneva have the old word fashion.) Signs of the times, miraculous and other indications that the days of the Messiah have arrived. The remainder of the answer (in v. 4) is the same, word for word, with that in 12:39, and there explained. The variation in the epithets (evil and wicked) is confined to the translation. This exact repetition of his own words is so far from being improbable, that we may readily believe him to have uttered them in many other cases not recorded. (See above, on pp. 105–6.) The comparison with Jonah is not here carried out, as in the former instance, possibly because some of the same persons joined in the demand on both occasions. Instead of giving this addition, Matthew here says, that leaving them behind, he went away, which may imply an abrupt and indignant movement, corresponding to Mark's statement, that as he answered them, he sighed (or groaned) in his spirit, i. e. was internally and deeply moved with grief and anger at their obstinate and hopeless unbelief. (See Mark 8:12, and compare Mark 3:5.)

5. The exact translation, coming to the other side forgot, seems to mean that they neglected, after their arrival on the other side, to make provision for their journey onward, which may have been into a desert region. Bread, in Greek the usual plural form, distinguishing the separate cakes or loaves, and here denoting the accustomed provision for the company, especially when going on a journey.

6. By what would be a curious coincidence where mere men were exclusively concerned our Lord begins, probably after they had thought of their neglect to carry bread and had begun to be solicitous about it, a parabolical discourse, in which he draws his illustration from the customary mode of making bread, i. e. with yeast or leaven. As this substance draws its useful quality from fermentation, and as this may be considered as incipient corruption, it affords a natural and striking emblem of the same thing in the moral world. Hence no doubt it was excluded from the sacrificial rites of the Mosaic law (Ex. 34:25, Lev. 2:11), and is employed so uniformly as a figure for depravity or depravation, that the only exception commonly admitted, the parable which Luke and Matthew join with that of the mustard seed (see above, on 13:33), is thought by some to be no exception at all, but the reverse or wrong side of the parable just mentioned, and designed to show the spreading tendency of evil no less than of good, not only in the world but even in the church of God. However this may be, it is certain that our Lord here makes use of the emblem in a bad sense, when he tells his disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. Take heed, literally, see, i. e. see to it, be on your guard. Beware of, the expression used above, in 7:15, 10:17, and there explained. The particular corruption to which Christ applies this figurative term is that of the Pharisees and Sadducees, or according to Mark (8:15), that of the Pharisees and of Herod. The leaven of the Pharisees, against which the disciples are here warned, is nothing peculiar to or characteristic of them, but something common to them with the Sadducees and Herod, and all others who professed the true religion without really possessing it. Our Lord might therefore have connected all these names, and others too, without the slightest incongruity, because he is referring to the points in which they are alike, and not the points in which they differ. What the point of contact and agreement was between these most dissimilar and hostile parties will be seen below (on v. 12). In the mean time their conjunction by our Saviour may be likened to the language of a zealous preacher now, who should exhort his hearers to be careful that their piety is not that of a Papist, a Jew, or a Mahometan, but that of a true Christian. The sense of such an exhortation would be evident, but who would charge it with confounding inimical, nay opposite religions?

7. Reasoned, reckoned, or considered through and through. In themselves, that is, each within his own breast, but also, as we learn from Mark (8:16), to (or with) each other. This does not imply dispute, but only earnest conversation and comparison of views, in which they seem to have agreed, since they are all represented as saying, i. e. in substance: (it is, or he says this) because we have not taken bread. This little circumstance, which none but a true history would have given, speaks volumes as to the simplicity and ignorance of Christ's disciples, even after they had been so long in contact with him, and had gone forth from him as apostles preaching and performing miracles. With respect to the error here recorded, however childish it may now seem, it becomes us to remember that many who deride such blunders as absurd, if not impossible, would probably have made the same if placed in the same situation, with their thoughts running upon bread, and a mysterious intimation from their master about leaven. Accustomed as they were to hear him speak in riddles on the plainest subjects, why might they not without absurdity suppose him to be doing so now?

8. But although not utterly irrational, and therefore not deserving our contempt, this error was still culpable and merited their Lord's rebuke. When Jesus knew (it) seems to imply that he afterwards discovered it, an idea not suggested by the Greek or by a close translation. Jesus knowing, i. e. on the same spot and at the moment, what they said, and what they thought. Why reason ye because ye have not taken bread? i. e. why connect what I have just said with your want of bread, and try to give my words a meaning in relation to that trifling matter? It is not their want of perspicacity in seeing what he meant for which he blames them, but the undue anxiety about mere temporalities which occupied their minds, and made them thus incapable of knowing what he meant, or at least that he was talking upon higher subjects.

9, 10. Do ye not yet perceive the drift of my discourses, and the end to which my teachings are all tending, or comprehend at least my general purpose? If you have not strength of intellect sufficient to divine or comprehend my meaning, have you not at least some memory of what has passed so lately in your presence, before your eyes, and through your very hands? This reproach, it will be seen at once, relates not so much to their misapprehension of his words about the leaven, as to their extreme anxiety about the bread, which not only distracted and preoccupied their thoughts, but indicated want of faith in his capacity to help them and provide for them. Although he never performed miracles where ordinary means would answer the same purpose, they had surely no occasion to be troubled at the want of bread, when he had twice created it to feed not single individuals but thousands. As already hinted (see above, on 15:37), the two kinds of baskets are distinguished here by both evangelists, as in the narrative itself, so that the difference cannot be unmeaning or fortuitous; and if the two accounts of the two miracles are merely two traditions of the same thing, then these words of Christ referring to them as distinct events must also he explained away. The five loaves of the five thousand, i. e. the five and the five thousand, the seven and the four thousand, now so memorable in my history and yours, but which you seem so strangely to have since forgotten.

11, 12. How is it that ye do not consider (or perceive), not my parables or enigmatical teachings till they are explained, but the design of my instructions, as relating not to bread but to religion, and the import of my miracles, as proving my capacity to feed you even by creating food, should that be needful. Had they duly considered what his miracles implied, they would not have had their minds engrossed by bread, or by the want of bread, when he was speaking, and would then have understood, if not precisely what he meant by leaven, yet at least that he did not mean the leaven used in making bread. This seems to be the natural connection of the thoughts, even in the narrative of Mark (8:21), who stops short at this laconic question, without any further reference to the meaning of the leaven. This shows that his design was not to elucidate that figure, but to illustrate the condition of the twelve at this important juncture. But we here learn that before the conversation ended, they understood that by leaven he intended doctrine, not opinions or distinctive tenets, as to which the parties named could not have been described together, but their mode of teaching and expounding spiritual truth, which in all these cases was more or less external, superficial, ceremonial, and in that sense might be called hypocrisy, but also in the stronger sense of insincerity. (See above, on v. 3.)

13. Here may be said to begin a new division of our Lord's official history, in which he prepared the minds of his disciples for the great events before them by imparting clear views of his own mission as a sufferer. This necessary process of instruction he begins by ascertaining how far they already recognized and understood his claims as the Messiah. Of this interesting conversation we have three harmonious accounts, Luke (9:18) here again becoming parallel with Mark (8:27) and Matthew. Neither evangelist assigns the date of this transaction, even by connecting it expressly with the previous context as immediately successive. The natural presumption is, however, in the absence of all indications to the contrary, that these disclosures followed, and most probably without an interval of any length, the miracles and teachings which immediately precede them in the narrative. The place (not specified by Luke) is given both by Mark and Matthew as the region or territory (Mark villages, Matt. parts) of Cesarea Philippi (i. e. Philip's Cesarea). This was a city of Upper Galilee, near one source of the Jordan, as the ancient Dan or Laish (Josh. 19:47. Judg. 18:27–29) occupied the other. It was at the foot of Hermon, and was called by the Greeks Paneas, a word still preserved by the local tradition as the name of a village (Banias) on the same site. To distinguish it from Cesarea on the sea-coast (Cesarea of Palestine, originally called Straton's Tower), so often mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, it received the additional name Philippi (Philip's or of Philip) from the tetrarch of Itrurea and Trachonitis (Luke 3:1), brother of Antipas and husband of Salome (see above, on 14:6), by whom it had been rebuilt or beautified, and named Cesarea in honor of Tiberius. Into the villages or towns dependent upon this important city Jesus came with his disciples, when or whence is not recorded. Most interpreters, however, inferring chronological succession from historical juxtaposition, understand this to have happened on a journey from Bethsaida Julias (see Mark 8:22) to Cesarea Philippi. As a sample of the mode in which the ablest Germans harmonize the gospels, it may here be mentioned that De Wette represents as a material variation between Mark and Matthew, that the latter speaks of Jesus having come to the vicinity of Cesarea when he put this question, while the former says he asked it in the way (or on the road) to that place. Even if this were true, the usage of the participle aorist is wide enough to cover any discrepancy thence arising, having come and coming being almost convertible expressions. But the critic has himself fallen into the mistake which he imputes to the evangelist, by not observing that in the way is mentioned after the arrival at Cesarea, and refers not to the journey from Bethsaida thither, but to his visitation of the villages or parts dependent on the former town as a provincial capital. He came among those villages no doubt to exercise his ministry, and being in the way or on the road, i. e. travelling among them, for this purpose, he asked or questioned his disciples in the words recorded in the last clause. This is one of the imaginary discrepancies which even some Christian writers represent as quite irreconcilable without the use of disingenuous harmonical contrivances. Whom do men say (or declare) me to be? the Son of Man? This is the order of the words in Greek and the natural construction of the sentence. The common version makes it a description of himself, and some of the latest critics omit me altogether.

14. Their answer brings to light the same diversity of judgment or conjecture before mentioned in the account of the effect produced on Herod by the miracles of Jesus (14:2), but beginning with the notion there ascribed to Antipas himself, perhaps because it was maintained in such high places, or because it had also become dominant among the people. Elias, Elijah (see Mark 6:15). One of the prophets, i. e. of the ancient or Old Testament prophets (Luke 9:19), either in the vague sense of some one, or as this sense of the numeral is denied by eminent interpreters, a certain one, not named. It seems from this reply that notwithstanding the impression made by our Lord's miracles and teachings, and the convictions now and then expressed of his Messiahship, the great mass, even of those friendly to him, were disposed to look upon him rather as the Messiah's herald or forerunner than as the Messiah himself.

15, 16. In contradistinction from these popular impressions he demands of them, his personal attendants and more confidential followers, in what light they regarded him. As if he had said, 'these are the vague ideas of the multitude; but it is time to draw the line between them and yourselves by making a profession of your faith.' But ye—whom do ye say (or pronounce) me to be? Peter answers for the rest, not only from his rash and forward disposition, but because he was in fact their spokesman, recognized as such both by his master and his brethren, and particularly fitted for the office by the very disposition just referred to. (See above, on 10:2.) As Mark (8:29) introduces this confession merely to complete the chain of incidents, he gives Peter's answer in the briefest form, containing only the essential proposition, Thou art the Christ, the Messiah, which are Greek and Hebrew synonymes (see above, on 1:1), while Luke (9:20) employs the more emphatic phrase, the Christ of God, and Matthew the still more descriptive one, the Christ,

the Son of the living God. (See above, on 4:3, 8:29, 14:33.) The importance of this first express acknowledgment of Jesus as the Christ or the Messiah, even by his own chosen follower arises from the fact that all his public actions hitherto implied a claim to that exalted character, and that in consequence the truth of this claim was essential to the proof, not only of his public mission but of his personal veracity. The claim itself had reference to the clear prediction of a Great Deliverer in the ancient prophecies, expressly called Messiah, or Anointed, both by David (Ps. 2:2) and by Daniel (9:25), and by implication so described in all the scriptures which exhibit him as filling the great theocratical offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, in which the previous incumbents only held his place till he should come, and to which they were set apart by unction, the appointed symbol of those spiritual gifts which fitted men for these high functions, and which he was to possess without measure. All this Jesus claimed, and all this Peter acknowledged him to be, not only as a private individual when the truth was first suggested to him by his brother Andrew (John 1:41), but now as it were ex officio, in the name of all the twelve, and in response to an authoritative question from the Lord himself.

17. In reply to Peter's confession, our Lord, as it were, confesses Peter. (See above, on 10:32.) Blessed, happy, with specific reference to the divine favour. (See above, on 5:3.) Some suppose a reference to all the names here mentioned as significant, not only to Peter, but to Simon, as derived from the verb to hear and sometimes to obey, and Bar-Jona, son of a dove, denoting harmlessness (see above, on 10:16), or used as a symbol of the Holy Spirit (see above, on 3:16). Another explanation is, that the Son of Man was as certainly the Son of God as Simon was the Son of Jonah. Bar is the Chaldee word for Son, used in the prophecy of Daniel (7:13), to which our Lord's question probably alludes. Flesh and blood, i. e. human nature, or humanity or man, as opposed to God. (See Gal. 1:16, Eph. 6:12, 1 Cor. 15:50.) He had derived this knowledge from no human source, either in himself or others, but from a divine illumination. As the question of our Lord in v. 13 was addressed to all the twelve (με ς), and as Peter, in this as well as other cases, speaks in the name of all, the blessing must be understood as equally extensive, though in form directed only to the spokesman. There is no ground whatever for assuming that the others did not share in his conviction, or that they obtained it in a different manner. (See above, on 14:33, and compare John 1:50.) Nor do the Saviour's words imply a sudden unexpected revelation of something entirely unknown before.

18. This is the passage upon which the Church of Rome rests its doctrine of the Papal Supremacy, in which it is assumed that the address is exclusively to Peter, not in his representative capacity, but as an individual apostle, and in reply to his personal confession. It is also assumed that he is here declared to be the foundation of the church, and that as the foundation of a building must be as lasting as the edifice itself, the promise is to Peter and the bishops of Rome as his successors. In opposition to this forced interpretation, many Protestants adopt one scarcely less so, namely, that the rock referred to in the promise is not Peter's person but his confession, or the doctrine which he had confessed, to wit, the Messiahship and deity of Jesus. To this construction there are two objections; first, that it is unnatural, and secondly, that it is needless. It is unnatural because it supposes an abrupt transition from one subject to another, without any thing to intimate it or prepare for it, to wit, from Peter's name to his confession, which is then moreover arbitrarily expressed by an unusual figure, not peculiarly adapted to suggest it. Such assumptions can be justified by nothing short of an extreme exegetical necessity, which does not here exist. For in the next place, this construction is not only unnatural but needless, even for the purpose of refuting the pretensions of the Papal See, which rest upon a series of gratuitous and false assumptions. Even granting all the rest that is assumed in this interpretation, it is false that the Popes are in any sense whatever the successors of St. Peter. It is false that the Apostle, as such, has or can have a successor. It is inconsistent with the very image here used of a rock or stone as the foundation of a building, which would then be represented, not as continuing unmoved forever, but as being constantly renewed and changed, which is absurd both in the sign and the thing signified. Another false assumption is that even if these words were addressed to Peter as an individual apostle, without reference to the rest, they necessarily imply a primacy or permanent superiority of rank or office. That no such consequence need follow even from the most exclusive application of the words, is clear from the equally legitimate and much more natural construction that may be put upon them; not, as some propose, that Peter was to lay the first stone of the church, which would represent him, not as a foundation but a founder; but that he was to be himself among the first stones laid by the great master builder, and that on him, as a part of the foundation, the church was to be reared by the accession of both Jews and Gentiles, as for instance on the day of Pentecost, and at the conversion of Cornelius. But although this is a far more natural interpretation of the words if addressed exclusively to Peter, than the Romish one, the fact that they are so addressed is far from being certain or beyond dispute. It is somewhat curious that the same interpreters who most gratuitously introduce a reference to the Popes, which is at variance with the very figure here employed, deny the obvious allusion to the twelve collectively or as a body. That our Lord's main purpose was not, as the Romanists allege, to honour and exalt this one Apostle at the cost of all the rest, is clear from its omission by the other two evangelists, who stop short at the end of Peter's own confession (Mark 8:29. Luke 9:20). This is something very different from the usual omissions in the parallel accounts. Had Mark and Luke omitted the occurrence altogether, or merely given it more briefly, no conclusion could be drawn from such a difference. But if Peter's exaltation is the main design of this address, what precedes (in vs. 13–16) is simply introductory. Now how can we believe that two of the evangelists would only give the introduction, and then leave out what it introduces? Another reason for believing that these words do not relate exclusively to Peter, if at all, may be derived from the continual allusions to the twelve as a collective body, even in the types of the Old Testament, especially the twelve tribes of Israel, as the framework of the old theocracy, but still more clearly in the promise to the apostolic body founded on this ancient constitution

(Matt. 19:28), in the repetition of the same thing in a different form elsewhere (Eph. 2:20), and in the symbolical description of the twelve foundations of the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:14), of which it has been well said, that if one of the twelve stones is to be displaced and put beneath the rest, the whole will fall to pieces. But besides these analogies from other parts of Scripture, and the frequent appearances of Peter as the spokesman of the apostolic body (see above, on 10:2), which create a strong presumption that he acts so here, we have sufficient ground for so affirming in the context, where we find that Peter's confession was in answer to a question addressed to the whole company (whom say ye that I am? v. 15). And what is here said of Peter is in substance elsewhere said of all, as we shall see upon the next verse. It will here be sufficient to refer to Eph. 2:20, where believers (of whom the church is certainly composed) are said to be "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets (or inspired teachers)." What is there affirmed of all cannot here be said exclusively of one, and therefore, if these words relate to Peter at all, it can only be in common with the rest, and as their representative. But however possible or even probable this reference may be, it is not absolutely certain, but is open to some very strong objections, none of which can be regarded as conclusive in itself, nor perhaps in conjunction with the rest, but the aggregate of which does certainly make out a strong case in opposition to this doctrine. In the first place, the figure of a rock, although susceptible like others of indefinitely various applications, is especially appropriated in the Scriptures to the divine character and attributes, so that, as it has been well said by a living writer,* the spirit of the whole, and not of one place merely, is, "Who is a rock save our God?" See Deut. 32:4, 15, 18, 30, 31, 37. 1 Sam. 2:2, 2 Sam. 22:2, 3, 32, 47, 23:3. Ps. 19:14, 28:1, 31:2, 3, 42:9, 62:2, 6, 7, 71:3, 73:26, 78:37, 89:26, 94:22, 95:1. Isai. 17:10, 26:4, 30:29, 44:8. Hab. 1:12. Rom. 9:33. 1 Cor. 10:4. 1 Pet. 2:8. In all these places the term rock is applied directly either to Jehovah or to Christ. Nor is it ever applied, even by the strongest figure, to a merely human subject. This remarkable usage is at least sufficient to create a strong presumption, that the figure here is not applied to any mere man. In the second place, it is exceedingly unusual, if not wholly unexampled, to employ the demonstrative (this) in application to the object of address; whereas our Lord repeatedly applies it to himself. See John 2:19, 6:5. Matt. 3:3, 21:44, in which last place, by a remarkable coincidence, he calls himself this stone. In the third place, the diversity of form and gender in the Greek words (πέτρος and πέτρα) is too abrupt and marked to be unmeaning and fortuitous, or explicable simply on the ground, that the masculine form was used in speaking of a man. But if they are synonymous, as commonly assumed, why should the feminine be used at all, the rather as it weakens and obscures the reference to Peter, if intended, which would certainly have been more clear and striking if the same Greek word had been repeated, "thou art Peter (i. e. rock), and on this Peter (i. e. rock) will I build my church." The assertion usually made, that this distinction exists only in the Greek, and that in our Lord's vernacular the same form was repeated, as it is in the Peshito, or old Syriac version, is doubly insufficient to effect its purpose; first, because it is gratuitous, assuming without proof the fact on which it rests; and then, because this fact, even if it be admitted, leaves the language used by Matthew unexplained. Without insisting, as some recent writers are disposed to do, that our Saviour uttered this address in Greek, or even that he introduced these two Greek words, a practice perfectly familiar to the Chaldee paraphrasts and Syriac translators, it is altogether arbitrary to assume that the Aramaic dialect of Palestine at that time could not furnish two equivalents to these two Greek words. It has even been alleged on high authority (Light-foot) that Cephas itself bears the same relation to the Syriac word Cepha (ܟܐܦܐ) that Petros does to Petra, and that both may have been used on this occcasion. But even granting that the same word was repeated, it might be, as in so many other cases, with a difference of meaning, not entirely clear at first, but having that peculiar enigmatical significance, which formed so prominent a feature in the Saviour's διδαχή or method of instruction. This double sense of one word has been sometimes preserved even in Greek (compare the double sense of dead, νεκρο ς, in Matt. 8:22 and the parallels, as commonly explained; that of ψυχή in 10:39; that of ναός in John 2:19, 20), while in the case before us the usage of that language furnished two forms to express the kindred but distinct ideas. The classical use of πέτρος and πέτρα is entirely distinct, the latter answering to rock and the former to stone, the two being scarcely ever interchanged even by poetic licence. See Passow (edited by Rost and Palen), Liddell and Scott, and all the late New Testament Greek lexicons, sub vocibus. This remarkable fact makes it still more difficult to understand why Matthew should have used both forms if Christ employed but one or only in one sense, when the masculine form (πέτρος) would have answered every purpose. If, on the other hand, this variation of the form is studied and significant, it serves to corroborate the previous objections to applying the term rock to Peter. By retaining the invariable classical distinction between πέτρος (stone) and πέτρα (rock), we not only adhere faithfully to usage (penes quem est norma loquendi), and do justice to the writer's careful choice of his expressions, but obtain a meaning perfectly appropriate and striking, namely, that while Peter was a stone, i. e. a fragment of the rock, his Master was the rock itself. The same contrast between Christ and the Apostles, or believers in general, as the rock and stones, or the chief corner-stone and those laid on it, reappears in Eph. 2:20 and 1 Pet. 2:4–8. This explanation, far from being new, is one of the most ancient upon record, being eloquently amplified by several of the Fathers,* and acknowledged even by the most ambitious of the Popes.† But if to any it should seem less natural than that which applies the figure of a rock to Peter, although contrary, as we have seen to settled usage, it has been already shown that there are cogent reasons for applying it to him in his representative capacity. But even if restricted to himself among the twelve, we have also seen that it implies no permanent superiority, and still less a derivative authority in any claiming to be his successors. It thus appears that whether this rock mean our Lord himself or Peter, it is easy to refute the papal claims, erected upon this expression, without resorting to any forced or fanciful construction. I will build (as something yet to be accomplished) my church, a Greek word, which according to its etymology means something called out or evoked, and by implication called together or convoked, as a separate assembly or society, selected from a greater number. As in the classics it denotes the popular assemblies of the Greek republics, and especially of Athens (compare Acts 19:32, 39, 41), so in

the Septuagint version it had long been used to represent a Hebrew word (קָהָל) denoting the host or congregation of Israel. To the Greek-speaking Jews, therefore, it had already a religious import, and would here be understood as meaning that the Saviour was about to found such a society, and to found it on the rock just mentioned. To this society he promises perpetual security. Hell is not the word so rendered in 5:22, 29, 30, 11:28, but that employed in 11:23, and there explained to mean the unseen world, or the abode of disembodied spirits, the condition of the dead, without regard to their character and state of suffering or misery. It cannot therefore well be understood in this place as denoting what we call the powers of darkness, or the devil and his angels, but is rather a strong figure for death or destruction, corresponding to the gates of the grave in Isai. 38:10, and the gates of death in Ps. 107:18. The very combination here used is also found in Æschylus and Homer, and explained by an old Greek scholiast as a periphrasis for death (περἰθρασις θανὸτου). Gates has been variously explained to mean the entrance, the defences, the military force, and the judicial power. Prevail against is by some comparatively understood as meaning to be stronger than, but commonly as signifying victory or conquest. Whatever be the sense of the particular expressions, the essential meaning evidently is, that nothing should destroy the safety of the church to be erected on the rock here mentioned.

19. The abrupt transition from the figure of a foundation-stone to that of a door-keeper, although not impossible or wholly unexampled in our Lord's discourses (see above, on 9:36, 37, 13:20), is not to be assumed without necessity, and therefore may be urged as an objection to the supposition that the rock of v. 18 is Peter. It is certainly no natural association of ideas, that the keys of a building should be given to the rock on which it rests. This may be neutralized, however, by observing that it is equally incongruous for a rock to give the keys as to receive them. All admit that this verse is addressed to Peter, as representing either his associates or successors. To the arguments against this last assumption, and in favour of the other, as already stated (on v. 18), may now be added, that the very grant here made to Peter is repeated almost in the same words in the next chapter (18:18) and addressed to the whole body of apostles. The only question here is in relation to the power bestowed. The figure of a key would at once suggest the idea of admission and exclusion to or from the church here called the kingdom of heaven. (See above, on 3:2, 4:17, 5:3, 10, 19, 20, 7:21, 8:11, 10:7, 11:11, 12, 13:11, 24, 31, 33, 45, 47, 52.) Even as an individual apostle, Peter may be said to have exercised this power in the reception of the first converts, whether Jews or Gentiles, and in the exclusion of such false professors as Ananias and Sapphira and Simon Magus. Acts 2:38–41, 5:5, 9, 8:21, 10:48. As representing the whole body of apostles, he may be said, in a still wider sense, to have organized the church, deciding who should be and who should not be recognized as members, and performing all the functions properly belonging to the character and office of a founder. If this clause stood alone, there would perhaps be no dispute, except with respect to the extent of the grant here made, or the persons who received it. But a difficulty springs from the addition of the next clause, where the figure is distinct, and yet so much alike as to make it doubtful whether it denotes the same thing or another. The former is maintained by some upon the ground that doors were anciently tied fast and opened by untying or loosing. But even if the usage be admitted, the allusion to it here would seem to be precluded by the express mention of the key, which could scarcely be employed for the loosing of a knot. Another explanation seeks to gain the same sense by supposing bind to mean attach or fasten, and loose to separate, equivalent expressions for admission and exclusion. A third gives the words the more specific sense of remitting or not remitting (compare John 20:23); a fourth, that of allowing and forbidding; while a fifth attempts to show by citations from the classics and Josephus, that to bind and loose was an idiomatic or proverbial expression for control or government in general. Diodorus Siculus gives an inscription on an image of Isis, in which she claims to be the queen of the whole country, adding, "What I shall bind, no one can loose." Josephus describes the Pharisees under Queen Alexandra, as managers of all affairs, who banished and restored whom they would, and adds, λυεἰν τε κα δε v. Even granting this to be the true sense of the figures, it is no proof of supremacy or even primacy, as here bestowed on Peter, since, as we have seen already, he is here addressed as representing the apostles, who are recognized by Protestants no less than Papists, as not only founders but chief rulers of the church; in which capacity, however, we deny that they can have successors.

20. This prohibition is to be explained upon the same general principle with those addressed to evil spirits and to persons whom he healed (see above, on 8:4, 9:30), not as an absolute suppression of the truth, but such a gradual disclosure as might best secure the great ends of his advent, and especially postpone its final issue or catastrophe till all intermediate ends had been accomplished. The very verb translated charged (here and in Mark 5:43, 7:36, 8:15, 9:9) by its etymology suggests the idea of distinction or discrimination, and may serve to remind us that this practice rested upon no fixed law or general rule, but on the wisdom and authority of Christ himself. That they should tell no man (of him, Mark 8:30), what they knew of him, particularly this which they had just confessed, to wit, that he was the Messiah.

21. Having now drawn from them a profession of their faith in his Messiahship, he enters on the delicate and painful task of teaching them that although he was the Messiah, and by necessary consequence a king, the manifestation of his royalty must be preceded not only by prophetic but by priestly functions, or in other words that he must suffer before he reigned (see Luke 24:26). This doctrine, though distinctly taught by Daniel (9:26) and Isaiah (53:4–10), had been gradually lost among the Jews, and was now confined to that small class who still looked for redemption in Jerusalem (Luke 2:38). The teaching even of the Scribes presented the Messiah as a conqueror and an earthly monarch, who was to restore the throne of David and Solomon and the long lost privileges of the chosen people. This delusion seems to have been shared by the apostles, so far as they had any views upon the subject, and of this he now, from this time, began (and afterwards continued) to disabuse them, by foretelling his various sufferings,

his rejection not by individuals but by the nation, represented in the Sanhedrim by the three great classes here distinctly named, and lastly, his resuscitation on the third day after his decease.

22. The effect upon Peter, though denounced by some as improbable and inconsistent with his previous confession, is one of the most natural and lifelike incidents recorded in the Scriptures. Affectionate and ardent, but capricious and precipitate, imperfectly instructed even in the great truth which he had avowed in behalf of his brethren and himself, and no doubt elated above measure by the praise or rather blessing which the Lord had just bestowed upon him, although only in his representative capacity, he could not have betrayed his own infirmity in one act more completely than in that recorded here by Matthew and Mark (8:32). Taking him to (himself or aside) as if to speak with him in private, not by the hand, which would be otherwise expressed. With our habitual associations, it may not be easy to see any thing in this procedure but absurd and arrogant presumption, which has led some to reject it as incredible. But when we take into consideration all the circumstances just suggested, and transport ourselves into the midst of them, as Peter was surrounded by them, we may see that the extraordinary scene presented in this passage, although one which no fictitious writer would have dreamed of, and which could not be the fruit of any mythical process, is nevertheless exquisitely true to nature, both to that of man in general and to that of Peter in particular. Began to rebuke (or chide him), as a friend entitled to such freedom, for indulging such unnecessary fears and gloomy apprehensions. He began to do this in the words preserved by Matthew, but was cut short by one of the severest answers ever uttered, which effectually taught him his mistake and brought him to his senses. Be it far from thee (Vulg. absit a te), literally, propitious to thee, which may either mean, God have mercy on thee, or spare thyself (Tyndale and Cranmer, favour thyself).

23. But he (the Son of Man, thus corrected and patronized by one of his own followers) turning (to him, or upon him), said to Peter: Get thee (literally go, begone) behind me (out of my sight, away from me) Satan. These words are not only the same in both accounts of this transaction, but identical with those pronounced by Christ to Satan in the wilderness, according to the common text of Luke (4:8), and according to the latest text of Matthew (4:10). This coincidence affords a key to the true meaning of this sharp apostrophe, as not a mere expression of abhorrence or contempt, but a specific charge of imitating Satan as the tempter, and endeavouring to draw his master back from the very thing for which he came into the world, and for which his three years' ministry was but a preparation. As if he had said, 'What, is Satan come again to tempt me, as he did of old? Avaunt thou adversary, get thee hence!' Then addressing the astonished and no doubt affrighted Peter, in his own person, he describes the cause of the mistake which he had just made. Thou art an offence, i. e. a stumbling block, a hindrance, to me. (See above, on 13:41). Savourest, an obscure English word, and expressing an idea not contained in the original, which means thou mindest, carest for, including both the thoughts and the affections. (Compare Rom. 8:5. 1 Cor. 4:6. Gal. 5:10. Phil. 3:19. Col. 3:2.) The things that be of God, &c., in the original is simply, the (things) of God, the (things) of men, i. e. their respective interests, affairs, or claims. The meaning of the sentence seems to be, 'you look only at the human side of these transactions, and regard my death as a mere instance of mortality like that of other men, to be averted as a great calamity, whereas it is the means which God has chosen and appointed for the satisfaction of his broken law and the salvation of his elect people.'

24. The connection with what goes before is, that although the disciples were surprised to hear that he must suffer, they must now prepare to suffer too, the members with the head. If any one (whosoever, without any exception or reserve) will (i. e. wishes or desires to) come after (i. e. follow) me (as my dependent and adherent), not in public station merely, but among the humblest classes of my people. Let him deny (i. e. renounce, abjure) himself (as the great object of regard), and let him take up his cross, not merely a prospective or prophetic allusion to the mode of his own death, but a reference to the common practice of compelling malefactors to convey their own cross to the place of execution. Crucifixion being commonly regarded as at once the most painful and disgraceful way of dying, is here put for the worst form of suffering, and carrying the cross for humble, patient submission to it. And let him follow me, not merely in the general sense of service or the special sense of imitation, but in that of suffering with and like another. As if he had said, 'let him follow me to Golgotha.'

25. This is one of our Lord's aphorisms, uttered upon more than one occasion, and already introduced by Matthew in a different connection and more briefly. (See above, on 10:39.)

26. The loss in the case supposed is therefore no loss, as the gain in the other case is no gain. The terms are chosen from the dialect of ordinary secular business. What is a man profited, what will he gain, on ordinary principles of value or exchange, if he gain, acquire, in the usual commercial sense, the whole world, that is, all that it can offer as an object of attraction or desire, the aggregate, sum total, of enjoyment, whether sensual, ambitious, intellectual, pecuniary, and lose (a most emphatic passive form, be made to lose, be injured, ruined, with respect to) his own soul, the word before translated life, but here denoting rather that which lives, enjoys and suffers. What are enjoyments if there is no one to enjoy them, if the man himself is lost, i. e. lost to happiness for ever? He pursues the awful supposition further, to the verge of paradox and contradiction, but with terrible advantage to the force of this transcendent argument. Suppose a man to lose his soul, his life, himself, in the sense before explained, how shall he recover it, redeem it, buy it back again, by giving an equivalent in value? There is something unspeakably impressive in this method of suggesting the importance of eternal interests, by supposing the very life or soul itself to be lost to the possessor and an effort made to buy it back, and then propounding the question, where is the equivalent, or how shall it be rendered? It is true that when the soul,

or its eternal life, is lost, there is no one to attempt its restoration, for the subject or possessor is lost with it. But this is only stating in another form the very truth which Christ is here propounding, that a man may lose his present life and yet live on and have a better life in lieu of it; but when he loses his eternal life, he is himself lost, lost forever, and the thought of compensation or recovery involves a contradiction.

27. The threatening against such as should be ashamed of Christ, recorded here by Mark (8:38) and Luke (9:26), having been substantially given by Matthew in a different connection (see above, on 10:33), is here omitted, while the last clause of the verse as they report it (when he shall come, &c.) is amplified into a solemn prophecy that the Son of Man (who now appears in the form of a servant) will come in glory (with a majesty the opposite of what you now behold, and that not his own glory merely but) the glory of his Father, with (attended by) the angels, whose reflected brightness will enhance that from which it is derived (Luke 9:26). He will then come, no longer as a sufferer but a judge, empowered and prepared to deal with every man according to his works, literally, practice (πρ ξιν), meaning his whole course of conduct.

28. This verse is one of the most difficult and disputed in the whole book, though the question is rather one of application than essential meaning. Amen, verily, assuredly (see above, on 5:18, 13:17). I say unto you, with emphasis on both the pronouns, I (the Son of Man) to you (my confidential followers). There be, not a subjunctive but an old indicative form equivalent precisely to the modern are. Some of those here standing, i. e. of the twelve then present and immediately addressed, or of the crowd referred to in Mark 8:34. Which, applied in old English both to things and persons, but confined to the former in modern usage, which would here require who. Shall not, a peculiarly strong negative in Greek, the aorist subjunctive with the particle (μή) suggesting the idea, that they neither could, would, nor should do what the verb expresses. Taste of death, i. e. experience or partake of it, considered as a portion or a draught administered by God to man (see below, on 20:22, 26:39). Though the form of expression here is highly metaphorical, it can be referred to nothing but the literal decease of persons actually present. This restricts the meaning of what follows to a single generation or a single life-time, though it may have been a long one. Till they have seen (or see, behold, or witness) the Son of Man (now disguised in the form of a servant) coming in his kingdom, i. e. as a king in all his royal state and majesty. The essential meaning, as to which there can be no dispute, is that before all then present should be dead, there would be some convincing proof that the Messiah's kingdom had been actually set up, as predicted by the prophets and by Christ himself. The only doubt or difference of opinion is in reference to the nature of this evidence, or the particular event by which it was to be afforded. The solutions of this question which have been proposed are objectionable, chiefly because too exclusive and restrictive of the promise to a single point of time, whereas it really has reference to a gradual or progressive change, the institution of Christ's kingdom in the hearts of men and in society at large, of which protracted process the two salient points are the effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and the destruction of Jerusalem more than a quarter of a century later, between which points, as those of its inception and its consummation, lies the lingering death of the Mosaic dispensation, and the gradual erection of Messiah's kingdom.

CHAPTER 17

THE solemn confession and prediction in the preceding chapter seemed to intimate the close of our Lord's ministry in Galilee, the formal winding up of which is now recorded. This juncture in the history was marked, moreover, by a momentary anticipation of his glory, which three of the apostles were allowed to witness, after which the record of the Galilean ministry hastens to its close. The main subject of this chapter is the Transfiguration, with the accompanying incidents (1–21). The remaining verses, which describe our Lord's last circuit in Galilee and visit to Capernaum (22–27) are closely connected with the following chapter.

The Transfiguration (1–8). The time, place, and earthly witnesses (1)—the actual transfiguration (2)—the heavenly witnesses (3)—Peter's proposition (4)—the divine recognition (5)—the effect on the disciples (6)—their restoration (7)—the end of the vision (8).

The Descent (9–13). The prohibition (9)—the doctrine of the Scribes as to Elijah (10)—our Lord's confirmation of it (11)—the fulfilment of the prophecy (12)—its application to John the Baptist (13).

The Epileptic Demoniac (14–21). The return (14)—the description of the case (15)—the failure of the nine (16)—our Lord's expostulation (17)—the dispossession (18)—the inquiry of the nine (19)—the faith of miracles (20)—its spiritual aids (21).

The close of the Galilean ministry (22–27). The last circuit (22)—renewed prediction of his passion (23)—the last return to Capernaum (24)—Peter's conversation with the tax-gatherers (24)—our Lord's exemption from such charges (25, 26)—he waives his prerogative, and provides the sum required by miracle (27).

CHAPTER 18

THIS chapter is entirely occupied with our Lord's discourses, or rather a single conversation (see below) to his disciples during his last circuit in Galilee, or perhaps during his last visit to Capernaum recorded at the close of Chapter 17. These discourses relate chiefly to two topics; the nature of true greatness, or the dignity of Christ's little ones (1–14); and the nature of Christian discipline, or the divine law of censures and forgiveness (15–35). The first of these subjects was introduced by a question of the disciples, as to their relative rank in the Messiah's kingdom (1), which question was itself not improbably occasioned by our Lord's prediction of his passion in 17:22, 23, though separated from it in the narrative by the account of an intervening incident (17:24–27). To the question Christ gives first a symbolical answer (2), which he then explains in words, both negatively (3) and positively (4). The evil effects of such humility would be prevented by their bearing Christ's commission (5), which would make offences oven against a child tremendous crimes (6, 7), which must therefore be avoided at any cost (8:9). Another reason for respecting even the most childlike and defenceless of believers is the fact that they enjoy angelic guardianship (10), and are objects of Christ's saving mercy (11), valued not according to intrinsic worth, but as men value that which has been lost and is found (12–14). As there will be mutual collisions, however, even among true believers, our Lord shows how they should be dealt with; first, in the most private manner (15); then, if need be, in the presence of a few (16); and lastly, in the presence of the church (17), to which in the person of the twelve, he grants the necessary power of reception and exclusion (18), and of effectual united prayer (19:20). All this has reference to the case of contumacious, obstinate offenders; but in answer to a question from Peter (21), our Lord teaches that the penitent offender is to be forgiven without limit. This he first expresses in a hyperbolical but not exaggerated answer to the question (22), and then enforces the necessity of such a temper in the parable of the two debtors (23–34), winding up with a solemn application to his hearers (35). There is not the slightest ground for doubting that this interesting conversation stands precisely in its proper place, i. e. its true chronological position, at the close of our Lord's residence and ministry in Galilee.

CHAPTER 19

AS the two preceding chapters (17, 18) record the close of our Lord's Galilean ministry, so the next two (19, 20) contain the record of his last journey to Jerusalem. In the one before us, we see him actually crossing the Jordan into Perea (1) followed by a multitude in quest of healing (2), as well as by adversaries, who propound a difficult question in relation to divorce (3), which he answers by referring them to the creation of man (4), and the original institution of marriage (5), implying an indissoluble relation (6). In reply to a further question, as to the Mosaic law of repudiation (7), he represents it as a later regulation, rendered necessary by their own injustice and severity (8), and not at all justifying the prevailing licence of repudiation (9). In reply to a misgiving of the disciples as to marriage (10), he teaches them that there is no rule applicable to all cases (11), and enumerates several instances of lawful celibacy, closing with a repetition of his warning against indiscriminate judgments in such cases (12). The repulse of little children by his followers (13) leads to a gracious invitation on his own part (14), with obvious reference to his previous teachings (18:2–4). Proceeding on his journey towards Jerusalem (15), he applies a searching test to a self-righteous seeker of eternal life (16–22), and takes occasion from it to declare the difficulties thrown by wealth in the way of men's salvation, which is stated both in literal and proverbial terms (23, 24); but immediately relieves the anxiety of his disciples (25), by referring all to the omnipotence of God (26). In reply to Peter's question as to those who, like the twelve, had stood the test of forsaking all for Christ (27), he utters a twofold promise, one specific and addressed directly to the twelve (28), the other general to all believers (29), closing with a proverbial intimation that there would be strange inequalities in its fulfilment (30). The obvious nexus between these discourses is a chronological one, that is to say, they are put together here because they were actually uttered in this order on the journey to Jerusalem.

CHAPTER 20

THIS chapter continues and completes the last journey to Jerusalem. Its connection with the one before it is as intimate as possible. The proverbial maxim with which that concludes is here amplified into a parable, that of the labourers in the vineyard, at the close of which the aphorism is repeated (1–16). We then find him still on his way to Jerusalem with the multitude (17), and privately repeating to the twelve the premonition of his approaching passion (18, 19). This appears to have occasioned the ambitious application of the wife and sons of Zebedee, and Christ's mysterious answer and prediction with respect to the latter (20–23). The jealous emulation of the other ten apostles gives occasion to a statement of the difference between Messiah's kingdom and all others, as well as of the only means by which distinction in the former can be possibly attained (24–28). He has now reached the last stage on the journey to Jerusalem, and there performs a signal miracle of healing, the subjects of which join his retinue and accompany him towards the

Holy City (29–34).

CHAPTER 21

THE next five chapters (21–25) record the winding up of our Lord's whole prophetic ministry on earth, first in public (21–23) and then within the circle of his own disciples (24, 25). In the one before us we find him at the end of his long journey, in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem (1), sending two of his disciples for an ass, in order to make his entrance in accordance with the well known prophecy of Zechariah (2–7). This first public claim to Messianic honours is acknowledged with enthusiasm by the crowd of worshippers going up to the passover (8–9). His arrival causes general commotion and inquiry as to his pretensions (10–11). He again exercises Messianic authority by clearing the temple of profane intruders, and by working miracles within its precincts (12–14). In reply to the remonstrances of the priests and scribes against these supposed disorders, he refers particularly to the acclamations of the children as a fulfilment of the Scriptures (15, 16). At night he withdraws to Bethany, and on his return early in the morning, blasts a fig-tree as a symbol of the judgment impending over the fruitless and unprofitable race of Israel (17–20). This leads to another brief discourse, in reference to the faith of miracles (20–22). At the temple he is met by a formal deputation from the Sanhedrim, demanding the authority by which he had so suddenly assumed prophetic if not Messianic powers (23). He replies by referring to the public testimony of his forerunner, whose divine legation they did not dare to call in question (24–27). He then shadows forth the coming changes in the parable of the Two Sons (28–32), and the fearful doom of the unfaithful Jews in that of the Husbandmen (33–41). He also applies to them and to himself the parabolic language of the eighteenth psalm (42–44). These open and severe denunciations of the theocratic rulers would have led to his immediate seizure, but for the popular belief in his prophetic mission (45–46).

CHAPTER 22

OUR Lord's great discourse to the heads of the theocracy as such (21:23) is here completed by the parable of the marriage-feast (1–10) and wedding-garment (11–13), closing with one of his significant and solemn aphorisms (14). Here the chapter might have ended; for here begins a new series of attacks, not from the government or its members, in their official capacity, but from several leading classes of the people. The first attack proceeded from a coalition of the Pharisees and Herodians, intended to reduce him to a dilemma, in relation to the delicate political question upon which they were divided, the lawfulness of Jews submitting to a foreign and a heathen power, which our Lord answered with a wisdom so consummate as to command the admiration of his very tempters (15–22). The next attack was from the sceptical and latitudinarian Sadducees, and was not so much insidious as frivolous, designed to throw contempt upon the doctrine of the resurrection (23–28). To their scoffing question Christ replies with godlike dignity, correcting their false notion of a future state, and authoritatively laying down the doctrine of the resurrection, which they denied and laughed at (29–32). As this reply not only silenced his assailants, but produced a great impression on the people (33, 34), the Pharisees renewed their attack, not now as a political but as a religious party, putting forward one of their scribes or lawyers, with a question probably discussed in their schools, as to the relative importance of the precepts in the decalogue (35, 36). Neither evading it nor answering it formally, our Lord escapes their snare, and at the same time teaches them the true extent and import of the law, by citing the two precepts which contain its sum and substance (37–40). The last interrogation is from Christ himself, and marks the change in his position from defensive to offensive, charging home upon them their departure from the ancient Messianic doctrine, and opening the way for the terrible invective and denunciation which immediately follow (41–46).

CHAPTER 23

OUR Lord now turns from his assailants to the body of the people and to his own disciples, both in the narrower and wider sense (1). For their guidance he defines the official position of the Scribes and Pharisees, and their claim to obedience, but warns against copying their example (2–4). This he enforces by disclosing their true character and motives, the desire of human praise, as shown in several particulars, against which he forewarns his followers (5–12). He then turns, for the last time, to the Scribes and Pharisees themselves, against whom he utters the most terrible invective and denunciation upon record, summing up, at the close of his prophetic ministry, all that he had said against them during its previous course (13). The first ground of denunciation is their frustrating the very end of the theocracy committed to their charge (13). The second is their double profanation of religious worship as a cloak for their cupidity (14). The third is their proselyting zeal, not for good but for evil, and tending not to the salvation but the ruin and the ruinous influence of their converts (15). The fourth is their misguiding of the people, as to religious duties, with particular reference to oaths, either as a mere example, or as a specially prevailing evil (16–22). The fifth is their sacrificing the essentials of

the law to its minutest ceremonial observances, and even to traditional and uncommanded usages, here expressed both directly and in strong proverbial language (23–24). The next two verses relate to the same thing, their merely outside righteousness, set forth under two striking and familiar images. The first is that of a dish clean upon the outside but dirty still within (25–26). The other is that of tombs or burial-houses, whitened on the outside, but within full of decayed or putrifying corpses (27–28). This comparison suggests the eighth and last denunciation, which was the more startling because founded upon what they no doubt looked upon as highly meritorious, their zeal in building monuments or tombs to the martyred prophets, and disclaiming all participation in the murderous fanaticism of their fathers. In opposition to this specious profession, our Lord represents them as the genuine descendants of the prophet-killers, and declares that they would yet commit the same sin upon those whom he should send unto them, and thus prove worthy to bear the burden of the whole race, not only as the last but as the worst generation (29–36). He then closes with a tender lamentation over the doomed race as represented by the Holy City, predicts its speedy desolation, and adds an enigmatical intimation of ulterior changes (37–39).

CHAPTER 24

THOUGH our Lord had solemnly concluded his public work as a teacher, and taken an affecting leave of Israel as a people (23:37–39), his prophetic ministry was yet to be wound up, within a smaller circle, and by a prophetical discourse, in the strictest sense of the expression (24, 25). A natural feeling of admiration in the twelve or some of them for the majestic structure of the temple leads him to predict its absolute destruction, and this to an inquiry as to the time and the premonitory signs of the great catastrophe of which they had so often heard obscurely (1–3). Instead of gratifying idle curiosity by positive details, our Lord begins by showing what would not be necessarily the signs of his return, however men might be inclined so to regard them, and impostors so to represent them (4:5); such as wars and other national commotions and calamities, which instead of announcing the end, might be merely the beginning of sorrows (6–8). Even when assailed themselves, betrayed, and hated, they should still be rescued if they remained faithful during these sore trials, and the Gospel must be preached to every nation before the coming of the final consummation (9–14). Without distinguishing the different stages of his coming or the accompanying judgments, he instructs his followers what to do when the Romans should invest Jerusalem, viz., to flee without the least delay, the idea of precipitancy being variously and strikingly expressed (15–20). The reason given is the unparalleled severity of the judgments coming on the Jews, and only to be checked for the sake of true believers (21–22). Even at this fatal juncture there would not be wanting false pretenders to the prophetic, and even to the Messianic office, whom he solemnly charges his disciples not to listen to, either at home or abroad (23–26), assuring them that when he did come, it would be as conspicuously as the lightning, or the flight of eagles to their prey (27–28), and be followed by the most terrific changes in the frame of nature, and the final gathering of God's elect (29–31). Having answered their question as to the signs of his return in judgment, he now answers that as to the time; first, by telling them that these great changes were not arbitrary judgments, but the growth of moral causes, and could no more take place until these had done their work, than the fig-tree would bear fruit before the season (32–33); 2.—that in a certain sense, this whole prophetic scheme should be verified, before the end of the contemporary generation (34); 3.—that although the event was far more certain than the continuance of the frame of nature, the precise time of its occurrence was concealed alike from men and angels (35–36), and it would therefore come as unexpectedly at last as the flood upon the antediluvian sinners (37–39), but with a discrimination between individuals unknown in that case (40–41). Having thus disclosed as much as he thought fit with respect to his departure and return, our Lord now teaches his disciples how they ought to act during his absence, whether long or short. The first great duty is that of vigilance, enforced by a case of burglary, perhaps of recent date and well known to his hearers (42–44), and then by a supposed but most familiar case of a servant left to take care of his absent master's house (45–51). In carrying out this illustration, he exhibits in a plain but vivid manner, the conduct of a faithful and unfaithful servant in such circumstances, showing, however, by the fearful severity of the punishment, that he has his eye not so much upon the sign as the thing signified.

CHAPTER 25

HAVING taught them the necessity of vigilance after his departure, he now shows them that the vigilance required is not mere watchfulness but watchful preparation. This is beautifully set forth in the parable of the ten virgins, winding up with a solemn application to his hearers (1–13). His next lesson is that their vigilance must not be idle or unfruitful, but laborious and productive, in proportion to their several capacities and opportunities. This is taught in the parable of the talents (14–30). The last lesson has respect to the way in which they might testify their love to him while personally absent. By acts of kindness to his suffering people (31–46). This is enforced by a graphic scene which, standing as it does at the close of a series of parables, rising one above another, might itself be regarded as a parable, the imagery of which is borrowed from the future, like that of the Rich Man and Lazarus. But with a skill which in an uninspired writer would be called consummate, this passage also winds up the prophetic

discourse in ch. 24, and thereby closes our Lord's personal work on earth as a prophet, even in the confidential circle of his own disciples.

CHAPTER 26

HAVING finished his teaching work, our Lord now looks forward to his passion and connects it with the passover only two days off, thus for the first time fixing the precise date of that great event which he had so often more indefinitely foretold to his disciples (1:2). The different lines of hostile influence which had long been converging towards his destruction now begin to show themselves in visible approximation. We find the Sanhedrim formally deliberating how they could despatch him without popular commotion, and abandoning the project until after the passover, for want of some auxiliary influence ab intra. How this aid was unexpectedly provided the evangelist informs us by relating how the disaffection of Judas had been brought to maturity and open outbreak a few days before at Bethany (6–13). This brought about the convergence which appeared to be indefinitely put off, and secured the espionage of a traitor within the narrow circle of our Lord's most confidential followers (14–16). He accompanies his Master and his brethren to the place appointed for the paschal feast; hears our Lord declare that one of them was to betray him, and pronounce a fearful woe on the betrayer, hears the eleven severally ask, Is it I? repeats the same inquiry and receiving an affirmative answer, silently withdraws, thus severing himself forever from the only Saviour (17–25). That Saviour then engrafts upon the last Jewish Passover the first Christian Eucharist, thus furnishing the link of transition and connection between the old and new economy (26–29). Withdrawing to the Mount of Olives, he predicts the defection of his followers, but promises to meet them in Galilee after his resurrection (30–32). To Peter's vehement denial of our Lord's words, so far as they concerned himself, Christ repeats the prediction still more pointedly in reference to Peter, and receives a still more passionate denial, in which all the others join (33–35). Then comes the awful scene of anguish in Gethsemane, made more so by the insensibility and drowsiness even of his three chosen attendants (36–46). He is pointed out by Judas to the armed band who arrest him (47–50). He rebukes a feeble effort at resistance on the part of his disciples, and teaches them that his submission is entirely voluntary and intended to fulfil the Scriptures (51–56). His disciples now forsake him and are scattered, but Peter soon after follows at a distance to the house of the High Priest where his Master was arraigned before the Sanhedrim, and after several vain attempts, false witnesses were procured against him (57–61). On his refusing to defend himself, the High Priest puts him on his oath according to the solemn form of the Mosaic Law, and receives in answer the first public formal assertion of his Messiahship and Divinity, confirmed by a prediction of his second coming (62–64). The High Priest, both by symbolical action and by word, declares him guilty of blasphemy in their very presence, and the Sanhedrim accordingly condemns him to death and gives him up to the most unmanly treatment and cruel mockery especially of his prophetical pretensions (65–68). Here the historian pauses, at the most convenient place, to let us know that in the intervals of these proceedings Peter had been repeatedly accosted as a follower of Christ, and had as often denied him, until brought to himself and to repentance by hearing the appointed signal (69–75).

CHAPTER 27

ALTHOUGH our Lord had been condemned to death for blasphemy by the highest tribunal of the Jews, that body re-assembles at an early hour, for the purpose of transferring him to the tribunal of the Roman Governor, who alone had power to execute the sentence (1–2). Before proceeding to record what took place there, the historian pauses to describe the miserable end of the betrayer; his remorse, his confession, his restitution of his wages, and his suicide (3–5). Then follows the debate among the priests as to the use to be made of the money, and their purchase of the Potter's Field (6–8). In all this the evangelist, according to his plan, points out the fulfilment of an ancient prophecy (9–10). Then resuming the account of our Lord's trial, he records his avowal of his kingship before Pilate, and his steady refusal to answer the accusations of the Jews (11–14). Pilate attempts to exchange him for another prisoner, according to a yearly usage, in which he is encouraged by a message from his wife; but the people, instigated by their rulers, choose Barabbas in preference to Christ (15–23). Pilate then, by word and symbolical act repudiates all responsibility, which the people, by an awful imprecation, take upon themselves (24–25). He is then abandoned to their will, mocked by the soldiery, and led to execution (26–33). The crucifixion is then described, with various circumstances serving to identify the sufferer as the subject of the ancient prophecies (34–35). The Roman watch, the inscription on the Cross, his fellow-sufferers, the scoffs of the passers-by, and the fearful insults of the priests, are all described with terrible distinctness (36–44). Then follow the extraordinary darkness, the desponding cry upon the Cross, the mockery even of this agony by some of the bystanders (45–49). The moment of his death is marked by various supernatural phenomena, producing conviction in the Roman soldiers who had charge of his execution that he was what he professed to be (50–54). Among the actual spectators of his death, the historian particularly mentions many women who had followed him from Galilee, several of whom he designates by name (55–56). The burial of our Lord is

entrusted to an eminent [though hitherto a secret] disciple, who deposits the body in his own tomb, leaving two of the Marys as it were to watch it (57–61). A very different guard was provided the next day by the guilty fears of the Jewish rulers, who obtained from Pilate a detachment of soldiers, to prevent the body being, stolen (62–66).

CHAPTER 28

THE history now closes with the Resurrection and its accompanying incidents, the earthquake, the descent of the angel, the effect upon the guard (1–4); the encouraging address to the women who had come at an early hour again to see the sepulchre, the message sent through them to the disciples, its repetition by our Lord himself who meets them on the way (5–10), the report of the soldiers to the rulers, and the falsehood put into their mouths (11–15). The whole narrative is wound up by the rendezvous in Galilee, our Lord's assumption of supreme authority, his great commission to his followers, and the accompanying promise of his perpetual presence with them (16–20).

THE END.