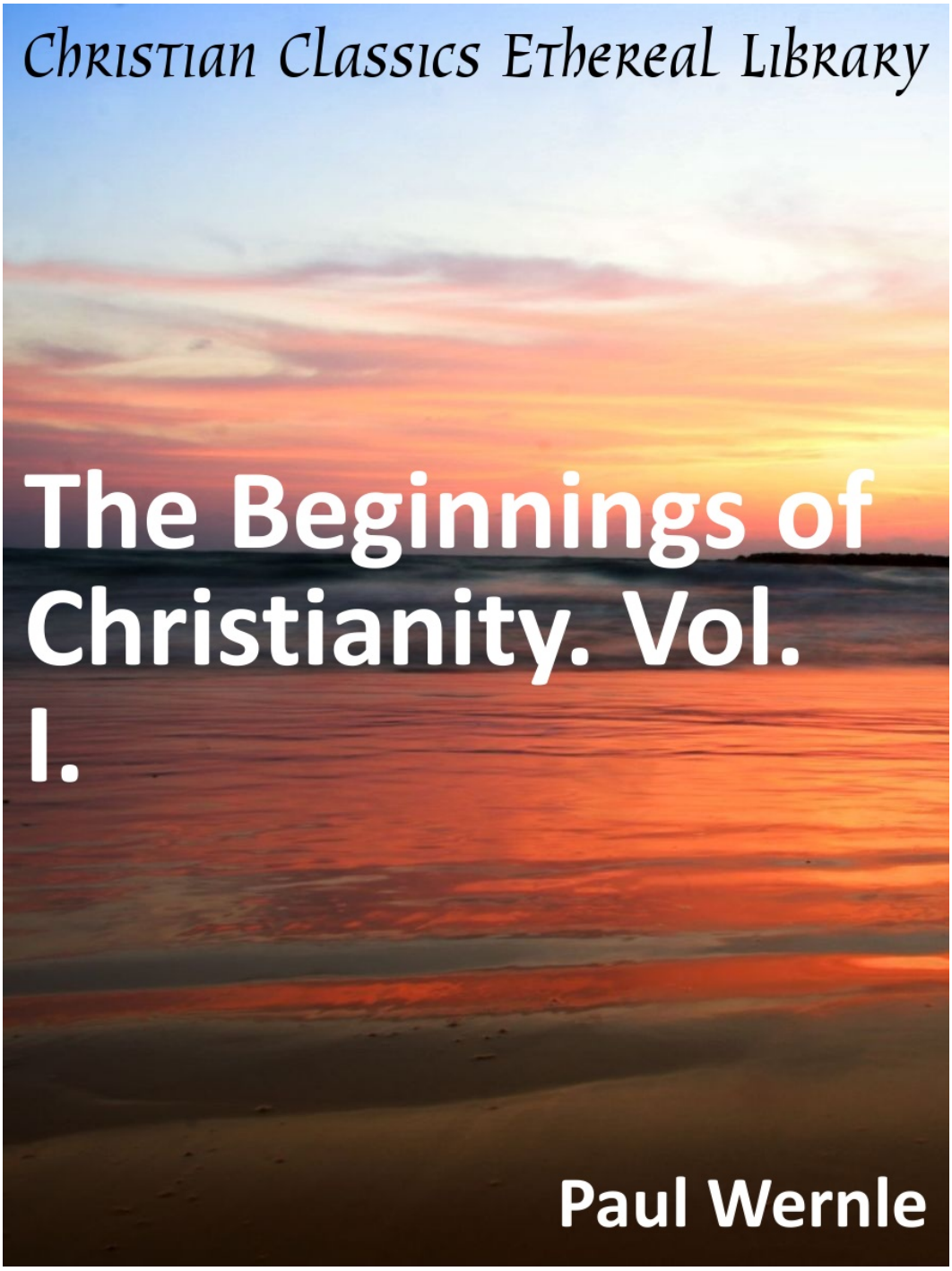
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The Beginnings of Christianity. Vol. I.
Paul Wernle

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Description: Paul Wernle was a professor of church history and New Testament studies at the University of Basel around the turn of the 20th century. Wilhelm Bousset, his professor at the University of Göttingen and a student of Adolf von Harnack, had a lasting influence upon his historical approach to biblical criticism. *The Beginnings of Christianity*, relying upon the Bible and then-current historical and textual scholarship, traces the origin and development of the Christian religion. The first volume documents the rise of Christianity, the early Christian community, and the theology of St. Paul.
Kathleen O'Bannon
CCEL Staff

Contents

THE BEGINNINGS OF CHRISTIANITY

BY

PAUL WERNLE

**PROFESSOR EXTRAORDINARY OF MODERN CHURCH HISTORY
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BASEL**

Translated by

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And edited, with an Introduction, by

THE REV. W. D. MORRISON, LL.D.

VOL. I.

THE RISE OF THE RELIGION

WILLIAMS AND NORGATE

**14 HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN, LONDON
AND 7 BROAD STREET, OXFORD**

NEW YORK: G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

1903

Prefatory Material

INTRODUCTION

AMONG Continental theologians of the younger generation there are few, if any, that occupy a more distinguished place than Professor Wernle of the University of Basel, and his work on the Beginnings of the Christian Religion, which is now presented to the English-speaking public, is the most matured and exhaustive product of his scholarship. It may not be possible for all of us to see eye to eye with him in the vast and sometimes obscure field covered by his brilliant study; but it is impossible for any one to withhold admiration from the freshness, the vivacity, the vitality, the penetrating insight which Professor Wernle exhibits in his handling of the origin and primitive development of the Christian faith. The book is addressed to all who are prepared to accept the bolder results of New Testament criticism, and the central idea running through the whole of it is a very simple one. It is first of all to ascertain what the Gospel is as seen in the teaching and character of the Redeemer; and secondly, to measure all the later expositions of the Gospel, contained in the teachings of the New Testament writers, by the Gospel itself. In order to ascertain what the Gospel really is, Professor Wernle considers it necessary to liberate its eternal substance from the historic forms in which it is expressed. The Gospel arose under a certain definite set of historic circumstances, and had to act upon the world through the medium of historic conditions. These conditions and circumstances are of necessity of a temporary and transitory character: they are not the Gospel itself, but only its historic envelope, and Professor Wernle strips off this envelope in order to seize hold of the imperishable substance of Christ's message to mankind. How far he has succeeded in separating the substance from the form of the Redeemer's message and personality, and (considering the fragmentary nature of the sources) how far it is possible to do so on purely historical grounds, it is for the attentive reader to judge.

According to Professor Wernle, Jesus prepared the ground for a new religious community but did not organise it Himself, and the disciples of the Master who had denationalised the Jewish conception of the kingdom of God were unable to liberate themselves from Judaism or to produce much impression upon the Gentile world. Both of these tasks were the work of St Paul; and as this work was of transcendent importance to the future of the Christian faith, Professor Wernle devotes a considerable part of this volume to an examination of the character and theology of the great apostle. His treatment of St Paul's theology is particularly striking and suggestive. It was a theology which derived its character from the situation in which the apostle was placed. He had to defend himself at once from Gentiles, Jews, and Judaizers, and his theology assumed the form of a powerful apologetic directed in turn against each one of these adversaries. The apologetic form in which Pauline thought is cast, sometimes affects the clearness and purity of the Gospel message, and the comparison which

Professor Wernle institutes between the Gospel as understood by St Paul and the Gospel as taught by Jesus, is fresh and illuminating.

St Paul was a trained theologian, the writer of the Apocalypse was a layman, and this volume closes with an analysis and estimate of that remarkable work. It is the oldest and only document springing out of lay Christian enthusiasm, and Professor Wernle thinks that it represents the general lay opinion of the Church in primitive Christian times. At the bottom of this enthusiasm lay the belief that the world was rapidly coming to an end, and that the supreme duty of man was to seek salvation from the coming judgment by watchfulness and repentance. Men in such a condition of mind had no thought of setting up stable ecclesiastical forms and institutions. But these men had a new life in them—a life of self-mastery, a life of love to God and to each other—such as the world had never seen before. And they were conscious that this new life of theirs proceeded neither from ecclesiastical forms nor institutions, but from the living spirit of the Redeemer. Such in brief is Professor Wernle's conception of the beginnings of the faith and of its effects on the human mind in apostolic times. The entrance of this new faith into the world is the most momentous event in human history, and the manner in which it took place is presented to us in this volume with unusual life, freedom, sympathy, and power.

PREFACE

IN the summer of 1900 I delivered lectures on New Testament Theology in the University of Basel. These I have now expanded into a book, which, however, is by no means intended to rival any handbook to New Testament Theology. My only aim in preparing my lectures was to present my pupils with a clear idea of that which I conceived to be the real meaning of the Gospel, and to trace the great changes it underwent up to the rise of Catholicism. I purposely excluded from the scope of my work all that appeared to be unimportant for the aim that I had in view. Theological ideas came under consideration only in their relation to the Gospel of Jesus. I have striven to be true to my original purpose in compiling this book from my lectures.

In publishing my lectures my aim is a practical one, and there is no reason to conceal it. An age of transition such as ours needs above all else a constant recurrence to the Gospel of Jesus for guidance. But it is well known that the Gospel does not lie everywhere on the surface, even of the New Testament, in its primitive simplicity, but has in many instances been covered up or transformed.

x

Now, though it is perfectly true that "Cowper's pious peasant woman" can understand Jesus in all that He was and all that He wanted, yet theological enquiry should surely never abrogate its great calling, which is to give all possible help to the simple comprehension of Jesus.

This, of course, theology can only do by self-suppression—*i.e.* by helping to liberate the Gospel from theology. If Jesus was, above all else, our Saviour from the theologians, then we theologians are truly His disciples only by the constant renewal of this saving work of His.

To do this, two conditions are pre-eminently necessary, the existence of which, alas, cannot be assumed as a matter of course amongst Christian theologians. They are, firstly, true reverence for that which alone deserves reverence; and secondly, fidelity to the Christian conscience. I reckon as an essential part of true reverence, the frankest and fullest renunciation of that false reverence for formulae, symbols, rites and institutions in which the free word of God is imprisoned and fossilized. He who does not completely reject the false can never find room in his heart for the true. And in like manner fidelity to the Christian conscience implies the clearest and most unflinching criticism of all that contradicts it, even though it be received upon the authority of a St Paul or a St John—*i.e.* the Gospel is to be employed practically as the canon and standard for all its later historical accretions. He who cannot see eye to eye with me in these two conditions had better leave my book unread; for even if he were to read it, he would not understand why I have been obliged to write so many passages in the style of a polemical pamphlet rather than in that of a purely historical essay.

xi

THE AUTHOR.
BASEL, *December* 1900.

PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION

THE publication of my work in an English translation is especially gratifying to me, for it is indebted in more than one place to English thought. I consider myself fortunate in having made the acquaintance of Thomas Carlyle while I was still a student at the University. He has become my leader and the leader of many of my friends. Here and there in this book the English reader will perhaps catch an echo of certain passages in Carlyle's writings.

The translation strictly follows the German edition of 1900. It is only the first two chapters about Jesus which have been altered, and that merely so far as to make them correspond with statements contained in the author's later publications.

THE AUTHOR.

BASEL, *February* 1903.

The Beginnings of Christianity.

THE PRESUPPOSITIONS.

CHAPTER I.

THE POPULAR BELIEFS OF ANTIQUITY.

IT is no doubt true that Christianity is a daughter of the Jewish faith: yet it strikes its roots deep down into a soil which we may call beliefs common to all the religions of antiquity. In that soil the characteristic features of the various religions of the ancient world are not as yet distinguishable. Among these common beliefs may be included the whole body of ideas concerning the earth, nature, man, the soul, and the world of spirits. Before the dawn of science these popular ideas bore undisputed sway, and they live on even to the present time engaged in a ceaseless struggle with scientific conceptions of the universe.

According to the popular beliefs of antiquity, this earth is, of course, the centre of creation, the only scene of any history concerning God and mankind. Over it is the vault of heaven, and there the sun and all the stars, "the powers of the heavens," run their courses, yet the earth is the world; in the Sermon on the Mount, for example, the two terms are interchanged as denoting the same idea. But the earth itself is small and little known. The thoughts of men can fly to the "ends of the world" in an instant. From one end to another flashes the lightning, and, like the lightning, so shall the Son of man appear to all men at once. The devil shows Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them from the top of one exceeding high mountain. If one wished to speak of a geography of the New Testament—the term would be a misnomer—its western limits would be Spain and its eastern the kingdom of the Parthians.

This limited view of earth and world had naturally not been without influence upon religion. The unwavering faith in Providence, as well as the hope in the coming of the kingdom of God upon earth, have their chief support in this undoubted geocentric system. In like manner missionary zeal was kindled by the belief that it would be possible to preach the gospel to all the world in one single generation. Men had no idea then of the size of this earth, such as we know it now, nor of the infinite and persistent variety among the different races of men, which cause such great difficulties to missionary enterprise. And in like manner they had no conception of the universe as a whole or of this earth's nothingness in comparison with it. However little reason we may have to boast of knowledge for which we are not indebted to ourselves, as little right have we to hide from our selves the chasm which separates us in this point from early Christianity as a child of antiquity.

The next point of difference goes a good deal deeper still. It is the boundless faith in the miraculous which early Christianity shares with all world-religions. The whole earth is thereby transformed into an enchanted world. As yet there is no trace of any knowledge of the law of natural causation. All things are possible for God and for those that believe, and all things are mystery.

In the first place, the world of nature is a world of wonders. St. John iii. 8 is a typical instance: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth." And just because of this arbitrary and mysterious character it is so well suited to represent the supernatural powers of the spirit. This belief in nature as a realm of marvels meets us most distinctly in the various eschatologies of the New Testament. According to these conceptions the fashion of this world shall pass suddenly away, and the heavens shall vanish with a great noise, the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and there shall be new heavens and a new earth. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood; the stars shall fall from heaven, the sign of the cross shall appear in the air, and the Son of man shall descend upon the clouds of heaven. Faith in the miraculous positively revels in the enumeration of signs of the approaching end of all things; in the vision of the seven seals and of the seven trumpets and of the seven bowls the fancy of the writer of the Apocalypse runs riot altogether, passing the bounds of all possibility. But this faith will not suffer itself to be limited to the distant future. In the history of Jesus and of His apostles it finds and creates for itself the material for an actual embodiment in the present. Here, too, there is nothing that is impossible, and the truth of the saying as to the faith that removeth mountains receives a striking confirmation. Jesus stills the tempest on the sea and causes the fig tree to wither, in both cases merely by the utterance of a word. He walks on the sea by night and enables Peter to do likewise. He changes water into wine, He divides a few loaves and fishes among five thousand and again among four thousand people. He calls Lazarus forth from the tomb on the third day in spite of the corruption that had already set in; He himself rises on the third day from the grave that is closed with a sealed stone and guarded by a watch; He enters the room though the doors are closed, and yet He can eat and suffer Himself to be touched; and finally, so we are told in the Acts of the Apostles, He ascends visibly to heaven, whence He shall come again visibly. The Acts now become the great book of the miracles of the Apostles and of the first Christian saints, whose leaders work wonders even with their shadows and their napkins. Thus faith in the miraculous surpasses all bounds, and yet it is not consciously dealing with exceptional cases, far less with breaches of the law of nature the very conception of such a law does not exist—but with everyday phenomena which are perfectly natural.

The religious value attached by the early Christians to miracles surprises us to-day, even more than the entire absence of the critical faculty. It is not merely those Christians to whom we owe our Gospels, who find the proof of the truths of their doctrine in the stories of the miracles. Jesus Himself appeals to His miracles (and that not only in the Fourth Gospel), and sees in them the beginning of the kingdom of God. Hence we can readily understand that the miracle of the Resurrection must needs serve as the foundation of the Christian faith. Whereas, amongst the Jews, miracles were intended as a proof of doctrine; amongst the Gentiles they bear witness to the manifestation of a God (Renan); and just as it twice

happened in St Paul's journeys, that he was on the point of receiving divine honours because of his miracles—once when he healed the lame man, and again when the viper's bite did him no harm—so Jesus was actually regarded by the Gentile Christians as God, because of the miracles that were related of Him. The theology of miracles occupies a higher position in the New Testament than one is usually inclined to accord to it, and the Divinity of Christ is bound up with this theology.

Nowhere is the difference between modern and early Christian modes of thought seen in so clear a light as in the fact that the stories of the miracles of the New Testament, which were once one of the chief proofs of the truths of our religion, are themselves to-day the object of long apologetic writings.

Like nature without, so the human mind within is a mystery to the early Christians. Here, too, they have no idea of a fixed sequence of events, but everything happens independently and arbitrarily. It is true that Jesus, and after Him the theologians Paul and John, just touched upon the thought of an inner necessity, but it was only by the way, and led to no further consequences. The belief in the freedom of man under all circumstances and at all times is for all that presupposed by the New Testament authors without an exception. Jesus confirmed this belief by the great demand that He made upon man, and it is the very life of Christian missionary work. But this belief is simply a special instance of belief in the miraculous.

But the true domain of mystery lies in the real inner life of the soul, in the unconscious with its enigmatic utterances. The miraculous itself is contained in every human being, and can manifest itself suddenly in ecstatic conditions. Unchecked by any Philistine spirit of rationalism, the early Christians bestowed upon all manifestations of the mysterious inner life of the soul a far more serious and more impartial attention than we moderns, who are often inclined to be somewhat too precipitate in determining the limits of that which is possible. In those days men were at once more childlike and more dogmatic in their explanation of mental processes. Even though they built up no system, the conception prevailed amongst them that these phenomena were the manifestations of some external agent. It was not we ourselves, but a demon, an angel, or a spirit that was the efficient cause; sometimes this agent is conceived of as intimately connected with our soul, but at others he is an entirely extraneous being that has forced his way into our body from without through one of its many pores, and now dwells within it and rules over it. Here we have the origin of the conception, not only of demoniacal possession, but of that of the Holy Spirit, whose operations, save that they work the will of a beneficent Deity, are pictured as analogous to those of the demons. Speaking with tongues and prophesying, the seeing of visions and the state of enhancement, the working of miracles, are above all else the manifestations of this one and the same spirit, as they are presented to us in chaps. xii. and xiv. of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, our principal New Testament authority on this subject. The conception of the

double appears rudely materialized in St Peter's conversation with Rhoda, and then in a lovely form in Jesus' words concerning the little children's angels, and especially spiritualized in that passage in St Paul where God's Spirit testifies to our spirit that we are the children of God. We trace these naive conceptions in theological trains of thought: the whole dogma of the Atonement, as well as, on the other hand, that of Inspiration, stand and fall in their ecclesiastical shape with this childlike psychology of the ancient world. Where we stand face to face with the phenomena of the unconscious in man and marvel, and yet even here at least suspect natural causation, the early Christians at once presupposed the supernatural agency of a good or of an evil spirit.

We may here mention in passing that in like manner the anthropology of the early Christian laity—possibly not that of the theologian St Paul—maintains its close connection with the popular beliefs of the ancient world, when it still conceives of matter and spirit as in some manner merged in each other. The soul, the spirit itself, is something corporeal, though far more sublimated than our flesh and blood. The rich man in Hades sees, hears, suffers thirst and torments in the flames, although his body already rests in the grave. At the foundation of the rite of Baptism lies the conception, though possibly no longer consciously, that the water cleanses the soul together with the body.

How strange at bottom do the words of Jesus sound to our modern modes of thought! "Be not over-anxious for the soul what ye shall eat and drink, nor for the body wherewith ye shall be clothed." The appearances, too, of the risen Master, with their hybrid character of visionary and grossly material features, can be more readily understood from the point of view of this anthropology, which is as yet not strictly dualistic. It is true that St Paul, as a clear thinker, endeavoured to arrive at a distinct separation of body and soul, but after all his efforts he only reaches the conception of the spiritual body, which still betrays his original starting-point.

After external nature and the mystery of the soul, we come finally to the third great wonderland, the domain of the Spirit. That which has become for us moderns a dead formula, or else the play of the freest fancy, was the deepest of all realities that regulated life for the age of early Christianity. Jews and Persians did, it is true, divide spirits according to an ethical standard into angels and demons, but as Satan can transform himself into an angel of light, the operations of the two groups are often surprisingly similar; and finally, the original contrast of harmful and helpful spirits can be plainly traced even in the New Testament itself. The spirits fill the whole of the upper world, the realm of the air, and yet they live at the same time upon earth and among men. All kinds of diseases—even fevers or dumbness, but in the highest degree, of course, mental diseases—are caused by them. A spirit can enter into a man with seven others or even with a whole legion. The expulsion of these inmates is itself the effect of a spiritual process, the means employed being fasting and disenchantment. The helpful spirits, on the other hand, are welcome saviours in every kind of distress,

and mediators between men and the highest God. Now, no one lived in the midst of these conceptions regarding the world of spirits with a more childlike simplicity of belief than Jesus Himself. He fights with Satan, and with the hosts of Beelzebub in the solitude of the wilderness, and in the midst of the habitations of men. He is under the painful necessity of seeing His most trusted follower become the emissary of Satan. St Paul is ever being parted from God by dominions, principalities and powers, and it is in defiance of them that he clings so fast to God's love. In one of his last letters he tells us of the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh even now in the children of disobedience, and he thus summons the Christian to the last struggle of all, not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. The weapons which he there recommends are the grand Christian substitutes for the ancient spells and charms. It was only by assuming the existence of demons that the early Christian Church could explain the might of Rome and the power of the heathen world. And everywhere the clear distinction between good and bad spirits rests upon the foundation of the ancient conception of the spirit world.

Nothing is easier than the proof that all these conceptions of the enchanted world with its three wonderlands are neither specifically Christian nor Jewish, but simply belong to the ancient popular belief, and not to it alone. The early Christians were perfectly conscious that they shared this belief with the heathen. That is why they made such frequent use of all these elements in their apologetic writings. The myths and miracles of Jesus are there compared with perfect ingenuousness with their Greek parallels (the earliest passage is in Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, chaps. xxi. and xxii.): "If the Christians relate cures of lame and palsied men, and of men sick from their birth, and the raising of the dead, then all this is similar to that which is said to have been done by Asclepius." The belief in the Resurrection of Jesus has its parallel among the Jews in the report of the risen Baptist, and among the heathen in the belief in Asclepius, who was struck by lightning and ascended into heaven. For the miraculous birth of the Son of God, both friends and foes of Christianity adduced, though with opposite intentions, the corresponding cases of the origin of sons of God amongst the heathen. Though Jesus compared His casting out of devils with that of the Jewish exorcists, this art was not specifically Jewish, but belonged to the ancient world in general. The Jew whom Celsus introduces as the opponent of the Christian, mentions Egyptian, *i.e.* heathen 'Goetes,' who for a few obols cast out devils, blow away diseases, bring up the souls of the dead, etc. The same applies to the prediction of future events. If we find Christians as early as in the New Testament appealing to the so-called proof from prophecy in order to convince the heathen, they presuppose the fact that their heathen adversaries attach a high value to the gift of divination.

So deeply spread and so deeply rooted was the belief in ecstasy as a divinely-caused state, that the apologists declared that euhemerism—*i.e.* the attempt to explain the heathen

religions by the deification of men—failed because of the fact of oracles. But the agreement of Christians with heathen in the belief in demons is most palpable in the controversy of Origen with Celsus. Both entirely concur in the assumption of an intermediary race or species of beings who are the givers of all gifts such as bread, wine, water, air, only Celsus calls them demons and Origen angels,—so narrow is the dividing line which here separates the friends and the foes of Christianity. A pure monotheist was hardly to be found either then or in the time of Jesus.

Such are some of the reasons that may be advanced in confirmation of the statement that the popular belief of the ancient world is the soil from which Christianity took its rise. In all these conceptions it is a child of its age and no revelation of God. Owing to the rise of science the props which still supported this belief in the midst of Christianity have gradually been withdrawn. Thus originated the great conflict between faith and knowledge. If it were really true, as many of its defenders maintain, that faith in the enchanted world constitutes the substance of Christianity, then, of course, the doom of our religion would be sealed.

CHAPTER II.

JUDAISM.

CHRISTIANITY stands to Judaism indubitably in a relationship at once of the closest affinity and yet of the most striking contrast. What did it take over from Judaism? What did it reject? It rejected the Jewish idea, the pivot on which Judaism turns. To all its other elements it stands in a positive relationship; although the part which it rejected, involved as a necessary consequence an inner transformation of the whole Jewish system.

What is the Jewish idea? It is the conception of religion as a legal, a national system. Nowhere else was it developed with such uncompromising severity. Speaking generally, religion is for the Jews a system of law (νόμος) which is definitely drawn up between a particular God and a particular people. In contrast to all the false religions of the Gentiles, the true religion is the Jewish law (or constitution). The God of the whole world, so it is said, granted to Israel alone its law in order to give them the whole earth for their inheritance, provided they were faithful citizens under this law, so that all other people might accept the law of Israel and become its subjects. Technically speaking, that is the formal principle of Judaism. The material may readily be inferred from the contents of the law. That is, it is nothing else than Jewish national custom conceived as the commandments of God. In other words, it is the sum of all the ceremonial judicial and social peculiarities whereby, in the course of time, the Jews imagined that they were differentiated from their neighbours. In the forefront they placed circumcision and claimed it to be the distinctive sign of the tribe. A bold claim, and one that rested on no historical foundation—the early Christians knew that already. Then followed prescriptions as to the taxes to be paid to God and His holy servants, the ceremonial regulating attendance at the Holy Place and the worship to be there tendered, penal laws and those regarding compensation, and commandments relating to moral and many other matters. All this together constituted the immensely complicated body of laws to which God had bound Himself and His people. To be religious meant to be a citizen of this state, to belong to the Jewish Church.

13

For the Church is simply the converse of this constitution. It is exactly the same thing if you call Judaism a Church or if you call it a constitution. The Church is the realization of the law which exists at first as an idea. There never was a time when the Church excluded true piety on the part of the individual, but the emphasis was laid on that which affected the community—nay, more, on that which affected it as a codified system of law. The Church is religion conceived as a spiritual State. Such was the position of Judaism from the exile onwards that it could only exist as a spiritual State in the midst of the world powers. In the time of Jesus religion meant a legal code and a Church.

It is well known that Jesus did not come forward as the opponent of the law or of the Church, but as the enemy of the Scribes and Pharisees. The simple reason of this is that they

14

are the visible representatives of the Jewish law. For this law demanded a very minute acquaintance. It needed men to act as commentators and to develop it still further. It was not something that had been laid down once for all. It was constantly growing. Only one portion was committed to writing in the Thora. The greater part, the customary law, was handed down by oral tradition. And the written law itself was composed in a dead language. Besides this, the whole was very complicated and very learned. Hence the necessity of a learned caste—the theologians who are, of course, rather to be considered as lawyers. They formed a close corporation into which a man only entered, and that for life, after long years spent as disciple at the feet of honoured masters, and after due ordination. Nothing could possibly exceed the esteem in which this caste was held. The Scribes were God's mediators and revealers—the only living authority in God's stead. All others were laymen and in the position of minors. Such was Jesus. Hence His attitude of opposition.

Now the aim and object of the Pharisaic propaganda was to drive this learned system into the heads of the people. The Pharisees wanted to see the law, which the Scribes first of all distilled as pure theory, in a position of practical and universal supremacy. They were zealous in good works; they loved a typical ritual; their energy was tireless; they were critical and censorious. Such were their characteristics. In Jesus' time they posed publicly as the pattern of what a religious man ought to be. He that did not accept their propaganda counted as a sinner or as 'am-ha-'arets,' country-folk that knew not the law. The Pharisees are the incarnation of the Jewish law. They represent an ideal of life which is distinct from everything else. One can realize it best by taking note of the judgments they pass on things of the world, of their estimate of the actions and destiny of men.

15

All external things are either clean or unclean, sacred or common. The duty of the religious man is to keep himself undefiled by all unclean things, kinds of food, vessels, etc.

The actions of men are of different value in God's sight. All 'extraordinary works' are especially pleasing to God; such, for instance, are, first and foremost, acts of worship, sacrifices, the paying of tithes, fasting, pilgrimages.

The end of man is holiness. He is nearest God who holds himself aloof from publicans, sinners, and Samaritans, and renounces the wicked world.

We need no further evidence to see that in opposing the Scribes and Pharisees, Jesus indirectly set Himself against the whole Jewish idea, law, and Church, and that St Paul rightly understood Jesus when he said "Christ is the end of the law."

And herein it is especially instructive to observe how the layman Jesus and the Scribe Paul attack different sides of the Jewish idea and thus complete each other in their criticism. It is the content of the Jewish ideal of life that arouses the indignation of Jesus—the terrible externalization of religion, the essential being completely buried beneath hypocrisy and folly. St Paul, on the other hand, fights against the form of the Jewish religion which is fitting but for hirelings and slaves, and reverses the true religious relationship, the sonship of man

16

to God. It is only when we combine the two lines of attack that we have a complete criticism of the Jewish idea.

And then, after all, the same Jewish idea in its modified Christian form enters upon a new lease of power—a magnificent dominion destined to last for centuries. Would that it had been otherwise.

But even in the time of its degeneracy the Jewish religion was pre-eminent, surpassing every other upon earth. Christianity could only arise in Jewish soil. Nowhere else did such faith in God, so high a moral standard, and so lofty a hope for the future, lie full of promise side by side, waiting to be unified and exalted into a world-religion.

It is important to realize clearly the distinctive feature in the Jewish faith in God. It cannot be monotheism. For a long time past that had become the common property of the enlightened Greek world, as far as it had any understanding for religion, and even in Israel itself it had been modified by a belief in angels which bears clear marks of its polytheistic origin. One need but read, for instance, the Epistle to the Colossians if one would form some idea of the weakness of Jewish monotheism, not to mention the Greek prologue to the Fourth Gospel, which places 'a' God, the Logos, by the side of the God. Neither, however, is it the simple belief in Providence, in a God that punishes and rewards, that constitutes the peculiarity of the Jewish religion. The Christian apologist Lactantius was able to postulate an individual Providence as an elementary truth current among all the better heathens. When the Jews in Jesus' time pictured the world to themselves as a kind of household instituted by God, and superintended by Him, then the Greeks presented them with the word for the idea—dioikesis. It is only the historical and teleological character of this faith in God that marks the pre-eminence of the Jewish religion. While with the Stoics the belief in Providence is based upon the order of nature that is, on the impression afforded by the world of a rational whole bound together by laws of cause and effect—with the Jews it is built up on the foundation of the deeds of Jahwe, of His promises and of His designs. Jahwe is free, in subjection to nothing but His own will; therefore religion never turns into philosophy amongst this people, but becomes faith in the God that creates things anew. To the Jews God never appears as the being who merely sets the world in motion and regulates its course, though that is a part of His government, but He is the free creator, the creator in every moment of time. All is history, even nature. Wherever they arrive at the idea of a necessary causation there it immediately finds its place in history as predestination, as the act of God before the beginning of time. And even where particular provinces of this history are assigned to the supervision of intermediary beings, they do not count as in anywise independent powers, but merely as the executors of the commands of God. The first of God's acts was the creation of the world, the last shall be the restitution of Israel and of the fallen world by the violent destruction of the present evil condition of things. The beginning and the end are united by an unbroken chain of divine acts. So far removed is the thought that the God that creates

the new world is perchance another than He that created the old world, that it is just the apocalypses that are especially fond of singing the praises of God the Creator. It is none other than John, author of our book of the Apocalypse, who sings: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are, and were created." So, too, we read in the "Shepherd of Hermas" from the true Jewish point of view: "Behold the Lord of all power, He that created the world and established the heavens and founded the earth above the waters; behold He removeth heavens and mountains and high places and seas, and all paths are made straight for His elect."

One frequently meets with the expression nowadays, "the transcendency of the Jewish idea of God," but in employing these words sufficient caution is not always observed. It is quite true that to later Judaism God has become a far-off, mysterious being. Everyone who reads in succession the theophanies of an Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and John realizes that. A further proof may be found in the awe with which the utterance of the name of Jahwe is avoided. "Hallowed be Thy name"—that is, may it be thought of with the reverence due to the unspeakable. Angels stand between God and man, whole hierarchies of dominions and powers and thrones. Living religion is often concerned with them instead of with God. One finds indications that God will only fully reveal Himself in the future, that at present He is visible to none, and no man can approach Him. This can be proved by many passages in the writings of St Paul and St John. For Paul, the whole present evil world is fallen away from God and is under the dominion of hostile powers, sin, death and demons. Satan is called the God of this world. It is only in the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus that we have irrefutable evidence of God and His love. John, too, calls Satan the prince of this world, and God, so it is said, no man hath ever yet seen, not even the prophets of the Old Testament. All our knowledge of God comes to us through Jesus that revealed Him. That, it is true, is a complete transcendency of the idea of God. But then we remember that St John and St Paul are theologians, they are not simple representatives of the popular belief, and that both of them, as Christian apologists, are interested in removing the world without Christ very far from God. Their writings prove nothing as to the belief of the laity in the time of Jesus. If in Jesus we meet with a faith in God of unexampled freshness and ingenuousness, which nevertheless is nowhere bound up with any claim to novelty, then the foundations for this must have already been securely laid among the Jews. Nor is it difficult to find proof of this. For Jesus, it is God that gives the rain and the sunshine, that feeds the fowls of the air and clothes the flowers of the field, that hears all prayers, that protects the sparrow on the roof, and much more man himself. That is the simple piety of the Psalms. The Psalms of Solomon, which date from the age of Pompey, are in point of time our nearest documentary evidence. The greater part of the canonical Psalter is not much older. This simple, childlike faith in God Jesus presupposes as possessed by those to whom He addresses Himself, and it knows

nothing of transcendency. But it is subject to the narrowest national limitations. The Lord of heaven and of earth was the Father of Israel. Only the Jew dare pray to "Our Father." Yet there was no loss in this; the limitations of this faith were also a sign of its truth and power. The chief point, too, for these simple layfolk was that this God, the source of all life in this world, through His deeds and through His gifts, promised to found the kingdom of God. Then should He manifest Himself fully as the God of deeds who is bound by His love but by no order of nature.

The second great advantage of the Jewish religion is its moral character. Jahwe was not only the God of great deeds but the God of a lofty morality, who by His person was a pledge for the indissoluble connection between faith and life. Both Jews as well as early Christians realized how immensely important were the consequences implied by this connection, when they compared the Homeric gods with their Jahwe. They were indeed themselves aware that the work of the Greek thinkers and poets had arrived at a great purification and moralization of the polytheistic religion. This, however, they might safely ignore, as the influence of Homer never ceased, and could for them only be compared to the influence of their Bible. There were, it is true, not wanting in the Jahwe of the Old Testament features which betrayed the fact that He did not from the first possess all that lofty morality. Yet in the great collection of writings these features are a vanishing quantity by the side of His ethical character—though even thus they were only too visible to the gnostic critic. Or if they were once noticed they were immediately cleared of all contradiction with the moral consciousness by means of exegesis—especially allegorical. For the aim of Jewish theologians was to remove the offence caused by any instance of anthropomorphism, which already appeared to them as likely to be prejudicial to the purity of the idea of God.

21

It is a consequence of the strictly moral character of the Jewish God that the outer forms of worship in this religion are entirely subordinate to its moral elements. This statement would not appear to be consistent with the contents of the Law, the longest portions of which are devoted to the regulation of public worship, nor with the practice of the Pharisees, who placed the ceremonial law above all purely human duties. But it can be inferred, were it but from the following two facts, first, that the cessation of the Temple worship at Jerusalem had as good as no influence whatever upon Judaism; and next, that we find no disputes amongst the Christians as to questions of ceremonial or of abstention from public worship. Neither God nor His worshippers needed the sacrifices. At the most the priests were pleased when rich contributions thus fell to their share. If amongst religiously-minded people any importance was attached to public worship, then this was simply for the sake of obedience. They just accepted the fact that it had been ordered as a divine institution. It was a part of the will of God, the strict and punctual observation of which, according to the ritual under all circumstances, and simply as an act of moral submission, secured the divine favour. But it was not the chief part of God's will. Whenever Jesus used the words "to do God's will,"

22

neither He nor those that heard Him ever thought of the sacrifices, but of the regulation of the daily life. It was a moral, not a ceremonial 'doing.' When St. Paul founded his churches amongst the Greeks, he noticed for the first time how alien to the Greek mind was that which he had assumed as a matter of course. For them the Christian congregation was an association for worship analogous to other similar associations. It neither *ipso facto* excluded the participation in other forms of worship, nor did it imply any pledge to regulate the life that lay outside of the services. It was therefore one of the chief tasks of the Christian teachers to impart a simple ethical meaning to the ceremonial prescriptions of the Old Testament which concerned sanctification.

It is true that Jewish ethics present us with an entirely contradictory picture in which the ugliest features are not wanting by the side of the most pleasing and sympathetic. Amongst the former one would reckon the preference given to the negative avoidance of sin over the positive doing of good, the equally important position assigned to morally indifferent and important commandments, the merely external summary of duties without any classification, the interest in sexual questions, casuistry, and the seeking for reward. It was not without reason that the Jew could find his pattern in the Pharisee, who merely exaggerated the tendency of the average morality of religious people themselves, and this the more readily, because every disposition thereto is contained in the written law itself. The seeds sown by the Priestly Code attain to their full growth in Pharisaism.

23

But, on the other hand, this transformation of morality into its opposite, is not the only characteristic that one notices in later Judaism. We are not justified in affirming that Jesus came to His simplification of the demands of religion through His opposition to the Pharisees. He would have delivered His message exactly as He did regardless of the Pharisees, and again not as something entirely new, but as containing the elements of sound vitality which He found already existing. Here, too, there is no lack of documentary evidence in Jewish writings. The ethical teaching of the Psalms and Proverbs, and of Jesus the Son of Sirach, points in this direction, and analogous elements may be found in the oldest form of the "Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs." Even a Christian document such as the Epistle General of James, derives its life rather from the simple Jewish popular morality than directly from the Gospel of Jesus.

In the first place, we notice here that what is demanded is extremely simple. There is scarcely anything ceremonial or subject to national limitations. Jesus meets the tempter in the wilderness with the very simplest words from the Book of Deuteronomy. In the decisive moments of His ministry He appeals to the decalogue, the commandments of love, things that everyone knows to be axiomatic truths. Surely this presupposes an education in an entirely sound moral atmosphere. In the next place, even His spiritualization of the claim, His insistence on the motive, are not entirely unprecedented. Does not even the Talmud lay stress, only too much stress, upon sins of thought? The "Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs,"

24

"The Two Ways," "The Shepherd of Hernias,"—all writings which do not depend directly upon Jesus, emphasize inner purity and simplicity, just as much as external good works. Truly, then, there is no lack of parallels to the Sermon on the Mount. There is still enough and to spare of what is great and original in the work of Jesus, if we freely admit that He could only have arisen from this people, and that He found noble forerunners amongst them. The morality of a people must in deed have attained to a very high level if it strives in so resolute a fashion to pass beyond mere external legality in order to reach inner purity of motive.

And is not, after all, the Jewish eagerness to believe that good deeds will be rewarded, the distortion of a true and great thought—that the good seed will under all circumstances ultimately bring forth good fruit? If we admit that Jesus was a sounder and saner teacher than our modern schoolmen, we may well ponder over the fact that He did not reject the scheme of rewards and punishments, but made use of it. Was not the true conviction thereby strengthened that idle piety is something entirely bad, and that God is not mocked? But in so doing Jesus did of course lay such stress upon the thought of the coming judgment that all easy-going optimism was purified by the most terrible earnestness.

This brings us to the third great legacy which Judaism bequeathed to Christianity—eschatology. Just as the origin of the new religion cannot be conceived without the Jewish hope in the coming kingdom of God, so in the lifelong struggle with the Roman state the victory is won through the Jewish hope in the Resurrection. The fact that the early Christians did not adversely criticise the Jewish hope in any book of the New Testament, and that they were able to treat Jewish apocalypses without further addition as Christian, proves how deeply indebted they felt themselves to the Jews in this point above all others.

How confused a maze of eschatological conceptions could coexist often in one and the same person we can see most simply by a few instances from the New Testament. We have an eschatology of the synoptists, and that a twofold one (Mk. xiii. and Luke xvi.), we have a series of apparently contradictory eschatologies in St. Paul (1 Thess. iv., 2 Thess. ii., 1 Cor. xv., 2 Cor. v., Rom. xi., Phil. ii.), a whole bundle of eschatologies in the Apocalypse, and finally a peculiar variety in 2 Peter. It is far more difficult to find even two entirely parallel visions of the future state, when one looks through the Jewish apocalypses dating from the time immediately preceding or succeeding Jesus. The thoughts of the learned differed from those of the common people, and the ideas of the Jews of the dispersion were unlike those of their Palestinian brethren. It will be sufficient for our purpose if we examine the different groups of these conceptions.

The most important chapter in eschatology, especially for the populace, excited as it had been ever since the wars of the Maccabees by patriotic aspirations, is the national hope. The heading of the chapter is "Israel and the Gentile World." The people of God—recipients of the promises, and who in spite of them serve the Gentiles, the kings of the earth, and the

city of Babylon, shall be liberated and exalted to lordship, over the whole world, while the neighbouring peoples shall be humbled. It is just the chief ideas of the New Testament—the kingdom of God and the Messiah—that belong to this political group of conceptions. But first the great reign of terror must pass by—the time of tribulation and temptation when Israel shall be humiliated yet further, and the heathen shall deliver their fiercest assaults upon the whole city and the Temple, led at times by Anti-christ, the devilish king of the last days, the enemy of God. When the need is highest, God's help is nighest: He confounds the enemy and establishes His kingdom. In all these pictures the kingdom of God is always conceived of as a political organization, in opposition to the kingdoms of the rulers of this earth and of the demons. It is placed upon the earth, or, with greater particularity, in Palestine, with Jerusalem for its capital. It denotes the supremacy of Israel over all the world. Her enemies and her tyrants are either rooted out or are subject to her as her slaves. They bring their tribute to Jerusalem and accept the Law of Israel. On the other hand, the patriarchs and the pious men of old, especially the martyrs, have now risen from the dead in order to participate in the joy of the kingdom which shall be—so men gradually tended to think—for everlasting. Either God Himself is regarded as the King, or He has raised the Messiah, the lawful descendant of David, to the throne, that He may judge and rule over His people in righteousness. While the older writings presuppose the continuation of the Davidic dynasty, the later accept the everlasting rule of the one descendant of David. Now all this is a continuation of earthly cirumstances under somewhat higher and more spiritual conditions. This vision of the future might be called a patriotic Jewish Utopia.

27

It is, however, characteristic of the age of Jesus that this political expectation seldom stands by itself, but has to suffer admixture with elements of an entirely different nature, with the eschatology of the whole world and of the individual. Two important questions, the fate of the world and the fate of the individual soul, are added to the previous subject: "Israel and the Gentile World." They are of especial importance for the new religion, because though it arose from the midst of the national eschatology, it quickly freed itself from it and turned its attention to the other problems. In the first place, we find that in later Judaism the whole realm of action—heaven as well as earth and the world of spirits—are all drawn into the historical drama, until at length—though the transition is not yet quite clear to us—the conception of the essential similarity between the future and the present gives way to the conception of the new aeon which in many important points is to be the exact opposite of the present world. Here is death, there everlasting life; here flesh, there spirit; here sin, there innocence; here God is far away, there He shall be seen face to face. This vision embraces the fate of the whole of creation, of the whole human race, so that Israel's glory merely appears as one special case amongst many. Of course it likewise furnishes us with evidence of the incapacity of the Jew to leave the world of phenomena behind him, for the future life never appears to him as the spiritual in our sense of the word, but always as the hyperphysical.

28

In the next place, men are now free to reflect upon the fate of the individual. The hope of salvation, first of the rescue of the individual in the great struggle that shall be in the last days, and then of his future blessedness—this hope takes its place beside that of the kingdom of God. The goal is one and the same, but many roads lead to it. Either the conception of the resurrection of the dead and of the day of judgment are accepted, and the emphasis is laid upon the judgment of the individual soul by God. The soul appears before the great judgment seat with the result of its whole life, there to receive everlasting joy or endless torment. In this case the old idea of the shadowy life of the soul in Sheol suffices to describe its condition until the day of the final resurrection. Or else the powerful light of the faith in retribution is flashed even into Hades itself, and that at once, so that for the individual death is followed immediately by judgment and the dead are portioned out between Gehenna and Paradise without waiting for the final judgment. But in this case the soul itself must be conceived of as something phenomenal, as sensible to bodily pain and pleasure.

In all this there is nothing clear and distinct—there is no unity of conception. The sources of all these ideas are so various that complete harmony is out of the question. Here we go back to the patriotic enthusiasm of the prophets and to their prophecies of the coming doom, and again to Animism, old as the human race itself, though it has been transformed by the dogma of retribution; and, lastly, to possibly Persian notions of the resurrection and the new world. It is true that attempts at reducing these varied elements into some sort of system are not entirely wanting. Such are the millennial theories of our Book of Revelation, parallels to which may be found in the fourth book of Ezra and in Baruch. First of all, room is found for the national Utopia, but then comes the final catastrophe, followed by the universal resurrection of the dead and the day of judgment; and so it turns out to be merely a provisional state of things preparatory to the new world. But for Jesus, the kingdom of God and the new world run into each other; there is no provisional state of things, but the most intimate blending of earthly and transcendental features. And after all, the most important point was not the manner of the realization, but the fact itself. Israel possessed the religion of Hope. No other people had anything like it. With the same battle-cry with which Christianity arose, "The kingdom shall yet be ours," Israel itself went forth to the last dread war of destruction and after that into its desolation. But as for the kingdom itself, it is in God's hand alone; that every Jew and every Christian knew. It is the gift of God, and He gives it when He will. Men cannot bring it about. Neither in Jewish nor in Christian writings is there the slightest suspicion of the thought that men's, acts, their works, or their piety can cause the kingdom to come. Complete passivity is man's duty. He must wait, and he must hope, and make ready in serious earnest. Between this world and the next stand the catastrophe and the resurrection of the dead and the judgment to come. It is perfectly immaterial whether this life and the next stand to each other, as they do in the popular conception,

in the relation of the deed and its reward; or, as from a deeper point of view, in the relation of seed and harvest. In each case the strictly supernatural character of the promise is retained.

The early Christians clearly felt and expressed their dependence upon the Jewish religion. They called their God the God of the Fathers; they declared the Old Testament to be their sacred book; they took the prophecies and the apocalypses as the basis of their hope. It was only the Jewish idea, the law, that they decisively rejected after a short period of hesitation; and even this only with the help of allegorical explanations which served to hide the defection from their eyes. But from the second century onwards, Christianity separates into two great movements. The one endeavours to realize the theory that the Christians are the true Israel, and finally gives the Jewish Church a fresh lease of life in Roman Catholicism. The other movement proceeds in part with rapid strides, and in part gradually, to the Hellenization of Christianity, to its transformation into Greek philosophy and mysticism; but in so doing it clearly shows us that in disassociating itself from Judaism, it has disassociated itself from the Gospel, which has this in common with Judaism, that it is a religion of practical morality.

CHAPTER III.

THE FULNESS OF THE TIME.

WHEN the early Christians maintained that Jesus had come into the world in the fulness of the time, they were not at all thinking of an especially favour able conjunction of affairs in the world, but simply of the termination of that apocalyptic age—the duration of which was unknown to themselves—which God had determined should precede the end of all things. The historian, too, has to exercise the greatest caution in the use that he makes of such statements as to the necessity of any occurrence in history. Even if he can prove in a general way that the conditions favourable to this or that event were present, he has done no more thereby than to point out that the thing was possible in the abstract. For who can say that these conditions were not already present a few decades earlier, or were present in a still more favourable degree a few decades later? By the side of the proof that the age was especially favourable to the spread of the Gospel, it would be possible to advance the counter proof with almost equally cogent arguments that the rapid transformation and decay of Christianity was due to the unfavourable circumstances of the age. It is sufficient for our present purpose to draw attention to some especially important characteristics of the position of Judaism in that age, without drawing any conclusions from them beyond what the actual facts warrant.

32

First, then, we have the facts that throughout the Mediterranean countries we find a type of civilization which was on the whole uniform, and that the Jews were affected by it. This is shown above all by the universal supremacy of the Greek language into which the Old Testament was translated, in which the Jews philosophized, which St. Paul spoke and understood, in which the greatest portion of early Christian literature was written. Community of language implies to a very great extent community of thought. Traces of this community we find in the latest books of the Old Testament, but above all in Alexandrian Judaism. The Jews take possession first of the forms of Greek literature—we even find hexameters in the Sibylline books, then of the conceptions and of the aims and objects of Greek philosophy.

Cosmology and ethics are developed into sciences in the Greek sense of the word; allegory becomes the connecting link between the Jewish word and the Greek spirit. We can already trace the first steps of that Jewish apologetic and criticism which paved the way for their Christian successors. The earliest form of Christianity is little influenced by all this, as long as it does not go beyond the boundaries of Palestine. The Greek spirit had no influence upon Jesus either directly or indirectly. But even the great missionary, who in many ways betrayed so anti-Greek, or at least anti-philosophical an instinct, cannot avoid contact with Greek conceptions. The literature of the sub-apostolic age, then, consciously throws the bridge over to the Greek world. Besides this, the guild system, which had grown up amongst the

33

Jews of the dispersion, and was afterwards taken over by the Christians, was a creation of the Greek mind, which managed to bring together again in new combinations the individual atoms that were floating about separately in that great cosmopolitan age, when all old bonds were in process of dissolution.

The mingling of religions was a prominent factor in the civilization of that age. It was effected consciously by the propaganda of the Oriental religions, unconsciously by the strange intermixture of all nations. This, too, was a preparation for Christianity. The only question is whether Christianity had not from the very first partaken of all these foreign elements, since Judaism, from which it had sprung, had been drawn into the process of decomposition. If in reality the Babylonian, Persian, Syrian, Egyptian, and Greek religions had been influencing later Judaism from all the different quarters of this chaos of people, then Christianity would have acquired its character of world-religion even from its very origin.

We are scarcely in a position yet to put these questions, let alone answering them. One thing is certain, that Jesus and His Gospel are intelligible from Judaism alone; and for this, for Jesus and for His relation to Palestinian Judaism, other and more accurate data are available. He appeared in the last dying moments of the theocracy and before the exclusive rule of the Rabbis which succeeded it. Here, it is true, it can be affirmed that only a few decades later the origin of Christianity would be inconceivable. The political situation was a decisive factor in this case. The little Jewish people had freed itself from the embrace of the vast surrounding empire in a magnificent struggle for liberty, only soon after to share the fate of every other Mediterranean country and bow the neck beneath the Roman yoke. It retained, however, its hatred of the foreigner and its aspirations for liberty, and consoled itself with the thought of its glorious future. It was these feelings, passions, and Utopias that gave birth to the last terrible insurrection which ended in destruction. Now Christianity arose while the ground was being prepared for this insurrection. In the New Testament itself mention is made of the Zealots, of the murder of the Galileans, of false Christs, all signs of this preparation. Through its most distinctive phrases, 'Kingdom of God' and 'Messiah,' the Gospel stands in the closest and most direct connection with this period of political ferment. It precedes the judgment of the year 70 A.D., exactly as the old prophecy once preceded the fall of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

34

In the next place we have to endeavour to present to ourselves the state of feeling among the Jews before Jesus appeared. It was a mysterious and a restless age. True, there was no lack of mercenary souls and of worldlings, who, leaving the future to take care of itself, devoted themselves to deriving what profit and pleasure they could from the passing moment. Jesus comes into contact at every step with this materialistic spirit, that knows not the signs of the times. But then besides these there are countless others, expectant, anxious and exultant souls, eagerly longing for the future. There were men and women there ready to sacrifice

35

house and hearth, family and fatherland. It was a great time, pregnant with heroes and martyrs.

All the hopes and longings, the serious earnestness, and the anger that lived in this people, were concentrated in one man—John the Baptist. He was the "fulness of the time" of Jesus. He stirred the masses as no man had done before. His preaching is only handed down to us in the Christian tradition, and therefore we do not know it accurately. The results of his activity were twofold. He suddenly applied the thought of the coming judgment, which lay forgotten and ineffective amidst the great confused mass of eschatological fancies, not to the Gentiles, but to the Jews themselves, and thereby shook their ecclesiastical system to the very foundation. The wrath of God descends upon the children of Abraham; it is of no avail to belong to the sacred people. Thereby in the next place the Baptist set each individual man the anxious question, What shall I do to be saved? This question, with which so many came to Jesus, is very far indeed from being a matter of course for a Jew, and not for a Jew alone. It was the result of the Baptist's preaching.

Directly, John the Baptist was merely the founder of a sect which succumbed to the influence of the Pharisaic tendency. The entrance to this sect was through baptism. Then followed ascetic observances to prepare for the judgment. There had been many movements like this before. The merely negative predominated, and that after all does not lead men out from Judaism. John hurled his decisive 'nay' against all the church life of the Jews. Jesus took up the 'nay' and added to it His 'yea.'

36

Jesus Himself was stirred by John to enter upon His own work. That was the greatest thing that John did.

37

THE RISE OF THE RELIGION.

CHAPTER IV.

JESUS. THE CALL.

CHRISTIANITY arose because a layman, Jesus of Nazareth, endowed with a self-consciousness more than prophetic, came forward and attached men so firmly to His person that, in spite of His shameful death, they were ready both to live for Him and to die for Him. Jesus imparted new values to things: He scattered new thoughts broadcast in the world. But it was only His person that gave these new values and these new thoughts that victorious power which transformed the world. It is men that make history and that imprint their personal character on great spiritual movements. If our century has had reason enough to learn that, then surely it is high time that the senseless chatter should cease about the religion of Christ which each Christian ought to acquire for himself. As if His power as Redeemer, His self-consciousness, His royal humility, could ever find a habitation in our little souls, quite apart from the fact that no one takes His external mode of life for a pattern. The difference between the prophet and the believer belongs to the elementary characteristics of every religion. The great historical religions, far from removing it, have but deepened and intensified it. It is impossible that a time should ever come for Christianity when any single Christian should acquire for his fellow-Christians the significance of Jesus.

38

What is the starting-point of our enquiry? Not the titles of Jesus; their meaning has itself partly to be explained by the self-consciousness. Not the stories of the Birth, Baptism, and Transfiguration; these are possibly but attempts at explanation on the part of the early Church. No; we must begin with Jesus testimony to Himself and with His mode of life.

Jesus comes to a man and says to him, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." He does on the Sabbath whatever seems good to Him, and calls Himself Lord of the same. As a new Moses He sets His "But I say unto you" against the words of the law. Himself a layman, He sets Himself in the place of the Scribes and declares to His audience of lay people that all knowledge of God has been given Him, and that He will impart it to them. He says: "Here is one greater than Jonah, greater than Solomon, the least of whose disciples is greater than John Baptist." He exclaims: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My word shall not pass away." He bids all those that labour and are heavy laden come unto Him that He may refresh them. They are to take up His yoke and learn of Him. And, on the other hand, He declares it to be the most grievous sin and one for which there is no forgiveness, if a man should blaspheme against the Holy Ghost who through Him works miracles. He comes to this or that individual with the brief command "Follow Me," and He calls for an immediate break with his previous mode of life. If need be, all are to be able to suffer and to die for Him and for His cause. If any man confesses Him before men and suffers for Him, then Jesus will certainly plead for him in the day of judgment.

39

These passages have all been taken from the Synoptists; they are the more significant, because Jesus does not here, as in the Fourth Gospel, press His personality upon men's notice, but rather conceals it. Now it is clear that a self-consciousness that is more than merely human speaks from these words. And this is the mystery of the origin of Christianity. What we need to do above all is to accept it as a fact—a fact which demands a patient and reverent hearing.

For scarcely more wonderful than the lofty self-consciousness of Jesus is the clear feeling of His limitations. Jesus prays to God as to His master, and teaches the disciples to pray to God. The deepest humility and subjection to the Lord of heaven and earth is His characteristic. Jesus will not suffer Himself to be called good—God alone is good. He knows nothing as to the last hour. God alone knows that. It is not His to assign the thrones of honour in the kingdom of God. That is God's sole prerogative. He speaks of God as the only judge whom man need fear. In Gethsemane He prays to God that the cup may pass, yet so that not His but God's will may be done. On the Cross there even escapes Him—according to the tradition—words that express a feeling of abandonment by God. So He stands, altogether a man on the side of men, with the feeling of the division that separates all things created from God.

40

The Church did not extend the reverence that it felt for Jesus to these expressions of His humility. In sharpest contrast to what Jesus Himself had said it set up the attributes of sinlessness and Godhead, and made the right to bear the name of Christian dependent on agreement therewith. This tendency can be traced back to the New Testament writings of the Apostle John. In the end this has brought about a reaction. Men have believed only in the humble words of Jesus, while they have increasingly distrusted the declarations of His majesty. But both belong together. The most wonderful feature in Jesus is the co-existence of a self-consciousness that is more than human with the deepest humility before God. The same man that exclaims, "All things are given Me by the Father, and no man knoweth the Father but the Son," answers the rich ruler, "Why callest thou Me good? No one is good but one, God." Without the first He is a man just such as we are; without the second He is an idle visionary. Jesus conceived of Himself as a Mediator. The Mediator is altogether man, without subtraction of anything that is human. But He has received from God an especial call and commission to His fellow-men, and thereby He towers high above them. Jesus shares this feeling of being a mediator with other men like Him. Even if it has in His case attained the highest degree of constancy, depth, and reality, yet no formula can define its exact limits.

Let us leave the form of His consciousness, of His call—the Messianic idea—entirely on one side for the present and look only at the fact itself. And how stupendous a fact it is. Jesus is a simple country child without any higher education or knowledge. Above all, He is no theologian. Up to His thirtieth year He was an artizan. In His native town no one pays

41

any particular attention to Him. His parents have no forebodings of His greatness. This layman, an artizan by trade, comes forward in God's name. He deposes all the Scribes. They do not know God. Jesus alone has recognized Him. He sets on one side the propaganda of the Pharisees. "Come unto Me and I will refresh you!" He sets aside the Baptist John. He belongs to the old order. His simple word shall be God's word--His help God's help. And all this without ever falling into the merely fanatical or visionary. He is always modest, humble, sane and sober, and yet with this superhuman self-consciousness. It is quite impossible to realize such an inner life as this. Revelation, Redemption, Forgiveness, Help—He has all those and offers them to such as shall surrender themselves to the impression of His personality. Jesus' mode of life is as far removed from the ordinary as His self-revelation. He stands entirely outside of human society. He does not mean to be a pattern for ordinary life. He has forsaken His calling, His family and His home, and has given Himself up to the life of an itinerant missionary. He has freed Himself from all the duties of social intercourse. He enters in again amongst men from without, but as a guest and as a stranger. In this manner He suffers Himself to be entertained hospitably with food and with shelter and to have His feet washed, and then He will leave the place, never perhaps to return again. He says expressly that He recognizes but a spiritual family—the men and the women that do God's will.

42

Besides this separation from the world we must notice the mysterious power of working miracles which Jesus possesses in a very high degree and which He can transmit to others. Even though Jesus uses all these powers in the service of ministering love they only thereby become the more extra ordinary. If He passes nights in solitary prayer, if in His zeal for preaching and healing He forgets both food and rest, if He interrupts the ordinary sequence of natural laws, or, Himself subject to some mysterious power, appears to His companions as a being of another world and to His ignorant relations as one possessed—everywhere there is the same impression of the superhuman. All this is quite peculiar to Himself, and is not intended to be typical. His companions, too, whom He attached to His own mode of life in order that they might help Him in His missionary labours, He distinctly separated by this very fact from the disciples in the world whom He and His companions wished to serve.

It is important to notice that the self-revelation of Jesus coincides with His mode of life. It was the same great calling which filled Him with the consciousness that He was the Redeemer, and which compelled Him to work as a homeless wanderer. Both in His words and in His life He represents the exceptional.

The fact that Jesus possessed a peculiar consciousness of His call stands firmly established as a portion of the New Testament which is proof against all the attacks of controversy. Now we must discover its form, the especial idea under which the call presented itself.

43

The whole of early Christianity gives one unanimous answer. Jesus is the Messiah, and has considered Himself such. The question now arises whether the belief of the early Church really was the belief of Jesus Himself. For the statement of the Church is attended by difficulties which have caused doubts to arise in connection with it.

The idea of a Messiah originated in narrow Jewish patriotism. It embodies the national aspirations of the Jews for a position of magnificence in the world such as they conceived had already existed in the time of David. The 17th Psalm of Solomon is our chief source for this idea. After the Messiah has driven away the enemies and cleansed the land of every abomination, He is to divide it justly among the Jews and govern them justly and wisely from Jerusalem as a theocratic prince. In reality, the idea of the Messiah had something archaeological about it, even for the Jews. It had been revived by the learned from a bygone age, and had gradually taken root among the people. It no longer quite fits in with the kingdom of God, with the new earth, with the transfigured body, and the whole transcendentalism of later Judaism. Hence the Messiah is a favourite figure in the intermediate state of things in learned apocalypses, whilst in the final state no room is found for Him.

The question, then, rightly arises, Can Jesus have clothed His lofty self-consciousness in so narrow a national Jewish idea? The answer depends, in the first place, on the reliability of the oldest tradition, and next on considerations of a general character. We have the trial of the King of the Jews, the entry into Jerusalem, the confession of Peter, the dispute for the places of honour on the right hand and on the left of the Messiah, which can scarcely all be inventions of disciples who inserted a later belief in the Messiah into the life of Christ. This result of our enquiry into the oldest Gospel (Mark's) is confirmed by the oldest collection of Logia, in which Jesus answers the Baptist's question, "Art thou He that shall come, or do we look for another?" by the simple reference to the beginning of the Messianic age of miracles; and in like manner ascribes to His victories over the demons the signification that in them the kingdom of God has come. Surely facts lie at the basis of these traditions, which, whether they be pleasant or not, demand a hearing and can only be suppressed by forcible means.

In addition to this there are considerations of a general character. The belief of the disciples in their Messiah must be older than Jesus' death, for it could not entirely arise after that death, which was such a grievous disappointment to so many expectations. If it is older than Jesus' death it is incredible that Jesus did not share it, and yet suffered it to be held.

If Jesus did not consider Himself to be the Messiah, then He must have thought of Himself as a prophet. This by itself would possibly be sufficient to explain all that was extraordinary in His mode of life. But Jesus could not come forward as a prophet—*e.g.* like John because the prophet always points to one higher than himself, and thereby assigns a provisional character to himself, while Jesus knew Himself to be God's final messenger, after whom none higher can come. That is the decisive consideration. The superhuman self-

consciousness of Jesus, which knows nothing higher than itself save God and can expect none other, could find satisfactory expression in no other form but that of the Messianic idea. That which weighs with Jesus in accepting this idea is not its political but its final and conclusive character.

This last consideration has brought us face to face with the question as to the origin of the Messianic consciousness. It is, however, only honest to confess that this origin is a mystery for us: we know nothing about it. All that we can say is how this consciousness did not arise in Jesus. It was not through slowly matured reflections of an intellectual nature: such are never the basis of certainty. The self-consciousness of a clever theologian might possibly thus be accounted for, but not that of the Son of God. Nor, again, was it owing to the influence of His surroundings; the voices of demons and of the world might make a man of genius vacillate: they could never impart a divine certainty to him. The fact, too, that Jesus appears from the very first with unswerving constancy and immovable certainty as one sent by God causes us to abandon both explanations. There is nowhere any hesitation, or doubt, or development from presentiments to certainty. Jesus learns new things as to the manner of His calling, but never anything fresh as to the fact itself. He acts His whole life long under the stress of compulsion. He knows Himself sent, nay, driven by God. He has only one choice: to obey or to disobey.

46

The Gospels date the Messianic consciousness of Jesus from the Baptism. He saw the Spirit of God descending in the fashion of a dove, and heard a voice, “Thou art My Son.” The great Old Testament prophets were, it is true, called in visions, and St. Paul became a Christian and an apostle by means of a vision. So far the evidence is in favour of the evangelists' story. But there is one consideration which should weigh very strongly in the contrary direction. The strange occurrence at the Baptism could have been told the disciples by none other than by Jesus Himself. If Jesus told them, then it could only be for the purpose of obtaining authority for His mission. But Jesus never appealed to visions. That is just His great distinction, His immense advantage over Mahomet. The whole edifice of Mahomet’s self-consciousness falls to pieces as soon as the truth of his visions is questioned. But in Jesus’ case you may cut out the story of the Baptism and of the Transfiguration and everything remains the same. All the outer processes which served the Old Testament prophets as means of communication with God, fall into disuse when we come to Jesus. That is just what constitutes His greatness. The consciousness of His call does not depend upon voices and visions, which everyone who has not himself experienced them is at liberty to doubt, but simply upon inner compulsion. How this compulsion came upon Him, whether it was in the end connected with some visionary experience, that is not for us to know. And after all, the important matter is not that Jesus had some experience of an especial nature with God, but that this experience compelled Him to turn to men. The historian who contents himself with this observes thereby the reverence that is due to this mystery.

47

But then, on the other hand, the inadequacy of the Messianic idea for Jesus Himself is likewise clear. Besides the one thought, the Messiah is God's last messenger, nothing but Jewish narrowness was connoted by this title. Happily Jesus is something else, something greater than the Messiah of the Jews. The traces are still preserved in the gospel tradition of the wrestling of Jesus with the inadequacy of the idea, of His labouring with the conception till finally its contents were completely transformed.

It is the story of the Temptation that shows us first of all that there is a complete want of inner harmony between Jesus and the Messianic idea. This story signifies the breach of Jesus with all that is fanciful and politically dangerous in the conception of the Messiah. The Messiah is a miraculous being who can do everything. Is Jesus to depend upon this, and thereby win over the people? The Messiah is a king of this world who attains to his dominion by force, deceit, treachery and cunning, just like other kings here on earth. Shall Jesus gain the sovereignty of the world by these means? No. He cries; it is the voice of Satan which is thus appealing to My feelings as Messiah. Away with it. In so doing He had already won the victory over that which presented the greatest danger in the conception of the Messiah, and had subjected Himself in obedient faith to God.

But what next? The Messiah of the Zealots had been cast aside. There remained the Messiah of the Rabbis. According to the true dogma, the Messiah was to remain concealed somewhere or other, perhaps in the desert, until God. exalted Him on His throne. That is to say, He was to do nothing and wait for the miracle to be wrought. But Jesus returned from the desert back into the world, in order to help men and prepare them for the Messianic time. He did not wait, but went about doing good. All the great redemptive activity of Jesus has no place in the Jewish conception of the Messiah; or, in other words, that which is great in Jesus from the point of view of the history of the world, is not a consequence of the idea of the Messiah, but is an original addition of His own.

48

'Messiah' and 'Israel' are two ideas that are inseparably connected together in the Jewish mind. The Messiah is Israel's future king—that and nothing else. Jesus, too, remained faithful to this dogma, and confined His activity during the whole of His life to His own people. But through bitter and grievous deception He had to learn that Israel as a whole was not receptive: that it would not accept the message, and that it was blindly hurrying along the road that led to judgment. At the same time, glimpses that open out into the heathen world fill Him with hope. And so He resigns Himself to be, if God so wills it, the Messiah whom Israel rejects and the Gentiles accept. Thereby all that is merely national is almost entirely banished from the idea of the Messiah. It is turned into the formal conception of king; judged by its contents, it becomes a paradox.

In the Jewish fancy Messiah is surrounded by all manner of heavenly and earthly glory. David's fame is reflected upon him. But the bitter experience that Jesus has gained in His dealings with His people causes the thought of the necessity of suffering, and even of death,

49

to ripen in His soul. From the day at Caesarea Philippi onwards He begins to familiarize the minds of the disciples with it, and utilizes the very occasion when their enthusiasm bursts into flame, to give them their first solemn lesson.

The thought of death was the stumbling-block to the Jews; it was the simple negation of the Messiah. No Jew before Jesus ever applied Isa. liii. to the dying Messiah. By thus submitting to this new necessity Jesus completed the purification of an idea which was at first by no means pure. The Messianic glory now becomes an object to be aimed at, not one which falls into the lap of some privileged person by some exceptional piece of good fortune, but one which has to be obtained through endless labour and renunciation: yea, even by death itself in voluntary obedience.

Thus did Jesus after much labour purify the title of Messiah which He had at first assumed through an inner compulsion. Even for us after all these centuries there is something surprisingly grand as we observe how the idea is emptied of all the merely sensual and selfish elements, so that finally the king in all his pomp and glory is turned into the tragic figure on the Cross. Herein, in one word, consists Jesus' greatness. He introduces the tragic element where others joyously revelled in material Utopias.

But the end of this work is no renunciation of the title of Messiah, but the distinct claim upon it advanced before His death. That was necessary for Jesus, otherwise He would have had to renounce both Himself and God. He left His disciples the hope in the restitution of all things as a legacy in connection, it would seem, with Daniel's vision of the Son of Man who is to descend upon the clouds of heaven. Jesus died with this belief in His speedy return in Messianic glory.

50

The belief in the return causes every thoughtful person the greatest difficulty at the present day. Compared with this, even the Messianic problem has but little importance. In the first place, it is a fact that Jesus was mistaken in the point of time: He thought of the return as to His own generation amongst whom He had worked, by whom He had been rejected. If our account of the trial of Jesus has any historical value, then Jesus did in fact say to His judges, "We shall meet again." But this meeting did not take place either for foe or friend. Yet that is not our real difficulty and stumbling-block. Apart from everything else, it is an altogether fantastic idea for us—that a dead person should return upon the clouds of heaven. This picture is the product of the idea of the world and of the psychology current in antiquity, and it is only in connection with them that it is endowed with any vitality. And so the doubt will arise whether it was really Jesus Himself, whether it was not, after all, His disciples who were the authors of this fantastic and erroneous conception.

But we must silence our modern modes of thought when facts speak so clearly and so decisively. However much may be a later addition in the eschatological speeches of Jesus, the constant element in them is just this thought of the second coming. It is this thought around which the whole of the apocalyptic theory has crystallized, and not vice versa. The

51

word 'Son of Man' is not essential. Paul has the idea, the expectation, of the parousia without this word. And besides, the chief difficulty is, after all, removed as soon as we place ourselves in the position of one to whom the ancient cosmology and psychology were realities, for then the thought of a 'homo redivivus' will become perfectly familiar to us.

The question was for Jesus to find a sanction for His mission. The superhuman in Him accepted the form of the idea of the Messiah. The Messiah is, and remains, king in the kingdom of God. Taking His stand upon this presupposition, death appears to Him to be one of two things. It is either a proof that He is in the wrong, or it is a transition to a higher right that shall manifest itself to a world which now fancies that it is triumphing. By announcing His return Jesus declares that God is on His side, and that He is in the right. And for this very same reason the early Christians laid all the emphasis on the parousia as their strongest piece of evidence. Even though this evidence consisted merely in a hope—a hope unfulfilled—it was yet powerful enough to help Jesus and His disciples over their greatest difficulty.

At the same time, it is obvious that that which is inadequate in the idea of the Messiah, here wins its first and last victory over Jesus. In His prophecy of the second coming Jesus yields its due to the faith of the age. Here for a moment the wild fancies of later Judaism, the magic world of the ancient popular belief, intrude in the midst of the grand simplicity of Jesus' consciousness of His call. There was no harmony between Jesus and the Messianic idea. He accepted the idea under compulsion, because it was the outer form for that which was final and highest. He laboured with it, broke it up, re-cast it; yet a portion of the deception which it contained was transmitted to Him.

52

What were the titles which Jesus chose to express His self-consciousness? The question belongs to the close of our enquiry. In the first place, because the meaning of the titles can only be derived from the self-consciousness and not this latter from the titles; and next, because there is an especial difficulty in distinguishing in this connection between what is to be assigned to Jesus and what is to be referred to the oldest theology of the early Christian Church. The evangelists ascribe to Jesus the titles Messiah, Son of God, and Son of Man. The first He never used of Himself, according to their account. They merely narrate that in His answers to the Baptist, to Peter, and to the high priest during His trial He accepted it—affirming the fact. On the other hand, the two other expressions are handed down to us as self-designations. The word Son of God fell into discredit amongst the Jews in later times, because the Christians showed a preference for this title. But in the time of Jesus it may very well have been current amongst the people as a popular Messianic expression. Does not God address the Messianic King in the 2nd Psalm with these words, "Thou art My Son"?

And yet it is striking how very seldom Jesus uses the word. In reality only once. It was one of the culminating points of His life. In tones of exultation He spoke out of the fulness of His heart to those that were nearest to Him. Just as Father and Son know and trust each

53

other, so do God and He. Thus He uses the Messianic title as the expression of the closest intimacy with God, of the most absolute trust in Him. But the title did not turn out to be a blessing for the early Church, destined as it was to migrate to heathen surroundings. It gave rise to physical and metaphysical speculations, and so caused a long series of misfortunes.

The commonest self-designation of Jesus in the Gospels is the phrase 'Son of Man.' Would that we knew for certain whether Jesus used it Himself! The phrase is to be traced back to the vision of Daniel (ch. vii.), where it is still used figuratively and without any Messianic application. Originally it signifies just 'human being,' *homo*. Just as the hostile empires appear in the vision as animals, so the kingdom of the saints appears to the seer as a man. But long before the age of Jesus this 'Man' had been transformed into the Messiah. A very slight change was needed for this. Jesus calls Himself the 'Man,' first where, referring to the passage in the book of Daniel, He prophesies His coming down from heaven to establish the kingdom of God; next, when he foretells His Passion; lastly, in other passages of various contents. But did He really so call Himself? One is struck by the fact that He speaks of Himself in the third person as though of someone else, and that He prophesies His coming as if He were already removed from earth. It is as easy to conceive of these forms of expression being used by the disciples after Jesus' death as it is difficult to imagine Jesus Himself employing them while He was still in their midst. If Jesus ever did speak of Himself as the Man, then He can only have done so a short time before His death and in the expectation of that death. One will then have to suppose that at the time when the thought of His approaching death gradually grew to be a certainty for Him, and the idea of His future restoration to sovereignty likewise arose in His mind, He drew comfort and confidence from this passage in Daniel. It suddenly acquired a living personal application to Himself. He saw Himself as the 'Man' exalted to God's side after His death and descending from heaven in glory. And now He created the paradox of the Son of Man who first must suffer. We may suppose the term to have originated in some such manner as this, and yet it is quite possible that it was the disciples who were the first to find this explanation of Daniel's words. But the expression, which was in any case derived from the Jewish apocalyptic writings, was altogether unintelligible to the Greeks, and hence we find Paul already avoiding the use of it. It was only very much later, when the Gospels had come to be regarded as sacred books, that they made an attempt of their own to find a meaning in it.

54

Thus from the very first the titles turned out to be the misfortune of the new religion. With the titles either the old or the perverted new ideas creep in—'Messiah,' 'Son of God.' 'Son of Man.' How inadequately at bottom all this applies to Jesus. Not one of these words expresses even remotely what He was amongst men, or what He was called to be by God for all time. Hence it is a part of true reverence for Jesus that we should venerate, not the titles, but Himself.

55

There was in Him something entirely new, a surpassing greatness, a superhuman self-consciousness which sets itself above all authorities, declaring God's will and promises, imparting consolation, inspiring courage, delivering judgment with divine power, a new mediatorship between God and man, that left all the former far behind it. But this that was new in Jesus appeared clothed in a contemporary and at bottom unsuitable form, His consciousness as Messiah. And in spite of all His labour to change the antiquated, the petty, and the transitory, He did not entirely destroy it. Hence immediately after Jesus' death a twofold movement can be traced amongst the disciples. Jewish patriots attach to the one word Messiah all the fancies and all the political Utopias of Judaism. But those who understand Him continue His work and set Him entirely free from these Messianic surroundings. The one road leads to the Messiah of the Apocalypse, the other to the 'Second Adam' of Paul and the Logos of the Fourth Gospel. The future belongs to the latter alone.

CHAPTER V.

JESUS.—THE PROMISE.

JESUS began His ministry with a clear and simple promise: "The kingdom of God is at hand." By so doing He proves His acceptance of the Jewish eschatology in its simplest form. The Jews waited for the kingdom of God as the state of things when Israel should be free and exalted to a position of power and splendour, when the Gentiles should be in subjection, and the patriarchs and holy men of old should have risen from the dead, and God be enthroned visibly amidst the people. Jesus original' hope, too, must have been very similar to this, though not exactly the same. This we necessarily infer from the following considerations. Jesus never explained the conception of the kingdom of God, for He presupposes it as well-known, nor does He anywhere criticise any false conception of the kingdom of God, He merely lays all the emphasis on its near approach, and on the conditions of entrance. Furthermore, He addresses His promise exclusively to the Jews, His own people, and not to the Gentiles. Lastly, He speaks of being together with the patriarchs, and thus reveals the Jewish foundation of His message.

The Jewish starting-point of the promise of Jesus will therefore form the first portion of our enquiry. But Jesus' greatness begins in every case where He sets Himself free from these Jewish presuppositions. Three points deserve notice: The place and the manner; the time; the recipients of the Promise.

1. The national pride of the Jews, the fantastic and material turn of the Oriental mind, combine to embellish the Jewish hope in the kingdom of God with a number of individual touches. This process can be traced from the apocalypses, both Jewish and Christian, down to the Koran. Read in the Apocalypse of St John the song of triumph over the fall of Babylon, the exultation over her misfortunes, the description of the final battle with all its cruel details, the delineation, at once fantastic and material, of the Jerusalem which is far indeed from being heavenly, with its arrogant contempt of the Gentiles. Mahomet's descriptions of Paradise with their repulsive sensuality may be passed over in silence. Even so harmless a vision of the future as is contained in the Magnificat and the Benedictus, the songs of Mary and of Zacharias, that St Luke has preserved for us, is limited to the political liberation of the people. We may not indeed conclude that because the political and the fantastical elements are almost entirely absent from the sayings of Jesus, that therefore He never thought or spoke of these things. Jesus never expected that the kingdom of God and the Roman empire could co-exist. The latter would have to pass away with the advent of the former. His other conceptions, too, will probably have been fantastic enough to our way of looking at things. But the Evangelists were under the impression that all these traits—the political as well as the material embroidery—were meaningless for Jesus, did not belong to the essential which alone He emphasized. Jesus must have understood how to purify and to simplify the

hopes of His disciples, and to concentrate them on the religious kernel. They remained indeed Jewish hopes, but such as had passed through Jesus soul. Without setting Himself in opposition to His surroundings, the hopes of a religious genius such as Jesus were from the very first of a different nature. All those features of vindictiveness, ambition, cruelty, sensuality, the artificial and fantastical pedantry, the minute and subtle calculations, did not harmonize with the simplicity of His soul. The acceptation of the Jewish eschatology by Jesus is of itself tantamount to its purification.

No very great importance, therefore, attaches to the place and the outer circumstances of the kingdom of God. It is clear that Jesus did not think of heaven or the other world. This earth, or, more strictly speaking, the land of Palestine, is the scene of the kingdom. There is no breach of continuity between the life that men live here and now, and their existence yonder. They eat and drink and take their pleasure; they live as men and not as spirits. To speak of the metaphorical language of Jesus is of itself enough to impair the naïveté of the whole picture. The entire harmlessness and innocence of Jesus are reflected in the simplicity of His expectations. For Jesus the earthly and the simply human are entirely free from any suggestion of the sinful. Why should that God to whom we pray for bread here below be less likely to give us food and drink in His heavenly kingdom? There is something almost countrified in Jesus' language about the future. Even an inhabitant of Jerusalem would have used richer colours in his picture. That is why we are told nothing of the city, the length and the breadth and the height of which are equal, and the streets of which are of gold.

59

But what an entire misunderstanding it is of Jesus when emphasis is laid, as it often is to-day, upon the earthly elements in His hope. That which He pictured to Himself, being a Jew of His age, in earthly guise, He would have imagined in a later century just as easily after a heavenly fashion. All the emphasis is laid, not upon the place, but upon simple happiness and upon community with God. When His kingdom comes, all suffering, all sorrow and lamentation, all sense of abandonment by God, shall be changed into joy, exultation, and the blessed feeling of nearness to God. To behold God, to be called the Children of God, to experience God's comfort and mercy—that is the centre of the promise. Therefore, too, the picture of the kingdom is enriched by a multitude of features which go beyond the earthly framework: the resurrection of the dead, the angelic body, the everlasting life. Even if this earthly stage is never left, yet the barriers between this world and the next have been removed, and the visible communion with God and with all His saints conjures forth a new world. But there is one fact which, plainer than all else, shows us of what little importance this world is after all for Jesus' promise. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, blessedness and torment follow immediately after death, but not upon earth. There is no contradiction here for Jesus with the hope in the kingdom of God, because for Him nothing depends upon the place, but every thing upon the condition of men.

60

Expressed in simple terms, what Jesus' promises in the kingdom of God is everlasting life, man's entrance into unbroken community with God. In common with His Jewish contemporaries, He pictures this everlasting life to Himself upon an earthly stage and with earthly features, but it is in the centre of the picture that He places that which is everlasting—nearness to God, such as is not known here upon earth.

And the door that leads to life eternal is the judgment of God that appoints unto every man everlasting bliss or everlasting torment. The later theology, which postponed blessedness to the next world, to heaven, understood Jesus after all better than our modern archaeologists, who in their interest for earth forget heaven. When He said the kingdom of God is at hand, He wished to place all those that heard Him in the presence of God and of eternity, in comparison with which this earth and world are of very little worth.

2. The Jews of Jesus' time entirely postponed the coming of the kingdom of God to the future. No trace of that kingdom could be perceived as long as the Roman ruled in the land. It had not, of course, been so at all times. When the Asmonean high priests and kings set up their empire and conquered many of the neighbouring tribes, then the Messianic Age appeared to them and to many of their followers to have begun already. The King and Son of God was there already, the promise which Jahwe had given His people seemed to be about to be fulfilled. In the Messianic Psalms, ii. and ex., the beginning of the kingdom of God and of its king are already celebrated. But all this was nothing but beautiful dreams. We do well to remember this when we come to examine the question, Does the kingdom of God exist for Jesus in the present or in the future? Does He promise it, or does He bring it with Him?

61

The Gospels themselves, if asked for an answer, appear to be in doubt. By the side of passages which speak of it as still future, there are others which declare that it is just being established upon earth.

The former passages are the most numerous, and are to be found from the beginning to the end of Jesus' ministry. His disciples are to hand on this same message with which He began: "The kingdom of God is at hand"; they are not to change it and say the kingdom has come with Jesus. In the Lord's Prayer they are to pray "Thy kingdom come," not, "may it be fully established," for it is not here at all as yet. So Jesus ever speaks of entrance into the kingdom as of a future event. The Beatitudes are all promises, one just as much as the other, "for theirs is the kingdom of God," as much as "for they shall see God." On the last journey to Jerusalem the sons of Zebedee beg for the seats of honour in the future kingdom, and Jesus acquiesces in the form of their request. And even at the Last Supper He looks towards the future when He says that He will not drink of the fruit of the vine with His disciples until the kingdom of God shall come.

62

The chief passage, too, which would seem to prove the present nature of the kingdom, points likewise to the future, if rightly understood (Luke xvii. 20: "The kingdom of God is

already among you"). In the first place, it is quite certain that the right translation is "among you" and not "in you," for Jesus is speaking to the Pharisees, so the evangelist expressly tells us. And next, we must notice the connection of the phrase with its context. It is immediately succeeded by the great eschatological speech of the sudden coming of the Son of Man, who shall appear all at once like the lightning. But first shall come days of tribulation and longing all in vain. The whole speech therefore presupposes that the kingdom of God is yet to come. And it is preceded by these words: "The kingdom of God shall not come in a way that attracts attention, nor will people say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'there it is!' but . . . ." Now the only possible antithesis to these future tenses is: the kingdom will be amongst you so suddenly that you will have no time at all for apocalyptic calculations and disputes. For like a flash of lightning so is the kingdom of God. This celebrated passage proves, therefore, just this: that Jesus, in contrast to all apocalyptic calculations, prophesies the coming of the kingdom of God as a sudden surprise.

Finally, the force of the argument derived from a consideration of all these passages is confirmed by certain indirect conclusions. To enter into the kingdom of God and to inherit eternal life is so entirely one and the same thing for Jesus, that either expression is used indifferently. The opposite of the kingdom of God is hell with the everlasting fire. In the kingdom of God the patriarchs and the souls of the saved shall meet together. The resurrection of the dead will therefore coincide with the advent of the kingdom. The vision of God is a future reward. The judgment and the kingdom of God are to come together. The latter cannot be said to be present as long as the separation of men into good and bad is still impending. Finally, the coming of the kingdom is brought about by the return of Messiah.

63

Now if we add to these considerations the fact that the early Christians all expected the kingdom of God in the future, we may look upon it as one of the facts which we know with the greatest certainty that in the message of Jesus the term kingdom of God has an eschatological connotation, that it stands for the new world that is to come.

There are, however, it is true, passages which point in another direction, and these need to be examined as well. The question is whether they can be explained, starting as we have done from eschatological premises.

In His casting out of the devils Jesus saw the beginning of the kingdom of God. "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." His victories over the devils seem to Him to be so many blows struck against the empire of Satan, leading on to its downfall. God's Spirit works through Jesus and lays the foundation for the transformation of the world. When the Baptist asks Him, "Art thou He that should come?" he receives the answer: "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up." Once more it is the miracles by which one recognizes the dawn of the New Time. Even though much has still to be awaited—hence the

64

warning, "Blessed is he that shall not be offended in Me"—yet for the believer a visible pledge of the final accomplishment is ready to hand.

This point we may look upon as established beyond all doubt. Jesus regarded—we must admit it—His momentary miracles as the first signs of the coming kingdom of God. We may perhaps call that the enthusiasm of Jesus.

Another saying seems to point in the same direction. We have to piece it together from Matthew and Luke. Its meaning is somewhat mysterious:

> The law and the prophets until John.
> Henceforth the kingdom of God suffereth violence,
> And the violent take it by force.

But no sooner do we realize that Jesus uttered this in triumphant exultation than the words come to be full of life for us. The kingdom is no longer a far-off divine event as in the ages when the law and the prophets prepared the way for it. It is even now being established upon earth, and that with violence, while men take possession of it. So speaks one who beholds with joy how the promise passes into accomplishment. Therefore, too, Jesus can say that His disciples stand in the midst of the kingdom of God, and are for that reason greater than even John himself.

These words are the expression of a mighty enthusiasm. With more of calm, but with no less certainty and joy, Jesus praises the beginning of the kingdom here and now in certain parables.

65

In the double parable of the mustard seed and of the leaven, Jesus contrasts the small beginning with the mighty end. So it is with the kingdom of God. It begins small and unnoticeable—so small that the great and the wise of this earth pay it no attention whatever. But its end brings about the transformation of the world. And so it is that all the great future is already contained in the small beginning. As we read these parables we must picture to ourselves Jesus going about teaching and ministering in that little corner of Galilee, and then try and imagine how this obscure activity is to lead up to the great world-catastrophe.

In the next parable, that of the seed growing of itself, two thoughts struggle for the mastery. In the first place it is that expressed by the words 'of itself,' the unshaken confidence in the necessary progress of God's cause, independent of all human activity; on the other hand, the steps in the development, the sure insight embracing the whole process of evolution by slow and gradual laws. Of the two the first thought is to be ascribed to Jesus with greater probability. There is no mention in this connection of miracles. The parables breathe an atmosphere of joy, courage, and confident resignation.

The modern mind is only too apt to read its own thoughts of evolution, immanence, and the universal character of the divine and the good, into these words. Jesus appears to have placed everything that is supernatural on one side. But that is just appearance. Under all circumstances Jesus imagined the kingdom of God to Himself as something supernatural. It always brings along with it the world of miracles to which belong the judgment, the new earth, the resurrection of the dead, and the vision of God. And that is just why Jesus and His disciples recognize the beginning of the kingdom in the miraculous powers that issue from Him. The only thing that is new in Jesus point' of view is that He regarded His own work not as preparation but as beginning (after all, the difference between the two is very slight) and recognized the dawn of the new age in His deeds. Here we stand once more in presence of what we have called the enthusiasm of Jesus. There was a time in the life of Jesus when hope swelled His breast in a quite unusual manner, when the people seemed to be coming over to Him, when all the devils yielded to His miraculous powers, when heaven descended upon earth. "I beheld Satan fall from heaven like lightning," cried Jesus at that time. "The harvest is great, but the labourers are few." "Blessed are your eyes to behold what ye behold;—that which prophets and kings have sought in vain to behold." At that time Jesus still felt Himself to be in harmony with all the good influences at work amongst His people. Patriotism and religion were one, and hope ran into vision. That was the happiest period in His life. It was then that He uttered the words about the kingdom of God being present here and now.

But the question is whether He retained this enthusiastic belief until the end. That period of jubilant hope was followed by a season of deep disenchantment brought about by the recognition of the fact that He and the people would not agree together in the long run. If the unclean spirit that has been driven forth can return to the house from which he has been driven, taking unto himself seven other spirits, then the last state has become worse than the first. In the end the great miracles only serve unto the towns in which they have been performed for a greater condemnation; that surely sounds a great deal sterner than the answer to the Baptist. Finally, Jesus foresaw destruction for His people and suffering and death for Himself. But even in the midst of this painful experience He did not surrender the certainty of His hopes. At the Last Supper, just before His death, He looked forward to the meeting once more in the kingdom of God, when He should drink anew of the fruit of the vine with His disciples. He bequeathed to His disciples the daily and hourly expectation of the coming of the kingdom: they were to be prepared every moment. The present generation should not pass away till all be fulfilled. They that have seen the works of Jesus shall likewise see the accomplishment thereof. This and that particular disciple—the later tradition substituted a vague 'certain'—shall not taste of death until they behold the kingdom. While Jesus points so decisively towards the future, the thought of the present commencement of the kingdom appears to have receded for Him into the background, but He never expressly

abandoned it; and so the early Church, too, clung fast to it in spite of the Master's death. But the emphasis is laid on the future. Just as in the parables before mentioned, our looks were forcibly directed away from the small beginning to the great end.

And so Jesus Himself made of Christianity the religion of hope. All His work breathes a spirit of expectation, of longing for the great invisible, for perfection. The goal of religion has not yet been reached. It cannot, it may not, be in our possession. During the whole period of His work on earth, Jesus never wearied of directing the gaze of His people forwards and upwards, and of balancing the blessedness of the future against all the suffering of the present. He did that in the Beatitudes no less than in the parable of poor Lazarus. It was only to the self-satisfied and contented, to the worldlings, that He had nothing to offer. We should picture Him entering into rich man's house and poor man's cottage with the greeting of peace, and then inviting His listeners in the simplest, most childlike strain to the joys of the life eternal. If Paul in a later age preaches the religion of longing in words of enthralling eloquence, he is merely continuing in his own language the Beatitudes of Jesus. This longing was the best element even in the Jewish religion, but here the Jewish nationalism—the Church—was in its way. Jesus had to remove the impediment.

3. The Jews believed that the kingdom was for Israel, and that Israel should be the ruling people in the kingdom. It is evident that Jesus shared this belief at first. Not only do isolated sayings of His show this clearly, but above all the fact that He purposely confined His message to His own people. Jesus seeks out the publicans and sinners for this very reason, because they, too, are the children of Abraham. And therefore His gospel is one of gladness, because it promises His people in the first instance joy and happiness. But in course of time, the message of judgment takes the place of the message of gladness, and the kingdom of God is emptied of all its national connotation.

From the very first the kingdom and the judgment were for Jesus inseparable. By the side of the kingdom was Gehenna, by the side of the invitation the threat. So the Sermon on the Mount rightly reproduces the thoughts of Jesus. The thought that every Jew as such had a right to the kingdom never entered into Jesus' mind. Yet at first the promise was throughout of a glad and enthusiastic character. But soon one disappointment follows another, and thus the Galilean ministry comes to an end. It is to disciples full of enthusiasm indeed, but not of changed life, that the word is uttered as to the mere saying of 'Lord, Lord.' To them also refer the parables of the tares and of the drag-net in their original form. Jesus cries woe upon the towns of Bethsaida and Chorazin and Capernaum, because all the miracles have been of no avail. The whole people He compares now to children at play in the market place, whom no one can satisfy, neither John nor Jesus; and now to the unclean and relapsed spirit, whose last state is worse than the first. The Jews cannot and will not understand the signs of the time: they live carelessly for the day; they eat and they drink; they marry and

are given in marriage; they buy and they sell—that is their life, and nothing but that. The terrible warnings which God sends them are all in vain—the massacre of the Galileans of Jerusalem—the fall of the tower of Siloam. All in vain is the great sign that Jesus gives them by His preaching of repentance—how far more successful was Jonah with the men of Nineveh! In vain, too, is the respite that God still gives them, that they may repent before the end. Irresistibly the whole nation is tottering down the road to ruin.

70

So the glad message of the kingdom finally turns into the announcement of the doom upon Israel. Jesus ranges Himself on the side of John. In the last days, just before His death, Jesus announced the fall of the Jewish Church, and even of the sanctuary, in clear and unmistakable terms. Not one stone shall remain standing on the other. At the same time the world of the Gentiles bursts into view and takes Israel's place. In the parables we are told how, instead of the invited guests who refuse the invitation, others are called to take their places at the table which is ready; how the vineyard is let out to other husbandmen, in the place of those who refuse to pay the fruits thereof to the lord of the vineyard; and then without a parable: instead of the children of the kingdom, many shall come from the east and from the west and shall sit at meat with the patriarchs in the kingdom of God. How this admission of the Gentiles shall be brought about Jesus leaves to His God. He just gives the promise without giving His disciples any command to go forth as missionaries. The history of the apostolic age is sufficient proof of this statement.

But was the rejection of Israel on the part of Jesus final? Not only did Paul believe in the final salvation of Israel but also the twelve apostles, too, encouraged by this hope, were unwearied in their attempts to convert their fellow-countrymen. In this particular point, however, much caution must be exercised in the way in which we deal with the tradition. It may be that even the patriotism of the disciples would no longer resign itself to accept this terrible conclusion. The early Christians only retained the parable of the fig-tree to which a season of grace had been granted, while the parable of the barren fig-tree was turned into a miracle and so deprived of all its serious meaning. All indications point to the fact that Jesus broke with the national hope more uncompromisingly, more decisively than His disciples. For individuals, even for many such, He had hopes stretching beyond His death, for that death was itself to be the means of the salvation of many. But the people as a whole He gave up as lost, obeying therein the teaching of facts better than the great apostle.

71

Thus, then, the message of Jesus retains its eschatological character from first to last. It is the announcement of the end, of the near approach of the judgment and of the kingdom, and such it remains. It is only the national element that is removed; the soberness and the glad joyfulness remain: they are the marks of eternity. Thereby Jesus so purified and so deepened the Jewish eschatology that it was able to conquer the world, and that the later change of the earthly expectation into the heavenly did not affect it at all. That which is great

and new in Jesus is not to be found in the thought of a present and immanent kingdom of God—thoughts which Jesus Himself soon abandoned, and which have never been a motive power in history, but in the denationalization of the Jewish hope.

72

Here, again, we can trace two divergent tendencies in the early Church, both of which start from Jesus eschatology. There is first the national Jewish tendency, fragments of which can be found in the Apocalypse—even St. Paul did not show himself quite free from it—Israel must be saved, cost what it may. And there is the freer, broader view which throws a bridge over to Greek thought and finally transforms the whole Jewish eschatology into a religious hope of the next world. This latter alone understood the meaning of the work of Jesus' life.

73

CHAPTER VI.

JESUS.—THE CLAIM.

IN the eyes of Jesus and of the Jews, the kingdom is a gift of God. It is established upon earth without any human intervention, in a supernatural manner by means of a series of miracles and catastrophes. Even in the period of His most confident hopefulness Jesus did not expect it to come about through His work or that of His disciples; it grows of itself. The thought of hastening the coming of the kingdom by any efforts on our part is in its origin neither Christian nor Jewish. It only originated when the idea of the supernatural was abandoned and the conception of the kingdom of God was entirely transformed. And how should Jesus and His disciples be able to bring about the judgment, the resurrection, the suspension of death, the vision of God? Such phantastic thoughts are entirely foreign to Jesus. What they have to do is not to try and hasten the coming of the kingdom, but to prepare themselves so that they may receive it worthily.

Jesus wished to urge men into this preparation by the call to repentance. Like the later Christian Church, the Jewish Church had certain definite regulations for penance—the 'Teschuba.' If any one had sinned he could recover God's mercy by a confession of sins accompanied by sorrow, fasting and self-chastisement. It would seem that the right of renewed participation in the church services depended upon such acts of penance. Jesus starts from this point, but He immediately makes the same change which Luther afterwards repeated in the be ginning of his theses. In the face of the approaching kingdom of God, He would have the whole life to be such an act of repentance—no merely external ecclesiastical penance, but a breach with the former superficial life and a drawing near to God. For this penitence is to consist in nothing negative or ascetic, as in the Jewish acts of penance, but simply in the doing of God's will. He that repents—*i.e.*, he that does God's will may hope to enter into the kingdom of God. What, then, does Jesus mean by the 'will of God'? What does the phrase cover as He uses it?

Two observations are here necessary by way of preliminary to remove any possible misunderstanding.

Jesus makes a clear distinction between the apostles and the disciples in the wider sense of the word. There is one little company of men whom Jesus removes entirely from their life in the world, separating them from their calling, their family, their possessions, their homes, and associating them with Himself as His followers in His life of constant wandering. But these are the future missionaries, whom Jesus makes partners in His own calling. Later on we shall come across them as the leaders of the first Christian community. On all the other disciples, on the brothers and sisters who do God's will, Jesus makes no such claim. He presupposes, on the contrary, that they will live in the world amid their usual surroundings. In His words to the twelve, when He sent them forth to preach, Jesus enumerates the

duties of the missionaries, whereas the Sermon on the Mount sets forth the will of God for the disciples in the world. If, therefore, the omission of the maxims of civic and industrial ethics in the preaching of Jesus is often noted, the reason of this omission is that they were assumed as a matter of course by Him. As He is not speaking to idlers, He has as little need to tell His hearers how they are to earn their daily bread as any preacher of to-day. He gives them religious principles, words of eternal life, which are to regulate their everyday life in this world, but which in themselves are useless unless applied to the life in the world.

The most important sayings of Jesus are grouped together in the Gospels after a very external fashion. A great variety of Logia are collected together under one or two principal headings. Above all, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is the new lawgiver who proclaims a great number of exalted precepts without any inner connection. But it is only fair to assume that Jesus possessed a definite ideal, and that all His single utterances must be understood with reference to that ideal. He looked at man in the definite relation in which he stands to the three great realities—himself, his neighbour, and God—and that in the presence of eternity, of the kingdom, and the judgment. That which does not touch, or only remotely touches, these three realities is no concern of His. He has nothing to say about it. Whatever, on the other hand, either furthers or hinders them, He takes up as the subject of His enquiry and determines according to the ideal.

76

The end which each man should place before himself is self-mastery and freedom from the world. It is only when he has attained to this goal that he can appear at any moment before God and will not be surprised by the sudden approach of the day of judgment. Self-mastery is to extend to the inner life of man—Jesus laid great stress upon this—to the words, the thoughts, the heart from which they come forth. Hence the importance of keeping words and thoughts under strict control, of mastering every evil look and every idle word. The feelings of personal honour and vengeance must in like manner be suppressed, for they deprive the soul of its freedom. The disciple is to sit in judgment upon himself, and strive after sincerity and loyal singleness of heart. Nor is he to shrink from any hardship or privation when the need arises. Jesus insists upon the strictest temperance which never rocks itself to sleep in a fancied security; upon watchfulness and prayer, and the constant struggle against temptation. Cut off hand and foot, tear out the eye if they cause thee to offend. It is only by means of this stern self-discipline that it becomes possible for man to be able to appear at any moment before God.

Freedom from the world and indifference to its attractions, its riches and its pleasures, as well as its cares and its sorrows, are a part of this self-discipline. Hence Jesus passed terribly severe judgment upon the servants of mammon more than upon all others. For mammon's aim is to become master of the soul. He would take it captive and drag it down so that it forgets the eternal. Therefore he is our chiefest foe, of whom everyone should beware. Jesus discovers the danger that threatens from this quarter in a great number of sayings and par-

77

ables. But He laid down no universally applicable law of renunciation. He demands that the soul should be inwardly free from mammon, and should be prepared for an entire sacrifice of all outward belongings as soon as God should call for it.

Another great enemy is the family. True, it is a divine institution, but it binds the heart to the world with a hundred chains, and tames the conscience and the earnest zeal of the individual. Amongst the Jews, family affection was the be-all and end-all of life. Jesus utters words which attack this affection with terrible severity and call for the severance even of the dearest ties. Let the dead bury their dead. His own mission is the destruction of that affection which makes a slave of conscience.

Again, another foe is that anxious care for food and clothing which imprisons men in a narrow cell whence they have no longer any free outlook on the eternal tasks and objects of life. Such conduct, says Jesus, is heathen. Take care, He says, of the great things, and God will take care of the little things. Neither, however, does He spare the exact opposite of this anxious life, the superficial life of routine and custom, the life that most people lead without virtue and without vice, and that enthralls them. He would not have the individual be the blind slave of public opinion. Let him, on the contrary, recognize the critical nature of the times, and the serious earnestness of his own life, and go forward to meet eternity.

78

In all these demands, therefore, Jesus' object is one and the same: the rousing of the conscience in presence of eternity. He gives us no rules of life, no laws whatever in detail.

With other times come other dangers and other duties. While Jesus rends family ties asunder, St Paul binds them up and strengthens them, and rightly so, for the heathen world presented a new situation. The key to the understanding of Jesus is to keep His aim in view and to recognize that the way that leads thereto is the awakening of the conscience.

The aim of Jesus stands out in the sharpest contrast to the modern ideal of culture, the free and full development of the individual personality such as we associate—whether rightly or wrongly—with the name of Goethe. We of to-day count sin as a part of our development, and delight therein if it has made us richer. Jesus demands poverty and a severe discipline. Better enter into the kingdom of heaven with only one eye than keep both eyes and be thrown into the fiery pit. This one saying is surely sufficient. By this contrast to the modern ideal Jesus approaches very closely to pietism, which at all events has understood the seriousness of the Gospel in the face of eternity. There is in the ethics of Jesus a kernel of severity and renunciation, nor is this unnatural when hell and perdition are realities. But, on the other hand, Jesus separates Himself from much that is called pietism. He emphasizes the need of the greatest purity, and He does not burden the conscience with petty and artificial regulations. It is noteworthy that He never opposed popular custom. Straightforwardness, uprightness, and unaffectedness, are to be among the marks of the disciple of Jesus.

79

As regards duties to one's neighbour Jesus simply formulated His demands in the words of God already contained in the Old Testament, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

But the old commandment receives a new and exceedingly rich application at the hands of Jesus: it is flooded by a mighty stream of enthusiastic love which bursts the national boundaries and spreads over, to the benefit of mankind.

Love is to govern all the relations of the individual to his surroundings. To the poor and needy it is to appear as liberality, a royal bounteous munificence free from all solicitude. As we ourselves receive all our good gifts from God, so the giving of them in our turn is to be a matter of course to us. Give to those that ask of thee. Blessed are the merciful. I must be ready to pardon the brother that wrongs me and that breaks the peace, without setting any limits or imposing any conditions, even till seventy times seven. We ourselves only live through God's pardoning love. Were it not for this love we must all of us needs perish, even the holiest of men. God's pardon is only limited by man's inability to forgive. To our friend and companion we must show humility and readiness to help and to serve, and to take the lower place even if we are the greater. He that will be great, let him make himself small and of no reputation. Jesus, Himself, the greatest, is the first to serve. Finally, to our enemies and to those that oppress us, we must show love, even so far as to pray for our enemies and to be the first to give way. There is something petty in bearing spite and ill-will. Let the disciple strive after God's magnanimity, the love that embraces bad as well as good.

80

In each one of these relations Jesus demands love as something rich, boundless, and extraordinary. All that is petty, timorous, and calculating is to be banished far away. Love is to be revealed as a sovereign power that no external law can resist. Yet He is not even aiming herein at any extraordinary actions or exceptional works, but just at that love which can be realized in the ordinary intercourse of every day. The sovereign power of love is a thing to be experienced in the simple everyday relations of men.

This demand for an all-prevailing love appears also to form the basis of the need that we feel in modern times for the reform of society, but it is something entirely different. Jesus did nothing for society as a whole. He did not want to reform it. If we look into them closely, His demands are unpractical for any form of society. No social organization can ever dispense with law, without falling into a state of anarchy. Boundless generosity would imply the abolition of property; boundless forgiveness, the abolition of all punishment; boundless humility, the abolition of every idea of honour and of order. Even in the oldest Christian communities that set up some such ideal, the claims of reality soon made themselves felt again and the limits of the possible were restored once more. But Jesus entirely ignores the question whether His demands suit society or not. And that not merely because it was impossible for Him to think of any reform of society while the end of the world was so near at hand, but above all because it was the individual and his inner life that was His aim and object. Enmity, anger, hatred, jealousy, implacability, are ungodly and wicked. No one can appear before God with them. On the other hand, love is that which is truly Godlike. It ennobles and elev-

81

ates one's own soul and helps one's brother to draw nearer to God. Love, that is, not for the sake of the consequent effects upon society, but because it alone deserves love.

This, too, is the reason why Jesus entirely neglects social ethics in His demand upon men. There is at first sight something paradoxical in the fact that the genius of love showed no interest in the outward forms of human society. The state is, of course, out of the question, being the rule of a foreign power. Jesus saw therein chiefly the love of rule and dominion on the part of the great of the earth. His disciples should look upon politics as a deterrent example. But even into the ethics of family life Jesus does not enter further than to proclaim the indissolubility of the marriage tie in opposition to the practice of divorce for frivolous reasons. In so doing He sets up an ideal for the individual without further troubling Himself how it can be maintained in this present evil world. He said nothing as to the relation of master and servant. He even showed no desire to remove poverty out of the world: "The poor ye have always with you." The reform of the laws of the land is a matter of complete indifference to Him; in His parables He reckons with existent injustice as with something that must needs be in this world. There is a characteristic little story, too, of a man who asked Jesus to settle a dispute as to an inheritance and receives the answer, "Who made Me to be a judge over you?" At the present day every clergyman has to pay far more attention to such questions than Jesus ever did. But if we rightly look upon these matters as coming within the scope of Christian love, we are not for all that to distort the picture of Jesus into that of a social reformer. His work was to awaken the individual to love and to make the individual realize his responsibility towards his brother. And thus Jesus did a work which, beyond all others, was for eternity, and still to-day He calls us back from the distracting maze of programmes and panaceas for the reform of the world to the reform of our own selves, which is the thing that is chiefly needed.

82

Lastly, we come to the question, What is Jesus' demand upon man as regards his duty towards God? There are exceedingly few sayings in the Gospels which refer to the direct relation of man to God. This observation leads us straight to the centre of the question. Jesus is naturally far removed from every kind of speculation as to God, simply because He is of a Semitic race. In spite of the apparent exception in the case of Spinoza, the men of that race have had to forego indulgence in the speculative flights of the imagination. Neither, however, is Jesus a mystic, nor does He claim of anyone a mystic absorption in God. There is not even the slightest suggestion of such a thing. Each one of the petitions of the Lord's Prayer deals with a single concrete blessing. It never rises into that sphere where world and time and space are forgotten. Never in any one of His demands does Jesus leave the circle of the active daily life as it lies spread out before eternity. He demands no life with God alone, by the side of one's work and intercourse with one's neighbour. Hence it is that the gnostics already found nothing very congenial in the Gospel. Everything with God and under God, but nothing in God alone. And a proof of this is that even the kingdom of God, towards which

83

the soul is to uplift itself in longing, is no mystic heaven, but something concrete, a social organization. The watchword God and the soul—the soul and its God—may apply to St Augustine; it does not apply to Jesus.

But the ordinary everyday life is to be lived under the influence of the principles of self-mastery and love with the constant upward look to God, in fear and in confidence, in faith and in longing. Jesus laid the very greatest emphasis on the fear of God, for our Father is the Lord of heaven and earth and the judge of every evil word, who can condemn body and soul to hell. In forbidding men to judge; in bidding them have no fear of men; in His parable of the talents, Jesus reveals a fear of God such as no Old Testament saint expressed more strongly. The fear of God is always the foundation on which those features of the Divine character, which inspire confidence and trust as to a friend, are built up. Where there is no fear, there Jesus' faith in God exists not. And yet Jesus brought the love of God home to His disciples with the greatest heartiness and simplicity. He teaches them to pray to Him just as children to a father, bringing to Him definite wishes in simple and earnest tones, full of confidence, feeling sure that they will be heard. They are to cast all their cares upon Him and to trust Him that watches over them more than over the flowers of the field or the fowls of heaven. They are to believe Him—that is, they are to endure all difficulties as children under His protection, and that bravely. So shall they (even in the present, in the midst of trouble and distress) make trial of God's love, and soon He shall grant them the attainment of the object of their desires—the kingdom of God. Hoping and possessing are inseparably connected. The simple belief in Providence does not stand by itself alone, but draws its greatest strength from the sure expectation of the glorious future that awaits it.

84

However certain it is that the difficulty of the great demand which Jesus made was substantially lessened by the limitation of His outlook on the world, of which this earth and Israel were the centre, and by the boundless belief in the miraculous, it would still be a mistake to exaggerate the distance which separates Him from us. Even to His disciples it seemed very strange that Jesus was able to sleep in the midst of the storm. In fact, they and others with whom Jesus had to do, constantly reflect our own weak faith. When Jesus prayed in Gethsemane He knew full well that His enemies were plotting His death, and yet He accepted it as God's cup. The demand of Jesus was therefore hard or easy, even in His own time, according as it was received. The difference between the religious and the irreligious man is ever this—the one thinks more of God, the other of the world. Jesus called upon His disciples to think so greatly of God that the fate even of the smallest was embraced by His love and His forethought. Whether they understood that or not did not matter. Enough if they believed it, paradoxical as it seemed, and thus made their way as pilgrims through this world to the kingdom of God.

85

Such, then, was the will of God which Jesus preached—a life of righteousness in the three great realities. As often as He sent forth His glad invitation to enter the kingdom of

heaven—whether He were speaking in the open air or in a crowded room—He brought these simple conditions home to His hearers. The right conduct of the individual in the present was of greater importance to Him than the joys of the future. He aroused the frivolous, softened the hard-hearted, and gave courage and comfort to the sorrowful. Just as He Himself insisted, with the greatest possible emphasis, on the simplest of duties, so He would allow no other standard to be set up either before God or man. On the judgment day God Himself will measure men by their self-control, their love and their trust in Him, and men too are to take these for their criteria. True, the heart is concealed from them—only God's eye can pierce as far as that—but they have the fullest right to demand deeds as the fruits of the heart. Goodness must come to the light. If it shuns the light it is non-existent.

Thus far we have come across no suggestion of Church, sacrament or dogma. The will of God, as it is fully and completely contained in the Sermon on the Mount, is no less entirely distinguished from the claims of the later Church than from the Jewish law, and it ought really to produce an impression of entire novelty amongst us at the present day. But towards the end of Jesus' activity on earth, there is a fresh addition—the claim of the confession of adherence to Jesus. This was the starting-point of the later development, and so it appears at first as if Jesus Himself was the cause of that fateful dogmatic after growth, and burdened the simple and eternal will of God with a minimum of dogma and ecclesiastical organization.

86

It is therefore very important to gain a clear idea of the particular kind of faith that was demanded, and of the circumstances under which Jesus called for it. Jesus wants no confession in the later ecclesiastical sense. He did not even insist upon the words "Thou art the Messiah or the Son of God," but simply on the recognition that God had sent Him, and that His words were God's words. "He that heareth you heareth Me, and he that heareth Me heareth Him that sent me." Hence the frequent connection, "I and My words," "I and the Gospel," and that just in the passages relating to the confession. This simple recognition that Jesus was sent by God was really a matter of course for all that accepted His message, for the cause and the person were one. Jesus was His message. More than this He did not ask. He would have no faith in Himself that in anywise competed with the reverence to be felt for God. God remains God and Jesus His messenger, through whom He could speak.

Now it is one of the grandest features in Jesus' character that He only came forward with this claim for confession after Caesarea Philippi, *i.e.* only from the time when danger approached His disciples and Himself.

87

He would have set no value upon a confession unattended by danger and suffering. Such would have come under the category of the mere lip worship 'Lord, Lord.' But now that danger approaches, confession becomes necessary, so that the cause should not perish together with the person. Jesus does not shrink from laying this readiness to suffer martyrdom upon each disciple as a positive duty. That is the original sense of the words 'self-denial' and 'carrying one's cross': no ascetic practices, but suffering in the following of Jesus. In fact 'to

follow' Jesus means in the Gospels to suffer with and for Him. Jesus' prayer for those that confess His name shows us how important this new condition was felt to be. Martyrdom thereby acquires the power indirectly to atone for sin. But the first demands that Jesus makes still hold good. No different conception is attached to the doing of the will of God. It becomes more serious, that is all; it implies greater sacrifices, since he who sets out to do it, thereby enrols himself a member of the fellowship of those that suffer with Jesus. Surely this readiness to face death on the part of men who had cut themselves off from their families and had refused to obey their ecclesiastical superiors for Jesus' sake was something entirely different from the zeal for creeds of present-day comfortably-situated and illiberal theologians.

The demand that Jesus makes is something so completely simple and positive that it can be described in its entirety without any reference to the law, the Pharisees, or Jewish ethics. Jesus was not one of those who can criticize the work of others but produce nothing of their own. Nevertheless we shall realize His work better if we compare it with the above-mentioned tendencies and forces.

88

When we examine the relation of Jesus to the Jewish law, we shall do well to leave on one side the statement in the Sermon on the Mount: "I am not come to destroy but to fulfil," and simply to look at the facts. For that statement belongs in its present form to the age after St. Paul, and is intended to formulate the result of the struggles of the apostolic age possibly already from an early catholic standpoint. One reason is sufficient to show that it cannot be ascribed to Jesus, for its form betrays a theologian for whom the question "destruction or fulfilment of the law" implied a problem to be solved.

For Jesus there was no such question, no question at all regarding the law in the strict sense of the word, for He was a layman and was in any case but moderately acquainted with the law,—had perchance never studied it at all. Hence He always believed Himself to be in agreement with the law. In the law stood the commandments to love God and one's neighbour; there stood the decalogue; there, too, stood the words that one should serve God alone. In the law, again, righteousness and love and truth were commanded. There was thus sufficient reason for Jesus to recognize in the law God's will. So He could see the way to everlasting life directly marked out in the law. "Keep the commandments," He says in answer to the question as to how salvation is to be obtained. Thus Jesus found His own demands sanctioned by the sacred book. He even found support in the law against the decrees of the elders. In comparison with them it proved itself to be the will of God as yet not overlaid by human additions. Jesus spent the whole of His life in the faith that He had the law on His side and that He Himself was its true interpreter.

89

At times, it is true, He came to a certain extent into collision here and there with this or that passage in the law. He could not approve of the granting of the bill of divorcement, in spite of Moses, who authorised it. But here there was a simple way out of the difficulty. It was one law against the other—God in Paradise against Moses on Sinai. The reason of

the contradiction was the consideration which Moses showed for the hard-heartedness of the people. If the antitheses of the Sermon on the Mount, "Ye have heard that it hath been said to them of old time, but I say unto you," are to be ascribed to Jesus Himself and do not (which is just possible) owe their present form to the early Church, then He set himself still more frequently against the letter of the law, namely, whenever He showed that the inner disposition was what really mattered and so removed narrowness and imperfection. But all these were exceptions. For Jesus God's will never contradicted the law.

It was His incomplete knowledge of the law which was in this point the cause of an entire deception on the part of Jesus. He took from the law only that which harmonized with His views, and so overlooked the fact that His opponents, too, had the law on their side, and that with far greater right. Pharisaism is a product of the religion of the law. There is an unbroken line of descent from Ezekiel through the code of the priests to the Talmud. The separation of sacred and profane, the preference for the ceremonial, the importance attached to that which was morally indifferent, the spirit of exclusiveness, the national fanaticism were all rooted in the law. The law implied the supremacy of the Jewish idea, the petrification of true religion, deadly enmity to the prophetic spirit. The law necessitated the existence of the Scribes, the murderers of Jesus. But all this Jesus concealed from Himself throughout His life on earth. He separated the human, the non-Jewish element, from the rest of the law, gave Jewish maxims an entirely contrary meaning, deepened and combined all that was limited and transitory. Jesus' attitude to the root principle of the law was entirely negative. St. Paul was right when, in opposition to the disciples themselves, he called Jesus the end of the law.

Jesus, therefore, stands to the law as He did to the conception of the Messiah and of the kingdom of God. He employs the old words throughout, and that *bona fide*. He thinks that He is their true interpreter, and discards just that which is characteristic and Jewish from their contents. And yet in this very self-deception the great essential feature of His character betrays itself. He would be positive. He would build up. He would not destroy. The converse of Jesus positive attitude towards the law is His uncompromising rejection of Pharisaism. It is so unsparing, so entirely without any exception, that the very name of Pharisee has become a term of abuse for all ages. Jesus did riot, however, begin the battle. The Pharisees drove Him into it by constantly waylaying Him and spying upon Him. Then their vulgar self-advertisement and their prostitution of piety greatly stirred His indignation. Finally, the whole tendency seemed to Him nothing but hypocrisy.

The aim of the Pharisees was to establish a definite ideal of piety among the people. Jesus sets up His own—which is related to it in all points as yea to nay—in opposition.

It is not the things without in the world that are clean or unclean, it is the human heart within. This inner habitation must be set in order by the sweeping out of evil thoughts.

All that is without belongs to God, and we have power over it. God takes no special pleasure in works of supererogation such as the offering of sacrifices, tithes, going on pilgrimages and fasting, but He looks for the weightier matters in the law, righteousness and truth and love. Man is to serve Him in his daily life. That alone is the true divine service.

Man's end is not a sanctity which withdraws itself timidly from this wicked world, but love. This love goes out in search of them that have gone astray and have become estranged, for they are our brothers, and casts down all the barriers that sanctity erects. A Samaritan that practises love is dearer to God and to man than a priest and a Levite with all their zeal for holiness. In opposition to the perverted sanctification of the Sabbath, Jesus says there is no alternative: either save souls and do good, or do evil and destroy souls.

92

That was an opposition which went right down to the root of things: it was a reversal of all values. The demand that Jesus made was certainly not one whit less exacting than that of the Pharisees. Nay, it was more severe, for it embraced the whole of life and made every evasion impossible. Jesus banished sophistry and hypocrisy, and restored conscience and reality to their rights. He exiled religious self-esteem and self-conceit, and brought back love and humanity. He set up a religion of morality as against one of ceremony.

Above all, this struggle reveals the great reforming element in the demand of Jesus. He will have the sanctification of life in the world, the sanctification of one's calling, one's everyday life, one's work within the limits of human society. All the demands that Jesus makes are set up, not for monks and ascetics, but for men in the world. Here is the battlefield, here the preparation for eternity. Hereby every form of pietism is condemned. Conscientiousness, love, trust in God—these constitute religion.

The relation of Jesus to Jewish ethics as a whole can now be considered. The result is a surprising one. Jesus eliminated the Jewish and retained the human. The sum of His commandments is addressed to the man in the Jew and to man in general. It is true that Jesus does not declare the principle in so many words, "Gentiles can be saved just as well as Jews." As a matter of fact His dealings are with Israel alone. But what sayings He utters are for all the world to hear. Love makes the Samaritan better pleasing to God and man than the unloving priest and Levite. The publican who simply and humbly comes into God's presence receives God's pardon sooner than the boastful Pharisee. The Ninevites and the Queen of Sheba will be the victors over Israel in the day of judgment. Even now there are heathen here and there whose great faith puts the Israelites to shame and makes its way up to God. All depends upon the doing of the commandments, upon the fruits and upon nothing else. And here we have the abrogation of the Jewish system of ethics, of the Jewish Church, nay, of every Church whatever. As soon as man examines himself in the presence of God and eternity, he recognizes that everything that is particular and separate is without permanence.

93

This discovery of the eternal in man was possible for Jesus, because His aim was not to set up certain detailed laws, but inner principles, capable of endless application and adapta-

tion. It was only for marriage that Jesus laid down a definite law, and this indicates the ideal. So St. Paul already understood Jesus' words, for he approves of divorce in certain definite cases. With this exception Jesus did not legislate on any particular point. Conscience is by its nature an individual matter. Jesus awakened it, but left it untrammelled. There is nothing less cabined and confined than love, nothing more delicate; and trust in God is of man's inmost nature. In many cases the legal appearance of some of Jesus' words can be traced to the efforts of the early Church to codify the Master's sayings. Jesus asked only for such things as are matters of course, which every man's conscience sanctions, and that is why He gave no reasons for His demands. Ecclesiastical dogmas need, to be sure, to be buttressed by arguments; for the understanding of the Sermon on the Mount they are superfluous.

There remains, however, an apparent contradiction. What is the relation between the eternal contents of the demand of Jesus and its eschatological foundation? Jesus commandments were to prepare the way for the approaching judgment and kingdom of God, their aim was future blessedness. In the back ground of all lies the alternative of the two roads, the prospect of heaven or hell. And is this demand to be forever valid in spite of this? Not in spite of, but because of this, Jesus appeared with His eschatological messages—that is to say, with the announcement that eternity was near at hand. His demand is that man should prepare to meet eternity, and fit himself to live in it. But he can only do that if the eternal within him is endowed with power and with victory. The approach of eternity awakened in Jesus the recognition of all that is essential, of all that endures in the sight of God. Jesus was able to lay the foundation of the religion that was to last for ever, just because He was the prophet of the judgment that was to come. And even though later on the eschatological drama receded ever further into the background, and this earth and the present raised their claims on man ever louder, yet eternity surrounds us even in the garb of time, and its demands are the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.

One man alone, Paul, maintains the demand of Jesus in its sublimity, and even he not quite uniformly. In the early Church the 'new law' at once secures a footing.

Paul's Gentile Church fell in like manner under the sway of the religion of law. A new Church—the Christian—took the place of the Jewish, and its claims are mostly the same: external, ceremonial, legal, and theological. Jesus' words condemn His own Church down to the present day.

CHAPTER VII.

JESUS THE REDEEMER.

WHOEVER, refusing to be led astray by words, surveys the short history of early Christianity, cannot fail to be struck before long by a curious observation. All high-sounding words such as redemption, atonement, justification, the new birth, and the receiving of the spirit, are wanting in the early Gospels, and yet every reader feels that those that were about Jesus were raised to a state of peculiar happiness. On the other hand, the greater the frequency of these theological expressions in the later writings, the further does the actual fact of redemption, as of something experienced and imparted to us even to-day, recede into the background. Even St. Paul, who himself was certainly to be counted amongst the redeemed, set up general theories about redemption, which were more than once contradicted by experience in his own congregations. Talk, especially theological talk, about redemption, stands frequently, if not always, in the inverse ratio to the actual experience thereof.

We must speak of Jesus as Redeemer, because His activity is not exhausted in the promise that He gave and the demand that He made, nay, more, in describing these we have not even mentioned that which was highest and best in the work of Jesus. He did not merely set up a goal for men and point out the direction thither, but He helped them Himself on the road. And this in ways so manifold as completely to outdistance the poverty of the dogmatic conceptions.

97

In the Gospels, Jesus appears before us first of all as the physician of men's bodies, as the redeemer of the sick and suffering. However great the number of miraculous narratives that we set on one side as exaggerations or inventions of a later age, a nucleus of solid fact remains with which we have to deal. Jesus possessed a healing power, strictly limited, it is true, by unbelief, but capable of producing the very greatest physical and psychical changes wherever He encountered faith. This power operated especially in the case of mental diseases, but was by no means confined to them. Now even though here, too, we see Jesus completely dominated by the conceptions of His time, and in part even not scorning to make use of its remedies, we can yet feel the moral grandeur of His character, and the boundless sympathy with every form of distress through all the outer folds of magic. He is a wonder-worker, but how infinitely exalted He appears when compared with any other worker of wonders. In the time of His enthusiasm Jesus explained this 'Redemption' as the beginning of the kingdom of God. On another occasion He places Himself on a line with the Jewish exorcists, and once again He expresses doubts as to the persistence of this driving out of demons. Jesus confines Himself strictly within the limits of miracles of beneficence; every request to perform a miracle for mere display, as a sign, He refuses with an emphatic no. Towards the end of His ministry an almost entire cessation of His miraculous activity is to be noticed. Yet He bequeathed His powers to the apostles if they made use of His name. The whole of the 'Re-

98

demption' was naturally of a transitory character. The evangelists assigned so important a place to it because of its value from an apologetic point of view. But there is no doubt that this side of Jesus' work as Redeemer was a very great religious consolation to those that experienced it. And it is an essential feature in the picture of Jesus that hunger, sickness and suffering moved Him to help scarcely less than mental trouble and distress.

Closely connected with the healing of the sick is the restitution of the alienated, the publicans and sinners. The Pharisees outlawed these people: Jesus loved them. His great compassion for the common people was especially directed towards this class. And that gained for Him the names, given in derision and mockery, of "glutton and winebibber, friend of tax-gatherers and godless people." He ate and He drank with them; He sought shelter with them. He called one of them out of the tax-office to be His partner in His work as missionary. One can scarcely conceive the strange character of this 'Home Mission work' of Jesus. For Jesus brought these alienated classes back, not to any church party, but to God. It is probable, too, that when He preached to them He spoke little of sin and of repentance, but He entered sympathetically into their daily life, and He showed them that God was to be sought, not outside of it, but within it. Then at times He would call forth such striking decisions as that of Zacchaeus. He Himself preferred this company to that of the very pious. He felt there a touch of sincerity and simplicity and humanity, which are only rarely to be met with amongst 'religious people.' Jesus did not say that the publicans and sinners were 'sick,' but merely that they were in need of His love. Some of His greatest sayings, perhaps even the parable of the prodigal son, arose from His defence of His intercourse with them.

99

His 'Home Mission' won for the new religion its most valuable adherents, because they were theologically the least corrupted. But it was attended by consequences which were Hostile to the Church. For this love finally embraced even Samaritans and heathen, and leapt the bounds of any and every ecclesiastical system. As soon as the new Church was formed, therefore, it again applied the Pharisaic measure to the publicans and heathen, so in St Matt. xviii. 17, the unrepentant is to be treated as you would treat a heathen and a tax-gatherer.

Furthermore, Jesus 'redeemed' His listeners from the theologians, and that had consequences that reached still further. The Jewish religion was decaying, above all, because of the fact that instead of the prophets as mediators between God and man, stood the Scribes, their exact opposite. As the whole of the religion was founded upon the sacred book, and this was written in a dead language and stood in need of explanation, the interpreters of the book came to be looked upon as the sole revealers of God. Over against them stood the laity, the "multitude that knew not the law," the unenlightened and immature. A perverted distinction, for, in the sight of God, it is the learned who are the laity rather than the others. These Scribes were ingenious, and had a good memory—other gifts they had none. The people were under the impression that they laid upon their shoulders a number of grievous

100

ordinances with which they likewise burdened themselves, and that they endeavoured to close the kingdom of heaven to those that sought to enter therein. Jesus deposed the Scribes. He refused to acknowledge their gift of revelation. They did not know God. The conclusion to be drawn from this is, however, not that the laity are no longer babes in spiritual things or that no mediator is any longer necessary—which is the fancy of a fantastic liberalism—but that He is the one mediator. No man—no layman even—hath known the Father but the Son, to whom all—*i.e.* in this case, all knowledge—hath been committed, and who can reveal God to whomsoever He will. Thus, then, Jesus brings redemption as the revealer of God in place of the Scribes. Herewith the old religion of the prophets has come to life again. God's word is no longer contained in a book: it is living. He speaks to the world, not through oracles and wonders, but through Jesus' words. Since, however, the Son Himself is no theologian, but—in learning—a layman, so God is by Him revealed to the childlike and simple. Every child can understand Jesus. For He brings nothing but what is obvious to every conscience. He places each single person in the presence of reality and eternity. So Jesus can call the multitude to Him: "Come unto Me. all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. My yoke is easy and My burden is light." His 'revelation' implies the great simplification of religion, the emphasizing of the essential, of the really important. It implies the end of theology. Christianity is in its essence a layman's religion, for its prophet was Jesus, a layman. But even the rise of the Pauline theology brought about the great change, though Paul himself still knew what Jesus meant. As for Christian dogma with its revelation of a body of doctrine, it is the veriest caricature of the Gospel. Jesus redeemed the people from the Scribes, and by the Scribes He was put to death. The two events are related as cause and effect. The evangelist, St Mark, has seized upon this connection very admirably when he portrays Jesus as one who did not preach like the Scribes, but finally comes to His end by them. In his book the lay character of the Gospel once more finds utterance.

101

Next to this, and as an immediate consequence of this redemption from the theologians, comes the redemption from the Jewish Church. It is in reality .already contained in the fact that the individual who was aroused by Jesus' call was made dependent simply upon himself and his own conscience. Wherever men realize their individuality and individual responsibility, there the authority of the Church ceases. When Jesus claimed the personal allegiance of His followers, He was taking a step that was entirely hostile to every ecclesiastical organization and was aiming directly at separation. Jesus finally demanded of His disciples that they should place His person above everything else, and should for His sake be prepared to endure the breach with their people and the rulers. It would seem that in His last speeches He directly foretold the conflict with the Jewish monarchy, and demanded of them in this case the completest freedom and constancy. It was indeed an immense demand to make of His disciples, laymen of Galilee, brought up to feel the deepest reverence for Jerusalem, the Temple and the Sanhedrim. But for all that they did not belie His expectations. Jesus really

102

trained a company of martyrs, men who did not fear the council, and obeyed God rather than men. These disciples possessed richly all those virtues which the Christians, in later times lost in their own Church.

Jesus' aim, however, was never merely negative. Side by side with the separation from the Jewish Church went the foundation of the new Christian fellowship—a fellowship, not a Church. Why should Jesus have founded a Church, filled as He was with the expectation of the near approach of the kingdom, which was to put an end to all human forms? The great interest felt in the Church is a product of later times, when the expectation of the kingdom no longer occupied men's minds in the first instance. In Jesus' teaching there is as yet no mention of any external organization, nor does He therefore say anything of the founding of sacraments, the outward signs of membership in the fellowship. He does not even, in any of His recorded sayings, exhort the brethren to foster the growth of the fellowship. But nevertheless He did found a fellowship through Himself and the Apostles. Whoever is faithful to Him, whoever receives Him and His messengers, whoever keeps His commandments and professes His cause before men, he belongs as a matter of course to the company of those that acknowledge the same Lord and Master. So then Jesus could from time to time speak of His 'family'—that is, all the brothers and sisters that do God's will. It appears also that He said that whoever forsook his home and his family for His sake should be recompensed a hundredfold, even in this present time—*i.e.* in the community of those who were of like mind with Himself. Jesus set up the keeping of the commandments, the 'fruits,' as the criterion by which men's fidelity to His fellowship was to be judged. By these the sheep were to be distinguished from the wolf, and the brethren that were to be recognized by these tokens were exhorted to lay to heart, as their first and foremost duty, the rendering of mutual service and assistance. In proportion as all these commandments are conceived of as purely spiritual precepts without any legal addition, the deeper, the more heartfelt, is the obligation incurred. Hence, and hence alone, it came about that within so very short a time after the first dispersion of the disciples, a new fellowship could be formed, and in this case as an external organization.

103

The full scope of the redemptive activity of Jesus was only attained in this fellowship of the disciples, when the new life that was in Him was transmitted to receptive hearts and minds. All that was peculiarly His own in His piety and devotion was transplanted and became the germ of the piety of the new community. All that is rightly called Christianity is, directly or indirectly, the after effect of the new life in Jesus, and must be guided by Him. The first striking characteristic of the piety of Jesus is the hitherto unexampled concentration and exclusiveness of the religious relation. God was one and all for Him, and the service of God the sum of His life. There was no distinction here between Sunday and week-day, between sacred and profane. Eating and drinking and sleeping, joy and anger, were all under God's eyes. He combined an entirely open mind towards the whole wealth of existence that

104

was accessible to Him with a complete subordination of all things to God. Of all later writings it is perhaps only Luther's "Table Talk" that reveals a similar combination. A being so completely united with God always exercises an influence upon his surroundings. Henceforth religion is placed in the centre of life, and becomes the dominant power. The enthusiasm of the disciples that found vent a little later in the speaking with tongues, and in the joy with which they embraced martyrdom, is a proof of this. These men were really able to offer up everything to God.

The next characteristic of the piety of Jesus is a combination of opposites which is quite peculiar to it the union of the blithesomeness and innocence of childhood with the courage and the serious earnestness of manhood. This cannot, of course, be imitated in its perfection by any one, but its effect nevertheless is that the predominance of the one quality always tends to be mitigated by the joint action of the other. It is probably impossible for anyone to form a conception of the childlike gladness of Jesus. His life was passed in sunshine and in joy, in childlike trust towards God, in glad exultation over Nature and good men. In the midst of the raging storm on the lake, He can sleep like the child in its mother's arms; for why should anything hurt Him? He looks at the birds. They toil not at all, and yet they enjoy everything so gladly; or He sees them sitting so safely on the edge of the roof, and no danger threatens them. Then, again, He finds that the meanest flowers of the field are robed far more beautifully than King Solomon in all his grandeur. Truly, men might learn some profitable lessons here. But dearer than all to Him are the little children. He folds them in His arms, He presses them to His heart. For He feels that He is amongst those of like nature with Himself. We men should be able to accept God's love as the child does the fairy tale that is told him. That is what the words mean: "He that receiveth not the kingdom of God like a little child cannot enter therein." All moody and self-tormenting thoughts, all carking cares, everything done under compulsion, all unnatural excitation of one's feelings, is entirely alien to Him. He possessed the full freedom and freshness of an entirely unspoilt and simple and great soul that rested in God's love. But side by side with this there dwelt in this same soul an intense earnestness. Eternity was ever present to Him. There was no playing or dallying, no forgetting of oneself even for a moment. His gaze was directed straight forward to the goal. God's thoughts fill His mind at all times. God's will is to become His. There is a fearful alternative—a narrow and a broad way. At the one end stands hell, where the fire is never quenched and the worm never dies. Better enter into the kingdom of heaven with one eye or with one foot, than descend to hell whole with all one's limbs. This terrible saying stands side by side with that of the reception of the kingdom of God like a little child, only the two together give us a complete picture of Jesus. And now this strange combination of sharp contrasts originating from Jesus imparts itself to others, and produces results of which none can foretell the end.

First of all, there was the certainty of the goal. Men's hopes were established and assured. For the Jews the end of the world was something uncertain and mysterious. They spend their time in minute studies and subtle reckonings as to its coming, and at the same time snatch at the pleasures of the fleeting moment. Better enjoy something tangible here than trust to an imaginary happiness yonder. Through Jesus hope has become an assured certainty, and thereby a power in men's lives with which the world has to reckon henceforth. Eternity is no longer a mere thought but actual reality; whether it comes sooner or later, the goal stands firmly fixed before men's eyes. And that is how the early Christians were enabled with quiet confidence to support their disappointment when the parousia did not come as they had expected. "The kingdom shall still be ours," was their consolation.

In the next place, man's freedom, his power to do the good, was incomparably strengthened. In all that He says Jesus appeals to the will, to the power of free choice. He conceives of God's commandments as entirely capable of fulfilment. He has absolutely no doubt that man can do a thing; he is merely lacking in will power. Jesus could so believe and so speak because He Himself freed and strengthened the will more than any other in the history of the world. His enthusiasm, His love, and His courage come to be mighty impulses, the originating causes of all that is good in His disciples. He is able to demand all, because everything becomes possible through Him. He is really able, as the legend says, to make Peter walk upon the sea. It is at all times incredible what a good and holy man can bring about in weak and little souls. He enlarges the bounds of that which is possible in the domain of ethics, just as a discoverer in that of physics. Jesus' disciples were no heroes. His whole intercourse with them up to the denial of Peter is a proof of that. And yet what a brave company Jesus made of them—ready to defy the whole world. In the great and everlasting struggle between the powers of good and evil, which runs through the whole history of the world, the appearance of Jesus implies the greatest addition of power on the side of the good, so that because of Him it is inconceivable that it should ever be conquered.

107

It was possible for Jesus to strengthen man's will power to this extent, because He freed him at the same time from the terror of sin. The Jewish feeling of sin, which was rather the consequence of misfortune than of moral depth of character, had already become something morbid, resting upon men's minds like a nightmare. Paul is its great interpreter. It is true that the most important Jewish prayer contained the splendid sixth petition—

108

> Forgive us, our Father,
> For we have sinned.
> Forgive us, O King,
> For we have done unrighteously.
> Dost thou not forgive and pardon gladly?
> Praised be thou, Lord, most merciful,
> Thou that dost pardon so greatly.

It was therefore an article in the Jewish creed that was firmly believed, that God pardoned the Israelites when they prayed to Him. But what was the use of fine words if the individual had no sense of personal certainty and was unable to derive thence the power to live a glad and joyous life? He was weighed down for all that by the feeling of sin. Jesus routed these wretched and morbid feelings all along the line. They vanish before His presence like the mist before the sun. Jesus turned the theory contained in the Jewish prayer into a fact, and gave to all that were about Him the certainty of pardon and courage and joy. If He uttered the divine declaration, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," to any anxious soul, then all trouble was at an end. As against the Pharisees He appears as the advocate of the true Father of Sinners, and in the parable of the prodigal son He proclaims the principle, that when God pardons, His justice is by no means diminished. But He taught His disciples just simply to pray to God for forgiveness and to look upon this as a fundamental law in the family both human and divine. Jesus has made it perfectly plain that the child of God is separated by no sin from God's love, as little as the child of an earthly father from that father's love. He looked into the human heart deeper than most rabbis, and He read there "no one is good," "ye that are evil." In the heart dwell evil thoughts, and even if the spirit be willing the flesh is weak. He that thus makes His way down into the depths is inaccessible to any easy-going optimism. But Jesus did not suffer Himself to be driven to despair by this discovery of sin, because He knows that God's mercy and love are greater than all our sins. If it is human to sin, then to pardon is divine. Nay, more: man would cease to be in the right relation to God were he ever to forego his claim upon the divine pardon. These are bold articles to put in any creed, yet they are only fraught with danger for those that know not the God of Jesus. How miserably all those finely constructed theories of sacrifice and vicarious atonement crumble to pieces before this faith in the love of God our Father, who so gladly pardons. The one parable of the prodigal son wipes them all off the slate. Sin and its burden lie far away from the disciples of Jesus, and still further is the theology of sin and propitiation.

109

The depth and the reality of the sense of the peace of God which Jesus bestows upon His disciples by this glad gospel is proved by their new relation to the world. Here, too, Jesus brings redemption from all cares and terrors. Since Jesus treads them under foot, the demons are no longer powers to be feared. Imagining that they were surrounded at every step that they took by a whole host of evil spirits, the Jews had come to find it hard to go forward otherwise than timidly and anxiously. The world—so it was said repeatedly—had been handed over by God to the devil, for was he not the prince and god of this world? Jesus, who had a mistaken belief in the reality of demons, conceived of His life as a joyous and brave battle against them, and cried aloud to men: "The world belongs to God, and it is He that giveth us the victory." Through His own fearlessness He freed His disciples from all fear of men. He showed them by His own example that fear of men cannot exist side by side with fear of God, and that he that stands under God's protection need not be in the least distressed

110

because little men hate him and oppress him. Even though God should suffer them to be vanquished here, they will even then rejoice in Him and will die with these words on their lips, "The kingdom shall still be ours." He removed all that was painful from the cares caused by poverty and necessity by helping them to carry God's fatherly love into all that was dark and difficult. The words, "Be not over anxious," which Jesus carried with Him from place to place, acquired all their power through Him who was free from all anxiety, who had nothing and yet was so glad. He taught them also bravely to win their way through the temptations of the world. He Himself overcame them by prayer and a brave word. But above all, Jesus caused men to look upon suffering and even death in a new light.

By its precipitate judgments the Jewish doctrine of retribution turned every misfortune into a divine punishment, thereby doubling the distress. Jesus entirely rejected this doctrine. He shows, on the contrary, in the parable of Dives and Lazarus that an entirely poor and abandoned man can be so much happier than a rich man who satisfies his every desire, because death so often brings with it a reversal of men's positions, and therefore Jesus says: "Blessed are the poor, the hungry, the persecuted, for the future is theirs."

More important, however, than all this both for Himself and for His disciples was His own death and the whole series of events leading up to it. At first it was a bitter necessity for Him, a divine purpose coming into collision with the human, which just had to be obeyed. Then later He began already to see some positive object therein. Some good end must surely be intended by His death. It must be fraught with blessing for many among the people who as yet believed not in Him. And then once more, in the hour of bitterest anguish, when all consolatory thoughts were like to be driven away again by the rude reality, Jesus still clung firmly to this. "It is the Father's cup." And thus He began His great work of recoining the value of things. Through Jesus' death the disciples were gradually enlightened. The dogma of retribution was not true. Suffering and death are not methods of punishment, since God has inflicted them upon His own Son. Thus the Christians were set free from all the bitterness that the fear of death contains. It is true that even the first generation of Christians did not rest content with the teaching of Jesus herein. The thoughts of punishment, retribution, and expiation, were lodged too firmly in their heads. They must needs be applied to Jesus in a new form. But nevertheless in the judgment that they passed upon their own misfortunes we can see that they began to grasp the new idea—that the 'cross' comes from God's love—this idea is the fruit of Jesus' death.

111

Thus, then, Jesus does, as an actual matter of fact, redeem His disciples from the influence of all powers hostile to God, and in so doing transforms the children of a world of vanity that passeth away into the children of God. For this was ever Jesus' ultimate aim: so to unite God and man as He was united with God. He never reduced this aim to a theoretical formula, nor did it ever occur to Him or to those that accompanied Him, to remove the boundaries that separated the 'Master' from His 'disciples,' yet He admitted His disciples so closely into

112

His relationship with God that the prayer of both is the same. And for Jesus and His friends everything in fact centres in prayer. In prayer man assumes his normal position—God the giver and he the recipient. Jesus and His disciples prayed with such joy, intensity and certainty of victory as perchance never before or since in the history of man. Philosophers may smile at this, because they do not understand it. Those have ever been the greatest epochs in the history of religion when the believer trusted God most of all, and therefore, too, received most from Him. Here the bounds of possibility are enlarged, new forces are set free, and cause the world to wonder. We are, however, here concerned with the contents of the 'Lord's Prayer.' It is not only the simplest summary of the 'redemption' which Jesus effects: it constitutes the bond between Jesus and His disciples. He that can really pray it—not as a mere formula—has reached that stage beyond which nothing higher is to be looked for under the present conditions of existence. Such a one calling upon God as his father is himself His child and in so far like unto Jesus. When he prays for the coming of God's kingdom he enters upon the possession of eternity. And finally, by asking for his daily bread, for forgiveness and protection during the short time that still remains, he receives the means of his existence, his peace and the certainty of his salvation from God's hands, and no power in heaven or on earth can separate him from God. Therewith his redemption is completed, as far as it is possible upon earth, and the future is already within his grasp. He that so prays has gained for himself a share in the divine power and love within the bounds of this earthly life.

113

The disciple of Jesus prays this prayer without making any claim upon his Master's advocacy or mention of His name. Thereby we are clearly given to understand in what sense Jesus would be the Redeemer, and in what sense He would not. His calling was to bring God so near to the men of His time and not to them alone—by His whole manner of life and personality, to bind them so firmly to God in the presence of eternity, that they should never more be able to part from Him. Herein He succeeded so entirely that the thought never occurred to His first disciples that He was setting Himself by the side of God, or was taking God's place as the central object of man's devotion.

They prayed to God alone, and they handed down the saying of Jesus that He, too, was not to be accounted good. And that was the final proof of their redemption. But through His humility and His truthfulness, and by His entire subordination to God, Jesus showed more than by all else that He deserved the name of Redeemer in the fullest sense of the word.

Looked at from a purely historical point of view, the death of Jesus was the necessary consequence of His revolt against the divine authority of the Scribes and the propaganda of the Pharisees. After His capture, however, Jesus was compelled in the presence of the Sanhedrim to confess Himself Messiah, and thus furnish an ostensible reason for His conviction. It would seem that the Roman governor accepted this political pretext. But that was not the real reason of the hostility and the violent conclusion of the struggle. The spiritual

114

leaders of the people, and the party that stood in the greatest odour of sanctity, recognized that a spirit had appeared in Jesus, which was bound to sweep them away. Finally, the danger came to be so great that only the immediate removal of Jesus appeared to offer any possibility of safety. The death of the leader seemed to them to imply as a necessary consequence the defeat of the cause, the confusion of His adherents, and the impossibility of belief in an executed criminal. These calculations appeared to be confirmed by the flight and the dispersal of the disciples after the capture of Jesus.

Contrary to all expectations, the dispersed disciples began to gather together again, at first in Galilee and then in Jerusalem. "He is not dead," they cried in triumphant enthusiasm to the murderers of Jesus; "He liveth." The reckoning of the Sanhedrists turned out to be at fault. Their clever calculations proved to be the greatest folly and impolicy, for faith in the crucified and risen Lord brought about that which faith in the living Christ had not accomplished: the foundation of the new Church, the separation from Judaism, the conquest of the world.

Whence this sudden change? For that the disciples fled in confusion and consternation is a certain fact. Their answer was: the Lord has appeared to us, first to Peter, then to the twelve, then to more than five hundred brethren together, then to James, then to all of the apostles, last of all to Paul. From these appearances—the first must have taken place, according to the oldest accounts, in Galilee—they inferred the facts of the resurrection and of the present life of Jesus in glory. In the very earliest time, when St. Paul obtained this information from St Peter, they were content with drawing these conclusions and required no further proofs. The new faith rests upon the appearances alone.

115

Our judgment as to these appearances depends upon the credibility which we attach to St. Paul and his informant, and still more upon our philosophical and religious standpoint, upon our 'faith.' Purely scientific considerations cannot decide where the question at stake is the existence or non-existence of the invisible world, and the possibility of communicating with spirits. Hence, too, all attempts at explanation, which rest upon the axiom that our world of phenomena is the only reality, are merely subjectively persuasive and convincing. The Christian faith always reckons with the reality of the other world which is our goal. A Christian, therefore, has no difficulty in accepting as the ground of his belief in the resurrection, the real projection of Jesus into this world of sense by means of a vision.

But there is another reason which prevents the historian from resting content with this supposition even if he approves of it. The mere faith in these miracles makes the origin of Christianity dependent on a chance, as though the cause of Jesus had come to nought but for this story. But in Jesus' person there resided so mighty a power of redemption, there was so great a certainty of ultimate victory, that it could not be destroyed by any death however disgraceful. "He was too great that He should die" (Lagarde)—*i.e.* the impression that He had made, the fellowship in which one had lived with Him, these were too great, too firm,

116

too indestructible. As during the time of His earthly life He had continuously imparted to His disciples joy, consolation, courage, and certainty of victory, so after His death He did not cease to take up again after a short interval of confusion His work as Saviour of mankind.

Of John the Baptist, too, it was said that he had arisen, and worked though Jesus. But his sect disappeared in the confused jumble of Jewish sects. But Jesus was really the Redeemer even after His death, and instead of His influence decreasing, He now really began to draw all men unto Himself. Even, therefore, though He may have helped by means of His appearances to enable His disciples to recover from their perplexity, the fact that these appearances produced this effect was the consequence of the earlier impression which death had not been able to efface. Faith in the resurrection is the fruit of salvation through Jesus.

THE EARLY CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LEADERS.

JESUS did not leave His disciples without leaders. During His lifetime He had organized and trained a compact body, a little company, the twelve. By participating in His missionary labours they were to multiply His activity, and when He was not Himself present, they were to take His place. Upon the twelve He had laid the duty of leading the same wandering life as His own. He had given them the authority to preach and to heal which He Himself possessed. He made them sharers in all His rights. "He that receiveth you receiveth Me; he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me." It was the twelve who accompanied Jesus when He entered Jerusalem, who received His last commands and were witnesses of His capture.

The first appearance of the risen Master, soon after the first flight of the disciples, fell to Peter, the captain of this company. The second was to all the eleven. We know nothing beyond the bare fact of these appearances; we do not know what words were then heard. The consequences alone are evident: the assembling of the company in Galilee, the start for Jerusalem, city of danger and mournful memories, their appearance there with the glad confession of the Messiah.

118

Round the nucleus of this little company there gathered the former disciples as well as the new adherents. The old name, 'the twelve,' gave way to the new official designation, 'the apostles,' though it is possible that this did not take place before Greek soil was reached. The chief recommendation of the new name lay in the fact that it could be transferred to the later missionaries as well, but its original meaning was strictly limited: "One who had companied with Jesus in His missionary work, and had been witness of the resurrection."

Nothing can exceed the significance of the apostles in the history of the development of Christianity. Jesus did not Himself found the Church. He who shattered the institution of the Jewish Church had no understanding for such an organization. But the company of the apostles is His own peculiar creation. He had faith in the power of the word and in the influence of personality. The call of the companions of His mission was the result of this faith. In this call He was not uniformly successful; that is proved by much else besides the one name Judas Ischariot. But, on the whole, the work that He had begun lasted. The foundation of the Church, all the work of consolidating the early community of believers, rests upon the apostles, upon their enthusiasm, their courage and their endurance. Here, again, the saying is proved true, that it is men that make history. The belief in the resurrection, the future foundation-stone of Christianity, arose in the circle of the twelve, and here alone.

The apostles were animated by a lofty self-consciousness. They felt themselves to be the representatives of Jesus. They were continuing His work. As ambassadors for Christ, they were ambassadors for God. The new office of mediation between God and man was continued by the apostles. Their manner of life was an extraordinary one, like that of Jesus. Besides

119

their work as missionaries, the twelve had no calling: for their sustenance they depended entirely on the hospitality of the faithful.

But Jesus' miraculous powers likewise continued effective in the apostles. It came to be universally accepted that an apostle could prove himself such by signs and wonders. Jesus Himself, so it was said, had given them power to tread on serpents and scorpions without danger. As a reward for their faithful services they should sit upon twelve thrones in the future kingdom and judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

In sayings such as these can be traced the glorification of the legend which dates from the earliest times. The self-consciousness of the apostles and the veneration of the disciples helped to complete each other almost from the first. At all events it was counted as an especial privilege of this early time that the twelve were there to lead; the twelve in whom Jesus Himself continued to live.

In spite, however, of all their high authority, there was not the remotest attempt to place the apostles on the same level as Jesus. Subordination to the Master, resting in the feeling that he owes his position to Him alone, is the sure sign of an apostle. The apostle is to give nothing of his own, but only that which Jesus has already given. He is to create nothing original: he has simply to hand down that which Jesus has already created. From the very first the apostles were to be the incarnation of the idea of tradition. However much they might differ externally from the rabbis, they were to agree with them in the value they attached to the careful handing down of the sacred tradition, in the one case the oral law, in the other the words of Jesus. Not only were the apostles intended to be this thing, they were this in reality. The messenger is completely lost in the Master. No single original saying of an apostle has been preserved for us, and yet this want of all originality does not diminish their authority in the very slightest; it was looked upon as perfectly natural.

120

In the Acts they lead a collective life, partly all together, partly two and two. They are merely types; there is no single person. It is true that there were differences enough of temperament, education and culture among them, but, on the whole, they were the representatives of the cause of Jesus; that, and nothing more.

The clearest proof of this is to be found in the way in which they conceived of their calling. It was just to hold firmly to the calling of Jesus. The judgment and the kingdom were near at hand. In spite of the rejection of Jesus on the part of the Jews, which His death involved, the duty of the apostles, after their Master's death, was to preach repentance to these very Jews, to see whether they might not yet be converted in time. It is true that Jesus Himself had passed judgment upon the Temple and upon Jerusalem, in words trenchant and unmistakable. But could it not yet be averted, after all, even in the last hour, if the Jews should turn and repent? Once before, Isaiah's disciples had tried to avert in the last hour the terrible doom prophesied by him over Judah, by the reform of which our book of Deuteronomy is the witness. The disciples of Jesus made a similar attempt when they set out

121

upon their missionary labours. Jesus had broken entirely with Israel: this they could not grasp. They suffered themselves to be imprisoned, to be ill-treated, to be executed by the Jewish authorities, and proved thereby that Jesus was to them more than all else in the world. But for all that, their own beloved nation was not to be abandoned. And so the picture has a reverse side: foreign mission work makes scarcely any progress in the hands of the twelve. They rejoiced whenever news was brought to them that Gentiles had joined the ranks of the disciples, but they did not go forth themselves. The Messiah was to meet His own again in Israel. We have a clear proof of this in the agreement come to at Jerusalem (Gal. ii.). James, Cephas, John, the pillars of the Church, declare their determination to remain constant to their mission to the Jews. If this is true of the leaders, it is certainly true of all the twelve. They just suffered St. Paul's work; they did not further it. Truly there is a certain grandeur in the way in which these messengers of Jesus, in spite of all, never wearied of the attempt to win over the very people that persecuted them, and whose rulers showed them such illfavour. It was also necessary and salutary that the connection between the old and the new religion should be maintained until the separation could be effected without damage. But progress on the line clearly marked out by Jesus there was none.

122

By the side of the twelve there early arose an authority of quite a different kind: the brethren, and the whole family of Jesus. While Jesus lived they believed not, or at least they doubted. It was only after His death that they were convinced of their brother's high calling. He appeared to James. This occurrence immediately secured him and the whole family a place at the head of the new community. Paul speaks of James, the brother of the Lord, once side by side with Peter, another time as a pillar, together with Peter and John, thus making his authority equal to that of an apostle. But that which secured the 'brethren' their prerogative was just this tie of relationship, and not the call to the work. The veneration felt for Jesus was transferred quite naturally to His brethren after the flesh, and these again were nothing loth to share in the honour paid to their great brother. The apostles and brethren of the Lord almost became rival powers. We can find traces of a dynasty of Jesus at Jerusalem. After the death of James a cousin of Jesus is chosen to be his successor, and so it goes on, to the great detriment of the new community. The free spirit of Jesus had not descended upon James, nor had he learnt anything from his experience in life. In him the unnatural reversion to Judaism found its leader. Those fanatics who so cowed Peter at Antioch that he refused to eat any longer with the Gentile Christians were "certain that came from James." Fortunately, however, the first generation of Christians was spared such struggles for the succession of the Master as are known to the oldest history of Islam. But while the apostle to the Gentiles represents the upward progress and expansion of Christianity, we have in James the drag on the wheel, the reactionary element.

123

Both together, apostles and brethren, were the authorities on the side of tradition. By their side the prophets, the representatives of the new ideas, find a place. This place depended upon special psychical gifts and upon religious enthusiasm.

The prophets did not present an entirely new feature in contemporary Jewish life. They had never entirely died out since the age of the Maccabees. A prophet, John, is Jesus' forerunner. In the story of the birth of Jesus, prophets and prophetesses find a place. Jesus foretells the coming of false prophets, and they appear in great numbers in the period immediately preceding the final insurrection of the Jews. They were the stormy petrels before the coming of the terrible tempest. True, it is possible that the arrival of the Christian prophets on the scene stood in some connection with the first rumblings of that mysterious political movement. But for all that something new does here begin, something unknown to the Judaism of that time. Shortly after the death of Jesus, the pent-up fires of enthusiasm break forth in the community of believers at Jerusalem. That mysterious movement began which, on the one hand, spread, all-powerful, like wildfire amongst the masses, causing the risen Lord to appear to five hundred brethren at once, transforming high and low, men and women, into inspired beings; and, on the other hand, caught up single individuals out of their ordinary every day life and drove them out into special forms of activity which often lasted a lifetime. The conception which men then formed of these single individuals—who alone were rightly call prophets—was that which had been held in all ages. A spirit enters into man from without, and from him tells forth God's message by ecstatic "speaking with tongues," by intelligible words or by symbolic action. His word then counts as the pure word of God. With reference to the future it is an oracle; with reference to the present, a command.

124

Both from the Acts of the Apostles and from St Paul's letters, we see that 'prophets' are amongst the distinctive marks of this first age of Christianity. But we learn at the same time that their authority was secondary. That is to say, that the ultimate authority, the foundation, was in all cases the tradition of Jesus. This might be supplemented by the prophetic word, by the spirit, but never transformed. That was a principle which does all honour to the perception of the guiding minds of the new religion. For the spirit which spoke out of the mouths of the prophets was impersonal, vague, and beyond control; all manner of influences and tendencies there competed with the influence of the Jesus of history. It was, after all, the religious impulse in its exclusiveness, for it forced back all other spiritual powers, but at the same time in its arbitrariness, and often in its moral indifference. To make the spirit of the prophets the ultimate authority would have been tantamount to subjecting oneself to the whims and fancies of men whose religious nature was powerful while their moral character was immature and undisciplined. It was therefore indeed fortunate that the word of Jesus, handed down by the apostles, was accounted higher than the Spirit, that the master of sane sobriety and temperance kept in check all those waves of exuberant enthusiasm and unrestricted power. Yet even with this restriction—this subjection to the apostles—the in-

125

fluence and significance of the prophets were the greatest that can be conceived. God spoke again. He continued to speak. Once more there were men of God on earth, directly inspired. He that laid hands upon them and blasphemed them committed the sin that should never be forgiven—blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. These prophets are of no great importance for the development of theology, but the history of the mighty religious impulse of the earliest age of Christianity would be unintelligible without them. The spirits of these men are still quivering with all the gladness, restlessness and enthusiasm of Jesus.

But the list of the leaders of the oldest time is far from being complete yet. We come next to the teachers, men likewise filled with the 'Spirit,' who, through their spiritual gifts, fathomed the hidden meaning of Holy Scriptures. They are the representatives of the 'Gnosis,' *i.e.* of the right spiritual understanding of the Revelation of God. Thus, Christian theology begins with them. Apollos is the first typical 'teacher.' A great future awaits them. Furthermore, there are the mysterious seven deacons. Stephen and Philip belonged to them. They were all Hellenists, and, as it appears, originally representatives of the Hellenists in Jerusalem.

126

Then there were apostles of the second rank, missionaries like Barnabas, Judas, and Silas, chosen by the Churches and sent forth by them or by the twelve as their delegates. As time went on and the twelve died one after the other, these apostles in the wider sense of the word stepped into their place. Lastly, there were the heads of the different Churches, called presbyters or bishops. They, too, were chosen on the ground of spiritual qualifications and by the voice of the Spirit. But their position, on the whole, was entirely subordinate to that of the itinerant leaders into whose hands the Spirit placed the supreme authority over the whole infant Church that was now just coming into being. These presbyter bishops did not then dream of the position of dignity to which they were destined later to attain.

Look where you will, there is nowhere a want of leaders; it is rather the superabundance, the too great variety in the body of officers, that strikes one. There would appear to be no one man in supreme command, no one to dominate all these different spiritual forces and carry on the work of Jesus without hesitation or confusion. There is indeed something marvellous in the sight—so soon after the death of Jesus—of this great organized host of able, enthusiastic, and courageous men all engaged heart and soul in the work of preserving for the world their Master's in heritance. The cause of Jesus cannot fail.

127

CHAPTER IX.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHURCH.

EVEN in Jesus' lifetime there was a Christian fellowship in the ideal sense of the word, the number of all those who recognized Him as the Lord, as their Head, and kept His commandments in their daily life. But there was no coherence, no organization. These followed only after Jesus' death, under the impression produced by the appearances and under the guidance of the apostles. We cannot fix any exact date, but we may look upon the return of the disciples to Jerusalem in expectation of the second advent of Jesus in the place where He died as the decisive occurrence.

The Christian Church is the child of enthusiasm. The less likely we are to imagine this as we look at the Church to-day, the greater the importance of reminding ourselves of this fact. The Church originated in a hero worship—theologians call it Faith the truest and the purest that has ever been. It united all the worshippers indissolubly together and created the new forms quite of itself. They were the tokens of the same love. Jesus Himself and none other was the centre of the new community, present in the veneration, the love, the enthusiasm, the faith of His disciples. The watchword of the brethren in its simplest form was just this: Jesus is the Lord—with Him through life or death into the kingdom of heaven; without Him we are lost. All the feelings of love and reverence for the nation, for the family, for friends, cherished in each individual soul, were now uprooted and transferred to Jesus and His followers. The saying of Jesus, "He that is not with Me is against Me," was now fulfilled in all its practical consequences.

128

The common faith immediately finds utterance in confession. Faith in Jesus as the Messiah is still in the background during His lifetime. Jesus forbade His disciples to speak of it. He had asked men to receive Him simply as sent by God. Now the formal confession "Jesus is the Messiah" becomes the distinctive mark between friend and foe. This confession rested at first on the unique impression made by Jesus the Saviour. It then acquired consistency and certainty by means of the appearances, and culminated in the hope that He should come again in glory on the clouds of heaven to inaugurate the Messianic kingdom. For faith in the Messiah was hope for the future. Jesus had not yet been Messiah. He had merely been a candidate for the office. Hence they spoke of the approaching advent of the Messiah—not of His return. Thus there crept into the confession, through this element of hope, something that was uncertain and yet certain, an anxiety, a yearning, a longing. In reality it could only find expression in enthusiasm. A terrible fact—death—seemed to contradict it. The appearances brought comfort, but along with it new questions and perplexities. The expectation of the advent in the immediate future placed men's minds in a state of perpetual tension. Thus this confession of the Messiah was no mere theological formula, but the expression of a very disturbed and stormy frame of mind; and only thus in connection with all that

129

rich spiritual experience and longing and love and courage did the confession of belief in Jesus, who lives in spite of His death and shall come again in glory, create the Church.

Faith is enthusiastic. Those who are enthusiastic for Jesus are *ipso facto* friends and brothers. Wherever enthusiasm is genuine, it is satisfied with a minimum of outward forms. Wherever an extensive apparatus of forms and ceremonies is counted necessary and holy, there as a rule enthusiasm has already beaten a retreat. At first enthusiasm embraces every one in a similar state with open arms. Herein we may discover the explanation of the fact that the early Church exhibits rather an enthusiastic than a legal character. All manifestations of anything extraordinary were reckoned the surest sign of a disciple: above all else the speaking with tongues. The impression made by the story of what Jesus did and of His appearances was so great that it often happened that not only believing disciples but strangers and new comers who were present fell into an ecstatic condition as they listened—an indubitable sign that they were brethren, as God had vouchsafed the Spirit unto them. So great was their joy, their gladness, that articulate speech formed no adequate expression for the overflowing enthusiasm. It could only find vent in stammering and in stuttering and in inexpressible sighs. In accordance with the psychology of that age these phenomena were immediately ascribed to supernatural causation. They were in truth simply the expression of a mystic state of psychical exaltation. The mystical element in religion had become a living reality. Yet this talking with tongues was never an isolated phenomenon. The enthusiasm of the disciples found vent in deeds as well, such deeds as man only accomplishes in extraordinary times. Through the migration from Galilee to Jerusalem a great number of the disciples had lost the means of earning their daily bread and had sunk into poverty. Without the support of their friends in Jerusalem, especially of some rich men among them, they would have actually starved. So it came to pass that the richer brethren gave the poorer so generous a share of their earnings and their possessions that the legend of the universal communism of the early Church arose in later times. Many a man in his enthusiasm sold his fields and brought the money to the apostles at Jerusalem to be divided amongst the poor. Charity was exhibited on an unbounded scale. Men gave of their own in so heroic a fashion that the rigid conception of property was actually shaken, and it was revealed that there lay in the words of Jesus a power to change the outer forms of life.

130

All this enthusiasm was crowned by the heroism of the martyrs. There is an early Christian hymn:

131

> "Let them take our life,
> Goods, honour, child and wife:
> Let all these go.
> Yet is the gain not theirs:
> The kingdom still is ours."

These simple fishermen and artizans of Galilee surrendered their all, even their lives, and with a glad courage, that shrank not from death itself, set the seal upon their discipleship of Jesus. They translated Jesus' words into deeds and accounted death for nought. The first community of believers was welded together by the blood of the martyrs far more than by the speaking with tongues. But this was all the organization that existed thus far. He that spoke with tongues of Jesus, he that for His sake gave all his belongings to the poor and died for Him, was His disciple; of that there could be no doubt. No outer sign was necessary.

And yet an outer form did come to be needed for the whole community. In the first period of its development Christianity existed as a sect (heresy). The metamorphosis from sect into Church was a very gradual process. Step by step the Christian sect separated itself from the Jewish Church. By slow degrees it emerged from its obscurity into publicity. But it was only in the reign of Constantine that the transformation was completed. At first it was a sect, and nothing but a sect. No one thought of leaving the Jewish Church. All shared in the public worship of the Church and were subject to the public discipline. But the community lived its own life hidden from the public gaze. The earliest services of the Christian Church were secret conventicles, meetings in the house of a friend with closed doors. We need but read the closing words of the Gospels, or the 15th chapter of the Acts, if we want proofs of this. Even the missionary work of the apostles was in part secretly carried on, and Jesus Himself had said, "Whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness . . . . and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets." Secret assemblies then such were the meetings at which the Spirit was given, at which the prophets prophesied, at which "all things were in common," and every meal a Supper of the Lord. Punishment and imprisonment, even death itself, were the inevitable consequences of any appearance in public. They ventured forth, it is true, again and again, but again and again they met with stern repression. For the Scribes in the Sanhedrim aimed at nothing less than the complete extinction of the sect. It was this policy of coercion which forced the Christians into the position of revolutionaries both in Church and State. We Christians of to-day should ever remember that our earliest forefathers were sectarians, like the Anabaptists in the time of the Reformation, and that they only managed to exist by constant opposition to the State Church.

132

Their life as sectaries imparted a sectarian character to the outer forms current among the brother hood. Every one free from suspicion was, it is true, allowed ready access to the meeting-place of the brethren. But admission to the brotherhood itself was only granted after the observance of due formalities. This was the place occupied by baptism. Baptism was no original Christian institution, but was borrowed from the disciples of John with one addition. By the utterance of the name of Jesus, a Christian character was imparted to the rite. We have no tradition as to the use of baptism in the earliest times. Its meaning is contained in the old expression, "Baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins." It was preceded by a profession of faith, a confession of sins and prayer to Jesus, then the pure

133

water cleansed body and soul alike, and when the disciple came forth from the water, he was accounted pure and a brother.

As yet no instruction preceded baptism. It was not necessary. The confession of faith in the Messiah was so simple. But as a rule adults only were baptized. Had not Jesus promised children the kingdom of God without laying down any further condition? The baptized now shared in the meals of the brethren. The chief meal was always, or at least frequently, connected with the repetition of a portion of the account of the Last Supper. At the same time they would speak of the blessing of the death of Jesus, and rejoice at the thought of His coming again. But the baptized were also subject to the strict discipline of the brethren. Unworthy members were excluded either permanently or for a time. He especially who was a cause of offence to the little society was compelled to leave the community. As far as possible the judgment was to be given without partiality or respect of persons, even the most important members, the 'hands and the feet' of the society, were to be put forth. Either the apostles or the prophets or the community as a whole were to pass the sentence. It was then counted to be passed by Jesus Himself, for His real presence in every assembly, were it but of two or three, was firmly believed in by all. Lastly, the apostles, prophets and teachers, secured a certain amount of connection between the scattered congregations by their constant journeys from the one to the other. Wherever they appeared they stood in God's stead. They conveyed the collections to their right destination, they fostered the brotherly love both of individuals and of churches for each other, but they were always reckoned as the servants of the community, not as its masters.

134

The foundation of the sect, however, brings about the first great change in the new religion. It can be traced in a certain increasing rigidity both without, where it assumes the shape of exclusiveness, and within, where it becomes legality. Between the brethren and those that are without, an impassable barrier has been set up by the institution of baptism and the profession of faith in the Messiah.

The words 'orthodox' and 'unorthodox' come to be used as shibboleths, and take the place of the distinctive mark given by Jesus Himself:—"By their fruits ye shall judge them." True, it cannot be for gotten that to do God's will alone leads into God's kingdom. But the opinion very soon gains ground that the doing of God's will presupposes faith in Jesus, and is, therefore, only possible in the company of the faithful. That is the first fatal step away from Jesus towards orthodoxy. Jesus had by preference taken as His types people like the publican, the Samaritan, the prodigal son, who were outside the Church. In people such as these He could trace so much more clearly just the really important things, humility, love, repentance. But in His sect it becomes a principle that outside of the brotherhood there is no safety, and that all good works—even the best done by those without are worthless, or at most form a step towards the righteousness which can be reached by the faithful alone.

135

Enthusiasm and legality would appear to be contradictories, and yet the whole history of sects presents them as existing side by side. Often enthusiasm is but the sign that something new, something exuberant, would fain free itself from the confinement of narrow forms. Amongst the brethren the Gospel very soon became a new law. As soon as the living person Jesus was no longer in their midst, and yet at the very same time His authority was immensely increased through the resurrection, necessarily His every word, even His mode of life, came to be an authoritative standard. So the rules for the missionaries were gradually laid down after the pattern of Jesus' life, and often they proved to be fetters for the new circumstances. So, again, the new law was now formed for the early Christian community out of the most important of Jesus' sayings, and thereby words of temporary application often received a typical meaning for all generations. The Lord's Supper was celebrated with a scrupulous frequency, and finally exalted into a Sacrament founded by Jesus Himself. Perhaps, too, the example of Jesus legalized the idea of the reception into the Church by baptism. In the same way faith in the Messiah comes to be claimed as a dogma which must be believed. It is no longer self-understood. In the long run, faith in an absent person can only be maintained by legal forms. Thus, then, this development of the sect implies at the same time a diminution of the first freshness, freedom, and originality, a gradual increase of that mere mechanical copying which belongs to the essence of a Church. The whole frame of mind altered. Mourning their Master, they began to fast again like the Pharisees and the disciples of John.

136

And yet this sect, sharply defined against the world, and with the Gospel for law, was the necessary vessel for the eternal treasure of redemption in Jesus. This was the first body which the soul of Jesus took unto itself in order thence to begin the long journey out from these narrow borders into the wide world. All reverence to the Divine in this brotherhood. Here within this small compass lies hidden the life that is destined to give the world comfort and to inspire it with strength. These rude but strong characters, at enmity with the world, their expectant gaze turned towards the eternal mansions, are called to be the conquerors of the world.

137

CHAPTER X.

THE OLDEST THEOLOGY.

THE 'Spirit' did not merely move men to talk with tongues in the early Church. He did not only kindle the glad ardour of sacrifice, and inflame the courage of the martyrs—he was likewise the creator of the oldest theology. New thoughts and pictures, and peculiar frames of mind, come into being amongst the brethren in contrast with the unbelieving world. They are felt to be new, and yet they make their way with an irresistible compulsion; they obtain authority as inspirations of the Spirit. They originate partly from enthusiastic laymen who by sudden illumination solve some dark mystery, partly from learned students of the Old Testament to whom deep insight into passages hitherto obscure is vouchsafed by the spirit that prevails in the community. If the formation of the new thoughts is thus guided by the Spirit, we can still more clearly recognize the Spirit as their ultimate source by the opposition of the world which lacks the gift of the same Spirit. Or, to express the same thing in the language of to-day, only he who shares to some extent in the enthusiasm of the disciples for Jesus can understand their thoughts about Him.

Now, as the Christian brotherhood was from the very first a lay brotherhood, their theology was bound to partake very largely of the lay character. A theology arises in which unbridled fancy and enthusiastic feelings have a greater share than the clear conceptions of the understanding, which is founded, not upon learning, at least not in the first place, which is ready to accept at once moods of the heart and mysterious echoes from the unconscious as divine revelations, and above all, takes the miraculous into account at every turn. These laymen often accept the contrast to the Scribes as their guiding line. Whenever any very artificial theory is advanced in the Gospels, which does not appeal to the heart, it is prefaced by the words "The Scribes . . . . say unto Him." They themselves would by preference be reckoned among the babes and the foolish to whom God has revealed that which has remained hidden from the prudent and the wise. This contrast, however, soon ceases to be as complete as it was at first. In its teachers the brotherhood acquired a learned element which differed from the rabbis only by its readiness to enter into the spirit of the sect. The special service which these teachers rendered to the community was the unsealing of the treasures of the whole of the Old Testament, which had otherwise remained a closed book for the laity, even were it only by reason of the difficulties presented by the language in which it was written. But they were also the first to borrow from the Jewish professional theologians, and introduced from thence into the lay theology—anticipating St. Paul herein—all manner of speculations and mystic doctrines as well as the whole apparatus of legal conceptions. Between these two elements—the lay and the theological—there were, of course, many transitional stages, and for this reason alone it would be impossible to arrive at any certain differentiation.

There were really two different motives at work leading to the formation of this earliest theology. On the one hand, the personality of Jesus Himself challenged reflection in the highest degree, almost more on account of that which lay hidden in the future, than on account of that which men already knew concerning it. They could not but feel impelled to examine in every direction and to attempt to understand His Messiahship, His death and His resurrection, and above all the mystery of His miraculous personality.

To this inner motive, the impression made by the personality of Jesus, there was at once added another—the apologetic interest, the determination of the relation to Judaism. The object was to win Jews for Jesus, to defend Him against them. In both cases, whether it were attack or defence, the employment of Jewish words and conceptions, common to friend and foe alike, was obviously necessary. All the oldest Christian theology is therefore Jewish in the means which it employs.

The whole of the great impression made by Jesus culminates in the confession "Jesus is the Messiah." This was likewise the chief point of contention with the Jews. If the Jews said, "He is not the Messiah because He died," the Christians replied, "Yes but He is, for He shall come again." Jesus answer before the Sanhedrim, "Ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power and coming upon the clouds of heaven," forms the sum total of the earliest Christian apology. The parousia is the proof that Jesus is Messiah. True, the proof lay in the uncertain future, but the comforting thought, "Qui vivra verra," helped to remove all scruples. Hence the centre of gravity of the Christian faith was transferred to its eschatology.

140

Through that one word Messiah it came about that the whole figure of Jesus was placed within the framework of the Jewish picture of the things to come that lay there ready and to hand. In the latter no change was made whatever; the only addition was the name of Jesus. This oldest Christian dogma is nothing but the filling up of a Jewish outline with a concrete name. First of all, the prophecies of Daniel are taken for guidance. So Jesus Himself had done. Hence the "Son of man" becomes in the Gospels the usual self-designation of Jesus. This, however, is but the starting-point. Soon all the Jewish apocalyptic theories with their richness of fantasy, claim the person of Jesus for their own. Contrary to all expectation, He becomes a mighty conqueror, hastening on a white steed at the head of the heavenly host to annihilate all God's enemies upon earth. How strangely inappropriate to Jesus that the "eagles" should be "gathered together" to devour the dead bodies of the slain! First come the storm-signals of wars and rumours of wars, famines, pestilences and earthquakes, signs in the heavens, and, most terrible of all, in the midst of these tribulations, Antichrist. In all this domain there is the completest agreement between Christians and Jews. Rightly could the heathen Celsus make merry over their petty quarrels as to whether the Messiah was called Jesus or whether His name was as yet unknown.

141

The Jewish faith swallowed up the Christian, and in reality it was the Jews who came forth the conquerors from these disputes. 'Jesus the Messiah' is a Jewish idea. It remains such in spite of all the new meaning which Jesus put into the conception. All that there is inadequate in it, which He Himself had repressed as far as possible, recovered the lost ground immediately after His death.

But how can Jesus return as Messiah if He rests in the grave? This objection is met by the proof of the resurrection. Unfortunately, the reality of the appearance was convincing to believers only, for it was only disciples that had seen the risen Lord. The enemies of the faith might without further ado declare them to be either deceivers or deceived. The belief in mere visions would never have made any impression upon Jews. An objective proof must be furnished.

The story of the empty grave was circulated at a very early period with the object of providing this desideratum. But who had found the grave empty? Again, it was only disciples, and women too so writes the oldest evangelist. Was that a sufficient foundation? It was strengthened by the additional facts that apostles themselves found the grave empty, and that the women had besides seen the living Jesus close by the grave. Thereupon the Jews circulated the report that the body had been stolen. The story of the watch set upon the grave, making such theft impossible, serves to refute it. And, finally, in order that the impression of a possible self-deception, or that the visions were of a mere phantom, should be entirely removed, legends arose of appearances of a more material kind wherein Jesus eats and drinks and suffers Himself to be felt, and Himself declares He is no spirit. It is true that these final stages in Christian apologetics are, in part at least, only reached late in sub-apostolic times, but it was necessary to exhibit the whole process in this place in order that it might be seen how one proof has to support the other, and no single proof is sufficient by itself. Faith in Jesus living and victorious can never be forcibly attained by arguments such as these, in great part invented for the purpose. Strange how blind men have been to this fact! No, this theology also was Jewish and obsolete.

142

But the death of Jesus? How was this greatest stumbling-block, this direct negation of the Messiahship, to be united with the faith? The oldest theology of the Cross originated in this question. Jesus own forebodings and His prophecies were appealed to as proving that His death had been no surprise to Him. Hence the emphasis laid upon the prophecies of the Passion in our Gospels. But that was but a poor comfort! Some few scanty indications given by Jesus as to the salvation to be brought about by His death were taken as a starting-point. It would seem that Jesus had Himself imagined that His death would exercise a salutary influence on many of His fellow-countrymen who were as yet unbelieving. But the actual setting of all these sayings we owe to the first community of Christians. The picture of the Martyr whose sufferings exercise a vicarious power and enlist God's mercy for His

143

people had long formed an essential portion of the Jewish faith. The fourth book of the Maccabees is the best known document to which to turn in support of this statement.

This thought is now brought into connection with the sufferings of Jesus. Then come the theologians who skilfully apply all their juridical and ceremonial conceptions to the death of Jesus. When St Paul became a Christian he already met with the formula, "died for our sins," on the lips of the leaders of the early Church. Now, all this is again Jewish theology. The real conclusion which the disciples should have drawn from the death of Jesus, is that even death itself is no punishment sent by God but a gift of His love. Christian apologetics working with Jewish conceptions overlaid and concealed this thought, so full of comfort. Forensic metaphors and ideas of propitiation began the process which is to transform the mystery of love into an arithmetical problem.

It was the teachers, too, not the laymen, who tried to explain the death of Jesus by the Old Testament. They transferred the scheme of prophecy and of fulfilment to the death of Jesus, and indeed to all the events of the Gospel history, and so removed by this argument from prophecy any rock of offence that still perchance remained. Such of them as spoke Greek preferred to make use of the Septuagint in this attempt, for this translation often served their ends better than the original Hebrew. Whoever has bowed in reverence before the great and original personability of Jesus must look upon this undertaking of the ancient Christians as almost an insult. What concern in all the world have prophecies of past centuries with our Jesus? Is it conceivable that all that was new and free that He brought into the world should be merely the mechanical result of causes that had existed long ago? The thing could not be done at all without a forced and artificial system of interpretation. And even the best analogies would seem to have come down to us from late times. So we come to the formulae:

144

Died according to the Scriptures.

Rose on the third day according to the Scriptures.

Born at Bethlehem according to the Scriptures.

But, after all, a great undertaking is connected with what had else been merely an insupportable extravagance, viz., the conquest of the Old Testament by Christian ideas. Apparently the interpreters proved their thesis from the Old Testament. What they really did was to put their meaning into it. And so it became possible to preserve the endless treasures of this sacred book.

To laymen, who had not the same intimate acquaintance with the Old Testament, the whole earthly life of Jesus, forming as it did but the ante chamber to His reign in heaven, appeared less in the light of prophecy than in that of the miraculous and supernatural. Did not the greatest miracle of all, the Resurrection, reflect a halo upon the Master's earthly life,

removing Him from the rest of mankind and causing the miraculous to appear to be the element of His being? Miracles were to prove Jesus to be the Messiah; the more miracles and the greater they are, the more likely that God has destined Him for the highest honour. One craves for something a little more substantial than hope in the uncertain future. The miracles of Jesus are the sure pledge that through Him the kingdom of heaven shall come, and that "He it is that shall come." Thus the foundation is laid for the strange and fantastic picture presented to us in the Gospels. St Mark gives us the first outlines, and even he often approaches very near to the limits of docetism, and afterwards this tendency knew no bounds. One specially noticeable feature in the picture is the story of the Transfiguration. Jesus' most intimate apostles are represented as once in His life beholding the Master in His Messianic glory and as hearing the divine confirmation of His claims, "This is My beloved Son; hear Him." We are expressly told that this story only became known after the resurrection.

145

Thus, then, one was at the same time brought to the ultimate question, What is the foundation for this element of mystery and miracle in the personality of Jesus? The answers to this question are exceedingly instructive, although their date is entirely a matter of conjecture. One thing is evident. Jesus was man and as man Messiah. This firm conviction could never be abandoned amid Jewish surroundings. With this presupposition the answer that appealed most convincingly to the early Church and its enthusiasm was the story of the reception of the Spirit. Thereby Jesus completely came into line with the Christian prophets, and, generally speaking, with inspired men. Dating from one certain moment, the Spirit of God descended upon Him, to dwell in Him and to be the source of all His miracles. This particular moment was connected with Jesus' baptism, the earliest event known in His life. The Spirit works in Jesus just as He does in all Christians, only Jesus is the leader of all inspired men, for He is the Son. Just because of this connection of ideas this theory seems to be the oldest.

146

But was not the Messiah David's son? Curiously enough the very passage of Scripture accepted by the Scribes but rejected by Jesus, is quoted in confirmation of the Messiahship. St. Paul is already familiar with it as something that needs no proof. The genealogies of our first and third Gospels must be ascribed to the earliest community. One is almost inclined to believe that it flattered the family of Jesus to be raised thus suddenly to the rank of a Davidic and Messianic dynasty. They certainly did not refuse the honour, as we can see from their confession to the Emperor Domitian. For us there is something that almost provokes a smile in this attempt to found the majesty of Jesus upon a royal genealogy.

The next attempt to explain the mystery of Jesus—the story of the conception by the Holy Ghost which later won its way to general acceptation—no longer belongs to the earliest brotherhood. Many of the Jewish Christians themselves rejected it. But, on the other hand, Jewish teachers began from very early times to bring the idea of pre-existence into connection

with Jesus. Strictly speaking, the Jewish theory was contained only in the affirmation that the name of Messiah lay hidden with God before the creation of the world. Now this name was Jesus. The new thought was very naturally inferred that Jesus Himself lay hidden with God from of old. The same goal was reached as soon as Jesus' words about His being sent by God were taken literally, and the conclusion was drawn that if God sent Him Jesus must have been with God before. Although the first three Gospels as yet nowhere give expression to the pre-existence and the heavenly origin in Jesus own words, these theories are for all that to be ascribed to a much earlier date than theirs. The course of history is by no means such that that which is logically posterior should likewise always appear last in point of time. There was then a ferment in men's thoughts, a crop unparalleled for its richness, and one consequence of this was that dissimilar and even contradictory explanations appeared simultaneously.

147

Speaking generally, all this theological activity betrays a certain dilettantism. There is a want of creative power in these early Christians. They have experienced something altogether abnormal in Jesus, but in order to express it their own words fail them. So they turn to the Jewish categories nearest at hand and attempt to confine the indefinable within these definitions. After all, how very petty are these first Christian thoughts about Jesus compared with the deeds of Jesus Himself and His own inner life. The real superiority of the new religion over the old is rather concealed than expressed by the earliest Christology.

No one will blame these early Christians because of their transference of Jewish ideas to Jesus. The same hero-worship, the same faith which moved them to speak with tongues and enabled them to face the martyr's death, likewise impelled them thus to formulate their creed. The great picture presented by this first Jewish Christology, quaint and extravagant as it is, is inspired by pure love and enthusiasm.

148

The theology of the early Christian Church has, however, yet one other fruit to show—and therein consists its true greatness. It was the collection and the arrangement of the most important sayings of Jesus, the handing down of the Gospel itself. It is a mistaken view to look upon this work as one that was merely receptive. The power to recognize the essential and to adapt it to the needs of the brethren was also requisite. The first in the field was the author of the Collection of Logia, perhaps the Apostle Matthew, who grouped the most important words of the Master under different headings from a practical point of view for catechetical purposes. Above all, he brought together the principal sayings in which God's will is clearly taught to all men by Jesus—these formed the nucleus of the later Sermon on the Mount. It began with the gracious promises of the Beatitudes, and ended with the judgment upon all those who know God's will but do it not. Still to this day the passage relating to the true standard of judgment expresses the clear consciousness that the kernel of the Gospel is contained in this sermon. All depends upon the fruits: and what they are is just what the whole sermon tells us. Then a second address brings together the duties of the

missionaries. Controversial collections of Logia are attached to this; the relation of the Christians to John's disciples, to slanderous fellow-countrymen seeking for a sign, to Scribes and Pharisees—all this is made clear by words of Jesus. Finally, light is in like manner thrown upon various aspects of the Christian life-prayer, the question of riches and of anxious poverty, the forgiving spirit, hope, and confession of sins. The man who made this collection had a wonderful grasp of the essential elements in the message of Jesus. At the same time he gives us the best picture of the early Church in its greatness. From his writings we can see what the hope of heaven and expectation of the judgment to come meant for the life of these Christians. The advent of the kingdom and of the Lord Himself in the immediate future is the presupposition of the whole of this Christianity. Then he leads us into the midst of the actual battle, he shows us the pride of the Christians towards the disciples of John, their fierce anger against the Pharisees, the official patterns of piety, their fidelity to their Master even unto death, stronger even than family affection and the fear of man. But above all he understands the awful seriousness for the individual of the claim which Jesus makes. He knows that the sum of the Gospel is something absolutely simple and practical, but for that very reason that which decides for heaven or for hell. For all that, however, he climbs the heights of joy and of childlike confidence. And so he achieved this result. Without any additions of his own, merely by selecting the words of everlasting life, he has bequeathed to us a picture of all that is essential in Christianity which is striking in its grandeur.

149

St Mark, the exponent possibly of a Petrine tradition, gives us another collection of Logia, arranged some what differently, not in the shape of long addresses, but by way of a narrative. He shows us how this tradition first attached importance to the occasion and the situation of each saying, how it inquired into the persons concerned, and then how groups of related anecdotes came to be formed. St Mark's groups, too, contain a portion of the theology of the early Christians.

150

The first of his groups collects words of Jesus in which His power to forgive sins, His intercourse with publicans, His opposition to fasting, His lordship over the Sabbath, are all illustrated in contrast to the Scribes and Pharisees and the disciples of John. The same heading, "Jesus and the parties," may be placed over the controversies in Jerusalem with the priests, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Scribes, which illustrate Jesus' attitude to the people, to the Roman government, to the resurrection, to the law and the prophets. A third controversy sets forth Jesus' attitude to the tradition of the elders. The enemies, it will seen, are the same as those against whom St Matthew's Collection of Logia fights. And the same subjects meet us here as well as there, the kingdom of God, the second advent, the confession of sins, love of the brethren, and prayer. An especial group brings together the principal sayings about marriage, children, riches, self-denial and the duty of serving. It is true that the chief commandments in which God's will consists are nowhere set forth in order. The

reason for this will be that the Logia Collection had already obtained so firm a footing. What St Mark's tradition does for us is partly to complete St Matthew's Logia, partly to bring them home to us with greater vividness. And yet the picture of the Gospel thus presented to us is an independent one and has peculiar features of its own. We see the opponents better before us, we share in the rejoicings when Jesus answers, concise, full of irony and the confidence of victory, ever hit their mark full in the centre; we live through the education to independence and freedom under the guidance of Jesus. St Mark's authority, the man who handed down to him the groups of stories, was without doubt a layman who saw in the Scribes the deadly enemies of Jesus and His cause. It was just his hostile feelings against the theologians which enabled him to grasp in so masterly a fashion the new and revolutionary elements in Jesus.

151

But the treasury of the early Christian brotherhood was not yet exhausted. The first and the third evangelists drew still further riches from this marvellous store; above all, the numerous parables which partly in all probability lay before them in written collections. St Luke especially must have been acquainted with a wonderful tradition of parables. It is a pity that those who took up arms in defence of the position that Jesus was the Messiah were but seldom clear as to the real sources of their strength. They did not perceive that the simple setting forth of the words of Jesus without any addition or explanation constitutes the best defence of Christianity, because better than all titles and legends it sets forth Jesus the man.

152

CHAPTER XI.

THE PARTIES AND THE ISSUE OF THE STRUGGLE.

IN one respect the development of the whole of the early Christian community was from the first reactionary—that is to say, in its far more positive relation to the Jewish nation. The belief in its incapacity and rejection by God with which Jesus left the world gave way to renewed patriotic hopes and renewed loving efforts. For Jesus there was finally no further doubt as to the certain separation between the kingdom of God and Israel, but His disciples clung to the old connection with a desperate tenacity, nor could all the persecution they had to suffer at the hands of the Jews cool the ardour of this religious patriotism. Here on this ground, Paul, with his ardent love for his native land, with his readiness to be banished from God's sight for His people's sake, stands shoulder to shoulder with the twelve apostles and with James the brother of the Lord, of whom Hegesippus relates that he was once found on his knees in the temple praying for the forgiveness of the sins of his people. Even at the beginning of the Jewish war, when the apocalyptic leaflet (contained in St Mark xiii.) was circulated amongst the Christians, they did not believe in the destruction of the temple, but only that it would be sore oppressed by Antichrist. It was only the catastrophe of the year 70 that opened the eyes of the Christians and led to a new judgment as to the Jewish people. Before the Jewish war this relation of the Christians to the Jews had no where been felt as a cause of the formation of parties.

153

Parties had, however, arisen through the relation to the law—though not at first. Both for Himself and His disciples Jesus had to the very last clung to the faith that they had the law on their side against the Pharisees. Nor was this faith in anywise diminished at first in spite of the self-deception on which it rested. They disputed with the Jews about questions of Christology, not about the law.

Amongst the brethren the word of Jesus was the ultimate authority—hence a free and natural life such as Jesus had brought into the world. There was no return to the ideal of the Pharisees, or to the asceticism of John the Baptist. All the emphasis was laid upon conscientiousness, love, the longing for God and trust in Him; but it was in these very points that they believed they were but faithful to the law. God's will as it was written in the law was declared in the words of Jesus. As soon as God's will was grasped in its inner meaning, becoming the deepest motive of the heart instead of an external ordinance, every contradiction seemed to be removed. This oldest Jewish Christianity is therefore to be conceived as entirely anti-Pharisaic, nay, more, as at bottom not Jewish at all—for how could it otherwise have bequeathed to us the picture of Jesus such as we have it? Yet at the same time it was a Christianity filled with the deepest reverence for the authority of the law.

Here was an inherent contradiction, for the same law was also the authority for the Pharisaic Scribes. Now, as soon as it was recognized, the contradiction was bound to lead

154

to the formation of parties according to the answer which men gave to the question: Should Jesus' word and the law remain connected or not?

The first missionary journey to the Gentiles afforded the occasion. Nowhere could any other feeling than that of joy prevail at the thought that Gentiles were to be admitted into the Church. But what was to be the condition of this admission? Was it to be Jesus' word or the ceremonial law? For the Jewish Christians, circumcision, the Sabbath, the regulations as to food, etc., were such old customs that they were scarcely any longer felt as burdens, but all the more unendurable were they for the Gentiles.

Barnabas and Paul simply set aside the law altogether for the Gentiles who sought admission—the sole condition then demanded having faith in Jesus. News of the great invitation only reached Jerusalem when it had already become an accomplished fact. It came through a hostile channel, being reported by narrow-hearted brethren who were Pharisees in all but the name. What was now to be done?

Thus early in the history of the young community do we come to the parting of the ways. True, at first the leaders, James, Peter, and John, united with Paul and Barnabas and declared the Gentiles to be free. But it was only now that the difficult question arose: What was to be the consequence for the Jewish Christians? They themselves were to remain faithful to the law. Such was the decision given at Jerusalem. But was mutual intercourse henceforward possible? Could a Jewish Christianity that remained true to the law, and a Gentile Christianity that was free from the law, continue side by side in a brotherly relationship?

155

The extremes quickly fell asunder. Paul placed Christianity in opposition to the law, and proclaimed the freedom of the Jewish Christians in Gentile countries. James and his party completely identified Christ and the law, and claimed the right to force the Gentiles to observe the law. In between these two extremes, the apostles remained in the old position of doubt and uncertainty which they had taken up at Jerusalem, without any definite principles, buffeted about by every storm and tempest, ill-fitted for leadership.

Such was the origin of Judaistic Christianity, a reversion to the Judaistic type in the very heart of the early Christians, occasioned by the progressive measures taken by St. Paul. It was an altogether reactionary movement. The law was set above Christ, the Jewish idea maintained in its fanatical narrowness and intolerance. The majority of these people were sincere enough, to be sure. One does not make a burden of one's life in mere superficial lightheartedness. But for them Jesus had come into the world in vain.

This tendency falsified the picture of Jesus by the insertion of many foreign Judaistic features. To say the very least, it wrongly exalted the utterances of a moment into the position of universally binding principles. It was this party which set on foot the mission in opposition to St. Paul which sometimes questioned his authority for taking up this work at all. In Galatia its emissaries tried to win over the superstition of the heathen to the side of Jewish

156

ceremonies, guided by the right instinct that the two were closely related and common foes of the Gospel. At Corinth they exploited a temporary wave of ill-feeling on the part of the congregation against their apostle, and attempted, first of all by mean denunciations, to rob him of the confidence that was felt in him, and so to have free play for their proselytizing efforts. The pious zeal of the narrow-minded, the passions of partizans and the malice of the wicked, here made common cause and did not shrink from employing even the worst means. But all this counter-mission ended in an utter want of success, and that for this reason, without going any further—the immense majority of the Gentile Christians did not want to become Jews. Even in St. Paul's lifetime the Church, in so far as it spoke Greek, could boast of a freedom that was securely assured.

It was only in Palestine and the neighbouring districts, where there had always been a strong Jewish element at the foundation, that this Jewish Christianity tenaciously maintained itself, but it was without any importance whatsoever for the fate of the Church at large. It retained its sectarian character all the more readily as it had itself split up into numerous subordinate sects. To these two main currents of thought in the apostolic age—Judaism (the law for all Christians) and apostolic Christianity (the law for the Jews)—numerous gnostic variations akin to Essenism must soon be added. It is only in connection with the evolution of Islam that they are of any importance in the history of the world. It was just out of such a Jewish Christian sect that the faith of Mahomet developed into a world religion. Neither the political occurrences in the two Jewish wars nor Hadrian's edict against circumcision inflicted so heavy a blow upon Jewish Christianity as the circumstance that both Jews and Christians alike rejected this compromise the former with curse and excommunication, the latter with the charge of heresy. So it was just put on one side—a proof to the world that compromises are to be saved by no sacred tradition, that there is indeed no such thing in history as standing still, but only progress or regression.

157

Such was the end of Jewish Christianity. The enthusiasm of the early days was succeeded by stagnation, decay, and finally dissolution.

Its enthusiasm, as well as all its living fruitful germs, St. Paul took over into his Gentile Church. By his progressive tendencies he drove the Church at Jerusalem into reactionary courses, and so sealed its decay and ultimate ruin. He was the disturbing, the exciting element in the earliest form of Christianity. He pulled down as much as he built up. He destroyed the peace, the vagueness, the compromises of this first age, and in so doing he understood the mind of his Master and the new mode of government of his Master's God.

158

ST PAUL.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF HIS CALL.

JOHN the Baptist came as "more than a prophet," as greatest "among them that are born of a woman." He set himself against the existing order of things and roused the whole people. But all that he left behind him was the ascetic sect of the Baptists which vanished in the chaotic confusion of different religions. Jesus followed. He grasped and combined all that was sound, deep, and genuine in the Jewish religion and rejected all that was morbid and artificial. He brought to His disciples the redemption and freedom of the children of God. But the immediate result of His activity—the early Christian fellowship—remained a mere sect composed of communities of pious Jews who longed for the Messiah and the kingdom, lived strictly according to the commandments of Jesus, and loved their own people. Almost exactly as they lived a few decades after the death of Jesus, Mahomet found them living centuries later. This Jewish Christianity lived apart from the main current of the world's history, in watchful expectation of the last day, and occupied in devotional exercises. The introduction of Christianity into the history of the world is entirely the work of St. Paul. He is not the founder of the new religion, and he did not wish to be accounted such. When he called Jesus his Lord and Redeemer he merely gave expression to actual facts. But it was he who brought Christianity out of Palestine and transplanted it among the Greeks and Romans, chief of all civilized nations. It could no longer now remain a mere Jewish sect. It had to measure its strength with the religions, the civilization, and the philosophy of the leading nations in the world's history. It had to enter into their needs, their language, and their social intercourse, assuming now a friendly, now a hostile attitude. It was bound to undergo a radical transformation, not merely of external form but of innermost essence. For as a simple community of brethren, believing in the Messiah and obeying the words of Jesus, there was no hope of its enduring in the midst of the civilization of the world. The new start is one of such importance that we must distinguish the pre-Pauline from the post-Pauline Christianity, or, what amounts to the same thing, the Palestinian sect and the world religion.

159

But in so doing we are realizing one of history's secrets. History makes great leaps, reveals deep chasms and yawning abysses, never advances in a straight line, and thus mocks all a priori theorizing. Paul never knew Jesus during His lifetime, and nevertheless it was he who best understood Him. He was one of those Scribes and Pharisees on whom Jesus called woe, the cause of whose moral and spiritual malady was just the theory "True religion is the law of the sacred nation that and nothing else," and now this Scribe destroyed the whole of this theory, took Jesus away from the sacred nation and brought Him to mankind.

160

All this he did, not through calculation nor yet capriciously, but in the full consciousness that he was called thereto by God. The consciousness of this call is very evident in all his

letters, most of all in those to the Galatians and in the second to the Corinthians, where he has to meet the attacks of his adversaries. What a proud and defiant note is struck in the beginning of the letter to the Galatians: "Paul, apostle, not by men nor through a man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead," upon which follows the explanation: "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me, but I went into Arabia." The second epistle to the Corinthians, the greatest apology of the apostle, would almost have to be transcribed from beginning to end, so full is it of a divine self-consciousness which reaches its height in such expressions as these:

2 Cor. iii. 4-6. "And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is of God: who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit."

2 Cor. iv. 6. "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

161

2 Cor. v. 18-20. "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, ... and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, that ye be reconciled to God."

Declarations which attain a similar high level are to be found in 1 Thess. ii., 1 Cor. iv. 9-15, Rom. i. 15, and also in the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians. In all these passages St. Paul draws no distinctions between the general calling of an apostle and the special calling of a missionary to the heathen, but shows himself prepared to receive both at once at God's hands: and it was just missionary to the heathen that God chose him to be.

The lofty expressions "Workers together with God," "Fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God," come down to us from St. Paul. He did not reserve them for himself alone, but applied them to the other apostles as well; to none other, however, than these. The same enthusiasm which we noticed above in the sayings of Jesus concerning the beginning of the kingdom, can be read in these words. Like Jesus, too, it is God's word that he is going to declare: no one is to look upon it as man's. Just as the power of God is contained in the Gospel unto the salvation of all them that believe, so St. Paul feels himself to be the man who transmits this power to others. He is the necessary link between the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus and the great mass of humanity. Employing rather the language of the lawyer, he calls himself a debtor to barbarians and to Greek, to wise and to foolish; or again, using the expressions of ritual, a priest of Christ to the heathen in the sacred service of the Gospel

162

of God. All these high attributes amount to the same thing in the end: his position as mediator between God, Christ and man. The twelve apostles likewise looked upon themselves as mediators between Jesus and the congregations of Christians—*i.e.*, as bearers of Jesus' word. St. Paul, however, went further than this: he sacrificed his life, devoted his whole being to this work of mediation. He even went so far as to ascribe to all that he experienced—his sufferings, as well as the consolation they brought him—a salutary purpose for the congregations; nor did he shrink from the bold thought of vicarious suffering. "I now rejoice in my sufferings for you and fill up that which is behind in the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for the Church." He often gives a somewhat different expression to his faith, saying that he must be offered up as a sacrifice for the congregations. Thereby his lofty and proud claim to be mediator on God's side is exchanged for the humble but rich calling of the ministry—servant to the congregations for Jesus' sake.

The apostle's self-consciousness has in fact limits which it never exceeds. Christ stands high above him. Indeed the distance between the Master and His fellow-missionary has already been considerably increased. Jesus is Lord—Paul is servant; Jesus sinless—Paul sinful and pardoned. He believes in Jesus Christ and cries to God through His mediatorship, prays at times to Him. Whereas there is no doubt that Jesus is already to be counted entirely on God's side, Paul reckons himself and all his fellow-Christians in the churches among the men in need of salvation. Nor is he strictly subordinate to Jesus merely as Christian, but also as apostle. Jesus is Lord over the faith—St. Paul is not. Jesus can lay down commandments. "The Lord says," so runs the formula of the Christian law. St. Paul can only give advice. His words never have the legal authority of the Master's words. Even as apostle he has ever to remember that he as well as all other Christians will have to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ and there receive his sentence—according to his deserts either praise or else blame and punishment.

163

St. Paul's likeness to Jesus strikes one at once, and at the same time the dissimilarity between the two is no less obvious. In the case of both there is a self-consciousness which goes far beyond all that one usually meets with; there is the claim to have been chosen by God from out of the mass of mankind for an especial purpose; in both, again, there is nothing like fanaticism, but clear recognition of their limitations, and there is a deep humility before God. And yet the word 'mediator' cannot be applied in the same sense to both. Whereas Jesus maintains that He knows God in an entirely new way—as the Son—Paul boasts of this knowledge of the glory of God which is reflected in the face of Jesus. He feels that he is not a creator; he merely transmits historical facts. God—Christ—Paul, such is the order. He held this conviction so firmly that he did not forget it for one single moment during the whole of his life. That great word of his, "if only Christ be preached," which the captive apostle uttered at Rome in the midst of all manner of doubtful associates in his missionary labours, is sufficient proof of this. That was the ground of his energetic rejection

164

of the thought of a Pauline party—it was something altogether abhorrent to him. "Has Paul been crucified for you?" "Have ye been baptized in the name of Paul?" "Whether it be Paul, or Kephas, or Apollos, all is yours, but ye are Christ's and Christ God's." But if the question is asked how it comes about that Paul felt the distinction from Jesus so far more clearly than the apostles, then the answer is easy to find. He had not eaten and drunk with Jesus, he had not lived with Him for months. He knows only the risen Lord, that sitteth at the right hand of God—the heavenly Being. On the other hand, it must not be forgotten that this heavenly Jesus inspired him with greater courage and confidence of victory. Thus faithfully serving his heavenly king he can go forth out into the wide world more securely and under better protection, overcoming his enemies by land and by sea and winning victories. The greater the master, the greater the servant.

It was as apostle of this Jesus, sitting on the right hand of God, that St. Paul founded the Gentile congregations, safeguarded their liberties at Jerusalem, withstood St Peter to the face at Antioch, drove the Judaizing party from the field, even if they appealed to the authority of one of the twelve, and dying as martyr left behind him the great free Gentile Church which had not been before him. He achieved greater results than all the other apostles, nor was he afraid of saying so quite plainly. But this great work in its entirety rests upon his faith in the divine calling which had been vouchsafed him. Without this faith it is incredible that St. Paul would have accomplished a tithe of what he did. His apostolic self-consciousness is as closely bound up with his work and his position in the world's history as the Messianic with the message of Jesus.

165

Whence came the certainty of the apostolic calling? By far the most beautiful answer is to be found in the First Epistle to the Corinthians: "Necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is me if I preach not the gospel." The calling to go forth as missionary is an inner compulsion which St. Paul cannot at all withstand. As the lion roars, so he must preach. Thus spake the old prophets. So Jesus might very well have said. The question, however, as to the origin of this compulsion must not be avoided. St. Paul gives us a clear account. He became at once Christian and apostle—such is his answer—to the question through the vision on the road to Damascus. Unlike Jesus, he ever turns back to this vision as to the call which he received. "Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen the Lord?" The Lord "appeared to me," just as He appeared after His death to the twelve. He can tell us the very day and the hour. From that moment he dates the new life and the new calling. All at once, without any break, the persecutor became the missionary—he himself looked upon it with amazement, how his conversion and his call came about without the slightest human intervention. "I conferred not with men. I went not to the apostles." The origin of his apostleship was not tradition but revelation, the one being regarded as excluding the other.

166

A contradiction, however, is contained herein which was immediately noticed by St. Paul's contemporaries. The apostleship is the incarnation of the tradition. The apostle is

one who hands down the tradition: he is one of a company who secures for the Christian community the connection with the Jesus of history.

Revelation, on the other hand, is the prophet's privilege. He has not to impart the old message of Jesus, but new words of God, just as they flow from the fountain source. Either, therefore, St. Paul is an apostle and hands down the tradition, or he is a prophet and declares the revelation. A combination between the two would only be conceivable if St. Paul had merely received the title of prophet by revelation, but had been obliged to go to the apostolic tradition for the contents of his message. Such a combination St. Paul refused by not going up to Jerusalem after his call, but by going forth to preach the Gospel on his own account. By so doing he afforded his opponents the opportunity of rightly contesting his title to the apostleship in the hitherto legitimate sense of the word.

The apostleship that rests upon revelation—such is the great leap that history takes. Interpret and explain the vision itself as you will, you must admit the leap. It was not the apostles whom Jesus called while He lived on earth, to whom He confided the whole of His message—it was not they who really continued His work, but the great persecutor of the Christians whom a revelation summons to the leadership. The leap, the revelation, were necessary if the cause of Jesus was not to stand still or even retrograde. The new way called for a new man bound by no tradition. Only a prophet, no ordinary apostle, could utter the word that should set the stagnant masses in motion. But then he must of course be an apostle as well, in order to carry his work through to the end. Such are the conclusions that we can draw, but the thing remains a mystery after all. The step forward that was then taken in the world's history rests upon the actual contradiction contained in the combination of apostle and prophet in one person. And as a matter of fact, what was there that was not new in this apostle by revelation? If the beginning of his career was unparalleled, the continuation was unusual. He avoids all intercourse with the apostles and goes forth into distant countries. He leaves Israel to its fate and turns to the Gentiles. He does not place the great provinces that he has just conquered under the authority of the twelve and the Mother Church of Jerusalem, but keeps them in full freedom under his own control. When disputes arise he does not give way to his older companions in one single point, nor does the former persecutor hesitate to administer an open rebuke to the Lord's favourite, Peter. New, too, is the Gospel that he proclaims. Instead of the story of the words and deeds of Jesus, the message of the crucified and risen Lord alone. True, the name of Jesus stands in the centre, but is it not another Jesus? And new, too, is the apostle's mode of life. He foregoes the right of being supported by his work as missionary and earns his daily bread by the sweat of his brow. Finally, he can never quite rid himself of the effects of his education as Rabbi they always cling to him. The apostle is a prophet; he appeals to revelation and yet at the same time he is a Scribe. He examines, proves, draws conclusions, and occasionally silences his opponent

with a whole host of startling and surprising texts. In a word, Paul is the exact opposite of all that had till then been understood by the word 'apostle.'

Hence the necessity and likewise the difficulty of his apology. A very great many Christians could not grasp the fact that one whose past record was the worst imaginable, who did not know Jesus and possessed no authority but that of a vision the invention of which was the easiest matter conceivable dared place himself by the side of the twelve whom all men revered, who already were almost accounted as saints.

Fortunately Paul did not attempt the proof of the truth of his vision. He needed none himself, and he would in no case have convinced his adversaries. True, he appealed to it, yet never to it alone. On the contrary, he marshals a whole row of other reasons of a somewhat varied character.

First of all he adapts himself to his opponent's mode of thought, to the high esteem in which they hold the original apostles. It is true he is the least of the apostles not worthy to be called an apostle, because he had persecuted the brethren. It was only God's grace that enabled him to take his place by their side and even to work more than they. But the twelve and he declare the same Gospel. Have they not handed down to him the fundamental facts of the death and resurrection, to be by him transmitted to the new congregations of believers? This statement does not quite tally with that to the Galatians—"The gospel which I preach I received not of man." The very same Paul who in the heat of the argument maintains his entire independence and the originality of his message, claims to be a bearer of the apostolic tradition as soon as any one of the fundamental articles of the faith held in common of all Christians is attacked. Notice the satisfaction with which he emphasizes his reception by "the pillars" in his account of the great dispute at Jerusalem: "James and Kephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship." In this passage he formally substantiates his claim that he has been duly received by the twelve. But above all, the collection for the poor in Jerusalem is intended to prove to everybody, and especially to the disseminators of slanderous reports, that Paul is no separatist or sectarian. On the contrary, he is a faithful servant of the Mother Church of Jerusalem, and now discharges his own debt of gratitude and that of all his Gentile converts by this readiness to spend and be spent.

169

It is, however, to the success of his work that St. Paul is able to appeal still more frankly and proudly. The Churches that have been founded by him are the seal of his apostleship, his letter of recommendation known and read of all men. "From Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum"—so he writes to the Romans—"I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ," and that, even where the ground had not yet been broken, "not where Christ was named."

Such is his glorying as a Christian. There are no vain boasts, no boundless conceits. On the contrary, he has remained constant, just within the bounds which God has set him. Have not the twelve apostles, too, been obliged to confess that God's grace has granted him so

170

great a measure of success—more than to themselves? As a part of this outward success he twice reckoned his apostolic signs and wonders as a proof that he was in nowise inferior to the other apostles. The Acts of the Apostles give us examples of this activity, which, however strangely it may strike us, in St. Paul especially, just formed a portion of a missionary's regular inventory. Many of these signs consisted of cures of sick persons; a still greater number, probably, were instances of mighty psychical convulsions finding vent in ecstatic experiences. The Galatians "suffered many things" when God ministered the Spirit to them and a power worked in their midst. At Corinth the proof of the possession of the Spirit and of this power inflamed a fanatic and undisciplined enthusiasm accompanied by the speaking with tongues, prophesying and healing of the sick. But St. Paul was not the man to rejoice at the sight of such external signs alone. Where no moral change followed upon them he might very well have been inclined to see even something Satanic in them. New men—new moral creatures—such the apostle ever puts forward as the surest proof of his apostleship. To the Thessalonians he writes: "Ye received my message not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." When his opponents in Corinth asked for a sign as a proof that Christ really spoke in him, he cries out to the congregation at once in anger and in joy: "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves; know ye not your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you?" He stands firm in the faith that these Corinthians, to whom so many crimes still cling, and who are now at variance with their apostle, do still, in spite of all, show forth the fruits of Christ and are redeemed to a better life through the apostle, and Jesus that works in him. Here, then, the proof by external results changes into the self-certainty of faith.

171

But now the Jews arrived with their whole host of accusations and slanders. They were past masters as critics and as spies. "Paul," said they, "was careless and changeable in his decisions; he hypocritically hushed up the unpleasant consequences of his latitudinarian gospel; he did not draw his support from the congregations, because he was afraid to do so; his sufferings and attacks were proof enough that God had smitten him," and many other statements of a like nature. In short, his whole mode of life and all his methods were a clear refutation of his claim to the apostleship. His self-defence is proud and of a grand simplicity: "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world."

And again, in 1 Thess. ii. and 2 Cor. vi. he rises to those powerful, but never vain descriptions of his activity in which the majesty of his style reflects in every line the feeling that he is standing at the height of his task. Such was his refutation of all these calumnies, and no man before him ever spake thus. But even in these passages, where the apostle is witness on his own behalf, the greatest emphasis is laid upon his suffering and privations. Not one of his opponents can come anywhere near him in this respect. And so, wishing to present all

172

that he has undergone at one view, St. Paul composes the famous enumeration of his hardships in 2 Cor. xi., where he assumes his mask of a jester whose boasting the world "suffers gladly." And though he mounts up to his vision, that other title on which his fame rests, and remains for a moment in silent contemplation of these holiest mysteries of his life, yet he descends immediately again to his sufferings: "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities; for when I am weak then am I strong." It is as though he himself felt that such visions after all only form the culminating points of a life for the man that has himself experienced them, but that all men, even including all his enemies, must in the end bow down in acknowledgment of the incomparable height of his suffering in the service of the brethren.

When on some other occasion his right to call himself a minister of Christ was called in question—probably on account of his not having known Jesus—he cries out at once in entreaty and as a challenge: "If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that as he is Christ's so are we Christ's." The halting sentence expresses the one thing to which he attaches the greatest importance—respect and toleration for the faithful fellow-worker. He himself acted in accordance with these opinions when the factions arose at Corinth and also at Rome. He never wishes to drive others from the field; he merely wishes to maintain the place for himself which belongs to him by the side of the others. Even in the very heat of his self-defence he proclaims the principle that he has been called to be the servant, not the lord and master, of the congregation, and that he has to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.

173

And so he gains the victory over all the attacks of his adversaries, the good and the bad alike, be cause his words and his life, the visible success and the inner self-mastery, have ever been in the completest harmony. Called to be an apostle by a revelation in an apparently illegitimate manner, he brilliantly legitimized himself by the services which he rendered. And in a fortunate moment the original apostles, including St James, confirmed this by holding out the right hand of fellowship, nor could any thing that was set in motion from Jerusalem in later times affect this position.

We have in reality only reason to be thankful to the Jews. Had it not been for their denunciations, we should have lost the apostle's proud and frank apology. The man of God had no reason to fear the light, since with "unveiled face he reflected, as in a mirror, the glory of God," for a world that hailed the light with joy.

174

CHAPTER XIII.

JESUS BROUGHT TO THE GENTILES.

ST PAUL knew that he was called to be a missionary to the Gentiles. External circumstances favoured this conviction. He himself was a Jew of the dispersion, a seasoned traveller accustomed from his earliest years to the life of the Greek towns. The pride that he took in his peculiar and independent position must have caused his work amongst the distant Gentiles to appear especially desirable to him, unhindered as it would be by the tradition of the early apostles. Next may be mentioned the opposition of the Jews, which he knew only too well from his own past. And besides it was advisable for the renegade—such he appeared to his friends—to depart to a safe distance. Such circumstances and such considerations no doubt contributed largely to aid St. Paul in forming his decision; but the really decisive cause was the clearly-felt impulse that urged him to go forth from the very moment of his call. He was under a necessity—he had to go to the Gentiles.

A tremendous task was laid upon him, to announce Jesus as the Saviour of the heathen. Yet the way had been paved—stepping-stones at least were not entirely wanting. First of all, Paul had a companion, Barnabas, who gave him the benefit of his riper knowledge and past experience. In the next place, the separation between Jew and Gentile was not absolutely complete. Little communities of Jews were scattered far and wide in all the larger Mediterranean towns; their synagogues attracted a number of Gentiles who became members of the community in a variety of ways, or were at least on terms of friendship with it. The first thing that St Paul did, therefore, was to visit the Jewish houses and synagogues in order by this means to obtain access to the proselytes and Gentiles. It was thus possible to take for granted that many of the Gentiles would be acquainted with the Jewish presuppositions of the Gospel—especially with the Old Testament. The entirely Jewish character of St. Paul's mission and theology is of course sufficiently explained by his own Jewish education, but becomes still more intelligible to us when we remember that the surroundings in which he worked had already been interpenetrated by Jewish influences.

175

In spite, however, of this Jewish preparation the attempt to bring Jesus to the Greeks was something entirely new. How was it to be done?

Several ways might be tried. One had already been attempted: the preaching of the twelve. It consisted of two simple parts: the promise and the threat, together with the demand. First the message: The judgment and the kingdom are close at hand: the Messiah is coming, Jesus the crucified and risen Lord; He is coming as judge of the world. Thereby fear and hope are aroused; and then the exhortation: Do God's will as Jesus taught it, and attach yourself to those who expect Jesus as their Lord. Why should the Gentiles refuse to give ear to this simple appeal?

176

St. Paul rejected this method with the exception of the first part, the announcement of the judgment. It is not that the presuppositions were too Jewish for him. He never experienced any difficulty in explaining the conception of the Messiah. But for himself this description of Christianity as a scheme of a promise and a claim upon conduct was altogether inadequate. Christianity was entirely a religion of redemption for him. He knew what that meant—to wish to do God's will and not to be able to do it. All the weakness, the powerlessness and perversity of men when left to themselves, had become intelligible to him through his own failures, and at the same time he had experienced the rescue from this state, the uplifting power—God's grace. Now, with such an experience the scheme of salvation put forward by the earlier missionaries—it was that of Jesus Himself—could never satisfy him. Jesus the Redeemer, not the lawgiver, that was his watchword. It was a great piece of good fortune for Christianity. As a mere teacher of true religion Jesus would only have taken His place in the ranks of the Greek moral philosophers by the side of Socrates or Pythagoras. As such He would doubtless have commanded respect and admiration, but never the faith which gives birth to a religion. Paul saved Christianity from the fate of stagnation as a school of ethics in the universal Greek rationalism.

An entirely different method of bringing Jesus to the Greeks was indicated by the great example of the Jewish-Alexandrine religious philosophy. Jesus needed but to occupy the position of Moses, as indeed He did later on. The Jews of Alexandria looked upon religion as a philosophy, with all its branches—cosmology, psychology, ethics, etc. But as distinguished from the Greek philosophy, they looked upon their own as a revealed philosophy resting upon the oracles of the Old Testament, to which all the wisdom of the Greeks was related either as borrowed or as a preparatory stage. For they either ascribed to the Spirit of God only the sacred writings of the Jews, in which case the Greeks must have stolen from them, or they allowed a certain activity of the divine reason in the Greek thinkers and poets, but proclaimed at the same time the superiority of the absolute revelation which had been granted to Moses.

177

It is quite possible that the Alexandrine Apollos gave utterance to similar thoughts about Jesus in his teaching regarding the 'divine wisdom,' as his countrymen did about Moses. But such a mixture of religion and philosophy appeared to St. Paul pure perversity. Once more his own personal experience was the decisive factor in the judgment which he formed. There had been a time when, as teacher of the law, he had boasted of the wisdom of his religion, and looked proudly down upon the blind heathen that were ignorant as children. But the collapse of his zeal for the law implied at the same time the fall of his pride in his wisdom. The foolishness of the Cross as opposed to all the wisdom of the learned, be they Jews or Gentiles, that was his new motto. First brought low in so wonderful a manner, and then exalted as he had been, he seemed to see, at least when he began his work, the essence of all religion in the paradoxical, and rejoiced in the thought that the world had not recognized

178

God through its wisdom, whilst the foolish and the lowly had accepted Jesus as their Redeemer, when He had been presented to them. This, too, was fortunate for early Christianity. Before it had been drawn into the philosophical evolution of the succeeding age, it was able to stand forth in all its sovereignty as a religion. All religion is a paradox. Jesus is not to be counted on the side of the philosophers. His religion can only be treated as an intellectual system, to its own loss and damage. The sole reason that arrested its entire decay was that, thanks to St. Paul, it came to the Greeks at the time of its growth as a power of life, and not as a system of philosophy. Jesus no lawgiver, no teacher of philosophy—that is the kernel of Paul's preaching, as it was in later times of the Reformers. Hereby alone Paul proves himself to be the foremost interpreter of Jesus, in spite of his deviations from the message of the twelve.

How does Paul preach Jesus the Redeemer to the Greek world?

As for Jesus and the twelve so also for St. Paul, the eschatological message stands in the forefront. The day of judgment is at hand, when each single individual, whether living or dead, shall have to appear before God's throne and give an account of all that he has done. Reward and punishment are meted out by God with perfect justice—to the one destruction and death: salvation, everlasting life in the kingdom of God to the other. The expressions which St. Paul uses are often different to those which we meet with in the message of Jesus. The Jewish conceptions—hell, Paradise, even the kingdom of God—recede into the background. Instead of judgment Paul always uses the word 'wrath'; instead of 'kingdom of God' he prefers 'salvation'; and instead of 'hell,' 'death.'

179

The influence of Jesus is felt in the emphasis that is laid upon the individual, and in the entire abolition of all the privileges of Israel. It is individual men and women that appear before God, not peoples; and moral character is the only issue at stake. As before, an especially earnest appeal is founded upon the nearness of the approaching end: it is still time; soon it may be "too late." "The night is far spent, the day is at hand."

The question may be raised whether St. Paul provided sanctions for his eschatological message to the heathen. Prophecy has at no time been greatly disturbed to seek for sanctions. Does it not rest upon God's word, upon the foretelling of His messengers?

The approach of the final catastrophe was a certain fact both for the apostle and for the Jews, proved out of the Old Testament; and Paul might reasonably presuppose among all proselytes of the synagogues some knowledge of the prophecies contained in the Scriptures. Nevertheless he spared no trouble in trying to give reasons for the positions that he advanced, and met the Greeks as well as he could on their own ground. The conceptions of requital after death, of torments for the wicked, and of rewards for the righteous in the divine blessedness, were spread far and wide amongst the Greeks by means of Orphic sects and philosophical schools. When Paul announced to each individual the near approach of the day of the revelation of the just judgment of God, and prophesied tribulation and sorrow

180

for all evildoers, and honour, glory and immortality to all the righteous, he was calling up long familiar pictures in the minds of his hearers: the only new element was contained in the message concerning the day on which all should appear before the judgment-seat of God. The apostle, however, was not content even with this. He proved how the beginning of the judgment was revealed even here and now in the moral ruin of the servants of sin. And in so doing he met the demand of those who required a visible pledge for this message of a future hope.

Even though the announcement of the judgment thus appeared to the Greeks as a message that could be grasped at once—in fact, as one with which they were almost familiar—the preaching of the resurrection was, it must be admitted, a stone of stumbling to them from the very first. Many Corinthians looked upon his conception of the restoration of the earthly body as an utter absurdity. Rather than believe such nonsense they would abandon the thought of any resurrection whatever. St. Paul finds himself compelled to draw up an elaborate defence of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which does in fact so far meet the objections of the Greeks that it removes the chief ground of offence, the quickening of the old body. In this apology he makes use of the conceptions of the new spiritual body, while at the same time he routs his adversaries that deny the resurrection by means of popular arguments. This is the most instructive point in the whole proceeding. St Paul is fighting for the old Jewish dogma of the resurrection—which differs entirely from the Greek hope in immortality; and while doing so he deprives it of that which constitutes its essence, by surrendering the belief in the quickening of the mortal body in order thereby to gain over the Greeks. Whether these concessions met with any success amongst the Greeks we do not know; at any rate it was only the old Jewish dogma of the resurrection which gained a permanent footing in the Churches founded by St Paul. We have, however, a striking instance in this explanation of an eschatological doctrine of the way in which the apostle showed his readiness to become a Greek unto the Greeks. Immediately after delivering his eschatological message St. Paul proceeds to paint the corrupt state of his audience, the full extent of which has only been realized by the near approach of the judgment day. Their corruption consists in idolatry and in impurity. Insisting on the degradation implied by these sins, he thus passes on at the same time to preach the faith in the one God and to awaken their consciences.

181

It is especially over the worship of idols that St Paul waxes wroth. He shows no understanding for any religion but his own. He is just a Jew counting all Gentiles as fallen away from the true religion. The two theories which underlie his criticism are both Jewish—the image theory and the demon theory. Either the heathen are fools because they worship mere images, things of nought, dumb idols, the works of men's hands instead of the God that hath no form; or else they are the poor slaves of demons, bewitched and under a spell, driven to this worship by some wild and wicked impulse. Nowhere, however, do we find him criticising any single one of these different rites from what he has himself observed. He

182

has judged idolatry *en bloc* before he knows what it is, and he does not want to know what it is.

The explanation of the monotheistic faith which is to take the place of this idolatrous worship is likewise based upon Jewish presuppositions, nor could one have expected St. Paul to do otherwise. He could have found no suitable proof in the person of Jesus. At first the whole of nature is interpreted as a revelation of God. In His works God has manifested His power and His divinity to all men. But then St Paul proceeds to utter that hard saying about the falling away of the heathen from the original revelation and the uselessness of all that philosophy attempts to do. The Jews alone have kept God's primary revelation. It has been preserved and set forth in the sacred Scriptures. And indeed the Old Testament was the indispensable handbook to any monotheistic form of belief at a time when all higher knowledge of the Greek thinkers and poets was precluded. "The wisdom of the world" meant "foolishness unto God." And yet even a Paul who wishes to set himself in uncompromising opposition against the whole of the heathen world, even he cannot escape the influence of Hellenism entirely. The doctrine of the 'nous' that can behold the invisible essence of God in His works, the conception of truth, the definition of God as the Being of whom, through whom, and in whom all things are, prove that—albeit, of course, unconsciously—St. Paul had submitted to the purifying influence of Greek speculation upon Jewish thought.

183

Moral degradation, impurity, was closely connected with this intellectual corruption—the worship of idols, heathen rites, magic ceremonies, and sexual excesses were all mutually interdependent. Many of those who listened to St. Paul, especially at Corinth, were the scum and offscouring of the depraved masses of the great cities where the apostle taught. Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, thieves, usurers, drunkards, revilers—all these the apostle enumerates in order to continue "and such were some of you." Even the blackest pessimism did not paint the situation in too dark colours. We have more than sufficient documentary evidence for the prevalence of unnatural vices in this period. St. Paul therefore could say to those to whom he preached that they were a "*massa perditionis*" without meeting with much contradiction. But in order to gain a hearing he appeals at the same time to reason and conscience, which he does not believe to be quite extinct even in the most bestial of men. Even without any knowledge of the Old Testament they have the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile excusing or else accusing one another. This recognition of the divine in man, which goes so far as to acknowledge that there are uncircumcized heathen that keep the law, is all the more surprising by the side of the apostle's pessimistic estimate of the Gentile world as a whole.

But after all, in thus appealing to the conscience St Paul is aiming merely at the awakening of the feeling of sin, and his optimistic utterances are made to serve his preaching of the judgment that is to come. They are of importance for us, because St. Paul is here again

184

clearly borrowing from Greek rationalism through intermediate Jewish sources. The Jews had taken over from the Stoic popular philosophy the use of the words "Reason, Conscience, Nature," and at the same time that conception of men as beings normally endowed with moral faculties and standards of conduct, of which these words are the expression. All differences of time and place sink into comparative insignificance by the side of this the common property of all normally developed moral human beings in the civilized world. This rationalism is one of the most important causes of the rapid spread of Christianity, and St. Paul is the first to make use of it.

The introductory stage of St. Paul's missionary work was thus formed of two parts—the eschatological message and the description of the degradation of the heathen world. We are not yet in the temple of Christianity itself, but only in the porch. The Jewish element still almost entirely dominates the preaching of St. Paul. His estimates are still influenced by Jewish prophecy, by the Jewish Scriptures, and by Jewish views of the Gentiles. But as a matter of fact lines of communication already lead over to the Greek world, even though they are mostly derived by St. Paul directly from the Jews. His eschatology reminds the Greeks of nearly related doctrines, and they have more that is akin to the monotheistic faith than the apostle is ready to believe. But he himself makes earnest appeals to their moral knowledge. Christianity and Hellenism begin to amalgamate in the preaching of the apostle who was in so many ways opposed to everything that was Greek.

185

St. Paul's object in thus bringing the Gentile hearers face to face with the near approaching judgment, utterly degraded and fallen away from God as they were, was not to lead them to repentance in the earlier sense of the word, but to faith. To repent meant, with Jesus, to turn round and do God's will. Paul does not at all believe that his hearers can do that. In spite of all the power that a man possesses of forming moral judgments, it is perfectly useless to appeal to his reason as long as it is held captive by his senses—by the law of sin in the flesh. His own experience had shattered his faith in the victorious power of the will; this, however, was not the only or even the decisive reason for the new demand for faith. As the whole object of his missionary labours is to win over the Gentiles for the Christian Churches, Paul can never grant that any awakening of new moral power would be possible through man's unaided efforts apart from the Church. He must, on the contrary, be so entirely broken and powerless that no other path of safety remains open to him in the whole world but faith—*i.e.* entrance into the Christian fellowship. This is the point where Jesus and His apostle are furthest apart from each other. With Jesus, courage, joy, and feeling of strength and entire health; as He Himself does God's will so He bids others do it, without attaching any ecclesiastical limitation. In Paul's case we have the description of a weak and heartbroken man who can only gain the victory within the Church and by supernatural grace. Extreme pessimism and the dogma of salvation by faith alone and in the Church—"extra ecclesiam nulla salus"—are correlatives. Jesus knows neither the one nor the other.

186

Oppressed by the burden of his sin, and trembling at the thought of the judgment, the convert is brought to Jesus his Redeemer—not the Jesus of the Gospels who promised the kingdom of God, revealed God's will, drove out demons and made God and man at one: this Jesus Paul himself never knew. He would, accordingly, have been obliged to have preached Him on the authority of the early apostles. But in their message He appeared as a prophet and a lawgiver, and that did not suit Paul's purpose. Jesus the crucified alone, or the crucified and risen Son of God, such is the Redeemer in St. Paul's preaching. He gives a short title to the whole of his message—the "word of the Cross." Now the Crucifixion and the Resurrection are not really deeds of Jesus, but experiences in which He played a very passive part. From an external point of view they are purely historical facts—paradoxes for the understanding, miracles and mysteries. Paul grants all this. The statement, Jesus the crucified is our Redeemer, is merely folly for the understanding; it is only through faith, that makes its way through all that is repulsive and paradoxical, that it becomes a power unto salvation.

Christianity, says St. Paul to the Corinthians, so clearly that there can be no possibility of a mistake, Christianity is not a philosophy: it is no rational system, but it is something historical, irrational and paradoxical, in which faith either recognizes God's power or else it does not. True, the facts have their meaning. The Cross implies God's love, grace, and forgiveness; the Resurrection the beginning of the life to come; but this meaning itself exists for faith alone. It is, of course, in any case painful for us to observe how the rich contents of the life of Christ and, above all, His message—though this, to be sure, we do meet with later on in the apostle's preaching—are entirely sacrificed to these two facts. But then what does this loss signify when we balance it against the immense simplification and concentration of this preaching of salvation? Simplification is always the mark of great men. In the preaching of St Peter and the other twelve all was presented side by side: the promise, the commandments, the miracles, the cross and the resurrection. It would have been difficult, especially for Greeks, to distinguish the redemptive power of Jesus in all this mass of material, whereas Paul brought them something which was simple and great that roused their enthusiasm (in spite of all paradox). There must surely be something divine when One that was crucified was made the object of such love and such enthusiasm. And when, thereupon, he exclaimed at the end of his address, "This is the way to salvation on the judgment day—faith in the crucified Saviour; here is atonement, grace, peace and certain salvation," then his words found their way home and faith cried 'Amen.'

187

Furthermore, this preaching, paradoxical as it was, contained elements that were extremely congenial to the Greek mind. The crucified Lord is the Son of God, who according to St. Paul descended from heaven. However incomprehensible the death of a heavenly being must have appeared to the Greeks in this statement—for the ideas of divinity and of death are incompatible—they were perfectly familiar with the title 'Son of God' and with the idea

188

of the descent of such an one from heaven. And as in addition to this Jesus' resurrection follows on the third day after His death and is then in turn succeeded by the Ascension to heaven, the divine nature is restored to its rights and a portion at least of the difficulty is removed. St. Paul's christology appeared therefore to the Greeks simply as the revelation of a new myth, like those with which they were already familiar, only surpassing them all in grandeur and power. In spite of the apostle's firm belief in the parousia, the emphasis in his christology is laid so entirely on past historical events, that for the hearers at any rate it is not the expected Messiah but the Son of God who has already come down from heaven, that becomes the centre of their faith. But the real stumbling-block still remained—Christ's death. St. Paul attempted to familiarize the Greeks with the idea by means of the conception of sacrifice. However Jewish his methods might be, his arguments after all contained elements common to the universal religious experience of mankind—sacrifice, vicarious atonement, and expiation. The greater part of his hearers especially, belonging as they did to classes that were morally degraded, were only too ready to accept the atoning death of Jesus which promised them remission of their punishment. In spite of all, however, there was paradox enough to cause amazement and surprise.

When once this first step had been taken, when faith had been aroused and the enthusiastic confession had fallen from the convert's lips—"Jesus is the Lord" (the apostle uses this title and not 'Messiah' amongst the Greeks)—St. Paul immediately proceeded to gather the disciples together into an organzied community. No Christian could have fought his way through the great dark night of idolatry and immorality as an isolated unit: the community—St. Paul calls it Church, using a Jewish word—was here the necessary condition for all permanent life. Here, again, many points of contact were presented by the Greek system of guilds and confraternities, of which the Jews had already made some use.

189

At the present day we are scarcely in a position to decide whether Paul exclusively followed Jewish patterns, or whether in some points he modelled his organizations directly upon the Greek type. As in addition he was bound to take over the characteristic rites of the Jewish Christian Church, and many of its forms and customs, he in any case created something that was entirely new to the world in which he lived. Through this amalgamation of Jewish, Greek, and Christian elements arose the Christian Church of the Gentiles, which throughout its future history remained ever open to receive new impressions, as a direct consequence of its origin from different sources. Baptism in the name of Jesus the Crucified was the form of entrance. Then followed very numerous meetings, for meals partaken in common, for divine worship, and also for the support of the poor brethren in the different localities as well as at Jerusalem. They were true communities of brethren, closely knit together for social, ceremonial and legal purposes, which gave their individual members a sense of strength and comfort, and often stood to them in the place of the family. St. Paul attached an almost exaggerated importance to the value of these communities. They were

190

to be nothing more or less than mediators of the Spirit of God or of Jesus to the individual. Though the aim and object of his preaching had been the conversion of the individual, he conceived the power of the new life to be exclusively confined to the Church. Here and here alone is the sphere of the Spirit's miraculous operations—the speaking with tongues, the healing of the sick and prophecy, and at the same time the renewal of the life, the power to start afresh. Only he who is a member of Christ's body—that is, who actually belongs to the Christian fellowship—experiences the Redeemer's influence that absorbs all that is sinful and earthly and implants that which is good and pure. St. Paul was sober-minded enough to recognize that these Christian communities were very far indeed from being his ideal the body of Jesus the temple of God. If in spite of this he clung fast hold to his belief in the power of the Church, he relied upon the fact that in spite of everything, many in the community shone like stars in the world in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation. For it was the beautiful time of the early spring, when the Church and the fellowship of them that believed entirely coincided, and did not, as now, stand in opposition to each other; when the influence of Jesus—that is, the Spirit—imparted itself so mightily to the whole community through the apostle, his fellow workers, and the first converts, that each individual was subject to it. This influence of Jesus did at first of course often find expression in excited behaviour and wildly enthusiastic actions, and it was only after repeated humiliations of one kind and another that it assumed a quiet and practically useful character. But without something of this enthusiasm, there had been no courage to lay the new foundation, and to separate from the world. The soul of Jesus, confined before within the secluded Jewish sects, now created for itself a second time a body, and this time one that was a great deal better suited to its power and glad joy. And that cannot be done without some stormy experiences. But the communities in which the Spirit finds a habitation are destined to alter the current of the world's history.

191

Scarcely have the Gentiles become members of the Christian community than Paul tries to discover something for them to do. His aim is now to train these masses of men, who had hitherto been for the most part without any kind of discipline, to work for the realization of the Christian ideal. He who had up till now only given and promised, now summons them to do the will of God in the strength of that which they have received. Words of Jesus, texts of the Old Testament, claims of the conscience, rules of Christian custom and discipline, reflections prompted by consideration for the outside heathen world, are all to become one combined motive for moral regeneration.

A very important question here arises: Did St. Paul keep faithfully to the ideal of Jesus, subordinating everything else to it?

Two preliminary observations are necessary to obviate any unfairness in the comparison.

192

1. St. Paul had to do with Gentiles, not with Jews. He cannot presuppose the high average of morality which Jesus merely purified, simplified, and set free from all impediments. A

great part of his task consists in bringing his converts to the point where Jesus found His disciples from the very first. He cannot effect anything without lowering the standard to a certain extent. He is obliged, *e.g.*, to attach greater value to outer deeds and respectability than to thoughts, even though he himself has exactly the same opinion as Jesus about the inner motive. In the next place, he is confronted with a whole mass of new ethical problems with which Jesus was not acquainted. The whole domain of social ethics, the state, the family, slavery, woman's position—all directly concern him, for it must now be decided whether these forms and institutions have any meaning for Christians. Whether St. Paul's solution is the right one may be doubted. At any rate he creates new values.

2. Jesus' claim concerned the individual simply and solely. St. Paul has the Christian Churches in view. There is a Christian form of worship, Christian discipline, the beginnings of ecclesiastical law, all of them things which did not exist in Jesus' time. Thus, whilst Jesus detached the individual as far as possible from his surroundings and left him to his own resources, St. Paul looks upon the duties which a man owes to the fellowship as the highest. This necessarily implies certain ecclesiastical claims even though they be reduced to a minimum.

Hence the simple division which was obviously sufficient for Jesus' demand is no longer quite suitable for St. Paul's. Jesus placed men in their right relation to the three realities: to themselves, their neighbour, and God. Everything else either completely vanished or receded into comparative insignificance by the side of these three realities. Three other problems have come to be of primary importance for St. Paul: the position of the Christian to the world; his duty to the Church; public worship. The same three realities, as in Jesus' case, lie at the basis of these problems, and yet there has been of necessity a certain shifting of interest. The comparison with Jesus is facilitated if from the very first we take this shifting of the problems into account.

193

The position to the world is the first and most urgent problem. The Christians come forth from this world where the demons bear sway and idolatry and immorality prevail. What is to be avoided as heathenish and sinful? What is necessary for the support of life? What is left to the free decision of the individual conscience? Can laws for all be set up? And what do they embrace?

St. Paul's solution of these difficult problems cannot but excite our highest admiration.

He starts from that which is obviously wicked, from downright vices, which are not to be tolerated in the Church. Idolatry, immorality of every kind, theft, drunkenness, are not to occur amongst Christians, were it but for the reason that they would thereby compromise themselves in the eyes of the world. Under the same category come, furthermore, party divisions, strife and bickering. Thence he goes down to the roots of these vices in the sins of

thought and word. Impure desires, low words, anger, envy and jealousy, blasphemy, lying, all that proceeds from the flesh and not from the Spirit, is to be torn out and put away. Thus far the law can be set up for all. But are the limits thereby laid down beyond which lies the kingdom of the good, and of that which is permitted?

194

No, it is only when we have reached the individual conscience that we come to the decisive point. All that does not proceed from faith is sin. Whatever the conscience does not forbid is good. The conscience is individual, free, and only liable to give reckoning to God. But the matter is not settled with this proclamation of the freedom of conscience. Who can deny that the conscience of the masses of the Gentile converts is anything but degraded and darkened? How indistinct, in such cases, are the boundaries between conscience, bad habits, and caprice! The aim is the transformation and education of this conscience till it attains to Christian standards. The 'nous,' the practical reason itself, must be changed step by step, that it may be entirely weaned from its former worldly standards and may become capable of understanding God's will, that which is good, pleasing and perfect. This comes to pass through the influence of the Christian community, and yet only on condition that the individual himself works at the purifying and deepening of his moral sense. The Christian has therefore never attained completeness in his relation to the world, but is always in the midst of a process of growth and development. He knows that he has always a number of problems set before him which only he, the individual, can solve, and which no written laws can prescribe.

195

The man who reached the height of these principles—higher than these there are none—did not only personally renounce the part of lawgiver in favour of free development of the Churches, but he saved Christianity itself from the fate of ever lasting immobility by setting up a code of laws. A religion like that of Islam is stereotyped for all time through its sacred book of laws, both from an ecclesiastical, social, and political point of view. Thanks to the Apostle Paul, Christianity is bound to no other law than that of the Christian conscience. To attain to this point of view, and still more, to maintain it, called for a courageous faith which perhaps no other man possessed in that age.

But did St. Paul himself remain quite true to his own principles in the advice that he gave and in his exhortations? The step between the setting up of a principle and its application in concrete instances is difficult enough, especially in the early days of any movement. In every case we have our highest authority in the principles which the apostle himself has laid down, even if his exhortations in the concrete case are opposed to them.

Great emphasis is laid in the epistles upon the duty of the renunciation of this world, and that with good reason: "Be not conformed to this world"; and "set your minds on the things that are above, for your citizenship is in heaven"; "seek the things that are above, not the things that are below"; "I am crucified unto the world and the world to me." In expres-

sions such as these the world is entirely identified with the kingdom of wickedness. But the heathen world, with which St. Paul was most intimately acquainted, was just that and exactly that. One need but think for a moment of cities such as Corinth, Ephesus, and Rome. To break with these heathen surroundings with their manners and customs, their superstition, with their laxity of public opinion, was a Christian's first and foremost duty. The very first act of the new life was to become completely different even in mere external matters to one's immediate surroundings. And as the power of custom was forever thwarting the new ideal, a constant struggle with custom—*i.e.* the world—was inevitable. St. Paul declares, too, in so many words that denial of the world means for him the struggle against sin. To die to sin, to be no longer the slave of sin, to crucify the flesh with its lusts and its desires—that was what bidding farewell to the world implied. Now, since the heathen religion and immorality were the chief representatives of sin and exercised at the same time the most powerful influence in public and private life was the art of that age much else than a public exhibition of immorality? It can easily be imagined that the domain into which the Christian was prohibited from entering was a very wide one. And, besides, there was the belief that it was the demons who were at work in all this wicked world, in the religious ceremonies and in the crimes, whereby a secret dread and horror were mingled with the purely moral hatred. No ultimate victory, no mere continuance even of early Christianity, had been possible without this great and powerful factor, fantastic though it was at times—renunciation of the world and constant struggle against it. The fiery winged words, especially the great battle-cry in the letter to the Ephesians, prove the apostle to have grasped the real position of affairs, and do him all honour. Wherever he could he thoroughly swept out all the heathen filth and dirt without listening to any terms, without even a thought of a compromise. It is to St. Paul that Christianity owes its aggressive courage, its boldness in the destruction of all idols. And yet it was none other than St. Paul himself who prevented the exaggeration of this renunciation into asceticism or into a dualistic speculation. "There is nothing secular but what is sinful"—*i.e.* what the Christian conscience calls sin—that is the limit: not a step further. In spite of all demons the old saying remains true: "The earth is the Lord's and all the fulness thereof." St. Paul did not set up the statement that all is of God as a speculative principle but as a practical maxim, and by it the things of this world are to be judged. "I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean of itself, save that to him who accounteth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean." And on this the apostle's great sayings are founded: "All things are yours—even the world," and "All things are lawful." When one reflects upon the situation of the first Christians, they are indeed sufficient to excite one's amazement. In every crisis of his missionary labours St. Paul adhered firmly to these principles. As against the Judaizing party he rescues the freedom with which Christ has set us free. Against the ascetics at Rome, who imagined themselves compelled by religious

scruples to forgo meat and wine, he takes up the defence of the 'strong' brethren. It is right to use everything for which one can give God thanks. He rejects the doctrines of the ascetics of Colossae—"Touch not, taste not, handle not"—as commandments of men, and proclaims instead the principle of liberty. "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."

198

The question concerning meats offered to idols presented the greatest difficulty of all, since it entered more deeply than any other into the every day life of the converts. Every invitation to a meal, every purchase in the market, might bring the Christian into contact with this meat. The argument that by eating such meat one entered into communion with the demons to whom it was offered, made an impression albeit a transitory one—even upon St. Paul himself. But the real reason for abstinence is love alone, regard for the conscience of the weak brother. The individual is free even in this case to regulate his own conduct. If he can thank God for his meat, no man can condemn him. On one occasion a saying of the apostle's was misunderstood: he was supposed to have meant that a Christian was not allowed to consort any more with whoremongers, usurers, and idolaters. St. Paul emphatically protested against this misinterpretation of his words by the characteristic statement, "other wise you would have to leave this world." The Christian must take up his position in the world and remain therein, for God has made it, and it belongs to God. So, then, in spite of his call to renunciation, St. Paul represents with reference to the world the standpoint, not of the Pharisees but of Jesus, to which he merely gave a fuller application and a clearer definition.

199

To describe the duties which a man owes towards himself, St. Paul is fond of using the word 'sanctification,' and, in fact, generally speaking, words derived from the language of ritual. Here one can trace the influence of St. Paul's early training in the school of the Scribes. Jesus makes no use whatever of the Pharisaic terminology of sacred and profane. The opposite of 'holy' is not wicked, but unclean, unconsecrated; and the application to the world without, instead of to one's own heart, is only too easily made. It is not difficult to find reminiscences in St. Paul's writings of the earlier Jewish phraseology—this, *e.g.*, that it is especially the members, the body, *i.e.*, the external, that is to be sanctified rather than the heart above all else. Sanctification is therefore, as in later Christian literature, something that is strictly limited. It consists in avoiding the sins of the flesh, and in repressing sensuality. If we recall the few facts that we know as to the past history of the Christian converts, *e.g.*, at Corinth, and remember the difficult position in which they were placed in the world in which they lived then, we can easily realize that sanctification, in the narrow sense of the word, was bound to constitute the first task of the Christian life. A higher morality can only grow up where the individual has attained the mastery over his lower, his animal impulses. Hence the following sentence stands at the head of all the rest of the apostle's exhortations to the

Thessalonians: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication." The first sign that one is to look for in the newly baptized Christian is that he no longer follows his lusts, but has nailed them for good to the Cross. So again in the great exhortation in the Epistle to the Romans: the presenting of our bodies as a sacrifice to God—*i.e.*, their sanctification—is placed before everything else. A passage in the First Epistle to the Corinthians shows us that this duty was by no means regarded as a matter of course. The Christians at Corinth must have been heard reasoning somewhat as follows: As complete liberty is granted in matters of food, seeing that the belly perishes, so sexual intercourse, too, is one of the adiaphora, for the whole body is doomed to corruption. The abhorrence which this reasoning excited in St. Paul, and the number of arguments which he employed against it, prove to us how serious he considered the danger to be. For the Greeks, religion was almost entirely a matter of ceremonial. The apostle's main object, therefore, was to show them that self-discipline in the ordinary everyday life—and especially chastity—was a part of religion itself, and that without the fulfilment of this preliminary condition they could have no share in redemption or in communion with God. The immense emphasis that was thus laid upon sanctification naturally led to a certain narrowing of the Christian conception of duty as a whole. That which in the teaching of Jesus appears merely as a part, and not even a very prominent part, of the Christian ideal, seems to be the one thing needful in many passages in St. Paul's writings. But such concentration was an absolute necessity. Here was the most dangerous enemy. The full impetus of the attack must be directed against him, and he must be completely routed, and then the way to the higher stages of Christian morality would be rendered possible. In Jewish writings of a moral character we find exactly the same emphasis laid upon the same duty. St. Paul is here working for the education of the masses. He has to raise them up out of the mire and filth of the world to the level of the morality of the Gospel. And by the side of these exhortations we read those beautiful words to the Philippians: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." The man who sets up so exalted and comprehensive an ideal is far from expending all his moral force in the struggle against sensuality.

As we pass on to consider St. Paul's relation to social institutions, it is surprising to find in what favourable terms he speaks of the State, and that, too, when Nero sat on the throne. The difference between Jesus and His apostle is very striking in this point. For Jesus living in Palestine, the State is naturally regarded as a foreign power resting upon brute force and oppression. For Paul, the Roman citizen, it is the great empire of peace, which enables him to exercise his calling as missionary without let or hindrance, and more than once protects him and his congregations from the Jews and the rabble. Thus he calls the State the great minister of God for good. It receives all its power from God Himself. It is none other than

the State that will for a season restrain Antichrist, and thereby render the undisturbed expansion of Christianity possible. It is very probable that we have here the after-effects of important doctrines of the Pharisees, dating from a time when politics and religion were unfortunately intermingled. Had it not been for his own fortunate experience, however, he would not have given them the powerful expression which he did. But one must be very careful not to confuse this optimistic religious view of the State with anything like patriotic feeling. St. Paul sought his own fatherland, and that of all Christians, in heaven, and that not only after his imprisonment at Home. Hence, too, the duties of the Christian to the State are practically all included in the paying of taxes and the rendering of the outer marks of obedience. The Lord of the Christians is after all not the Caesar at Home, but Jesus in heaven, whose speedy return shall put an end even to the Roman empire. If we look at the 13th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans carefully, there is no perceptible trace of political thinking, or even of political interest. The only matter that is of importance from the point of view of the world's history is that even before the great struggle between Church and State broke out, Christians are forbidden under all circumstances to engage in revolution. That is not much, but it saved the Church.

202

St. Paul regards the organization of human society, the relation of master and slave, as something divinely ordained and admitting of no reform. There is no thought of the abolition of slavery, or of equality at least between Christian slaves and their masters. God calls the one to be a slave and the other to be a master: hence one can serve Him in either relation. The only result of any attempt to change this social order would be a state of uncertainty and danger. Hence the slave, even if liberated, had better make no use of his manumission. The real reason for this indifference to the existing order is not only the hope that the end of the world is near at hand—and with that, of course, all else will end—but also the feeling that these social differences neither directly further nor hinder one's development, but that they are beneficial or injurious according to the use which the Christian makes of them. And, besides, it must not be forgotten that modern slavery is a very different thing from ancient. The modern feelings of misery and wretchedness which we associate with slavery were then unknown. And yet St. Paul is not the man simply to leave things as he found them. In the passages relating to the duties of domestic life which are to be found in the later letters and in the Epistle to Philemon we have the first brief but promising attempts to Christianize the relationship of master and slave. If the Christian master and the Christian slave will ever remember their responsibility to their heavenly Master, then a new spirit is bound by degrees to find an entrance. The Christian master is to look upon his former runaway slave who now returns of his own free will as his "brother beloved." Instead of severing the existing relationships without substituting anything better for them, simply in order to proclaim a merely negative result—the freedom from bondage—the apostle endeavours to Christianize the social order of his day.

203

How different, again, are the problems which Jesus. and His apostle respectively had to solve with regard to marriage and the family. Apart from the frivolous practice of divorce which He abolished, Jesus could reckon upon a condition of affairs that was at bottom sound. St. Paul, on the contrary, finds himself compelled to start from the very beginning, to lay the foundations on which later a healthy family life could be built. That he did this is sufficient of itself to prove that he was more than an ascetic. It would be well for us to read the descriptions of the apostles in the later "Acts," how they travel among the heathen populations making it their main object to separate man and wife by setting up the standard of an absolute continence.

204

There was no more decided opponent of asceticism on this point than the author of the first letter to the Corinthians, who enjoins their marital duties upon husband and wife, and warns them against a dangerous continence. He speaks of these matters in the down right way of old times without any appearance of prudery, which is very different from our fastidious treatment of these subjects. In a world full of crime, uncleanness, and sordidness of every kind he recognized his vocation in the education of the masses to the ideals of honourable marriage and constant fidelity. Perhaps he demanded too little: obedience of the women, love of the men—more the passages in the letters do not contain: but then this little contained, after all, all that was important, and on this foundation a new and healthy life could be built up. He likewise commended in a few brief and wise words the education of their children to Christian fathers and mothers, and to the former the duty of obedience. Taking it all in all, we have in St. Paul an educator with a thoroughly healthy understanding for all that was necessary and wholesome.

205

But, then, is there not the celebrated chapter in the First Epistle to the Corinthians? Here, surely, we have the words of a monk and an enthusiast.

First of all, "the present distress" and the "shortness of the time" have to a certain extent shifted his point of view. He here strikes a note which reminds one of the apocalypse in St Mark xiii.: "Woe to them that are with child and that give suck in those days." But there are also echoes of thoughts of Jesus Himself. Just as Jesus uplifts His voice in warning against the light-heartedness with which as before, in the days of Noah, so once more before the end of the world—they "were marrying and giving in marriage," St. Paul likewise fights against the fettering of the soul in the presence of eternity: "they that have wives . . . . as though they had none." That can be understood by reference to the teaching of Jesus. But then, further: the unmarried man can care for the Lord better than the married; marriage dulls a man's sense to higher things. As though this aptitude for the higher life were especially noticeable in bachelors and unmarried women! Paul was not married. He had his calling as an apostle, which entirely engrossed him. He forgot that when, while writing these words, he fancied all unmarried men like himself. The principal reason, however, is yet to come: there is something unclean in marriage; only the unmarried woman can be holy both body

and soul—*i.e.*, marriage defiles. Hence celibacy and virginity are higher and better than marriage. Hence it is better to remain a widow than marry again. Marriage is a compromise between entire chastity and the weakness of the flesh: it is better than prostitution, and in comparison therewith not sinful but good. Thus writes the Rabbi in Paul, to whom the natural no longer appears clean. These sentences—the ideal in its entirety set up for all alike—do not stand on the level of the Gospel.

206

This will occasion no surprise to anyone who knows how difficult it is for a man to escape entirely from the influence of his past. On the contrary, it is surprising how one with such ideals, and starting from such premises, could write so exceedingly wisely, soberly, and with such entire self-suppression as St Paul in 1 Cor. vii. It is in this very chapter that he enjoins upon husband and wife their mutual duties, that he approves of mixed marriages, and would allow divorce if the heathen husband or wife so wish it. He allows marriage to virgins and to widows. He recommends it, if it must be, to those that are spiritually betrothed. The very man who has just presupposed that marriage is in a sense polluting, even though he has not said so in so many words, declares that the heathen husband is sanctified by consorting with the Christian wife; for the children surely are holy. And nowhere else but in this passage does St. Paul subordinate his own word, as advice or opinion, to the word of Jesus, which is a command. It may, therefore, be maintained with perfect justice that St. Paul consistently and zealously fulfilled his task of educating the heathen masses, sunken as they were in unnatural vice and frivolity, to a healthy and faithful family life, and that in spite of his favourite ideas, which smacked of the Rabbi and the ascetic. The spirit of Jesus completely dominated, not indeed his thoughts, but his acts in his missionary calling.

207

The apostle's prescription regarding the head-dress to be worn by women during divine service belongs to the reform of manners properly so called. The difference between St. Paul and Jesus is here again especially noticeable. In Jesus case we have only the three great realities by the side of which all details disappear. His gaze is directed upon eternity. St. Paul regulates a special case—woman's dress—insisting upon it with the greatest urgency, and marshals a whole array of reasons in support of the position. But the rule which the apostle lays down is intended to counteract woman's mistaken aim to be man's equal in everything; and then, in the midst of the strangest statements, we are surprised by the assertion of the essential equality of the two sexes: "Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, nor the woman without the man in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man (in Paradise) even so is the man also by the woman (since then), but all things of God." It was just the exaggerated emphasis which the apostle had laid upon the inferiority and subordination of woman that compelled him to reflect and make this correction.

In regulating the intercourse with the unbelievers, St. Paul sets up the simple principles of friendliness, peacefulness, and love, even towards slanderers and persecutors, and so remains true to the example of Jesus: "Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be

possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. As long as we have time let us do good to all men." He often bids his converts think of what their heathen neighbours will be likely to say. Consideration for them should be a spur to every individual to press on towards perfection. The only passage in which he issues a curt command to be entirely separate from the servants of Beliar (quoting Old Testament texts in support of what he says), is so entirely without connection with its context that its genuineness has rightly been called in question. All that we know else of the apostle is the very opposite of anxious timidity. The Christian may associate fearlessly with sinners as long as his conscience does not suffer hurt.

208

We have thus examined the Christian's position towards the world from every point of view. On its progress from the little villages round about the Sea of Galilee, out into the great world and into the great cities, Christianity encountered a number of new tasks and problems, the solution of which tested the power of Jesus' spirit. St. Paul was the first great leader in this forward march. The new religion is indebted to him for its boldness, for its undaunted faith, for its energy in saving the good seed and in pulling out the weeds in every new ground that was sown.

The second principal task which St. Paul had to take in hand was the regulation of the care of the community. Jesus had not founded any organized community, and had given His commandment of love of one's neighbour the widest possible extension by especially including one's enemies. The brotherhood of believers became the real sphere for the exercise of this love of one's neighbour, both for the first Christian society and for St. Paul. Thereby, no doubt, the commandment of Christ was narrowed. The aim of the Christian mission is, it is true, ever more and more to include the whole world in the community. But, as a matter of fact, there is a clearly defined boundary line between the world and the community, and this is often only too plainly visible. The love of one's brother no longer means the love for every human being, who is my brother, but love for the Christian alone. The word φιλαδελφια is used amongst Christians since St. Paul's time in this narrower sense, but so it had already been used in the Jewish congregations. There is indeed an approximation on the part of the Christian to the Jewish communities, for in both alike, sanctification and love of the brethren are accounted the highest virtues. But this concentration was again necessary and beneficial for Christianity. If words and feelings were to be turned into deeds, then this vague and undefined love had to crystallize into love of the community—the love, *e.g.*, of a Corinthian convert for all his townsmen was in any case an empty phrase, that for his fellow Christians might at least be genuine; and, besides, St. Paul was always careful to see that the duty of love beyond the limits of the congregation was brought home to his disciples.

209

Every single congregation was always to consider itself a member of the whole body—the Church of the Christian brotherhood, and never as a self-existent unit. Did not the apostles, the prophets, and the teachers, belong to the whole Church? Jerusalem was the Mother

Church of all these congregations. The most palpable external sign of this connection was the collection for the poor at Jerusalem, which St Paul set on foot and carried through with a truly amazing energy, in spite of his often strained relations with the heads of that Church. But this was by no means all. Either the apostle himself or his fellow-workers brought each congregation news of the other congregations as they travelled about from place to place, thus awakening feelings of shame, resentment, emulation, and ambition. Each congregation felt that it was observed, and possibly also criticised, by all other congregations throughout the whole world. Besides this, there was the link formed by united prayer for the apostle and with him for congregations in distress. And finally, the exercise of a generous hospitality was regarded as a duty towards all missionaries and brethren on their travels, and they in their turn again strengthened the feelings of union between each and all. In this manner St. Paul created an organization so closely pieced together that no single link could fall out of the chain, but that each felt that it was kept in its place by the united efforts of all the rest; and in so doing he afforded Christian love a wide and varied sphere wherein to realize itself.

210

But its chief domain was after all that which lay nearest home—the individual congregation. Just like Jesus, St. Paul esteemed that love highest which did not go forth in search of distant and extraordinary deeds, but proved its strength in the ordinary and everyday life. A man might give all that he had to the poor and yet be without the right kind of love. It is this prosaic, everyday love—no sentimental enthusiasm—that St. Paul commends to the Corinthians, in the celebrated chapter, as the greatest thing in the world, as that which abideth forever when speaking with tongues, prophecy, and knowledge have passed away; yea, which is even greater than faith and hope. There is indeed nothing simpler than to exercise patience and goodness, and not to boast or envy, not to offend against good manners nor seek one's own, and not to bear a grudge; and therefore of course nothing harder. By all that he did and said St. Paul strove that the Christians should pursue this simple ideal. And yet what difficulties were placed in his path by this very system of separate congregations! Parties and factions seemed forever to be forming, and celebrated teachers to be founding schools. The strong looked down with contempt upon the weak, and these in their turn condemned the strong. There were lawsuits about property which brought the brethren into evil repute amongst their heathen neighbours. The apostle intervened in each case with a peremptory yet friendly admonition to live in unity and practise mutual concession, modesty and humility. He came in course of time to attach the highest value to this congregational life as the most important school for the training of the individual. Here frequent occasions occur for the individual to forget himself, to become of no reputation, to retain the self-mastery by concession and patient endurance, to allow freedom of conscience to be ruled by love, and to further a brother's best interests in all things. But then the consequence of this is that each no longer has to fight his own battle, but feels himself supported, comforted and strengthened by the whole community. St. Paul revives the old picture of

211

the body and the members, where each member is of importance for the body, and gives it a new and magnificent application and meaning. When one member suffers all suffer; when one is honoured all are glad; it is a duty to rejoice with them that do rejoice and to weep with them that weep. Who can complain any longer that love has been narrowed? Surely it is Jesus Himself who imparts to this brotherhood this unexampled capacity for active love? St. Paul merely caught up this love that issued from Jesus, assigned to it a narrower sphere, and then multiplied it in the congregations which he founded.

212

St. Paul's third and last task, the regulation of public worship, is almost entirely a part of the second. For Jesus there was naturally no such thing as a Christian public worship, for the simple reason that He founded no Church. He taught His disciples to pray both by themselves and together; and it is at least the beginning of such worship that one liturgical prayer, the Lord's Prayer, is ascribed to Him. The necessity of a special separate Christian form of worship made itself felt in the first congregation, otherwise there had been no continuance of the corporate life of the Church. Its two principal component parts—Baptism and the Lord's Supper—are signs of this very corporate life, intended to mark, the one the reception of the member into the community, the other the public meetings of the brethren. We must be careful to remember this when we come to examine St Paul's regulations.

In regard to both sacraments St. Paul is no longer a creator. He simply accepts the tradition. The public worship of the Church was likewise in all probability modelled after the pattern of the Jewish synagogues. This much we may safely infer from the use of Aramaic words; only the enthusiasm of the congregations generate, at any rate at first, a far greater freedom and variety of forms. When an exaggerated, and at the same time selfish, form of pietism availed itself at Corinth of this freedom, to the destruction of all decency and order, St. Paul introduced a liturgical form of worship, and thereby also checked the desire of the women for emancipation. And for the same reason he was compelled to turn his attention to the common meals, which at times degenerated into pious drinking bouts, and to issue strict regulations as to the right and wrong way of partaking of the Supper of the Lord. In both cases we see how the good order of the life of the congregation, the edification of all instead of merely a few, the participation of the poorer brethren in the meals—all of them social considerations—were really decisive. It is more important that all should profit than that one or two should be caught up into the seventh heaven for a few moments. His digression on love, while treating of ceremonial regulations, is his grandest and completest statement of this truth.

213

So far all is simple. The Church must have its outward symbols and its means of edification, and these things must be so regulated that they really conduce to the Church's benefit. And though we have here much that is new and that goes beyond what Jesus taught, yet the

purely moral character of His Gospel is left inviolate. But through St. Paul a new value comes to be attached to acts of worship which cannot be harmonized with the teaching of Christ. At Corinth Christians suffered themselves to be baptized a second time for their deceased relations, and St. Paul refers to this in his defence of the resurrection. That is a heathen conception of baptism which turns it into an 'opus operatum,' and as such a guarantee for blessedness. Whilst in this case St. Paul simply accepts the superstitious view without saying any thing, he is himself actually the cause of it in the case of the Lord's Supper. To please his Greek converts he compares it to the Greek and Jewish sacrificial feasts. He is the first to contrast the holy food there consecrated with all other that is profane, and bids us see in the sickness and death of many Christians the judgment upon their profane participation in the holy meal. Now, that was an accommodation to Greek superstition which led to the establishment of a religion of a lower, less spiritual, nature as a direct consequence. But the mere fact that an extraordinary value is attached to ceremonial acts is in itself fatal. The conception of what constitutes a Christian is here enlarged in a very ominous fashion.

214

The apostle, however, knew full well that besides participation in acts of ritual there is an altogether different manner in which Christians can have communion with God. Like Jesus, he exhorts his hearers and readers to offer up prayer and thanksgiving, to place their trust in God, to commit all their cares to Him, to accept everything, even affliction and suffering, as from His hand, to fear Him and to long for Him. The prayer of thanksgiving is above all else the sign of a genuine Christian for him: he that thus prays stands in a right relation to God. And the true sacrifice that is well pleasing to God is not any participation in worship, but the devotion of body and soul to His service. All those superstitious statements to which allusion has been made are in St. Paul's hands means to an end: in the one case, that of baptism, to prove the Christian hope; in the other, that of the Lord's Supper, to secure decency and good order in the congregation. It is not for St. Paul himself, but for the future history of his congregation, that the seeds of mischief have been sown. Henceforth participation in divine worship takes its place side by side with trust in God, and two kinds of religion, of communion with God, begin to compete with each other.

215

Let us now review once more the whole of the Christian claim, as it is presented by St Paul, and compare it with that made in the first instance by Jesus, and we shall perceive that a great forward movement has taken place, and on the whole, it has preserved the direction imparted to it by Jesus. The Christian ideal has become richer, more varied and comprehensive, but it has not essentially changed, and it has not deteriorated. This we can best realize when we read all the passages in which St. Paul briefly summarizes the essentials of the new religion. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of God's commandments is every thing. In Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails aught, but faith working through love. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering,

goodness, faith, gentleness, purity. But now remaineth faith, love, hope; but love is the greatest of these.

The man who formulates his claim under these main headings understood Jesus better, grasped His meaning more fully, than any other that came after him. And this sympathetic comprehension of that which was essential in Christianity, enabled him to carry the teaching of Jesus from the Jews to the Gentiles, retaining the human and the eternal, while rejecting the merely national. This brilliant definition of the ideal is at the same time the best criticism of all that is imperfect in St. Paul's work. A great man deserves to be measured by his aims rather than by his achievements. He who would understand St Paul aright should seek to find him at the height of his ideal, and then he will discover that he is not very far distant from Jesus. But to present the claim of Jesus to the Gentiles and to maintain it in its entirety was indeed a very great achievement on the part of St. Paul. His work was assailed by two great enemies, which sought to compel him to descend from the height of his ideal and adapt himself to the imperfections of the uncultured masses: they were, on the one hand, the gross vices, on the other the enthusiasm of his heathen converts. The sinful life that was so often continued after conversion, the instances of incest and fornication, the lawsuits, the factions all seemed to cry with one accord: lower your standard, at least temporarily. On the other hand, the ascetic aberrations of some, the spiritualistic follies of others, the pride of the 'strong,' the striving to shake off all control and to cease from all work, appeared to be so many indications of the necessity of a law to check this want of discipline and sobriety. It is amazing to notice with what firmness and clearness St. Paul continues to travel along the path indicated to him by Jesus. As a wise educator he took circumstances into account and remembered that "le mieux est souvent l'ennemi du bien." He insisted on the appointment of Christian judges in order to put an end to the hateful spectacle of law suits between Christians in heathen courts. He excommunicated the immoral members of the Corinthian church and summoned them to repentance in order to cleanse the congregations of the worst stains. When he enumerates the different vices, he seems to say that certain deadly sins exclude a man more than others from the kingdom of God. As a preliminary measure against the enthusiasts he appoints a definite order of service. These examples might be multiplied, but nowhere do we find a single one which does not come under the category of purely educational and provisional measures. As to what constitutes a Christian, St. Paul's answer is always that of Jesus. He recognizes no subordinate form of Christianity for the masses. He ever reverts—often immediately after making some concession—to Jesus' whole claim on conduct and on character; the ideal ever remains above the real and yet ever within reach. He that is in Christ Jesus is a new creature: the old is passed away; all things have become new. And in spite of all the danger presented by enthusiasm the Christian stands secure in the freedom with which Christ has made him free.

St. Paul had begun his missionary labours with the preaching of the judgment. He ends as he began. The preaching of the ideal and the lofty Christian claim both call for this conclusion. Whether a man is pressing forward towards the ideal, or lagging behind, is by no means a matter of indifference. It is a question of life and death. The return of Jesus, which all Christians await, will bring with it the judgment, when all, apostles and congregations alike, will have to render an account of the result of their lives, and receive praise or blame in equity and truth.

With a mighty loud voice, just as one of the old Christian prophets, St. Paul cries out to his converts, "Maranatha, the Lord is at hand. Redeem the time. Your salvation is nearer than at first. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Be ye not, brethren, in the darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief in the night. Let us not sleep, but let us be sober. Let us put away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light." That is the language of Jesus Himself. Just as in the claim that he makes, so in this message of the judgment, St. Paul has suffered himself to be inspired by his Master. And this is yet one other proof, that in spite of the ecclesiastical transformation which he effected, he wished to bring to the Gentiles Jesus and His Gospel alone.

For us, of course, he has left great and important questions without an answer. What is the meaning of faith and grace and church, if in the last resort it is the word of judgment that decides the faith even of Christians? When St. Paul invited the Gentiles to enter the Christian community he promised them that the road to salvation should be simple and easy. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." When he disputed with the Judaizing party he persistently maintained the position that the believer was sure of his salvation and safe from the wrath that was to come. The Christian's joy and glory consisted, he declared, in the absence of all fear, and the assurance of God's everlasting love. That is why the Christian knows himself to be called and elected from all eternity. But the preaching of the judgment, with its alternating notes of fear and hope, and the uncertainty of salvation which it causes to arise in every soul, contradicts the high value attached by St Paul to the Church as well as to the individual's faith in his election.

219

At times this idea of the value of the Church seems to dominate St. Paul to the exclusion of every other. Even in the extreme case of incest at Corinth lie hopes that the man's soul will be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. If God punishes the thoughtless participation in the Lord's Supper with sickness and with death, then this punishment is merely a means of chastening lest we be condemned together with the world. He that has built badly upon the foundation of Jesus Christ shall nevertheless be saved "yet so as by fire." God's faithfulness is so great that He must complete what He has begun. The meaning of statements such as these appears to be none other than that all Christians should be saved even though, it is true, under different degrees of blessedness. And this is just where St. Paul's extremely high

estimate of the external ecclesiastical organization finds its expression. But passages which point in a contrary direction are not wanting. If Israel be the type of the people of God, and if its fate have any typical meaning, then it is clear that church membership does not confer any certainty of salvation. Is it not written that God was not well pleased with many of those that passed through the sea and they were overthrown in the wilderness? The message of the judgment, therefore, when it is addressed to Christians, always takes the possibility of their failing to obtain salvation into account. Like the preaching of Jesus itself, it is meant to be taken seriously.

220

The contradiction in which St. Paul stands with himself is a necessary one, and arises from his historical position. On the one hand he has to gain converts for the Church, and must exalt it as the only road to salvation, and therefore separates mankind into those within and those without the Church, as the saved and the lost. On the other hand, as a true disciple of Jesus, he is bound to destroy all confidence in the Church—even the Christian Church—and place the individual in the presence of eternity and God's judgment before everyone that does not do the right. Hence this hesitation and contradiction. St. Paul is an ecclesiastic and a Christian with a living personal faith. All the later teachers of the Church who were at once apologists of the ecclesiastical institutions and disciples of the Gospel, have followed in the apostle's contradictory footsteps.

Yet this 'yea' and 'nay' cannot be St. Paul's last word. Salvation as he understands it is only attained where the individual has reached the certainty that he is God's child personally and that nothing can separate him from God's love. This certainty is as far removed from confidence in church membership, as it is from the alternating fear and hope inspired by the thought of the day of judgment. It is something purely personal, something that the individual must experience for himself and that none other can give him, because it is only true for himself.

221

It is experienced as he gazes upon the Cross, the revelation of God's love; as he places his trust in God's faithfulness, of which he has made trial in the course of his own life, and as he listens for the voice of God's Spirit which testifies to our spirit that we are the children of God. It was the final aim of all St Paul's missionary labours that each convert won over by him should reach the goal to which Jesus had brought the disciples in the Lord's Prayer, wherein they receive all things as from God's hand and are safe for time and for eternity in His fatherly love.

St. Paul brought Jesus to the Gentiles as their Redeemer who uplifts them to the new life with God. He attained that which Jesus Himself desired, but in his own, even somewhat abnormal, manner.

In the first place, his aim is so to bring home to his hearers their sinfulness and powerlessness and their liability to the judgment, that every road to safety by their own efforts is

cut off and only the way of faith remains open to them. This may be called St. Paul's methodistic presentment of faith.

In the next place, he does not present Jesus the Redeemer in all His life and suffering as the object of faith, but only the Cross and Resurrection of the Son of God. This is St. Paul's methodistic presentment of the Cross.

The form which St. Paul's missionary preaching took was the result, in the first instance, of his own personal experience. He himself became a Christian in an altogether abnormal fashion after having been a Rabbi and a persecutor. But the really decisive factor was after all his extraordinarily powerful ecclesiastical interest which impelled him so to narrow the way to salvation that it led through the Church alone, whose mark was faith in the crucified Son of God. But though the methods were changed, the Gospel itself remained as yet the same. Nay, rather, the new machinery proved really effective in bringing Jesus to the heathen. In his representation of the promise, the ideal and the aim of redemption, St. Paul is simply Jesus' disciple, and indeed the profoundest and most powerful of all.

222

But St. Paul is likewise the first to have entered into the forms, ideas, and conceptions of the Greeks at innumerable points of his missionary labours. He did not merely bodily transplant the Gospel from one place to another. He saw that the new plant took root and acclimatized itself. There are far more points of contact between the Greeks and St. Paul's practice than between them and his theology, which is embedded rather in Jewish ideas. But the great achievement is this, that the same man took up that which was Greek and that which was Jewish fused the two elements and then entirely subordinated them to a third, the Christian, in Jesus as he understood Him. For it is not the amalgamation of Hellenism and Judaism, but the conquest of both for Jesus, that assigns St. Paul his high place in the world's history.

223

THE PAULINE THEOLOGY.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PRESUPPOSITIONS.

THE Pauline theology is an entirely new phenomenon on the soil of Christianity. In the early Church at Jerusalem, isolated theological propositions had been set up which had arisen in the course of reflection about Jesus and in controversy with the Jews. They spoke of the Son of God and of the Messiah, of the wonderful call of Jesus and of His vicarious death. But nowhere do we find even the feeling of the necessity for any clear co-ordination of all these thoughts. The Jews—even the learned Jews—never felt any desire to build up systems of doctrine. There never existed any systematic theology of the synagogue. The Rabbis taught the explanation of single passages, the comparison with other passages, the formation of syllogisms, and also the allegorical method of exegesis. The expositions of St Paul in Rom. iv. and Gal. iii. are good instances of Jewish methods of exegesis. As soon, however, as St Paul leaves the ground of Scripture his methods are no longer rabbinical. He would not, however, really have been able to learn anything even from the learned Jews of Alexandria. All his knowledge of Greek philosophy did not make a philosopher of Philo after all. His business is biblical exegesis after the manner of the Rabbis, only from the point of view of the Greek teachers. At all events, St Paul was so imperfectly acquainted with Greek philosophy itself, that it had no influence over him, and that which he created in his theology is no philosophy either.

224

St Paul's education at the feet of the Rabbis certainly proved to be of great importance for him. Here he learned to know and understand the Sacred Book, learned rabbinical methods of interpretation, and many thoughts and conceptions of contemporary Jewish theology. Henceforward he could command the resources of a trained jurist. His later doctrines as to the annulling of the law and justification by faith are proof of this. Here it is that he heard men speak of Adam, of the Fall, of the death of all men. In fact, generally speaking, his interest in sin and the avoidance of sin first awakens in the school of the Rabbis. It is probably to the same source that he owes his initiation into apocalyptic mysteries. One single circumstance, however, should warn us against forming an exaggerated estimate of this rabbinical influence; it is the use St Paul makes of the Septuagint. He takes no interest in the Hebrew text. In his arguments he uses words of the Septuagint to which nothing corresponds in the Hebrew. The influence of his masters cannot therefore have extended very far.

The decisive factor in the genesis of St Paul's theology was his personal experience, his conversion on the road to Damascus.

Henceforward his estimate of things was an entirely different one. All that had before seemed to him great and important, was now of little worth. He saw everything in a new light. His whole being was radically changed. Rarely, indeed, has such an entire alteration

225

taken place in any man. Previous to his conversion, the law had been his chief delight; he had been contented with himself and vainglorious; he had found himself without fault, and trusted optimistically in his own strength. Afterwards arose the consciousness that he had been Messiah's enemy and persecutor of the cause of God. Hence mistrust and even condemnation of the whole of his previous life. Then the crucified Jesus had been a fanatic and a blasphemer, overtaken by a just punishment; now this same sufferer on the cross was the Messiah, the Redeemer, the Son of God. So decisive an experience, producing such an entire reversal of all values, was bound to become an unparalleled incentive to thought and inquiry. To think now meant to re-think. The convert's first duty, the first point that he was bound to clear up for himself, was that during the whole of his previous life he had been pursuing a wrong course, and that now he was in the right one. Paul changed his previous thoughts so entirely that it is lost labour nowadays to attempt to trace his course back to the ideas which he entertained before his conversion. In fact, we are completely ignorant as to what ideas he exactly had at that time. One thing alone is certain, that he abandoned those which he had and buried them out of sight. The apostle had one theology and one alone, and that is a Christian one. Each single word of his epistles flows from his Christian consciousness. There is no natural theology for him personally, no presupposition of sin, death, and the judgment which preceded his knowledge of Jesus. It was the knowledge of Jesus, on the contrary, which dictated to him the shape and fashion of all his presuppositions. If, in spite of this, we appear to derive a contrary impression from whole portions of his letters, then this is to be traced to the second source of his theology—his apologetic interest.

226

For he that was converted in so violent a fashion is now missionary to the Gentiles. The judgment is near at hand: his task is to save out of heathenism as many as are predestined to salvation. The theology which is presented to us in his letters is neither that of the Jewish Rabbi nor yet that of the convert of Damascus reflecting on his previous and his present state, but it is that of the missionary. What he did was not merely to turn his thoughts to account for the practical aims of his mission, but, as far as we know them, he formed them during and for his mission. St Paul's line of thought may best be termed Christian missionary theology from an eschatological point of view. Why else should he have employed the Greek language and Greek forms and conceptions, and thrust the really rabbinical train of thought so completely into the background? Or why else, again, should he have attached so great an importance to conversion, which divides, or ought to divide, the life of every Christian into two halves? But if the Pauline theology is a missionary theology, then it is the theology of an apologist, the first great system of Christian apologetics—compared with which all the apologetic thoughts of the early Church at Jerusalem are but as modest preliminaries.

227

In the next place, the great twofold divisions of this system of apologetics is the result of St Paul's peculiar position between Gentiles, Jews, and Judaizing Christians. It is first a theology of redemption the basis of his missionary preaching to the Greeks; and secondly,

anti-Jewish apologetics—the defence of that same preaching against Judaizers and Jews. His theological work, however, is not exhausted in his tireless efforts to seek and to save the lost and to beat back the foes from without. He aims likewise at a theology for mature Christians. He seeks to penetrate to the depths of the thoughts about God contained in the Holy Scriptures and in the revelation of Christ. It is a Christian gnosis which has penetrated even into the world of spirits and into the divine mysteries. We must now attempt to present these three great facts of his system of thought separately, though they frequently, of course, intersect and blend with each other.

228

CHAPTER XV.

THE PAULINE SOTERIOLOGY.

ST PAUL understood the word 'salvation' in a very wide and comprehensive sense—not merely as liberation from evil or from sin, but as salvation out of this present evil world into the good world which in a sense is future but has now already begun. Hence the simplest division of our subject will be:—This present evil world and its powers; the crisis; Jesus the Saviour; the salvation of believers.

This Present Evil World and its Powers.

In his missionary preaching St Paul began with the message of the judgment that is to come. Under the lurid light of the day of judgment he revealed the entire destruction of his hearers. The theoretical basis of this preaching is a radically pessimistic view of the whole world, which takes no account of the difference between Jew and Gentile, a pessimism which extends to the whole human race, and even beyond it to nature and the supersensuous world itself.

In the first place, the whole human race, the whole of creation, is doomed to death. Since Adam, death has seized upon the sovereignty and reigns supreme. It has found its way everywhere. There are no exceptions. That is not a matter of course, it is unnatural. Man's will is to live. Hence he feels his mortality as a hard slavery which causes him to sigh in deepest melancholy.

229

Whence comes this doom of death, mysterious and yet certain?

The Jew Paul answers, from sin. The wages of sin is death. Since Adam's sin death goes in and out amongst men like a hereditary disease; but at the same time it is the consequence of the sin of each individual. For all men have sinned and therefore all die. The universality of sin follows as a simple inference from the universality of death. St Paul is here thinking, in the first place, of individuals. They are free agents—freely have they sinned and so incurred the penalty of death. Thus far St Paul has not diverged from the teaching of the Rabbis. But he soon leaves that teaching behind him when he declares that it is not in the power of the individual's free will to accept or to reject sin. Sin has acquired a sovereign power over the human race since Adam. There is a kingdom of sin, and that is humanity itself. We all, Jews and Gentiles, are under sin. There is a law of sin in our members to which we are subject. Hereby St Paul declares the necessity of sin for all men, and not merely its actual universality. He gives expression to this thought of the necessity of sin in opposition to the rabbinical doctrine, led thereto perhaps by a deeper insight into the innermost life of the soul and the play of motives, still more perhaps by his apologetic. For this thought is a necessary postulate for the doctrine of salvation through Christ, which might appear to be superfluous as long as merely the universality of sin were maintained and exceptions were conceivable.

230

But what is the origin of sin, with its all-compelling power?

St Paul gives two answers to this question, the difference between which is not explained in his letters.

1. The whole of mankind is involved in the fall of the first man. Through the first man, Adam, came sin, and as its consequence death, unto all men. That is the Jewish theory built up by the Rabbis on the foundation of Gen. iii. Its greatness consists in the fact that it is an attempt to give expression to the thought of the solidarity of the whole human race. The first man is made to appear before God as the representative of the whole race, and his fall is therefore accounted as the fall of the race. But the juridical and, as it were, historical form of this theory is unsatisfactory. Sin enters from without by chance, without any inner necessity, and obtains sovereign power by the commission of one single and accidental fault. And this fault of the single individual has then to be placed by the supreme judge to the debit account of all his descendants, as though each one of them had committed it himself. Such a juridical appreciation of facts harmonizes with Jewish modes of thought, but with no deeper sentiment. It was more for the sake of antithesis, too, that St Paul made use of this theory. He wished by means of it to establish clearly the universal significance of Christ.

2. Sin clings to man's bodily nature. All men are flesh, and sin dwells in the flesh. Man is sold under sin because he is flesh. Nothing good dwells in him, that is, in his flesh. So closely are the body and sin connected that St Paul creates the expression "body of sin." This theory is neither Jewish nor Greek, but an original creation of the apostle's. The Jewish starting-point is, it is true, clear enough: the opinion that the human body is weak, impotent and corruptible, keeping men in entire separation from God. Jewish, too, is the opposition between flesh and spirit, instead of between body and soul, as the Greeks say. But the pessimism which we read in St Paul's sentences is by no means Jewish. The conviction of the weakness of the flesh and of the existence of evil motives or of the evil heart in man never suffered the Jews to abandon their confidence in their own strength and righteousness. Side by side with the feeling of sinfulness, the most characteristic features of Jewish piety are self-satisfaction and boasting on account of good works. Words such as "I know that in me, *i.e.*, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" must have had an altogether repulsive sound for Jewish ears; and Paul is very well aware how he tramples the optimism and self-satisfaction of his fellow-countrymen under foot when he uses them. And when he goes so far as to say "The flesh lusteth against the spirit," he appears to take the flesh as the principle of sin and sensuality, just as matter is the seat of evil for the Greeks. Here he is ranging himself on the side of the dualism of the later philosophy which is ultimately derived from Plato. He draws nearer to the Greeks, just as Philo did before. But for all that St Paul does not turn into a Greek. There is an effective barrier to this conversion—the firm hold which he has, as a Jew, of the belief in the creation, which surfers no second principle to exist by the side of God, but derives the flesh as well as everything else from the Creator of the universe. There is besides this a second barrier: his belief as a Christian that the world and all that is in it—the

flesh therefore included—belong to God and those that are His, and that it is just the flesh in which the Spirit is predestined to lodge. Sin does not originate in the flesh—it takes up its abode therein as a visitor from outside, just as the Spirit is likewise to come in from without and dwell therein. It is evident, therefore, that this theory of St Paul's upon which he bases the necessity of sin is his own work. Hard personal struggles and sad experience of the power of the senses may very well have supported the theory. The decisive factor was the destruction of all his self-confidence, of all trust in his own natural powers through faith in Jesus the Redeemer. Complete pessimism as regards the body is the necessary converse of the optimistic trust in Christ and His Spirit.

Did St Paul himself reconcile his two theories of the origin of sin? Not in his letters—*e.g.* in 1 Cor. xv. death is derived from Adam's fall and after wards from Adam's earthly nature, without any attempt at reconciling the two statements. And the same applies therefore to sin. But can we rest content with this conclusion? Surely we must choose between the two. The connection between flesh and sin is either antecedent or subsequent to the fall. In the first case it is cause; in the latter, effect.

Here we stand face to face with the ultimate questions of theological speculation. The gnostics soon afterwards occupied themselves with these matters. In fact, we here enter upon the domain of the Pauline gnosis and leave the field of thought covered by his missionary preaching. St Paul did not shirk these ultimate questions, but he came to no satisfactory conclusion, and contented himself with answers which are contradictory.

233

One can distinguish the germs of three theories.

1. The theory of evolution.—This present earthly world is related to the future spiritual world as the lower stage to the higher. First the natural (psychical), then the spiritual (pneumatic), first Adam, that is, of the earth, then He that is of heaven—Christ. St Paul develops this theory in 1 Cor. xv. for a definite purpose. He wants to make it perfectly plain to his Greek converts that the resurrection body will not suffer from the defects of the present body. Hence he contrasts it as the higher and the perfect with the lower and the imperfect. In so doing he adopts the story of the creation of man in Gen. ii., and thus obtains a theory which can easily be reconciled with the belief in the divine creation. It is full of a magnificent optimism. Onwards and upwards, step by step, leads the road. When the thought of the education of the human race obtained a footing in the Church towards the end of the second century, then men were glad to invoke the authority of St Paul. But as sin and the flesh are outside of St Paul's scope altogether in these passages in First Corinthians, they can be of no real importance for the ultimate questions.

2. The theory of degeneration.—Not only man but all nature is fallen from a state of glory into a state of corruption. The foundation is the story of the fall in Gen. iii. combined with the opposition between the spirit (before the fall) and the flesh (after the fall). Jewish legends (the books of Adam) and gnostic and Catholic theologians anticipate and continue

234

this line of thought. In Paul himself we only find a few scattered indications, which all, however, converge in this direction. The present evil world cannot as such be ascribed to God. God created it, and it was very good. Did not God, according to the Bible story, create the world and mankind in glory as a world of free spirits? Adam and the whole cosmos were confined within the bounds of matter (σάρξ) as a punishment for the fall. True, the flesh was created by God, but only as a means of chastisement, and that was death which according to Gen. ii. 17 was to follow on the very day of man's disobedience (*cf.* Rom. vii. 11: "Sin . . . slew me"). That, again, was nakedness (2 Cor. v. 4), of which man became conscious immediately after the fall: he had lost his former tabernacle, the body of his glory. It was the coming short of the glory of God (Rom. iii. 23), that is, of that body of glory created in God's image with which man had been clothed in Paradise. Mortality is the punishment for the fall from the world of spirits through the disobedience of the first man, and the groaning and travailing of the whole creation betokens the longing for the lost Paradise. It is only this theory that harmonizes with every step of St Paul's argument and completely explains his position with regard to the flesh which is God's creation and yet was not from the very first. But these subjects did not enter into his preaching to his new Gentile converts. And thus we can readily understand that this theory is only incidentally mentioned in his letters.

235

3. The theory of evil spirits. St Paul once mentions incidentally (2 Cor. xi. 5) that the serpent beguiled Eve—according to the Jewish tradition it was to commit adultery. This passage implies that the devil should be regarded as the cause of the whole of the evil condition of the world; nor is the absence of all mention of Satan in the chief passages in the Epistle to the Romans any argument to the contrary, for the place of Satan is there taken by a kind of mythological figure, an abstraction, sin. St Paul's thoughts always cross over to the spirit-world ultimately; proof of this can be found in other Epistles besides those to the Colossians and Ephesians. Even in the Epistles to the Romans and in First Corinthians we read of principalities, authorities and powers in the upper regions which would separate us from God, and which must be abolished as God's enemies before the end of the world. Now, as everything proceeds from God, and therefore likewise the angels, there must have been a rebellion in the spirit world and a falling away of some. On one occasion—it is in the passage relating to the head-dress of women during divine service—he alludes to the fall of the angels mentioned in Gen. vi. when the sons of God sought the daughters of men in marriage. On another, when speaking of the lawsuits of Christians with each other, he reminds the Corinthians that they, the saints, shall some day sit in judgment over the angels. All this presupposes apocryphal Jewish traditions as to the occurrences in the spirit world. Thus the fall has extended even to the world above, and so the picture of the present evil world is completed. All demons are of course counted amongst these fallen spirits, and as the whole of the heathen world—its religion and its immorality—is ascribed to their agency, this gnostic theory obtains an immediate practical significance. Satan is the God of this

236

world—*i.e.*, of the kingdom of sin—which is manifested, especially amongst the heathen, in so lurid a light.

St Paul's pessimism culminates in this last sentence concerning the God of this world. The view at which he finally arrives is that this present evil world was not originally so created by God, but has only become such through the fall, and that it is now governed by fallen angels, powers hostile to God. Various reasons led the apostle to form this awful opinion: contemporary Jewish thought and feeling, his own bitter experience, his realization of the darkness of the heathen world in which he worked, and of the lurid light cast by the approaching day of judgment. The apocalypse of Ezra shows us how strong a tendency the Jews had in times of national disaster to entertain such pessimistic views of the world's future. And yet, what a difference there is! For Ezra, there are still some righteous, few though they be in number, whereas St Paul writes, "None is righteous; no, not one," and "in me dwelleth no good thing." The reason for this difference is evident. St Paul's pessimism is intended to serve his apologetic. It is because Jesus alone is the Redeemer, that the world has to be presented as irredeemably wicked, and every other road to salvation closed to men. It is not the actual recognition of the greatness of sin and the impotence of man which is at the root of this theory, but faith in Christ necessitates these pessimistic postulates as presuppositions. There is a convincing proof of this statement. The pessimistic view of the world no longer holds good for the Christian, or at any rate only in a modified form. The Christian lives in God's world, and he is lord thereof. The theory of sin is an apologetic means for the awakening of faith; when once this end has been attained, it gives way to other conceptions.

237

It is evident that the apostle's apologetic is very far removed from the preaching of Jesus. Jesus was no pessimist, and yet He surely knew what was in man, and knew that no one was good. Children and birds and flowers were His delight. He rejoiced in God's love and in the good men whom He met. St Paul first violently extinguished every other light in the world so that Jesus might then shine in it alone. This exaggeration of the truth in the service of apologetics was the more fatal that the Church soon began to turn this pessimism to good account.

The Crisis. Jesus the Saviour.

In the scheme of St Paul's missionary preaching the message of the judgment and of death is followed by that of the crucified and risen Son of God. Here we have the heart and centre of the Pauline theology. Here we can see more clearly than in many other cases into the genesis of his creed. It goes right back to the deep personal experience connected with the vision of the risen Christ. And this experience imparts its personal character to the theory, producing an impression of strength and truth. But the necessity arises for presenting it in an apologetic form—it is recast from a theological point of view, and it is only now that it assumes the outer form with which we are familiar.

238

What did Paul learn of Jesus? For what was he indebted to Him?

He did not know Jesus upon earth, and only learnt some facts of His life by hearsay. His personal acquaintance with Jesus was only brought about by means of the vision on the road to Damascus. Here he saw the heavenly Jesus, the risen Lord, the Spirit, and was called by Him to be an apostle. Hence the Resurrection of Jesus comes to be a fact of very far-reaching influence for him. Death's reign is at an end. Eternity—the spirit world—enters in triumph into the world of sense. The morrow of the new day has dawned. Now, as the call at Damascus is the starting-point for the whole of St Paul's new life, the resurrection has really become the foundation of his religion for him.

A new light is forthwith shed upon the crucifixion likewise. Before this the Cross was the greatest stumbling-block, as it apparently refuted the claim of Jesus to be the Messiah. But no sooner was He accepted as the risen Lord than it came to appear as something divine. It was the means of salvation. By the sacrifice on the Cross God's message of love and grace was conveyed to man. These seem to us to be theological reflections. But the sense of pardon and blessedness which Paul derived from the Cross was a real personal experience. Henceforth it is for him the fixed centre round which all history turns, the source of all comfort, of all peace with God. St Paul sees the motto "God for us" written in great letters over the Cross.

239

There can be no doubt, therefore, that this experience is the root of St Paul's Christology. The articles of his creed, however, are a great deal more than the expression of this experience. In them as they have now come down to us we can hear the Christian apologist speaking. One instance above all others will serve to make this point clear. As the result of his experience St Paul might have said: "As for me, it was at the foot of the cross that I first learnt what God's love meant." But instead of this we read in the letters: "No man can attain to the certainty of this atonement save in the cross alone." That is the language of the apologist. Hence the extension to all men, the proof of necessity, the exclusion of all other possibilities. This applies to al] St Paul's statements about the crucifixion and resurrection: how much more to the development of the doctrine concerning the Son of God, where there is no personal experience to build upon.

The Cross, the Resurrection, the Son of God—these are three new great starting-points in the Pauline Christology. In the Cross he proclaims God's love, in the Resurrection the dawn of the world that is to come, in the Son of God the pattern for all Christians. Since St Paul wrote, these are the three subjects of all Christology.

The Proof of the Love of God.

The first portion of St Paul's apologetic had presented the Gentiles before the judgment-seat of God in all their sin and moral degradation. The wrath of God was all that they could expect. There was no means of escaping from this wrath by their own power or by sacrifices of their own. And then, when they were thus distressed and despairing, he brings them this surprising proof of God's love. Even before St Paul, the death of Jesus had become the object

240

of theological thought. This had been caused, above all, by the controversy with the Jews. As the Jews interpreted the death of Jesus as a divine punishment, the Christians opposed them with an explanation of that death by which the innocence of Jesus was securely established. His death was, it is true, a punishment—thus far they acknowledged their opponents to be in the right—but not for His own sin, but for the guilt of the Jewish people. It came to be a definite article of the Christian creed that Jesus died for the sins of those that repent and set their hopes upon His death.

When once Paul became a Christian, he accepted this explanation. All that he did was to add additional conceptions of sacrifice, propitiation and redemption, employing the terms of the professional theologians. The theory of sacrifice is repeated in countless variations in his letters, now in a legal, now in a ceremonial form, and again in both together. It was really through St Paul that the thought of Jesus' death, of sin, and of the atonement for sin, first came to be inseparably connected. St Paul's greatness is not, however, constituted by this rationalism—for such we must term the arithmetical manipulation of the death of Jesus—but by an entirely new appreciation of the Crucifixion.

In the first place, he removed the death of Jesus from its narrow Jewish setting and placed it in the centre of the world's history. He attached so immense a significance to this propitiatory sacrifice that all petty legal categories were felt to be comparatively unimportant. Jesus did not die for the sins of a few Jews alone, but for all mankind; nay, more, even for the world of spirits. The explanation of this fact is that no ordinary righteous man died on the Cross, but the Son of God, the highest object of the divine love. What need after this for any other sacrifices, means of propitiation, acts of penitence—in fact, of any human works? The propitiatory death of Jesus occupies the place of all that was ever done to gain God's grace. There was nothing left to be done by men, or even by angels, than just to accept this propitiatory sacrifice. But in the next place St Paul's interpretation of this sacrifice started from above and not from below. It is not that a sacrifice is to be brought to God which is to change His wrath into mercy. Such had been men's thoughts before, but God is the agent, the sacrificer, the propitiator: and the motive of His action is love, and nothing but love. That was an entire reversal of the usual point of view, and we find it clearly and consciously employed by St Paul in all the chief passages of his letters: God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. God gave His own Son for us, to show us that He would give us all. God shows His love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. By thus proclaiming aloud the love of God the apostle really does away with the necessity for all legal and propitiatory thoughts. If the conception of sacrifice still remains, it is transformed into a mere symbol. It is not God who loves us that needs the sacrifice, but we men need the certainty that the act of propitiation has taken place. At bottom, the death on the Cross is not a means of propitiating God, but a symbol of His grace for men.

It is true, however, that the influence of Jewish modes of thought again makes itself felt here in the exaggerated estimate of the single historical fact. As before the whole process of man's moral degradation was derived from Adam's fall, accompanied by sin and death, so now all God's grace is gathered together from the whole course of history, and concentrated in the death of Jesus. Paul actually denies that God ever pardoned before the death of Jesus; at any rate, he maintains that it was only now that His grace was made manifest. Had he not in his apologetic zeal already extinguished every other light in the world? This new light must now therefore illuminate the whole world and the whole course of history both forwards and backwards. This exaltation of the one historical fact was not so dangerous for Paul, who expected the end of the world in the near future, as for later ages, which were thereby nothing less than robbed of their faith in the living God. It must, moreover, be remembered that the historical fact can never be intelligible without the theological interpretation. One of two results is bound to follow. Either rationalism gains the upper hand, and defines the necessity of the death of Jesus, attaching a legal or ceremonial value thereto; or the paradoxical and the miraculous elements prevail, and then there remains nothing but faith in the unintelligible mystery. Both results can be traced in St Paul's writings. The same man boasts of the folly of the Cross, and defines the ways of the wisdom of God.

243

Here the old and the new lie side by side. To the former belong the theory of sacrifice and the rationalism, which attains to its position of influence in the Church through none other than Paul himself, to the latter the paradox that God's love is manifested in the Cross. Now this statement, when properly understood, annuls the theory of sacrifice, and approximates to the thought of Jesus that even death and suffering come out of God's hand. But when St Paul narrows the statement, maintaining that God's grace is visible only in the Cross, then he departs from Jesus' teaching, who saw God's love poured out upon mankind in all that He gave them both in trouble and in joy.

The reason of this is that St Paul, as an apologist, is obliged to narrow the road that leads to God's love, so that it must perforce pass through the Christian faith alone, and therein he sets no good example to the Church.

The Dawn of the Coming World.

The Resurrection of Jesus was an unparalleled event; the sovereignty of death was at an end; he that had ears could hear the first peal sounding for the general resurrection to usher in the world that was to come. From the invisible world Jesus stepped forth once more into the world of phenomena, and so testified still more clearly to the fact that the new world was close at hand.

St Paul, who was himself vouchsafed an appearance of the risen Christ, grasped the meaning of the Resurrection of Jesus: the old world is passing away, the new world is at hand. Thereby the Christian hope received a mighty accession of strength. Again and again we have these two statements coupled together. As surely as God awakened Jesus so surely

244

will He awaken us. But such were the thoughts of the earliest Christians as well. What is new in St Paul's conception of the resurrection is the meaning that he discovers in it for this present life.

The positive and negative elements seemed to him to be necessarily combined in the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus. The Son of God had come into this world only to die because of it, and to succumb to its evil powers. But no sooner was He awakened from the dead than His life began in the world beyond, the true world.

All this seemed to Paul to be typical and symbolical, and that in very many ways. Did it not imply that man had bidden farewell to all the former world, and that the new world had already dawned? Death, sin, the flesh, the descent from Adam—their power was broken, their reign was at an end, But the new sun was fast rising, and its rays were already illuminating the Christian life.

To express this in theological language was, however, rather more difficult. Again we have an historical fact—to be sure, it was a miracle—to start with. Now, was this miracle to imply the transition from the old world to the new? It was evident that death, sin, and the flesh still continued in the world. The Resurrection of Jesus did not put an end to all this. Nevertheless, St Paul persists in connecting the crisis in the world's history with this one fact.

245

The end of death is, of course, one of the things to be awaited. But flesh and sin are to be laid aside. How can that be done, seeing that Paul himself still lives in the flesh, and very many Christians still in sin? St Paul gives two explanations, and the one contradicts the other.

On the one hand, as he looks at life as it really is, he takes refuge in ethical theory, in the categorical imperative. Christ's death and resurrection ought to imply for all Christians the death of their own sin and selfishness, and the beginning of the new life. On all occasions St Paul insisted clearly and impressively on this imperative.

On the other hand, his metaphysical pessimism impels him to accept a theory which brings the powers of nature on the scene, and maintains that flesh and sin have been overcome in the tragedy of Jesus' death. Seeing that men have been described by him as under the dominion of evil powers of nature, there is no room for a purely ethical solution. Somehow or other these natural powers must be vanquished and rendered innocuous by the death of Christ. This St Paul really did maintain, but never in a very convincing fashion.

As a matter of fact these theories are concerned with the other-worldly character of Christianity. That beautiful passage in Colossians: "Seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God . . . . your life is hid with Christ in God," tells us what is St Paul's object. The Christian is to have his gaze turned towards the future with eager longing and zeal for righteousness; he is even now to be a citizen of the heavenly country. Here St Paul quite coincides with Jesus, only that Jesus points to the kingdom of

246

heaven that lies in front, while St Paul goes back to the resurrection of Jesus and bases his argument upon that fact. In the apostle's insistence on the beginning of the Christian's new life even here and now, we may find a further parallel to the belief which Jesus entertained—it is true, only for a time—in the actual commencement of the kingdom of heaven. And yet, even here we can trace the prejudicial influence of St Paul's apologetic interest. He is compelled to derive postulates from this one fact to which nothing corresponds in reality. It is, to be sure, nothing to be wondered at that he to whom the appearance was vouchsafed should exaggerate the value of Jesus' resurrection. Nevertheless it was a misfortune for the new religion, and in contradiction with the progressive spirit of Jesus, that the one miracle in the past thereby became the foundation for Christianity.

The Son of God who came down from Heaven.

St Paul was not acquainted with the historic Christ during His life here on earth. He merely heard men speak of Him. He thus became familiar with all manner of instances of His love, humility, and kindness, and apparently he told his Greek converts of them. These, however, did not form the basis of his theology. The most important element in that are the titles. The knowledge of the titles and of their value compensates for the lack of personal knowledge. How could it be otherwise? If one knows Jesus oneself, all titles are inadequate; if one does not, then one just extracts from the titles all that is capable of extraction.

St Paul had three titles from which to choose—all three had been commonly used of Jesus in the earliest Christian community: Messiah, Son of Man, Son of God.

247

The title of Messiah—the Greeks said Christ—is naturally retained by St Paul, were it but for the Jews' sake. He employs the word in the old eschatological sense, as the Lord of the kingdom of heaven that is at hand, and also, with but little of its original meaning, as a mere title of Jesus. He nowhere attaches any new signification to it. He himself awaits the advent of Messiah, earnestly looks forward to the day of Messiah, and considers all Christians to be living in expectation of Messiah's revelation. His idea of the Messiah is that of the apocalypses. He conquers Antichrist and vanquishes Beliar; doubtless He is surrounded by all the hosts of heaven just as He is represented in the apocalyptic pictures. And he likewise expects the judgment of Messiah when God shall grant Him to sit upon His judgment-seat. But this Jesus that is yet to come is of almost less importance for St Paul than the Jesus who has come already. Besides thus looking forward into the future we find him—more and more frequently—looking back upon the Cross and the Resurrection. Besides, he feels that the word Christ has a strange sound for Greek ears, and conveys no clear meaning. He therefore introduces two Greek titles in its stead: Lord and Saviour. The word Lord is introduced as an equivalent for Messiah into the official formulae used at baptism; Jesus the Lord, no longer Jesus the Christ. Such is the shortest of these formulas. The word Saviour, or helper, is intended to explain to the Christians what they are to expect in the coming Messiah: the eschatological sense still largely prevails. He is not yet the Saviour upon earth. Now, as

248

both Lord and Saviour were attributes universally applied to gods and kings, both these titles introduced by St Paul came to be the means, contrary to his intention, of separating Jesus altogether from the Messianic picture and of bringing Him nearer to the dignity of the Godhead.

The second title—Son of Man—St Paul abandoned, as it could only have denoted Jesus' human descent for the Greeks—quite contrary to the sense of the Hebrew word. But instead he calls Jesus the 'Man.' It is possible that he intended this as the right Greek translation of the oldest title. "The man from heaven" would then be the last reminiscence of the passage in Daniel where the "Son of man is expected from heaven."

Unfortunately we cannot determine with sufficient certainty whether St Paul, in making use of his idea of the heavenly man or second man, started from the title, Son of Man, that was used in the primitive community. For in any case he created something new and original, whatever the preliminary stages may have been. The abrupt break of continuity with the national Christology and the conception of Jesus' world-wide mission are both revealed in this title. Jesus appears to be so great to St Paul that He can only be compared with the first man, the father of the human race. Where Adam fell back He goes forward, and He recovers what Adam lost. So Jesus is assigned His place in the world's history, the division of which into the period before and the period after Christ, dates from this magnificent conception of St Paul's. Nowhere else is the universality and novelty of Christianity expressed as simply as here. Only we must remember that it is ideas and not facts with which we are now concerned. It is not the historical Jesus who is compared with Adam, but the ideal man with the sinner.

249

Besides, St Paul himself frequently varied these thoughts. In one place you will find the whole contrast is made to consist in the difference of natures: Adam earthly, Jesus heavenly. In another, in the difference of the act: Adam disobeyed, Jesus was obedient. The explanation is that on each occasion he is pursuing a different aim. In order to bring out clearly the sequence of the present and the future world, he contrasts the lower and the higher nature of the two prototypes. But when he wishes to guarantee the certainty of the life eternal to the Christians, he demonstrates that equally important consequences for their descendants have resulted from the deeds of these two progenitors.

But how are we the descendants of Christ? There is no answer. Neither does the comparison of the consequences hold good. Adam's descendants died; Christ's followers die also. At bottom, then, no very great service is rendered by this comparison. It dazzles one at first, but cannot be carried out. It is a brilliant idea entertained by St Paul for a time but afterwards abandoned. The meaning of Jesus cannot be clearly expressed by changing and playing with such antitheses.

There remains yet one title—the Son of God as the centre of Pauline theology. The word 'Son of God' had already been used by the earliest community, but in a very harmless sense.

250

It denoted Jesus as the favourite of God, His confidant, knowing His ways better than anyone else. In the 2nd Psalm, too, the words "This day have I begotten thee "denote the divine election and nothing more. St Paul gives the words Son of God an altogether new and mythical sense; for the Greeks alas it was only too intelligible. The Son of God is a heavenly being who has been with God from before the ages. He is more than man, for He became man. It is not impossible that rabbinical doctrines as to intermediate beings supported St Paul in this thesis. It is, at any rate, very much like the Rabbis, when from the passage in Scripture, "God created man after His own image," St Paul drew the conclusion that a separate being, "the image of God," must therefore already have been in existence in heaven, and that this "image of God" was none other than the Son. But St Paul's experience, the vision of Christ, was the decisive factor. As he here saw Jesus as a heavenly being in glory, so he had to picture Him to himself as existing from the beginning of time. The faith in this Son of God that descended from heaven is a consequence of the vision of the Son of God in heaven. By means of his vision St Paul became the creator of the new Christology, which drew its inspiration, not from history, but from something above it—from a mythical being, and which won over the heathen for this very reason.

But what is the relation of the Jesus of history to this Son of God? St Paul's thesis is an exceedingly surprising one, but it bears the stamp of a man of genius. "The Son of God became a man such as we are, that we men might become sons of God as He is." Thus the leading theme had been furnished for the whole long history of Christology.

251

St Paul used the words "man such as we are" in a very strict sense indeed. Jesus had been born of a woman. He had taken upon Himself our physical nature. He died on the Cross and was buried. He even died of weakness and to pay the debt of sin. Had the Docetae then existed they would have found no more determined opponent than the apostle himself. For the death on the Cross, which was their chief rock of offence, was the apostle's glory. If he occasionally uses the equivocal expression, 'homoioma,' picture or likeness, then he would merely say that the Son of God, who is originally of a different nature, now became such as we are. Neither, however, does the later doctrine of the twofold nature—the opinion that in Christ Jesus a heavenly being was united to a human find any support in St Paul. Jesus, while upon earth, was for him a man, not a man *and* Son of God, first flesh then spirit, not both together. One thing only separates Jesus from all other men, His sinlessness, which has of necessity to be postulated for the theory of sacrifice. With this one exception nothing separates Him from ourselves. However often He may be set up as our pattern, nothing is ever said of a special spiritual organization, or of a second nature.

Doubtless this whole point of view is a myth from beginning to end, and cannot be termed anything else. It was as a myth, as a story of a God who had descended from heaven, that the Greeks immediately accepted it. And yet the form of the myth is, it must be granted, Jewish. God is in no wise drawn down into the world of sensible human phenomena; the

252

thought of an incarnation of the Deity would be pure blasphemy for St Paul. It is not God but the Son of God alone who thus descends into this world. But the personal life of the historical Jesus does not exist for this theory.

The way in which St Paul, however, imparts an ethical meaning to his myth is very admirable. The coming down of the Son of man to a life of service and obedience forms the pattern of our humility and sacrifice. The whole of the great Christological passage in the letters to the Philippians has an ethical and practical purpose. But how much more simply did Jesus teach His disciples the lesson of humility by the example of His life upon earth without any mythological background! As everywhere, St Paul finally reaches the thought of Jesus, but here in so dangerous and roundabout a fashion that the Jesus of history is completely smothered up by the myth of the heavenly Son of God.

Paul and Jesus.

The Cross, the Resurrection, the Son of God who descended from heaven—these are the three great innovations of the Pauline Christology. In the Gospel of Jesus they are almost entirely wanting, yet St Paul's object is to express evangelical thoughts by means of them. The comparison between the Master and the disciple is especially instructive:—

1. *Jesus*.—God is our Father, and has been always and everywhere. He showers down His love upon us by the gifts of food and raiment, by abundant pardon, by deliverance from the evil, by the promise of the kingdom that is to come. All that Jesus does and says is meant to confirm man's faith in the love of God the Father.

253

Paul.—In the Cross of Jesus God gives the whole world a proof of His pardon and His love. Without that there is no certainty of the atonement. Only he that believes in the Cross has the true God.

So speaks the ecclesiastical apologist according to the principle that outside of the Church—that is, the community of those that believe in the Cross—there is no salvation.

2. *Jesus*.—The kingdom of God is at hand. It is to be the aim of the disciples' longing, and is to give them strength for a new life in righteousness. Jesus leads His disciples onwards till they can walk in the light of eternity.

Paul.—The Resurrection of Jesus is the proof that the world to come is already beginning. Even now the Christian is risen with Jesus and has entered into life eternal.

So speaks the apologist, who is bound to give palpable proofs for the promised realities, and thereby confuses facts and postulates.

3. *Jesus*.—Through His teaching and His example He redeems men, so that they become the children of God, and lifts them up to a life of love and humility.

Paul.—The Son of man came down from heaven upon earth so that we might have a pattern in His self-humiliation, and through Him become the children of God.

So speaks the apologist, who himself knew not Jesus, for whom therefore the mythical picture had to effect that which the impression made by Jesus wrought in the earlier disciples.

254

The consequences of the great innovation were boundless. Jesus was presented to the Greeks in the shape of a mythical drama. Once again they had a new myth, and that, too, derived from the immediate present. And this conquered the world. The simple teaching of Jesus of Nazareth had never been able thus to win its way to victory, for the world was not yet ripe to receive the impression of a great personality by itself. That which was great and redemptive in Jesus had to suffer itself to be wrapped up in the heavy coverings of dogma; even in St Paul it lives and works mightily therein. In spite of all, it must be deemed fortunate that Jesus was preached to the world by St Paul. After all, side by side with the thoughts about Him came the Master Himself.

The Salvation of the Faithful.

After preaching the crucified and risen Son of God, St Paul's next step in the course of his missionary labours was to gather the faithful into communities, to purify their life in common, and so to regulate it that it might become a haven for the individual and the means of his salvation. Passing now to theory, we find the doctrine of the salvation of the faithful built up upon these facts. Here, too, the foundation is formed by St Paul's experience both of his own nature, and especially of his missionary communities; but it is only after revision in the interests of Church defence that the theory is completed as we now have it.

St Paul had himself been converted by the appearance of the risen Lord. He had felt an entire breach of continuity with the past, the death of his former life, a changed estimate of all values, of all frames of mind. But at the same time he felt the growth of a new life within himself since that meeting with Christ. Powers burst forth into being, of the existence of which he had had no previous knowledge. He himself began to speak with tongues, to behold visions, to catch glimpses of the world beyond. So powerfully did he feel the nearness of God that he was compelled to fall upon his knees and to cry out "Abba, Father." Peace and joy, blessedness, freedom from all anxious care, took up their abode within him. The contest against all the powers of evil seemed no longer so terrible. Victory was at hand. He felt himself to be more than human—a giant, a hero: "I can do all things through Him that strengtheneth me." All this called for an explanation, and Paul, in accordance with the whole of his psychology, could only find it in the 'Spirit' which had miraculously been imparted to him.

255

The experience he had gathered in the course of his missionary work seemed to him to point in the same direction. Here he saw the servants of sin, the scum and offscouring of mankind, carried away by a passion ate religious enthusiasm from the very moment that he began to preach, and often even strengthened so as to overcome their sins. Many were the miracles that he witnessed among his converts—manifestations of power, such as the healing of diseases, the speaking with tongues, prophecies, but also miracles of conversion. All this could proceed from nothing but the Spirit, especially because of the frequent ecstatic accompaniments. But here the value of the communities was far more evident than in St

256

Paul's own case, who had become a Christian without any ecclesiastical instrumentality. Permanent converts were to be found only within the communities. Like stars in the world, so these Christian congregations shone along the shores of the Mediterranean. Here was a visible and palpable proof that the coming world was very near at hand.

Both these factors, the personal experience as well as the results of the missionary journeys, must be remembered if one would understand the doctrine of redemption. But the third factor—the apologetic motive is not long in making its influence felt. The results of experience are universalized and completed. The ecclesiastical interest acquires clear expression for the first time in a theory concerning the value of the Church as an organized body. The word 'ekklesia' is of course but little mentioned as yet, but all the more is said of Faith, of the Spirit, of Baptism, which together constitute the Church. But at the same time even the most determined apologist cannot shut his eyes to the imperfection of the communities and of the redemption by means of them. The patch work character of the whole of this earnest of the world to come is only too evident. Hence the theory concerning the postulates for the future world succeeds the theory concerning the experiences in the present; the doctrine of salvation by the Church is followed by eschatology.

The Theory of the Experiences.

257

St Paul recognizes as the root of the Christian's new life a single definite force: the Spirit of God or of Christ. This force does not work directly, but only through the means of grace. The inner means is faith; the outer are the Word, the Church and the Sacraments. Now, though the Spirit works upon men through these media an entire change of the inner and outer man is seldom effected: there are. obstacles in the way. Such obstacles are the flesh, the sin that still remains, suffering and death. The Christian's duty is to endeavour to overcome these obstacles. He actually does this partly through faith and moral effort, partly through hope in the coming perfection. Thus the theory of the experiences leads on quite naturally to the theory of the postulates for the future world. Such, then, is the arrangement of the following section.

i.

The power that effects the believer's salvation is the Spirit. Although St Paul occasionally speaks of the Spirit as though it were matter—*e.g.*, the outpouring of the Spirit—yet he regards it usually as distinctly a force. As such it is included under the strict law of natural causation, only that it is a cause of a higher order. Like all forces, it can only be described by its effects.

The effects of the Spirit are exceedingly manifold, and range from the extraordinary to the normal, from the miracle to ordinary virtue.

First of all come the physical effects—the 'forces' in the general sense of the word. According to the popular conception there is not merely one Spirit, but as many Spirits as there are manifestations of force. One Spirit causes the speaking with tongues, another the interpretation thereof, another prophecy, another healing. St Paul himself writes of the

258

Spirits in three passages of the first letter to the Corinthians. He there speaks of the Corinthians as "eagerly seeking for spirits," each desiring to gain as many as possible for himself. We should to-day speak of these phenomena as the elementary effects of the religious impulse in the psychical and physical domain. St Paul himself was a master in glossolaly, more than all the Corinthians. No wonder that many caught fire at his enthusiasm. Such experiences are contagious. But little was wanting to make the whole of the Christian Church resemble a company of madmen. The apostle now, however, proceeded to allay the excitement, and that by summary measures. First of all he gathered all these different spirits under one heading: they are the various manifestations of the one Spirit of God. His object in so doing was to put an end to all jealousy and envy. The same Spirit gives to each one severally as He will. In the next place he sternly represses the wildest and least intelligible expression of this enthusiasm—the speaking with tongues—compares it with prophecy, and assigns a higher place to the latter because the understanding has a share in it and the whole Church is thereby benefited. That was a reversion of the order of precedence in the community. The undue exaltation of an egoistic mysticism was thereby effectually prevented. But finally, he places even prophecy itself far beneath love, "the more excellent way," which is alone eternal: the doing of the simplest Christian duties is of greater value, in his sight, than the most exceptional gifts of insight and foresight. For all that, he allows a certain value to all those manifestations of the Spirit—they, too, are divine. At Thessalonica he went so far as to take up arms in defence of prophecy against mockers and doubters. His object is just this, that the Christians should learn to find their way out of enthusiasm and the extraordinary into plain and sober everyday life. And this object is best served by his insertion of 1 Cor. xiii. in the midst of his dissertation on spiritual gifts.

259

To quench this exaggerated spiritual exaltation St Paul places the exact opposite of speaking with tongues at the head of the gifts of the Spirit, viz., the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge. As he is speaking of nothing but extraordinary things, he must, in the first place, mean a speaking of God and the Divine which appears suddenly and unexpectedly, like a revelation, and surprises all that listen. The lightning thought of wisdom reveals the presence of the Spirit. But that is not all. St Paul teaches that the whole body of Christian knowledge, all those thoughts the possession of which constitutes the preeminence of Christians over Jews and Gentiles, can be traced to the Spirit. Every Christian teacher may boldly step forth with the claim that he is bringing an inspired message, and every layman who calls Jesus Lord speaks under the impulse of the Spirit. This is the point from which the representation of the Pauline gnosis will have to start. Two things are especially important in this derivation of knowledge from the Spirit. In the first place, the chasm between the supernatural and the natural has been bridged. Not only the welling forth of revelation, but the permanent spiritual outfit which should belong to every Christian, are to be ascribed to the working of the Spirit. At the same time, however, Christian is contrasted with all non-

260

Christian knowledge as some thing wonderful and higher. Here we have the origin of the sharp division in later times between the knowledge of the natural man and the faith of the Church. The same man who rejects miracles in the popular sense of the word proclaims the miraculous character of the new theology all the more loudly.

St Paul sounds the deepest depths when he brings the life of prayer into connection with the Spirit. Prayer as he describes it in Rom. viii. is still very closely related to the talking with tongues. The understanding can go no further. Because we know not how we ought to pray all the more does the Spirit work. He comes to our aid, with sighings that cannot be uttered. But God, that reads the hearts of men, knows what the Spirit means. St Paul is here thinking of no ordinary prayer—no Lord's Prayer even. He is thinking of moments of deepest emotion, such as came over him and others, prostrating them and casting them into a state of blessedness either of silence or finding utterance in sighs. Those are the moments when the immediate contact of the soul's inmost being with the ultimate source of all things is experienced. That which he here calls Spirit is the mysterious background of our personality, inaccessible to all our science, working beyond our consciousness. But St Paul does not confine the Spirit's activity to these rare moments of exaltation. Every prayer that a Christian utters beginning with the name of Father proceeds from the Spirit. In every real prayer there is a communion of the human soul with God. Then the Spirit of God testifies to our spirit that we are the children of God. Then the love of God is poured forth in our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Then are we 'driven,' that is, we feel a higher power coming over us, and then we experience a feeling of joyful gladness, surest token of God's presence. All these sentences have an enthusiastic ring about them; they betray their origin in a great time of storm and stress. Yet some of this enthusiasm every Christian in every age is bound to carry with him into his every-day life. Without that certainty which the Spirit gives us that we are God's children, it is impossible to ascend the steep and rugged road that leads from this world to the next.

261

The most important sphere, however, of the Spirit's operations has yet to be mentioned. St Paul conquered the whole of life for the Spirit and thence derived all moral action and every virtue in our possession. The extraordinary is once more the starting-point. A charism—a gift of grace—is in reality the altogether exceptional privilege of quite extraordinary persons. Just as there are only certain people who can prophesy or teach, so there are others who alone understand the difficult task of serving, of presiding, of ministering to the poor, because they have been specially endowed by the Spirit with these gifts. This or that individual Christian can be joyful, or patient, or chaste in especially difficult circumstances where perhaps every other would have given up the struggle. The reason of that must be that the Spirit gave him the power and the endurance. Originally, as in the previous instance, it was the different spirits of joy, patience, etc. In every case heroic and extraordinary states of thought and feeling are originally conceived to be the surest signs of the Spirit's presence.

262

But from this somewhat narrow starting-point St Paul draws wider and wider circles which gradually extend over the whole of life: 1 Cor. xiii., Rom. xii., Gal. v., are proofs of this. At first only heroic manifestations of love were conceived of as the workings of the Spirit. St Paul leads his Corinthian converts to look upon love as that power in life which is intended to dominate and transform all that is common and every-day. At first gifts were only ascribed to abnormal persons. St Paul leads the Romans to conceive of all Christian feelings and acts, be they great or small, as the effects of grace. It is not the excitation of this or that feeling which is to originate from the Spirit, but the inspiration of the whole life. So radical and complete is the change that owing to St Paul the words 'in the Spirit' or 'through the Spirit,' which originally denoted an ecstatic condition, came to mean the same thing as the Christian life. Here the Spirit is naturally no longer conceived of as a force that comes and goes, but as a Christian's permanent and abiding possession. And yet how we are reminded again all at once of the previous popular stages of the conception! St Paul's 'gifts' are simply a theological word for the spirits of the earlier age, only they are no longer external beings, but faculties and talents immanent in the soul. The strictly causal conception of the Spirit, leading to determinism, is likewise retained from the earlier form of the belief. When the Spirit works there is no room for the free agency of man. St Paul never suffered this determinism to have any practical consequences, though there was no escape from the logical results of the whole theory.

263

But who can fail to recognize that the entire theory of the effects of the Spirit, which, starting from miraculous forces, derives from one and the same source all knowledge, the life of prayer and moral action, is nothing but the description of the Christian ideal drawn by an enthusiastic apostle? The actual state of things, the condition of the congregations, corresponded here and there with this ideal, but contradicted it in the vast majority of cases. A theory of the Christian life as it should be universally is here built up upon isolated great experiences. So Paul spoke to the Gentiles that he might sing the praises of Christianity, and to the Christians in order that they might be urged on to the attainment of the ideal by the description thereof. This apologetic character of the doctrine of the Spirit is rendered still plainer by all that follows.

St Paul terms the Spirit, Spirit of God or Spirit of Christ, and both phrases mean the same thing. The identification is by no means a matter of course. It is the apostle's doing, and his object is the subordination of mysticism, under the influence of the Jesus of history.

The phrase 'Spirit of God' is certainly a very obscure expression; its meaning depends entirely upon the conception of God held by the man that uses it. He who represents God to himself as the impersonal first cause of the world, or as the negation of the world, will conceive the Spirit of God as the mysterious forces of nature which proceed from this first cause. This conception of God and His Spirit is the cradle of all the later history of mysticism. The phrase 'Spirit of Christ,' on the other hand, is perfectly intelligible, and derives its

264

meaning from the Jesus of history. Rightly understood, it is bound to render the evanescence of religion into mysticism utterly impossible.

St Paul's universal experience in founding his congregations was that they became the scenes of a wild enthusiasm which was certainly connected with faith in Jesus, but had in reality nothing whatever to do with Jesus Himself. The breach with their former heathen life, the concentration of their thoughts on the after world that was so near at hand, their renunciation of this world, the feeling that they were safe in port, all combined to drive many Christians into a whirlpool of religious sensations. The religious life had been aroused, and dominated them exclusively. Plain civic duties and ordinary everyday work were neglected. Idleness, ascetic tours de force, selfish fanaticism, an exaggerated zeal for certain spiritual gifts, were on the increase. St Paul cut off all that was unhealthy and dangerous. Yet he still allowed enough and to spare of that enthusiasm to continue, which originated, not from the influence of Jesus, but from the untrammelled religious impulse. It is very significant that in speaking about these gifts of the Spirit—*e.g.*, talking with tongues, healing, etc.,-—St Paul never uses the words 'Spirit of Christ;' just as, conversely, when he does use them, he never has such manifestations in view. Without denying the divine element in them, he suggests indirectly that these phenomena are in no wise specifically Christian. Indeed, they almost belong more to the universal history of religion than to the history of the religion of Jesus.

265

On the other hand, St Paul spares no effort in his endeavour to bring the Spirit under the influence of Jesus. This he does, firstly, by forming the expressions 'Spirit of Christ,' 'Spirit of the Son of God,' and next, and in a still higher degree, by placing Christ and the Spirit side by side with each other, and even identifying them with regard to their influence upon Christians. This last he effects by a threefold series of propositions: Christ lives in the believer; the believer lives in Christ; the believer died and rose again with Christ. In stating the second of these propositions, even the grammatical expression which St Paul employed—'in Christ'—is exactly parallel to the words 'in the Spirit,' which were used in other cases. Now by this means the whole doctrine of redemption is apparently doubled. We have a theory of the Spirit and a theory of Christ, the aim of which is, after all, exactly the same—the renewal of life. Therefore the Spirit and Christ must be identical, as indeed we should infer from the very expression 'Spirit of Christ,' which connects the two conceptions. What, then, is the meaning of this identity? It is by no means a dilution of the idea of Christ into any thing impersonal or abstract: this is the last thing of which the man who had seen Christ would think. On the contrary, it is the Christianization of the Spirit, who is thereby transformed from an impersonal force of nature into the historical influence of the person of Jesus. This is St Paul's great reform. He firmly established the connection between the Redeemer and the redemption of believers. These were two separate things for the earlier Christians. On the one hand was the picture of Jesus, such as it passed over into the Gospels,

266

and on the other were wonderful phenomena, tongues, etc., as effects of the Spirit. Between the two there is no connection, nor can there possibly be any as long as the sphere of the Spirit's operation is merely the abnormal. St Paul teaches Christians to recognize the working of the Spirit above all else in the renewal of their lives, but this is the effect of the teaching of Jesus; Christ and the Spirit are therefore immediately seen to be one—or, to express the same thing more concisely, Paul will acknowledge no other power in the lives of Christians, by the side of the influence of Jesus. The logical consequence of his reasoning would have been to abandon the conception of 'Spirit' altogether in favour of the personal influence of the historic Christ. It would have been better so for all future time, for under the title 'Spirit of God,' all that was alien to the Spirit of Jesus crept into the new religion. That which hindered St Paul from drawing this conclusion was at bottom merely the general atmosphere of thought of the ancient world. Like all the rest of his contemporaries, the apostle was bound to recognize an immediate divine influence in these wonders and manifestations of power.

But it was Paul the apologist who completed this subordination of the Spirit to Christ. The Jews spoke of the Spirit of God, and the Greeks might also have used the same words. But the Spirit of Christ is naturally the peculiar possession of Christians. For what purpose should Christ have come into the world, if it turned out later that there was another road to salvation apart from Him? On one single occasion (in Gal. iv.) St Paul speaks of the sending of the Spirit as of something separate by the side of the sending of the Son; but no, it is the Spirit of the Son of God Himself. The salvation of believers can only be effected by the Saviour. St Paul cannot admit any other way. Without this nexus of conceptions the whole edifice of his apologetic would be undermined. The doctrine, however, was. it must be admitted, attended by a peculiar difficulty. We, to day, can speak of the Spirit of Jesus because we know Jesus from the Gospels. Now St Paul does not know Him; he only saw the heavenly Jesus, and that for a moment. Where was the guarantee that he understood the Spirit of Jesus? It is just here that the continuity with the Jesus of history seems to be broken. But facts prove that St Paul knew Jesus in spite of all—yes, knew Him better than all his predecessors. What he brought to the Greeks was no mere product of his imagination, but the real Jesus with His promise, His claim and His redemption. When Paul writes, "He that hath not the Spirit of Christ is none of His," "He that is in Christ Jesus is a new creature," he is filled with a profound and genuine impression of the person of Christ, and though it was only as apologist that he gave the final form to his doctrines, yet in this point he was right. Whatever of genuine Christian life was lived in the times to come, has its source exclusively in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, or as St Paul writes, in the Spirit of Christ.

267

The means of grace.

The Spirit of Christ does not enter when and where it will. It is bound to certain outer and inner media. The most important of the latter is faith. St Paul became a Christian without

268

the help of any ecclesiastical organization, but not without faith in Christ. He had to bring that to the vision of Christ which the others had to bring to the preaching of Jesus. The parallel with the miracles of Jesus here strikes one's attention. Just as want of faith prevented Jesus from performing miracles, so the Spirit, in spite of all the forces at its command, cannot take up its abode with any unbeliever. In neither case is faith the final cause but solely the condition.

What is faith in this connection? Not primarily that which it came to be later—the acceptation of a number of formula? as true; just as little as this was the faith which Jesus demanded. Faith can best here be defined as readiness and receptivity for the work of redemption. When Paul begins his preaching of death and judgment, of the Cross and Resurrection, as God's great acts of redemption, these all depend upon whether or not his hearer recognizes something divine therein, something that has to do with his own redemption. He needs not to understand the connection of the propositions. As soon as it dawns upon him, "this Jesus concerns me and my salvation," then faith has been awakened in him. Consciousness of a divine power unto salvation in the mighty drama of Jesus that, and nothing but that, is faith. Forthwith, peace with God, the love of God, and the certainty of atonement, make their entry into the hearts of men. This St Paul himself experienced and perceived in countless other instances.

269

If we ask in the next place whether this faith is a free act on the part of man, or whether it is God working in him, then it is very hard to say what answer St Paul would have given. The different parts of his doctrine of salvation are as a matter of fact so closely connected together that there is very little room for the exercise of man's free will; in man there dwells no good thing—but yet there is the longing for salvation. The doctrines of grace and of predestination appear to exclude any co-operation on the part of man in the work of redemption. If God determines who is to belong to the saved and to the lost, then faith as a condition of salvation must be reckoned as a part of that which God decrees.

But for another reason determinism cannot be said to be St Paul's final answer. St Paul is a missionary and an apologist. As such, he is bound to count upon the freedom of his hearers. He would lose his missionary zeal, the fire of his eloquence and the ardour of his love, if he did not hope to attain his end thereby amongst men free to choose. He must often have exclaimed—like a Methodist preacher—"Now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation; be ye reconciled with God. Let not God's grace be offered you in vain." He who thus appeals to the feelings of his hearers does not believe that the season of grace for each individual amongst them has passed long ago. And so we find St Paul in the Epistle to the Romans counting it a fault in the Jews that they shut up their hearts against the faith in their false zeal for righteousness. Even thus it is as yet not active co-operation that is called for, but something purely passive—readiness to receive God's gift. Afterwards, it is true, St Paul leaves this, his first position, far behind him, when he makes salvation depend upon the

270

acceptance of certain definite formulae; on the faith that Jesus is the Lord and that God raised Him from the dead, or on faith in His death. Consciously or unconsciously the ecclesiastical creed has here been forced upon the apologist, in the place of the mere receptivity of former times. And the creed at any rate is a human piece of work. Nay, more, for apologetic purposes this conception of faith is the only one that is practical. The preaching of the Church necessitates the ecclesiastical creed. The way of salvation is through the Church. Since then, this great word 'faith' has been used many thousand times to describe the entrance into the Church for those that stand without and to exhort them thereto.

Of the external means through which the Spirit of God works upon them that draw nigh, the word of God is the most essential. Faith is awakened when the word is preached. In St Paul's own case, of course, this does not apply. But not every one is called by a vision from heaven. St Paul's opinion of the importance and power of the word or Gospel was exceedingly high. In it God's power unto salvation is brought near to men. Therefore it is God's word and not man's. Here indeed the apostle is in entire agreement with his Master, whose employment of parables is a testimony to the importance He attached to the word. The flood-tides of every religion have always coincided with the supremacy of the free word and with its exaltation high above all liturgies, sacraments, and the like. For it is only in the clear word that both the spiritual and the intelligible elements in a religion find expression, and behind the word stands the personality of the apostles. It is just owing to the high estimate which he had of the word that St Paul looked upon himself and the apostles as means of salvation. God's message of atonement is only completed through the apostles, who carry it forth and publish it abroad. It is only where apostles have been bringing the word of God with them, that faith can arise and the Spirit enter.

271

We pass next to that which is really the most important of all the means of salvation, the Church, *i.e.*, the whole Christian organism. The demand for faith—*i.e.*, for entrance into the Church—proves that the Spirit is bound to the Church, and this is further indirectly proved by the fact that the Spirit nowhere has an abiding place outside of Christianity. But St Paul also adopted the most appropriate metaphor to express this theory, the Church as the body of Christ. Therefore Christ is the Spirit of the Church. Thereby he unites Christ and the Church so firmly to each other as only the Catholic system has done besides. For as yet no need had arisen for the division of the Church into visible and invisible. This need only arose when it became evident that the sad experience which even St Paul had had, was not transitory but belonged to the essence of the Church here on earth. St Paul did not as yet believe this. He looked at the good and bright sides in his congregations, and trusted that the bad, however often it appeared, would meet with a determined resistance and be bound to disappear. The high esteem in which he did, as a matter of fact, hold his congregations, here combined with his apologetic thesis that the Spirit could work upon Christians within the Church alone. The power and the truth of his apologetic depends upon the former,

272

the actual fact. Later, when Church and community diverged, it appeared to be a mockery that the Church should be a mediator of the Spirit of Jesus. Had it not become the home of all these elements which had gradually grown up in opposition to the real Jesus? How entirely different was the situation which St Paul partly already found and partly himself created. There was a rivalry of love in the Churches, a readiness of sacrifice, fearless renunciation of the world, a strict morality, mutual co-operation, a glowing hope for the future, an enthusiastic eagerness to suffer for Jesus. In spite of much that was disappointing, it must have been a delight then to strike a blow in defence of the Church. There was a great element of truth in the proposition, "The Church is the channel of the Spirit of Christ."

St Paul made a very free use of the metaphors in tended to express the relationship between Christ and the Church. Now it is body and spirit, now body and head, and again man and wife. At times he pursues the image into minute details without much taste, after the manner of contemporary allegories. But the very change of metaphor proves the indissolubility of the quantities compared. Christ and the Church form a unity for St Paul which nothing can put asunder. Now, however new this relation may be, the value attached to the Church in itself is old and Jewish. Paul destroyed the Jewish Church for Christians, opposing the community of believers to the legal organization. These are great reforms. But the conception of Church itself remained, and to a certain extent even the way of looking at religion as a constitution. The thesis, "extra ecclesiam nulla salus," had hitherto only been maintained by the Jewish theology. Through St Paul it obtained a firm footing in the Christian communities. Here the apostle of liberty paves the way for the Catholicism of later times.

273

The same remark applies to the remaining means of salvation, baptism and the Lord's Supper. Hitherto they had been valued as signs of membership, baptism as a condition of redemption besides. But it was Paul who first created the conception of a sacrament. Any external acts—here bathing, eating, and drinking—are turned into sacraments as soon as they are esteemed to be means of salvation. They are thereby stamped as something different from what they really are: the element of mystery and the miraculous takes possession of them, they come to be the instruments of divine power. This result St Paul achieved in the case of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism was not of supreme importance for himself personally. It conferred no new gift upon the man who had been vouchsafed the vision of Christ. As missionary, too, he had not regarded baptizing as his office. God had not sent him forth for that. Even the great idea of dying and rising again with Christ appears in the Epistle to the Galatians without any mention of baptism. It is only in the Epistle to the Romans that St Paul makes use of it to elucidate this idea. But here, it is true, he employs altogether sacramental language of baptism, and parallel passages can be found in other letters. He would have baptism regarded as a miracle and a mystery. The baptized convert should believe that he steps forth from the water a different person to what he was when he entered it. In like manner he taught of the Lord's Supper, that it was a meal at which one eats no

274

ordinary bread and drinks no ordinary wine, but partakes of the body and blood of Christ. It was a spiritual food and a spiritual drink—*i.e.*, a channel for the conveyance of the powers of salvation. It is hard to understand how St Paul, who elsewhere always connects redemption with the Spirit of Christ, here all at once attaches a value to the body and blood, *i.e.*, to that which was after all perishable in Jesus. The reason probably is that he found here an institution already existing which could only obtain a place in his spiritual doctrine of salvation with extreme difficulty. But he did find a place for it, and thereby made it a sacrament. He had to educate his heathen converts, and with this end in view it appeared to him to be important that they should clearly realize their redemption in certain ceremonial actions. As a matter of fact he only confused them thereby, dragging them down from the spiritual sphere into that of natural magic. It appears to us at the present day exceedingly strange that the hero of the Word should at the same time have become the creator of the sacrament. He himself—every one who knows anything about St Paul knows that—needed no ceremonial magic, as the Spirit within him testified to him of God's love, and Jesus had set him free from the ceremonies of the law. But through the reception of the sacraments into his doctrine of redemption, he has himself a share in the origin of that Catholicism which made him a saint while at the same time it stamped out his spirit.

275

Obstacles to Salvation, and the way to overcome them.

Salvation as St Paul conceives of it, is in its essence the imparting of a divine power. Men cannot save themselves—they are sick, powerless, and prisoners. Then there comes to their help the power that has its origin in the world beyond, the Spirit. He takes over the guidance into his hands as effective cause. We ourselves are passive instruments driven by the Spirit. The aim of salvation is that the power from beyond should permeate everywhere and dominate all, absorbing entirely everything that is fleshly and sinful. Then shall the next world, the new heaven and the new earth, have come unto us.

But do we even attain to a complete salvation here in this world—when everything that is old hath passed away and all things have become new? No; salvation by the Spirit is thwarted by certain obstacles which stop its progress. Death is still with us, and announces its approach by sufferings which ever remind us of our perishable nature and drag us down from the heights of enthusiasm. The flesh is by no means dead or absorbed. The Christian feels his lusts and passions only too keenly. And sin? St Paul met with it at every step among his converts. At Corinth alone incest, fornication, lawsuits about property, party strife. And had it really departed even out of his own life? "Not that I have already obtained or am already made perfect." The apostle had by nature a passionate and irritable temperament, temptations from within and from without, and at the same time a keen and highly sensitive conscience. It is inconceivable that he imagined himself free from sin.

276

Paul was no fanatic to shut his eyes to any unpleasant facts. Whenever he came across a sin he called it by its name. To hush things up or decently to throw a veil over them was

never his way. He remained unaffected by the flowers of Greek rhetoric. It would be truer to say that he occasionally formed too gloomy a picture of the state of the whole community because of the sins or failings of a few. But he never lost courage. He clings firmly to his. apologetic theory of the ideal of redemption without admitting any limitations, and he sets to work to look the obstacles that lie in the way straight in the face and to overcome them.

First comes the summons to fight against the flesh, sin and the devil, to fight with all the power of one's will. For it has been proved that the Spirit alone cannot do it. Man—*i.e.*, his will—is to help the Spirit to victory by taming the lusts and passions, by hard work and strict self-discipline. Now here the categorical imperative and the thought of the end to be achieved reinforce the Spirit working according to laws of natural causation. Whether this is theoretically conceivable or not is a matter of indifference. Whenever St Paul expounds the theory of salvation he ends by this call to duty. And thereby he rendered experience her due. If we live in the Spirit let us also walk in the Spirit. We are debtors not to the flesh, but should through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body. "Mortify, therefore, the members that are upon earth." The apostle's deep earnestness is well brought out by the severely ascetic form of these exhortations. He was able, at any rate, to say of himself that he mortified his own body and brought it into subjection, lest while he preached to others he himself should become a castaway. When he actually saw any sin in the course of his labours he forthwith exclaimed "away with it." For this, in his opinion, was to constitute the difference between the redeemed and the unredeemed: that the former should at all times be able to fight a victorious fight. Through the Spirit he has been raised from his state of impotence and has become strong and bold. He should have no lack of courage and faith in victory; the ardent exhortations of the apostle will furnish him with an ever fresh supply breathing the same confidence in the power of the good as did the summons of Jesus.

277

If, however, in spite of all, the believer should have stumbled, then faith raises itself up again by the Cross of Jesus. For surely God's love does not cease at our baptism. Why, that is when it really begins for us. As Christians we are under grace, and have the certainty of salvation from the wrath that is to come. It is not, of course, from ourselves that we derive any absolute guarantee of the abiding love of God. Even though the Spirit may impart to us in our hearts the certainty of the Sonship, who shall tell us exactly where the Spirit ceases and one's own wish begins? The moments of ecstatic communion with God are succeeded, alas, often so swiftly, by hellish states of depression. The Christian only stands immovably fast in the love of God when he is not thrown upon his own resources, but can lay hold of what God Himself has done. It is only when he gazes upon God's love as shown in the Cross that that comfort is vouchsafed him which is proof against every trial. Nowhere do we penetrate further into the depths of St Paul's thoughts, nowhere recognize more clearly his sober sanity, his distrust of his own feelings, his need of an objective proof besides. Clearest of all is the following passage in the Galatians: first the triumphant exclamation:—"It is. no

278

longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: . . . .” there is all the joy of the new redeemed life. This, however, is immediately succeeded by the chastening reflection: “And that life which I now live in the flesh”; ‘the old is after all not laid aside, I feel its presence only too often’; but then follows the brave consolation: “I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.” It is not the Christ within us but solely the Christ without us, who leads us through all our anxiety to peace at the last. And from this fact every Christian may derive the certainty of forgiveness. Accordingly, St Paul everywhere recommends forgiveness, and himself forgives. As far as we know, he may have received even the incestuous person into communion again, when he saw that distress and sorrow were driving him to despair. Paul was no Tertullian whose rigid sense of justice placed insuperable obstacles in the path of pardoning love. So he leads his converts on to the glad faith, that in spite of the sin that doth yet beset him, the Christian can still remain a child of God, and can look forward joyfully to the day of judgment.

Our self-discipline and faith in God’s love do not, however, fully remove the obstacles in the way of salvation. Again and again the Christian finds himself entangled in this present evil world. Only one thing helps him in every difficulty, and that is hope. Hope alone permits the Christian to look at the world as it is, and to escape depression without wrapping himself up in any fictitious optimism. We walk by faith, not by sight. We are, it is true, saved, yet by hope. Here we see in a mirror darkly, and all our knowledge is fragmentary. We ourselves, though we have the first-fruits of the Spirit, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. The Spirit is an earnest of our future state, and not that state itself. Never did any man realize the imperfection of our present state more sincerely or truly. That is why no one can call him an idle enthusiast. This recognition, however, of the defects of our present state is but the necessary negative condition attaching to the positive hope in which St Paul’s message centres. This present world passeth away, and the salvation which has here been begun will soon be completed.

279

This leads us on of itself to the theory of the postulates for the future. The decisive factor here, however, is not the picture of his fancy, but the power of the yearning which draws its comfort thence. For this yearning Paul found words—think of the song of creation’s earnest expectation—which still to-day fill us, “ripae ulterioris amore”! For the details of eschatology are always more or less the product of this or that particular age, and therefore negligible for later ages. But the yearning itself, with all its consequences for the life of the apostle, courage, consolation, joy and patience, is that which speaks to men in all ages. The concluding verses of the 8th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, in which trust in God is expressed as nowhere else in the New Testament, follow immediately after the song of the earnest expectation; and were it not for this confident hope in the future, they would lack all sound foundation.

280

By thus striving to overcome the obstacles on the road to redemption through work, faith, and hope, the Christian at length attains to the certainty of salvation, so that he can stand on the everlasting foundations even now, in the midst of tribulation and distress. The assurance of salvation is explained by the theory of election—Paul starts from the following proposition: That which is eternal cannot have arisen in time. If the Christian, therefore, is certain of his eternal salvation, then this must have been determined upon by God before all time. God chose certain individual men and women before the creation of the world, even those who possess this certainty, and foreordained that they should become brothers of Christ and children of God. In consequence of this election by God, all that happens to them for their salvation follows in an inevitable succession. Every imaginable evil may befall such chosen children of God—it matters not, their lives are marked out for them, they must reach the goal. All works for their good and brings them nearer to the goal. Even were a devil to get possession of them, he would have to work God's will and bring them forward on the road to salvation. So St Paul thought of himself: God separated me from my mother's womb: so each true Christian may think, and from this standpoint count his whole past with all its guilt as a part of God's plan.

281

St Paul thought that all Christians should attain to this consciousness of election. He did not, however, transmit his belief to the Church. Experience showed only too plainly that being baptized and being saved are too different things. The individual is to attain to salvation in the Church but not through the Church. St Paul prescribed no particular method for the acquisition of the assurance of salvation. As tokens he mentions now the love felt for God, now the faith in the Cross, and now the voice of the Spirit. In the end it is found to be a personal experience. No man can tell his brother what it is; he must discover it himself. God is faithful, and He will complete the good work which He has begun; so St Paul would reassure those of a wavering and doubting temperament. Here, however, there is a gap in the apostle's apologetic system. Strict consistency demanded that entrance into the Church should guarantee salvation. St Paul meets this demand half-way when he connects salvation with faith. But he does not pursue this line of reasoning to its ultimate conclusion. In the end salvation is a matter which the individual has to settle with his God. Hereby we see that St Paul was more than an apologist for the Church: he was a disciple of Jesus.

The Theory of the Postulates for the Future.

Here, too, the needs of the apostle's apologetic system unite with his personal hopes. The vast edifice of the doctrine of salvation is as yet unfinished. To complete the structure St Paul will have to look beyond this present world, so experience teaches him. But the Christian does not grope about in an uncertain and imaginary future which can be depicted according to individual fancy. The nature of the future world can, on the contrary, be safely predicted from our knowledge of the present. There are two facts which cast a bright light on this future world: the Resurrection of Christ and the possession of the Spirit. From the

282

resurrection of Christ we may infer that our own resurrection will exalt us into a higher state. We shall be transformed, and our bodies will be like that of Christ. From the possession of the Spirit, it follows that we shall have a spiritual body, one in which the Spirit shall no longer dwell as a strange guest. But besides this—here St Paul is employing the methods of Jewish apologetics—we may learn a great deal as to the nature of the end of human history from the description of its beginning in the first chapters of Genesis, for all things revert to their origin.

From these data we can derive a clear picture of the Pauline eschatology in its principal features, distinguishing its negative from its positive elements. All that is hostile to God throughout the whole sphere of salvation must be conquered, destroyed, or at least subdued. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. They are taken up into something higher. All the hostile angelic powers are cast down and subjected to the dominion of Christ. Finally, the last enemy, death, is vanquished. And, on the other hand, the dead rise up, they enter into everlasting life, into the spiritual world, as it was in the beginning of all things. All Nature lays aside once more its garments of corruption and stands, instead, clothed in glory in the presence of God. And Christians now have spiritual and heavenly bodies, they are clothed in the bright robes of Paradise, they are fashioned like unto the image of Christ and stand around Him like brothers round the first born. Now all creation is once more good, and God is all in all, as He was before the creation of the world.

283

These are the principal features of the eschatology;. they are perfectly clear and in this form peculiar to St Paul. There are several features of the Jewish apologetic which point in the same direction—*e.g.*, the idea of a transformation of the body, but nowhere so simple and consistent a system. St Paul, it is true, completes this system by the addition of many traditional details derived from Jewish apologetics. To the principal features he added: the Antichrist, the arrival of Messiah, the restoration of Israel, the day of judgment, the millennium, Paradise and others. The process of transformation is also conceived in a thoroughly Jewish fashion with many wonders and catastrophes, and as of old, this earth is to be the scene of the kingdom of God. But all this is relatively of little importance compared with that which alone really matters—the immense progress in the spiritualization of the eschatology. We enter into a new world, a spiritual kingdom. The earthly joys of Jesus' promise, the glad eating and drinking at His table, have gone. Paul retains, however, what Jesus desired above all else—communion with God in a higher, an eternal state of existence. Taking this, therefore, as the essential, he leaves all the phenomenal apparatus on one side and so completes the spiritual process which Jesus had begun. God and eternity—that is the real issue at stake. The Christian is to strike out of his hope all that is of the earth, phenomenal and individual; it belongs to flesh and blood, not to the Spirit.

284

With these brief indications he has left us a number of unsolved problems. (1) Is the resurrection and transformation of the body one event, or are they two separate occurrences

which succeed each other rapidly? On one occasion, St Paul says plainly, the dead shall rise incorruptible; on another he speaks of the awakening of the mortal body, when he explains to the Corinthians that the body belongs to the Lord and not to fornication; and founds his explanation on the message of the resurrection. He appears to presuppose that this mortal body will in the first instance rise again. Is it not contained in the very conception of resurrection and transformation that the old body will first of all arise from the grave and only afterwards be changed? (2) Does Paul expect a resurrection of all men, or only of Christians? In the most important chapter he only mentions the resurrection of Christians, but in the course of his missionary preaching he brings all the just and the unjust before the judgment throne of God. But even if the unbelievers participate in the resurrection, the spiritual body cannot surely be granted them. We do not find any definite mention of hell—the word itself does not even occur. Is it possible that he conceived of ordinary death as a final punishment? (3) When does the judgment take place? Does it coincide with the second coming of the Messiah? or is it postponed till the end of Messiah's reign, or does it take place progressively in the gradual victory over the enemies of God? The conception of the single day of judgment seems to be the prevailing one. But then can the new body in this case be said to exist before the final judgment has been pronounced? All these are questions which admit of no clear answer—for us, but not for St Paul. Probably St Paul pictured the occurrences in the afterworld somewhat after the manner of the Apocalypse of Baruch. First, all men arise with their mortal bodies, and thus appear on the day of judgment immediately after the parousia. Not till then does God deliver His judgment, allotting death to one man, and to another the transfiguration of the body and everlasting life. If these suppositions are correct, then St Paul's position is much more nearly that of the popular hope of the resurrection than certain phrases in 1 Cor. xv. allowed us to suppose; in this chapter, however, he is trying to meet the Greeks as far as possible.

285

But is it true that all men are condemned either to life or to death? Isolated texts in St Paul's Epistles appear to give expression to the bold thought that all men shall be saved. "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." "As through one trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation, even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life." "God hath shut up all unto disobedience that He might have mercy upon all." On these passages later theologians have based their hope of a universal restoration. But on insufficient grounds. As soon as the texts are read in connection with the context it is evident that St Paul is only thinking of Christians. In his enthusiasm his expressions are somewhat rhetorical. Surely the great apologist of the Church did not build up his whole doctrine of salvation, closely connecting each part with the other, in order finally to cast it on one side. And if in the whole course of his missionary preaching he starts from the presupposition that there are lost and saved, two sharply divided classes, then he does not think of rendering his presuppositions on which the whole of his

286

work rests illusory in the end. For clear-thinking ethical natures such of those of Jesus and St Paul, it is a downright necessity to separate heaven and hell as distinctly as possible. It is only ethically worthless speculations that have always tried to minimize this distinction. Carlyle is an instance in our own times of how men even to-day once more enthusiastically welcome the conception of hell as soon as the distinction between good and bad becomes all-important to them.

Other passages in the letters have given rise to the opinion that in the course of his life St Paul gradually receded more and more from the Jewish hope of the resurrection and approximated to the Greek hope of immortality in the after-world. We hear of the apostle's wish to enter into the eternal house of God in heaven as soon as his earthly tabernacle is dissolved, or of his longing to depart and be with Christ. That appears to point to something different to the old hope of the resurrection. But it is only appearance. The man who composed the great chapter on the resurrection in First Corinthians had not yet acquired the chameleon-like qualities of a modern theologian. The hope which he there expresses is certain truth for which he will live and die. Even from the imprisonment in Rome he writes: "If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead." The resurrection, the transformation of the body, and the judgment—those are the absolutely fixed points in the Pauline eschatology, and it is at our peril that we try to meddle with them. The longing to die and be with Christ is for him identical with the hope in the resurrection. This longing spans the chasm that lies between death and the resurrection, and proceeds straight to the desired goal, to the meeting with Jesus. So likewise the martyr Ignatius hopes by death to come straight into the presence of God, passing across the abyss between death and the resurrection, of which he often makes mention. For the religious hope, death, resurrection, and the coming into the presence of God are one and the same thing, always and everywhere, not in St Paul's case alone. And in like manner the passage as to the dissolution of the earthly tabernacle and the being clothed upon with the heavenly habitation, refers to the change at the time of the resurrection and to nothing else. The apostle would not then be found naked before God—*i.e.*, in his mortal body—which appears to him to be nakedness (Gen. iii.) compared with the heavenly body, but he would be clothed immediately in the robes of glory. At bottom it is a matter of complete indifference to him what happens to his body before the resurrection. For he has found abiding comfort in this thought: "Whether we live we live unto the Lord, and whether we die we die unto the Lord; whether we live, therefore, or die we are the Lord's." A man possessing this sure comfort need invent no new hope for the after-world, but can content himself completely with the traditional Jewish representations. Beyond the dark passage which he shall have to traverse he knows that he shall be with Jesus, and that he shall enjoy the vision of God—that is the goal.

The Pauline eschatology was too exalted for the later Christians, too poor in the concrete pictures of the imagination. It was not the letters of St Paul but the Apocalypse that became

the handbook for the doctrine of the last things. Since, however, they drew the longing for eternity from these letters and suffered his courage, his consolation and his joy to influence their lives, St Paul's labours in their midst were not altogether fruitless.

St Paul was the first to build up a great theory of salvation. Before him salvation had been a matter of experience. No one had described it. Jesus made children of God of His disciples without uttering one word about salvation. Through Him they had become established in hope, and victorious in the pursuit of the good; the anguish of sin no longer beset them, the cares of this world no longer troubled them; death itself had lost its terrors. They were God's children, living together with God as with their father. Upon the basis of this experience—his own as well as that of others—St Paul built up his soteriology. He called the power which produced all these single effects the Spirit of God, and united it with the historic Christ and the Gospel. The Spirit is nothing but the influence of the personality of Jesus in history.

But St Paul likewise built up this whole theory of redemption as an apologist in the service of the Church. The Spirit was attached to the Church and its institutions. He made out all men outside of the Church to be as bad as possible, he set up the Christ of the Church as the only Saviour, and praised the Christian ideal, as it is possessed by the Church, as the greatest thing in the world. Thereby his soteriology obtained that definite ecclesiastical character with which it shortly afterwards passed over into Catholicism.

289

By constructing this theory of redemption St Paul united the Gospel of Jesus with a cosmology and a theology which in spite of many Jewish conceptions was bound to be welcomed by the decaying ancient world on account of its pessimism, its new myths, its ideal, its doctrine of hope. Jesus, His influence and His Church, were here introduced into the drama of the great world. All that was merely Jewish and national was weeded out; there remained the story of the fall and of the redemption of creation. And conversely, all the hopes and longings, the thoughts and imaginations of the ancient world came to crystallize round the person of Jesus, and so acquired consistency and the sense of reality. Thus, then, the background had been found for Jesus, and the centre for the philosophy of the world and of salvation. That was the work of St Paul.

290

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ANTI-JEWISH APOLOGETIC.

THE contrasts between this world and the next, between Adam and Christ, the flesh and the Spirit, death and life, are the subjects of the great theology of salvation. No mention is made of Israel, of its law, of its peculiar position. These matters do not concern the Greeks. But the struggle against Jews and Judaizers compelled St Paul to undertake a learned exposition of his teaching as compared with Judaism. This struggle had of course to be fought out in the first instance in the sphere of actual fact. The connection with the synagogue had to be cut off in all places where St Paul preached, and the Old Testament had to be brought to the Gentile Christians without the official Jewish explanation. Then St Paul had stubbornly to defy the whole congregation at Jerusalem, and at Antioch to withstand St Peter to the face—fighting, in the first instance, for the freedom of the Gentile Christians, and in the second for their equality of rights with the Jewish Christians. More important here than all his learning was the resolute attitude of his personality. Finally he had to beat back the attacks of the Judaistic emissaries upon the newly founded Churches, and to see to it (in spite of all abuse and denunciation) that none of the newly acquired territory should be lost again. In this struggle against the Judaizers—it was at the same time the struggle for his apostleship—St Paul stands revealed to us under his sternest and most rugged aspect. It is there that he breaks forth into abuse of the false apostles and messengers of Satan; it is there that he utters the curse against every one that should preach another gospel, even were it an angel from heaven. The fact is, that he knows that the very existence of Christianity is at stake. When finally the most impetuous attack had been repulsed, there was still no rest for him. For in the meantime, his other great enemy the Jews remained as powerful as ever. They denounced him as an apostate and a blasphemer to the Christians at Rome; they imprisoned him, and all but killed him at Jerusalem; during his captivity they stirred up all the strife they could in his churches—*e.g.*, at Philippi. He had to ward off the attacks of these Jews till the time of his death. Now this struggle against Jews and Judaizers in actual life naturally led him to engage in a theoretical campaign, both of attack and defence. His aim and object is ever the same: the justification of the mission to the Gentiles free from the bondage of the law. In the explanation of his doctrine, three points come up for consideration: the criticism and setting aside of the law, the defence of the reception of the Gentiles on the basis of faith, and the problem of the prerogatives of Israel. St Paul of course speaks everywhere from the standpoint of a Christian apologist.

291

The Law Annulled.

It was a memorable hour when St Paul met St Peter at Antioch, and fairly placed the alternative before him: Christ or the law. Either the one or the other. A little while before, at the council at Jerusalem, he had only proclaimed the freedom of his Gentile converts

292

without criticising the observance of the law by the Jewish Christians. But now the law and Christ stood opposed to each other. Paul put the following question to Peter: Where have we ourselves found our salvation, and where not? No sooner was the question put in this antithetical form than the law was annulled. It now took its place amongst those hostile powers from which Christ has set us free. Henceforth St Paul's motto was: to die unto the law, in order to be able to live unto God.

Thereby St Paul destroyed the idea that true religion was the legal system of the Jewish race. His object now was to establish this on a theoretical basis.

There were many ways in which he might achieve this result. The divine origin of the law might be questioned. Or secondly, the eternal and the temporal elements in the law might be separated by means of internal criticism. There was a third road, which led to freedom from the law—allegorical interpretation. Finally it could be pointed out that the law was not the way of salvation, and had been annulled by a new divine dispensation.

The first method—the denial of the divine origin—was that, *e.g.*, pursued later by Marcion, the apostle's zealous follower, but St Paul himself resisted the temptation. A temptation it was for him in the heat of the fray with the Judaists, when he wrote the letter to the Galatians and the second to the Corinthians. At that time he laid great weight upon the fact that the law had been ordained through angels, by the hand of a mediator; it did not, therefore, originate immediately from the hand of God. Nor did he shrink from counting it among the weak and beggarly elements which, as heathens, they served in times gone by. Or else he spoke of the teaching of the law as of a "ministration of death," and said of the letter that it killeth, words which surely would only be applied otherwise to powers hostile to God. Nevertheless he clings firmly to the fact that God gave the law. The law is not sin, but holy; the commandment is holy, righteous and good—and herein lay the real source of the difficulty of the problem. Had it not been for his tenacious belief in the divine inspiration of every word in the law he would never have needed to take all this trouble to prove that it would have to be annulled.

293

The second method was pursued by Catholic and gnostic teachers of the second century, who distinguished the eternal law of nature from the transitory law of ritual. Even the conversation of Jesus with the Scribe as to the supreme commandment seemed to point in this direction. But for St Paul the 'nomos' admits of no such division—it is something whole and entire. It is possible indeed to be uncertain of which part of the law he is thinking on this or that particular occasion: *e.g.*, in Rom. ii. and Rom. vii. he has the moral law in his mind; in Gal. iv. the law of ritual. But he has never expressed this distinction in so many words, nor does he anywhere treat of one part of the law more favourably than another. The essence of the law is for him the categorical imperative, and all its constituent portions bear this character in like manner.

294

The allegorical interpretation had been a means even for the Alexandrian Jews (Philo and others) of liberating themselves, at least theoretically, from the literal meaning of the law. It was practised in Palestine also, and Paul knew of it. He made use occasionally of Old Testament stories in an allegorical fashion: *e.g.*, of the story of Isaac and Ishmael. And in like manner he interpreted isolated commandments which seemed to him unsuitable to God if taken literally; as, *e.g.*, the prohibition to muzzle the mouth of the oxen when the corn is trodden out. Could not the whole of the ritual law be thus interpreted? Would not this turn out to be the road to freedom?

There are indeed certain indications which appear to point in this direction. The circumcision of the heart in the spirit is contrasted with the circumcision of the flesh as that which alone has value in the sight of God. Or we hear of the circumcision not made with hands—*i.e.*, the putting off of the body of the flesh at baptism. If the law is spiritual, does it not then rightly need a spiritual—*i.e.*, allegorical—interpretation of those portions which are of less value? Does not the celebrated antithesis of letter and spirit (2 Cor. iii. 6) lead us to the same conclusion? St Paul's opinion is the exact opposite of this. By the letter and the spirit he sets up in opposition to each other two covenants of different contexts—the one demands as a right, the other grants freely. The difference between Paul and Philo strikes one more forcibly from this passage than from any other. For reasons of his own St Paul could not find freedom in allegory: the law even when interpreted allegorically represented a demand for him.

295

St Paul's theology pursues an entirely independent course of its own. His criticism establishes two propositions hitherto unheard of: the law cannot be the way of salvation; Christ by His death has freed us from the law.

1. The law cannot be the way of salvation, because it only demands, it does not give. It presupposes God as lawgiver and judge: man has to perform a task, God rewards or punishes. St Paul never wearies of describing this relationship of wages without toning down any of the difficulties. "Now to him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned as of grace but as of debt." Thereby, however, the result of the law is merely a negative one. The law brings the full knowledge of sin: by its continual injunctions and prohibitions it actually stimulates transgression and drives a man to sin. So it works wrath and has death as its doom. Despair is the result of the service of the law.

The picture which St Paul thereby presents to us of later Judaism is a very strange one. He characterizes it as a religion of wage service and of fear, a slave's religion suitable for bondsmen only. To be a sincere adherent of Judaism is tantamount to despairing of one's salvation. For God is the stern Judge before whom even the most pious Jew cannot stand. In the Epistle to the Romans St Paul proves this point from Scripture, quoting passages from the Psalms and the prophets. "None is righteous; no, not one." In the Epistle to the Galatians he argues from the law itself: "Cursed is every one which continueth not in all things that

296

are written in the book of the law," and hence he draws the conclusion that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God.

Now, is St Paul's criticism of later Judaism just? What would a Jewish Rabbi think of this representation of his faith? He would say: this is a caricature of our religion. The Jewish Church is law and grace. The law presupposes grace. To be a Jew, a child of Abraham and a member of the chosen people, is already a mark of grace. Circumcision is a symbol of God's covenant grace. The whole Jewish Church is an organization for the attainment of salvation. It has sacrifices, repentance, the great day of atonement, the good works of the fathers, personal merits, the forgiveness of God in answer to prayer. He who has fear in the presence of the law may take refuge in the grace of God. For Israel has a God who is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, a faithful God.

How was it that St Paul thus entirely ignored the grace that was in the Jewish Church and the justification that was already within reach? There is a double reason—one personal, one apologetic.

St Paul saw to the bottom of contemporary Judaism. It was really in the main a service for wages and a slavish form of piety. A man could not breathe freely in God's love, could not feel himself free as a child of God. Jesus could retain complete personal freedom because the law did not stand between God and Himself. But wherever legalism thus formed a wall of separation, it fostered an artificial and slavish form of piety. The Church and the Sacraments do not give the one thing that is needful: the trust of the individual soul in the grace of God and the certainty of His love. The question as to the personal assurance of salvation still remained unanswered: it was only the day of judgment that was to clear up all that was now doubtful. An unbiassed examination must allow St Paul to have been justified in his criticism.

297

But now, of course, St Paul's apologetic and ecclesiastical interests came into play. Besides the grace in Christ he could not possibly allow any Jewish means of grace to have any efficacy. The despair which the law produced in pious souls was welcome to him, because it was the only way to get them to accept Jesus as their Redeemer. The whole of St Paul's criticism of the law, instead of being based on Jewish premises, always presupposes the Christian salvation that has already been won. As a Christian St Paul had become so entirely estranged from the law and the Jewish Church that he could never again judge it objectively. He was obliged, therefore, in writing Rom. vii. to learn to understand it again. Hence a Jew could never have written as St Paul did. Christ and His Church stand everywhere between the apostle and the law.

2. The despair to which legalism leads has been clearly set forth. The law is not the way of salvation, but as it is nevertheless divine, how can we escape our obligation to it? Christ was sent by God to set men free from the law. Christ is the end of the law.

Christ sets us free from the law in a twofold manner, in both instances by suffering vicariously for us. In the first place, Christ's whole life upon earth was a free and vicarious service of the law. He was made under law to them that are under law. For the Son of God who descended from heaven was, as such, free from the law. If He subjected Himself to the law He did it for our sakes that we might become the free children of God.

298

But above all the death of Christ was a vicarious suffering endured to set us free. St Paul's line of argument is a masterpiece after the true rabbinical fashion. One passage in the law pronounces every transgressor to be accursed; another says that every one that is hanged is accursed of God. Therefore he that is hanged is accounted a transgressor in the eyes of the law. Now, Christ hung upon the tree, but naturally without being a transgressor or accursed. Therefore, He became a curse for us, and our transgression has received its due punishment in His death. Thereby we have been set free from the law.

The passage in which he employs the argument from the marriage law describes exactly the same thing. From a legal point of view death puts an end to marriage and sets the surviving partner free. In a similar manner our obligation to the law would be ended by our death. Christ died in our stead; that is as much as to say that the connection between us and the law had been severed. We are dead to the law. That is to say, we are free men.

It is clear of course that all these arguments deal with legal abstractions and have nothing whatever to do with the Jesus of history. The question, does Jesus set us free from the law or not, could surely only be answered from the point of view of His position in history. This St Paul, however, absolutely refuses to take. The Jesus of history is for him a servant of the law just like every other Jew, but as Son of God voluntarily and vicariously. Now, without going any further, St Paul is at fault in his premises, and so the whole of this theory is an ingenious conjuring with ideas and nothing more. All this strikes us as so unnatural that many have found it hard before now to take St Paul seriously here. But for all that he was in serious earnest, and the idea that he had in his mind was a great one. He rightly understood Jesus when he conceived of Him as our Redeemer from the law. He revealed the contradiction between the respect which Jesus paid to the law and His actual relation to legalism. He drew that inference from the Gospel of Jesus, which His disciples neither had the courage nor the perspicacity to draw for themselves. Jesus was in very deed the end of the law; with Him began a new mediatorship and a new religious relation. The struggle against Scribes and Pharisees reached its rightful conclusion only when their legalism—the system which stood behind their persons—was annulled. That St Paul based this true under standing of Jesus on a very lame theory which disregarded facts, we have to take into the bargain. And, besides,

299

St Paul's mistake must be put down to the account of those who had been acquainted with Jesus, but had not recognized Him as free.

Of course, if we confine ourselves to the Jewish point of view we can easily understand the wrath and the indignation of St Paul's adversaries when he came forward with proofs such as these. For there was no single word in his theory that carried conviction with it. The very method, the attempt to prove the annulling of the law from the law itself, implied reasoning in a circle. There was, to be sure, a good dose of the characteristic cleverness of the Jewish Rabbi in it: and that made it seem all the more obnoxious to them. This kind of apologetic was bound to repel every thinking Jew. Christ was the end of the law for the believer—*i.e.*, for the man who had from the very first embraced the Christian point of view.

Justification by Faith and Freedom in the Spirit.

The positive converse to the negative criticism of the law is the proof of the superiority of the Christian religion over Judaism. St Paul's object is to show that Christians who have abandoned the law but who believe in Christ as their liberator from the law, far from losing, have been greatly the gainers by the exchange. Once again these theories are based upon experiences quite peculiar to St Paul, out of which, however, he constructs the defence of his practice as missionary and of the gospel which he preaches.

By the vision of Christ on the road to Damascus the religious relationship had been reversed for St Paul. Before, it was he who performed and God who rewarded. Now, God comes to meet him with the free gift of love. He is the giver, St Paul the child, the recipient of the gift. That is what St Paul means by the word grace. It is the return to true religion from an imaginary faith of one's own fabrication. God first—man last: that alone is the true religious relation. Thence rest and peace and thankfulness enter into the heart. And faith is nothing else than receptivity for God's love, the suffering oneself to receive the gift, the being seized by God. Grace—God is the Father; faith—I am His child: these two belong together. St Paul has expressed this more clearly than anywhere else in Rom. iv. Once more we hear the music of the 103rd Psalm, and there is added to it a note which no Jew could possibly strike, a strain of personal assurance. For in the death of Christ God's love has spoken to him.

By this same miracle of his conversion St Paul became a new man morally. When he found God and experienced His love, the good became the untrammelled motive power of his life, proceeding from his inmost being. He felt himself free, and the good conquered, without any kind of external compulsion, without either threats or prohibitions, without the taskmaster: nay, rather, from pure delight and love. That, in St Paul's language, is the Spirit. When the storms in his inmost being had subsided, external attractions lost their hold upon him. Instead of being something foreign to him, the good became his true home. He felt light-hearted and glad in the midst of all his labours.

By means of these experiences St Paul was able to look into the depths of religion as no previous thinker had done. In so far as his propositions merely reproduce this experience, they are the foundation stones of every theory of religion. Once again St Paul has reached Jesus, and once again he has gone a long way round to do it. For no man possessed in like manner as Jesus the power of living the life of a child of God or of acting from the inner motive. That which St Paul only learnt through the shipwreck of his old life, Jesus possessed from the very first as an original endowment. Hence Jesus had no need of St Paul's antithesis.

302

When it was therefore necessary to defend the reception of the Gentiles against the attacks of Jews and Judaizers, without exacting the observance of the law, and simply on the ground of their faith, then naturally St Paul found his personal experience very valuable. All that is genuine and profound in the doctrines of justification and of Christian liberty can be traced back to the experiences of St Paul. But his apologetic interests have here injured the expression of his thoughts to an even greater extent than in other points of his theology. They compelled him to accommodate himself to the difficulties and to the conceptions of his opponents, and to the employment of like conceptions in setting up antitheses against their theses. A great subject of a distinctly non-Jewish nature was thereby pressed into a perverted Jewish form. This remark applies to the doctrine of justification, which defends the entrance of the Gentiles on the ground of faith, even more than to the doctrine of Christian liberty. Jews and Judaizers alike declared that without circumcision and the fulfilment of the law no one could prepare for the judgment, or hope for justification on the day of judgment. In opposition to this St Paul set up his doctrine of justification by faith.

303

What, then, is the meaning of justification? What is the position of God, what is the position of man?

The word 'justify,' like its opposite, 'to declare guilty,' is a forensic term and is thence applied to the act of the Supreme Judge—God. In later Judaism men pictured God to themselves as keeping account in heaven of the deeds of men upon earth. Every man had his own particular page in the heavenly book, in which the good deeds were written on one side and the bad on the other. Now the Judge passes sentence in every moment when He decides to write the deed on the good or the bad side. But He can only pass the final sentence when He sums up the total of the good and the bad deeds. There is accordingly a twofold act both of justification and of condemnation—one that is going on continuously as each deed is done, and a final one on the day of judgment. Under the first head would be included, *e.g.*, the justification of the publican on the strength of his prayer in the temple, or of Abraham because of his faith in God's promise. Under the second St Paul himself includes the justification of the doers of the law on the day of judgment, of which he holds out the prospect in Rom. ii. Naturally the ground covered by these two kinds of sentence differs considerably. In the first instance it is the praise of a good deed; in the second, entrance into the everlasting blessedness, salvation.

The question now arises, which kind of sentence St Paul had in view in his doctrine of justification: for he was acquainted with both from the very first, just as his teachers the Rabbis were acquainted with them. Under the justification for which he contends he understands the single final sentence of God, the sentence which decides upon life and death. But now comes the innovation which he introduced. In the first place, instead of awaiting God's final verdict on a future day of judgment, he transfers it to the very beginning, to the entrance of the convert into the Christian community, so that every Christian, being already justified, can go forward in confident joy; secondly, he attaches a new meaning to justification, inasmuch as not the righteous but sinners are justified; henceforth it is simply equivalent to forgiveness—forgiveness for time and for eternity. Whereas the Jew anxiously awaits the uncertain award of God in the hope that he will stand the test of the day of the Lord because of his good works, the Christian has the full assurance, from the very day of his entrance into the community, of having received a full pardon in spite of all his sins. Both innovations—participation in salvation here and now and the reception of grace instead of one's just due—completely transform the idea of justification. All that is left are the juridical terms and the forensic appearance. "I am justified," no longer means, now I have acted rightly in the sight of God, but I have received forgiveness and am assured of His grace.

304

What, then, is the position of God in justification? Here we clearly realize the contradiction between the new meaning and the old form. God must be conceived of as judge in accordance with the forensic expressions. As such He gives His award on the ground of the deeds of men that are brought before Him for judgment. So it appears to be, as long as we look merely at the form. But the meaning points in a contrary direction. The God who declares sinners to be righteous, ceases to be a judge. He is the God of grace, and not of justice. Would that the old order, first man, then God, had not been retained even when the old doctrine received its new setting!

305

In the Jewish doctrine of justification God is the judge who punishes or rewards. St Paul, revising this doctrine, substitutes the God of mercy who forgives sinners on the ground of their faith. But St Paul's ultimate object was to establish the new order: first God, then man. This he does in the Epistle to the Galatians by emphasizing the promise, and by uniting promise and faith in one conception. The God that promises is the God that 'prevents'; man's faith only comes second. In the Epistle to the Romans the doctrine of the revelation of the "righteousness of God" in the death of Jesus is intended to express the same thought. In the doctrine of justification as a connected whole, 'righteousness' must be the substantive to the verb 'to set forth as righteous,' *i.e.* to justify, and means 'justification.' The only reason why St Paul did not employ the ordinary Greek word for justification is that the Old Testament provided him with an expression established by long usage, "The righteousness of God" (*cp.* Isa. li. 5, 6, 8; Ps. xcvii. 2). St Paul, as we have seen, altered the signification of the idea! It now means simply forgiveness, grace, love. This grace of God has been manifested,

he says, in the death of Jesus: here is the objective fact to which the sinner seeking for forgiveness can cling. God's love, therefore, according to St Paul, does not follow the act of faith but anticipates it. That is the great reversal in the religious relationship which Paul himself experienced. But he did not succeed in giving clear expression to his new thoughts. The old form of the doctrine of justification was still too powerful. In his controversy with the Jews St Paul did not manage to find the simple words "God is our Father."

306

But the old forensic system exercises its most baneful effect upon the position of man in the doctrine of justification. Faith in Jesus Christ comes to be the condition for justification. Now for Paul himself this faith was nothing but the feeling of God's love in the death of Jesus, the passive reception of God's gift, the exact opposite of any kind of performance of works. But in the course of his controversy with the Judaizers, he sets up, in opposition to their thesis, justification by the works of the law, his antithesis, justification by faith; thus putting faith instead of the ceremonies of the law as the work of man that is acceptable to God. That is, of course, not his intention: he emphatically declares faith and works to be opposites, but the power of his adversaries' formula is stronger than his will. And what is the faith after all which secures justification? It is the faith in Jesus as the Messiah, in His death and resurrection—in a word, it is the creed of the Church. And thus in fact a new work—the Church's creed—has stepped into the place of circumcision, ordinances as to food, the Sabbath, etc., and even now the apologist is not afraid of uttering the fatal proposition: "The creed of the Church will save a man in the day of judgment, and will secure eternal blessedness for him." The subject of controversy with Jews and Judaizers was the question whether entrance into the Christian fellowship might be considered a substitute for the Jewish ceremonies or not. But how widely removed is this question from St Paul's deep personal experiences.

307

One further argument, however, was indispensable. If St Paul wished to refute Judaism, he must prove "justification by faith" from the Old Testament. It was a critical undertaking. How could he expect to find again in the Old Testament the great new creation which he had experienced in Jesus? But apologetic methods smooth away most difficulties by taking merely words into account. By chance the decisive words 'faith' and 'righteousness' were found in the Old Testament (Gen. xv.) "Abraham believed . . . . and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness" (Hab. ii.). "The righteous shall live by faith." So the proof was furnished both from the law and the prophets. By Gen. xv. St Paul even secured Abraham, the ancestor of the Jewish people, for his doctrine. This was an immense advantage, for now he had the start of the law by 450 years. Clearly, then, it was proved to be altogether secondary. Even circumcision was now proved to have come in after faith. The institution of the rite is described two chapters after Gen. xv. It was therefore likewise something secondary and not the main condition. The appeal to antiquity had resulted in St Paul's favour; he had

vanquished his opponents, for the old, according to the belief of that age, was everywhere the more venerable and holy. With what one must almost call a refinement of cleverness, St Paul managed to extract a proof of justification by faith even from a passage which actually praised the law. It was the passage Deut. xxx. 11 seq., "This commandment which I command thee this day, it is not concealed from thee, neither is it far off . . . . for it is the word that is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart that thou mayest do it." The clever man simply omitted the first words "The commandment," etc., and the conclusion "That thou mayest do it," and lo and behold he had interpreted the word as his gospel, and 'mouth' and 'heart' as 'faith' and 'confession.' To a Rabbi this exegesis could appear as nothing else than deceitful. And doubtless St Paul heard the epithet applied to his procedure. Thereupon he answered that when the Old Testament was read the "veil of Moses" was over the hearts of the Jews, so that the true meaning of the law remained concealed from them; or, in a more succinct and emphatic form, that the devil had blinded them. This, then, was the conclusion of the controversy concerning the proof from Scripture between St Paul and his opponents.

But for us there is still another point in this matter which is very instructive. Through the use that St Paul makes of Abraham in his apologetic he renders the theory of salvation vulnerable. Before this we always used to hear that the whole of mankind was a 'massa perditionis,' that the light of salvation only began to shine in the world when Christ came on earth. And now, all at once, long before Christ's advent, there is the golden age of Abraham in the midst of this wicked world. The contradiction is due to the fact that two separate systems of apologetic, the one for Greeks and the other for Jews, intersect at this point. The consequence of this is that the Old Testament and its God are saved; the God of Jesus Christ is also the God of Abraham. In a later age the whole assault of the gnostics beat in vain against this rock of apologetics. And thus, even this artificial proof from Scripture turned out to be a piece of good fortune for the Church.

Whoever examines St Paul's doctrine of justification, laying aside all Protestant prejudices, is bound to reckon it one of his most disastrous creations. The word 'justify,' with the new meaning attached to it, is ambiguous; the position of God who as judge declares the sinner to be righteous, is confusing; the value attached to the creed of the Church as the decisive factor in the judgment is fraught with evil consequences, and the proof from the Old Testament is arbitrary and artificial. St Paul fought for the universalism of Christianity and the substitution of the religion of love for that of legalism: what he really attained was the establishment of the Christian Church with the new legalism of faith and the creed, with the return of all the Jewish sins of narrowness, fanaticism, and the restricted conception of God. A great and profound thought, however, lies hidden, in spite of all, beneath the defective outer form. God is our Father, who freely gives to us whether we deserve it or not, and we men, just as we are, His children, living by His love. This thought is at once strengthened

and realized by the fact of the historical manifestation of Christ. To the kernel though not to the husk we Protestants certainly owe the deepest reverence.

The second reproach, however, which his Jewish adversaries cast in his teeth still remained unanswered. The annulling of the law was equivalent, they said, to an invitation to unchecked sin. The reception of the Gentiles without the law merely paved the way for the entrance of immorality into the Christian Churches. St Paul's answer to this was the doctrine of Christian freedom.

He attaches a sharply defined meaning to the word 'freedom': it is freedom from the Jewish law, which, like a giant, holds men in bondage. The children of the house are free, therefore freedom from the law means at the same time the sonship of God. And that, according to St Paul, was Christ's great achievement, that out of the slaves of legalism He made us to be the free children of God.

But there is no danger in this freedom from the law, because the Christian's new life proceeds from within. In the Spirit which God has given him, the Christian has a complete substitute for the law. Whilst the law, as a foreign and extraneous power, demanded of us that which was incapable of fulfilment, and was unable to break the inner law of sin in our members, the Spirit grants the Christian the power for a new life from within, and all that proceeds from the Spirit is not contrary to the law but fulfils it. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, chastity; and along with the gift of love is given the fulfilment of the whole law, for the command of love to one's neighbour is the sum of the whole law. So, then, the freedom of the Christian from the law is no freedom to commit sin, for from the Spirit there proceeds only the victory over sin and obedience to the will of God.

It is as though one stepped out of the dark night into the bright light of day, when one comes to these marvellous and simple sentences after leaving the laboured arguments of the doctrine of justification. They are eloquent with the glad rejoicing of a man who has become a child again after having been an aged pedant, and at the same time with an enthusiasm for the victory of the good in all his friends which is peculiar to the period of creative activity. Nowhere else has the superiority of the new religion over the old found so brilliant an expression. But on a closer examination we observe that it is not a picture of things as they really are, but a coloured apologetic representation that we have here before us. St Paul himself was the first to be aware that the Spirit produced very various effects, *e.g.* at Corinth, and amongst them some which threatened to implant in the lives of the converts the tendency to an unbridled and morally dangerous enthusiasm. One need but compare the fruits of the Spirit which the apologist enumerates in the Epistle to the Galatians with those which are noted in the First Epistle to the Corinthians. And apart from this St Paul knew very well that the work of the Spirit cannot be compared to natural causation, so that the moral life could be deduced from it by purely logical methods. That which he describes as apologist was the ideal and not the real in his congregation. Read, *e.g.*, the statement: "They that are

Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the passions and the lusts thereof." Taken literally it would not be true to fact: but St Paul is setting up the ideal, the aim and goal of effort. The same remark applies to the idea of the new birth—St Paul prefers the word resurrection—which he sets forth in the Epistle to the Romans as a parallel to the theory of the Spirit. He had once more been reproached with the taunt that his doctrine of free grace led to immorality. St Paul answers, referring to baptism, that sin for Christians is an impossibility, because they had died to it once and for all at their conversion, and through dying to it with Christ had been freed from all relation to it. It has rightly been pointed out that great moral changes sometimes take place from the very moment of conversion in the missionary field. But to generalize from such cases is surely only the work of the apologist who takes the ideal for the real.

312

St Paul felt that himself, and therefore added in the Epistles to the Galatians and Romans the command in the imperative mood to the description in the indicative. We may perhaps even go still further and say that the description of the ideal was written by him in the shape of a command to his readers to attain to it. Both in the doctrine of the Spirit and in the doctrine of the new birth the Christian is to read his obligation to understand his Christian freedom as obedience to God's will. His freedom is to consist in becoming the servant of righteousness, in the rendering of services to the brethren, and in a freedom from sin. To this St Paul firmly adheres. There is no word about the law. Christians are not under the law but under grace. But the place of the external law is taken by the inner sense of obligation, the simple content of which is love to God and the brethren. This inner obligation is to rule their hearts and minds in the place of the law. His controversy with the Jews, the impossibility of understanding anything but the Jewish law under the word 'nomos,' prevented St Paul from using the phrase, the inner law of duty. And finally, his doctrine of the Spirit presented an obstacle, for he always conceives of the spirit as of some strange power entering in from without. It never comes to be equivalent to the conception of a will which has become good. But under this husk—Antinomianism and the theory of supernatural spirit—the kernel—the idea of duty and of a good-will—gradually emerge an earnest for the future. Only thus can we explain the fact that the man who annulled the law had at the same time the most profound conception of the ethical character of Christianity. In St Paul's controversies with Jews and Judaizers the great ideas of moral liberty and of Sonship to God are striving for a clear utterance. They fail to find an outer form such as to ensure their victory; nevertheless it was fortunate for the whole future history of Christianity that they were connected so closely with its origin.

313

The net result of all these theories as to law, justification, freedom, is the annulling of the mistaken Jewish idea. True religion is not the Torah of the holy people, just as God is not a mere tribal Jewish God. He that would become God's child must first escape from the purely national Jewish customs. Thus St Paul takes up that standpoint which alone corres-

ponds to the Gospel of Jesus. He draws his conclusion from Jesus' message and consciously raises Christianity into the position of a world-religion. This or that theory which he employed in so doing may not meet with our approval, but they all served to make a deed possible which has a world-historic significance.

314

There is a reverse side, however, to the apostle's undertaking. The destruction of Jewish legalism furthered the development of the Christian Church. But the Church has also its legal system—first of all spiritually expressed in faith and the confession of Jesus, and soon afterwards in the new ceremonies which find a footing in the Sacraments. However strange it may sound, the man that destroyed the Jewish idea of the Church is in reality the theoretical creator of the new ecclesiastical system. It is indebted to no one more than to him who said, "He that believes will be saved."

But St Paul's standpoint, which was on the whole still purely spiritual, was far too high for the succeeding age. It could not remain content with the mere annulling of the Jewish law. Even the education of the Gentiles called for a new Christian law. This was formed, as the Torah had been before, by the gradual collection of ecclesiastical customs, legal forms, regulations for public worship, dogmas, etc., which were ultimately sanctioned officially. The origin of Catholicism is the gradual transformation of the Church built upon faith into an institution of dogmas, laws, and ceremonies. That is of course a very great decline from St Paul's high ideal, but it is a decline in the direction of that idea of the Church which St Paul himself had created.

The fate of the Jewish people.

315

The results of St Paul's missionary labours were immense. Christianity became the religion of the Greeks and Romans, of the Mediterranean peoples as a whole, instead of being as before the religion of the Jews. It was quite evident that God had abandoned His ancient people and had entered upon a new course.

The whole people of Israel seemed all at once to have no lot or part in the divine plan of salvation.

This was of course likewise a result of the message of Jesus. Jesus had found greater faith in the centurion of Capernaum and in the woman of Canaan than in Israel. In unmistakable language He had set aside the privileges of Israel. The men of Nineveh and the Queen of Sheba should fare better on the day of judgment than this people. St Paul merely completes the great process of levelling which Jesus had begun. The second and third chapters of the Epistle to the Romans are our chief evidence in support of this statement. There the apostle proclaims the equality of Jews and Gentiles before God—God is no respecter of persons. The mere possession of the written law is of no value, for the Gentiles have the law written in their hearts. It is the working of good that decides on the day of judgment. Nor does literal circumcision carry any privilege with it. The uncircumcised that do God's will shall judge the circumcised that transgress the law. Indeed, both Jews and Gentiles alike are under

the dominion of sin, only the Jews with the greater responsibility. Let them lay aside, therefore, all national pride and all boasting on the ground of their belonging to the holy people. The very words of their own Scriptures stop the mouth of the Jews and prove all men without distinction to be worthy of punishment in God's sight. Only a disciple of Jesus could speak thus.

316

The answer to such rebukes was naturally that of apostasy. The report must have been spread, especially at Rome—even among Christians—that Paul had denied his nationality and blasphemed his people, his God and the law. The reproach was comprehensible enough, but it was not just. St Paul could in all truth call God to witness that he would rather himself be anathema from Christ for the sake of his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh. Their salvation was the fervent wish of his heart and the object of his supplications to God. But it was just in the presence of accusations such as these that the problems almost drove him to distraction. How can the present unbelief of the Jews be reconciled with God's promise to them, with the glorious part of God's chosen people? Can the people of God be lost? The answer to this question is the last great chapter of the apologetic. And on this occasion it concerns his own heart as well as his kinsmen.

First of all, the privileges of Israel over all other peoples are solemnly set forth, in striking opposition to other passages in the same epistle. Theirs is the adoption and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the law and the service of God and the promises, and the fathers and Christ as concerning the flesh. So speaks the Jew in St Paul, who suddenly bethinks himself of his origin. But then there begins a mighty wrestling to attain to clearness as to God's purposes with this highly privileged people. There are three separate stages.

1. Has God's word become of none effect? No; the Bible itself speaks of election amongst the children of Abraham, and of God's free choice everywhere. If God blesses only one portion of Israel and rejects another, and saves the Gentiles in its place, then all this is in accordance with Scripture. The God of the Bible has revealed Himself as the God of arbitrary power. All that He does is right. Man, a weak thing of nought, should bow down in all humility before the sovereign decrees of God that have been revealed to him in the Old Testament, the God that blesses one and pours out His wrath upon another.

317

2. But how is the salvation of the Gentiles, that seek not after righteousness, consonant with the rejection of Israel, that is jealous for the law? It is just Israel's religiousness and perverted zeal for works that are the cause of their having hardened their hearts against God's new ways. The Gentiles are ready to receive the new message and to behold the works of God, whereas Israel's pious zeal renders them unreceptive. God gives Himself to such as are willing to receive the gift.

8. But is the election of Israel set aside forever? No. A part of Israel hardened their hearts, but the purpose of this was simply to draw the Gentiles on to their salvation. But when the fulness of the Gentiles has entered in, then Israel's heart shall no longer be hardened and

all Israel shall be saved. This must come to pass, because of the promises to the fathers. For the mercies and the election of God are sure.

These three stages are not directly contradictory. They are rather to be regarded as so many steps up which the apostle's thought had to ascend in due order. The sequence of these stages affords us an insight into the very centre of the apostle's method of investigation. 318 The first command resulting from the enquiry is: submit thyself to the inscrutable but supreme will of God; reverence God's ways whether thou understandest them or not. So speaks the Semite, who sinks before Allah in the dust even if He tread him underfoot as a worm. It is only when due submission has thus been paid to God by us that we may humbly enquire as to the sin of man that perchance moved God to this action. Indeed, in view of man's littleness there is but one main sin: self-reliance, resistance to God's new ways. Here St Paul writes as a Christian and from the deepest experience. It is the fault of every orthodoxy to apply its own system cut and dried to God's free thoughts about the future. But our examination must go beyond the human relationship: God last as well as first. The enquiry as to the purpose of God alone leads us to the complete answer—the aim of God's purpose must be the realization of His promises. It is by looking into the future that the darkness of the present is chased away. Here, finally, the Jew speaks yet once more: at the end of all things, God and Israel belong indissolubly together. The examination begins, therefore, with the awful mystery, then seeks for illumination in reflection as to the possible motives of God, and finally finds comfort and peace in the comprehension of His purposes for the future.

And yet what a fluctuating medley of thought about God! First, the God of mere arbitrary power; then the ethical God who accepts those who turn their hearts to Him; and finally the God of the nation, who keeps His faith with His favourites. And this last God is the mightiest for St Paul, with the one proviso that the breadth and freedom of the Gospel are 319 untouched.

Jesus had passed a clear and definite sentence of condemnation upon Israel, because He had come to recognize in the course of His activity that God's ways were about to turn aside from Israel, and because He submitted to this result of His experience. St Paul did not submit, though God had definitely entered upon new paths—the fact was accomplished, but the apostle set the authority of the old scripture still higher. The contrast is a characteristic one—both for Jesus and for St Paul—here reverence for facts, there for the Bible. At the same time, we observe once more how the Jesus of history is simply nonexistent for St Paul when he treats apologetic problems of this nature. No mention whatever is made of Him in the three chapters of the Romans which treat of Israel's fate. The literal text of the Septuagint seems to be the only decisive authority, and that is so sacred and so almighty, that whenever it comes into collision with the human conscience, the latter is silenced when the voice of revelation speaks. This is, of course, only apparent—we have had sufficient reason to know that St Paul could on other occasions manipulate the Old Testament text

as he liked. The really decisive factor was after all his patriotism, which he did not get rid of even as a Christian.

But notwithstanding its reverence for the apostle, the Christian Church soon laid aside the Jewish patriotism of St Paul, who rested upon God's promises in the Old Testament in spite of facts. In the year 70 A.D. came the awful end of the Jewish state and sanctuary. That was looked upon as a divine judgment. Henceforth there could be no doubt as to God's new ways.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PAULINE GNOSIS.

ST PAUL developed his soteriology as well as his anti-Jewish apologetic in the midst of his missionary labours and for purely practical purposes. In order to win over the Gentiles, Jesus had to be presented to them in a wider, more comprehensive, and intelligible system; and furthermore, this system had to be defended against the attack of the Jews and Jewish Christians. It may even be safely maintained that St Paul scarcely ever speculated in the interests of pure knowledge and abstract truth. All his propositions—even the most abstruse—served the practical purposes of missionary life, and were never put forward without reference to them. But for all that it is a fact that through St Paul speculative thought and knowledge became a power in Christianity. The relation of Jesus to the problem of knowledge was a totally different one. The whole of His teaching is marked by the entire absence of every kind of speculation and an emphasis on the all-importance of action. If He boasts of the knowledge of God He means the understanding of the divine will in opposition to the science of the Rabbis, and this is so simple that it is within the reach of every child and unlearned person. The first step in the development of a Christian theology is marked by the appearance of teachers in the Church at Jerusalem. But it was St Paul who first really created the science of the Church. Through him a very high degree of importance comes to be assigned to knowledge and science in Christianity. Great systems, albeit at first of an apologetic nature, are built up. We have lines of argument often of the most complex form. It comes to be an integral portion of the Christian ideal that a Christian should be rich in the word of God and in knowledge of every kind. Thereby the way is paved for an immense change in the nature of Christianity. It takes its first timid and tentative steps on the bridge that leads over to philosophy—*i.e.* ecclesiastical philosophy, of course. The reason for this change is certainly to be found in great measure in the previous theological training of St Paul, but we cannot forget either the great alteration that has taken place in the historical position. As soon as Christianity is definitely separated from Judaism and faces Judaism and heathenism alike in an independent position, an entirely new task is incumbent upon it, viz. the enlightenment of Jews and Gentiles. In St Paul we are still in that stage where Greek philosophy is almost totally ignored, that is, as a power of culture which might be a possible rival. The science that is developed by him is still essentially Jewish Old Testament science.

322

What is the meaning of 'gnosis' in St Paul's case? It has three characteristic features. (1) It is something higher than 'pistis,' faith, which is always presupposed as a necessary first step to knowledge, but is surpassed by it. The clearest statement of this fact is to be found in the opening chapters of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. First the folly of the Cross, the preaching of faith, then the divine wisdom of gnosis, which teaches us to understand folly itself as wisdom. (2) It is the possession of a few and not of all. The "word of wisdom"

323

and the "word of knowledge" are counted by St Paul as especial gifts of the Spirit which are granted to single individuals. "Not all men have knowledge." True, the ultimate goal is that all Christians should come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, but now for the present the difference between them that have knowledge and the ignorant exists. (3) It proceeds from the Spirit. St Paul sets this forth especially in 1 Cor. ii. Through the Spirit God has revealed wisdom to us. We have received the Spirit which is of God in order therewith to understand what God has granted to us. The last of these three characteristic features is the most important. It sets up a sharp dividing line between human science and knowledge in the sense which St Paul attaches to the word. The origin of the two is entirely distinct. The source of the one is to be sought in the reason; it is a result of human activity; it is therefore weak and faulty. The latter is the result of divine revelation, and is therefore stamped as true from the very first. The very forms of expression of the two sciences—the human and the divine—are different. The one speaks in the words of human wisdom current in the schools, the other in spiritual words as of spiritual things. But not only do they differ in the manner of communication; difference of origin implies, furthermore, that the earthly philosophy does not—nay, cannot—understand the spiritual wisdom; for this 'gnosis' is unfathomable save by the Spirit; while, on the other hand, he that is spiritually-wise is able to understand everything, although he himself is not understood by anyone.

324

In these sentences, pregnant with such important consequences, the difference between ecclesiastical and non-ecclesiastical science is for the first time definitely established. They are related as reason to revelation, as the human to the divine. But what is the Spirit of which St Paul speaks? It is simply the Spirit of the Church or the sect, the sum of the impressions, words, feelings, impulses and thoughts which are produced in the Church, and which prevail in it as being both holy and necessary. In a word, it is the Christian consciousness as it grew up from the seed sown by Jesus, and as it was further transmitted in His sect. That which would be counted divine must pass muster before it as the final court of appeal. Whatever in anywise contradicted it would not be counted as revealed truth. But the Christian consciousness itself is placed beyond the bounds of discussion: it is perfectly sure of itself; it is ultimate and supreme. A proud and even justifiable Christian self-esteem developed this theory, but created therein a kind of supernatural coat-of-mail for itself which was at last bound to exercise a chilling and be-numbing reflex action. This theory preserves the peculiarity and sovereignty of the Christian religion—that is its everlasting merit—but it does this by passing a fanatical verdict of condemnation upon the whole remaining world of thought and feeling. It would appear that St Paul formed it in controversy with the Jews about the Old Testament, or, rather, that he indirectly borrowed it from the Jews. But even in this controversy the disastrous consequences are revealed which have since been indissolubly attached to this theory.

325

Now what is the object of the Pauline gnosis?

It is itself again the Spirit—*i.e.*, the revelation of God. Gnosis is the revealed understanding of the divine revelation, the re-discovery, by means of the Spirit, of the Spirit that is hidden from all other men.

All the oracles of the Christian prophets would be included under the conception of revelation, especially the revelation by means of Jesus. There is, in fact, an especial art of interpreting the words of the prophets, which is inspired by the Spirit, the judging or discerning of spirits. But this is not called gnosis by St Paul. Nor, again, is Christ the revealer of God's word for him, as it is the Cross and Resurrection, and not His sayings, that are the divine acts of salvation in St Paul's meaning of the word. So, then, there remains finally only one great object for the Pauline gnosis—the Sacred Scriptures of the Jews.

St Paul introduced the Old Testament in all his Churches as the sacred canon, the only divinely inspired book. This was an event of the very greatest importance in the history of Christianity. The Jewish national literature is declared to be divine, and is to become the sacred book of the Greek and Roman converts to Christianity, whilst at the same time it is the sacred book of the Jews, the bitter opponents of the new religion. How is this possible? The Pauline gnosis furnishes the answer. Great portions of the Old Testament were, to be sure, accessible to the heathen Christians, and inestimably precious to them as it was. Here was a text-book of monotheism, of morality, of hope, which excelled almost every other. Now, by means of the gnosis, even the national Jewish portions can be read as Christian, and, generally speaking, Christianity can be discovered everywhere in the old book. It becomes the means, partly even before St Paul, of the Christianization of the Old Testament.

326

The divinely inspired character of the Old Testament in every one of its parts is a firmly established fact. There is no dispute between Jews and Christians as to this point. St Paul accepts the teaching of the Rabbis, that the whole of the Old Testament is a collection of divine oracles, and that every text, even apart from its context, is a word of God. He personifies Scripture, speaking of it as of a divine being: "the scripture foresaw," "the scripture hath shut up all things." He does not indeed speak of the Spirit that inspired the Old Testament, perhaps because he considered the Spirit to be a gift of the last days. On the other hand, he appears in certain passages to have arrived at the conclusion that Christ is the inspirer and revealer in the Old Testament. Here he abandons his Jewish standpoint altogether, and his action is attended with important consequences. If Christ spoke in the Old Testament, then it is certainly a Christian book.

But the inspired book demands an inspired exegesis. For this purpose the Jews had the order of the Rabbis, who were especially endowed by God with gifts of the Spirit, in order to interpret the Scriptures. Here is the source of the Pauline theory of knowledge. He denies the spiritual endowment of the Rabbis, and proclaims himself and the Christian teachers to be inspired. It is evident that one of the two parties must be in the wrong: the former

327

prove from the Old Testament that Jesus was a criminal, the other that He is the Messiah. The Christians must be in the right, because, generally speaking, the Spirit is poured out amongst them in richest measure. For the endowment with the gnosis is only one amongst many gifts of the Spirit. The Christian interpretation therefore of the Old Testament is the only one that has any authority. Yes, the Old Testament must be interpreted according to the spirit of the Christians. The Jews—even the Rabbis—understand nothing about it. The veil of Moses is upon their hearts when they read it. They are 'natural,' not 'spiritual.' Satan hath blinded their minds.

It is therefore proved that the canon of the Old Testament is to be interpreted by the canon of the Christian conscience. And so the task set to the interpreters of Scripture is endless. By reason of its divine origin, every word in the Bible is written for all eternity. In each a divine meaning is contained, often more than one. Being intended for all time, each word has likewise an application for the age of the interpreter. Here, in this present age, it has to accomplish its direct purpose. Thus, *e.g.*, the chastisements of the patriarchs in the wilderness were written for our warning, upon whom the ends of the ages are come. In fact, everything that was written aforetime was written for our learning. St Paul's exegetical methods are naturally simply those of the Jews as Philo and the Rabbis employed them. This applies to the proof by prophecy, the use of types and allegory, and the practical application. The only new feature is the use of the Christian consciousness, the Spirit, as the canon of all exegesis. But the very circumstance that Jews and Christians alike used the same methods, combined with the fact that St Paul stands under the influence of the tradition of the Rabbis for his matter, as well as for his style, contradicts the apostle's artificial separation between the Spirit and human knowledge.

328

The exegesis of the passage concerning the oxen whose mouth is not to be muzzled is the best example of the Pauline gnosis made to serve the practical needs of the missionary. The canon of exegesis, which the Rabbis likewise accepted, runs: Nothing unworthy is to be ascribed to God. The Christian spirit forthwith discovers that the passage can be applied suitably to the missionaries. But for the most part the apostle's gnosis serves the purposes of his anti-Jewish apologetic. It was only necessity that caused the Christians to invent the proof from prophecy properly so-called. As the patriotic prophecies of a Messiah applied to Jesus in a very small number of instances, the Christian gnosis had now to discover in the Old Testament new proofs for the Messiahship of Jesus. Few excelled St Paul in the art of finding such passages. He did not hesitate to undertake the proof that all the promises of God were 'yea' in Jesus—*i.e.*, had been fulfilled in Him. How great a skill in exegesis that presupposes! It is a trifle indeed for such an interpreter to prove from the use of the singular instead of the plural in the passage, "To thee (Abraham) and thy seed" that the words are intended to apply to Christ. We have already pointed out how the annulling of the law, justification by faith, and the rejection of Israel, were proved out of the Old Testament. At

329

bottom, the whole of this apologetic gnosis is of course a mere theological fabrication whereby we are transplanted into an artificial kind of world. If anywhere it would be in Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Jeremiah that a real starting-point for the Gospel would have been found. But it was just the great prophecy of the earliest age that was entirely unknown to the Rabbis. However, St Paul as well as the other Christian teachers had one valid excuse. They acted under the compulsion of necessity and from genuine conviction. And the lucky find which St Paul made, while conducting this enquiry, is, after all, the mark of a man of genius:—the law is a later addition: the great age of the religion of Israel preceded the origin of the law. In like manner he successfully brings to light again many passages in the Old Testament of a universalist tendency which had been hidden away by the Rabbis.

Of greater importance, however, than either of these results was the fact that, thanks to this Old Testament gnosis, the Christian and the Jewish Church were continually placed side by side. The history of Israel is interpreted in a Christian spirit. Even the Christian Sacraments, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, are discovered in the pillar of cloud, in the Red Sea, in the water from the rock, in the manna. And on the other hand, the Christian Church is conceived of in a Jewish fashion as the Israel of God unto whom are all the promises. The effect of the gnosis in thus strengthening the Jewish idea of the Church came to be of the greatest importance. In this case it was the attributes that were transferred from the old Israel to the new; later it was the forms and institutions.

The apologetic exposition of the Old Testament for the purpose of confuting the Jews by no means, however, exhausted the Pauline gnosis. It produced, besides, bold speculations of its own, which only clearly come to light in the letters of the captivity, but date from a much earlier time: the chief subjects were the angel world and Christ.

In the 110th Psalm mention is made of the enemies whom God will subject to the Messianic King, the reference being to the neighbouring peoples, the Moabites and others. Paul applies the passage to the dominions, principalities, and powers of the spirit world. In Isa. xlv. 23 we read that every knee shall bow unto God—the heathen of course being meant; but Paul adds—of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth. In Dan. vii. 22 it is prophesied that judgment will be given to the saints, *i.e.*, Israel, and we naturally infer that it is the great empires upon earth that will be judged: but Paul concludes that therefore the saints (or Christians) shall judge the angels. We may gather from these passages that St Paul generally applied Old Testament words which referred to states upon earth to the angel hierarchies. It is merely an application of this principle to the political circumstances of his own time when he considers not the Romans but the princes of this world, *i.e.*, the demons, to be the murderers of Christ. By means of this equation, "the heathen kingdoms = angels," a huge fabric of angelology could be constructed out of the Old Testament. Assyria and Babylon and Egypt were intended to mean all the thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, the world-rulers of this darkness, the spiritual hosts of wickedness; and the

perpetual wars of Israel with its neighbours were but the type of the invisible battles fought in the spirit world. Anticipations of this conception are to be met with in later Judaism also, when angel princes appear as the leaders of the neighbouring peoples. But the systematic transformation of earthly politics into heavenly is St Paul's work.

The gnostic speculations as to Christ were of much greater importance. Jesus is the 'Lord' (= Kyrios). The subject of the whole of the Old Testament is the Lord (= name of God). Consequently St Paul can set down the equation Jesus = the Lord in the Old Testament. Proofs for this abound. Expressions like "the understanding of the Lord," "the Table of the Lord," "the Glory of the Lord," "the name of the Lord," "to tempt the Lord," "to return to the Lord," are all applied to Jesus. Jesus, *e.g.*, was the God of revelation in the wilderness; there He baptized (the water from the rock), and celebrated the Eucharist (the manna). True, the letter to the Philippians says that it was only after the resurrection that the name above all other names was given Him (*i.e.*, the sacred tetragrammaton equivalent to the Greek Kyrios, Lord), but other passages contradict this statement, and nothing therefore can be concluded from it. And besides the word Lord, the name of God is but one of the designations of Jesus in the Old Testament. He is also the image of God after which God created man, and as such mediator at the creation. All things were created through Him, and He is the head of every man.

332

Now when once this gnostic Christology reached such giddy heights as these, then the most extravagant speculations of the later letters can no longer strike us as strange. When once Jesus has become the God of Revelation of the Old Testament, and the mediator in the creation, then He is also the head and the centre of the world of angels. And if His propitiatory death has power for all men without distinction, why should not the rebellious angels like wise experience His power? In all this reasoning there is no missing link between the possible and the impossible. The 'humanity' of Christ has been laid aside a long time ago by the earlier speculations. Can we be astonished if the fulness of the Godhead now dwells in Him bodily? If there is anything that surprises us, the reason is that we do not know the Old Testament passages which St Paul uses as the basis for his gnosis in the letter to the Colossians. The occasion for his treating of this subject was the rise of false teachers at Colossae who appealed to the authority of angels. To meet this heresy St Paul considers it advisable to remind his readers that all angels derive their being from Christ alone, and through Him alone they continue to exist.

The Pauline gnosis claimed to be a revealed exegesis of the Old Testament. But this Christology cannot possibly have been obtained by exegesis of the Old Testament, seeing that it had been wrongly inserted into every text. Whence, then, did St Paul derive it? It cannot originate from the Jewish doctrine of the Messiah, since Christ always appears in this as a definite eschatological quantity. Philo's doctrine of the Logos is too remote to come under consideration. But there were angelological speculations amongst the Jews, doctrines

333

of divine intermediate beings regarded as instruments in the creation and government of the people of God. The archangel Michael was assigned a prominent position above all others in the history of salvation; he was almost a subordinate god, to whom God had committed the care of His people in His own stead. Besides this, the distinction between the two divine names, Jahve and Adonai, had struck, not only Philo, but the Palestinian Rabbis, and had led them to set up distinctions in the divine being. St Paul may well have heard of such speculations; they facilitated the discovery of Christ in the whole compass of the Old Testament for him, as all that he needed to do was to identify Christ with the highest of these intermediate beings.

This adaptation of previous isolated speculations cannot, however, be considered to be an explanation of the Pauline Christology. Its real origin is to be sought elsewhere. St Paul's object was to make Christ the centre of his cosmology. However strange its outer form may appear to us, the whole of this gnosis is after all the first great Christian interpretation of the universe. It is not without reason that it is just in the Epistle to the Colossians that the words occur, "Christ is all and in all." No sphere of the world, neither of the natural nor of the spiritual, is henceforth to be accounted profane and under its own government. Christ is the Sun of all worlds. What remains if this theory be set on one side? Angelological speculations, myths, etc., and side by side with these, the person of Jesus as of equal value with the others. The practical consequence was that at Colossae they sought for communion with God of a supra-Christian character. But now the apostle declares Christ to be the head of all things, and there is therefore no other means of mediation, save through Him alone. Thereby, too, a step forward has been taken in comparison with the doctrine of salvation. The significance of Christ was limited in that doctrine to His helping us out of this present evil world. Here in the gnosis He is the mediator of the whole world. A positive relation to the cosmos has taken the place of one that was negative. Hence follows the practical conclusion, which we find already in the hortatory portion of the Epistle to the Colossians, with its Christian regulations of marriage, of education, of the relations of master and servant, and the command that whatever is done must be done in the name of the Lord. Thereby Christ is secularized and the world is Christianized. It is only the Pauline gnosis that completely explains to us the firm stand thus taken with Jesus on the vantage ground of this world—of His world.

334

But what a circuitous route he travels. How simple and untheological is the gospel faith in Providence by the side of this. Compare the reasons given for the "be not anxious" in St Matt. vi. with the first chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians. The Pauline gnosis here starts from a very living feeling of that which is Christian and at the same time from an entirely dead conception of God. Even in its origin the dogma of the divinity of Christ is a proof of the weakness of the faith in God. Jesus would not j have answered the false teachers at Colossae: "The angels, whose intercourse you are seeking, only exist through Me and have even

335

been reconciled to God by Me." He would simply have said: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him alone shalt thou serve."

But St Paul knows another gnosis of a completely different nature besides this of which we have been speaking. It is theocentric, and it belongs to the close of his system. It is a bold undertaking to penetrate with the Spirit into the deep things of God and to explain the whole of the world and history from the standpoint of God as the realization of divine purposes. The starting-point of this gnosis is his own experience, his own certainty of salvation. As the Christian regards the whole of his former life in spite of all its sin and all its evil fortune as the divinely appointed path for his own redemption, so he may with equal right look upon the whole course of the world's history, of which his own life forms an infinitesimal portion, as the necessary way of the Lord unto salvation. Only then the goal is so infinitely greater. The simplest formula of this philosophy of history is: All things are from God, through God, and to God. God is the first cause of the whole world and of all history. He has created them. Now even though the world should fall away from God and sink down step by step into even deeper sin and corruption, then that is but an apparent infraction of the divine plan and government.

336

> "Deep in unfathomable mines
> Of never failing skill
> He treasures up His bright designs
> And works His sovereign will."

God Himself willed the Fall and sin. He has given over to sin and disobedience all alike, that to all alike He may at last show mercy. Yes, the law was only given to man in order to make the offence greater. But the greater the sin the wider God's mercy. No statement is too bold for St Paul to make, for the thought never occurs to him that sin could thereby lose the character of guilt on the part of man. Sin is guilt in any case, but then God is God even over sin. And then the world is gradually led back to obedience to God by the incarnation and sacrifice of the Son of God. Now that is the manifestation of God's grace which is so inexpressibly great, so much greater than sin. Step by step the process of redemption proceeds. Christ, the Church, the Gentiles, Israel, the angel world, are one after another embraced by the love of God and return to Him from whom they took their origin. In the end God will be all in all. All things have reverted—not to physical absorption in God, but to worship and subjection to the honour of God the Father. The fall and sin had one great and important consequence. The story of the parable was lived in real life—the story of the children who only learned to love their home when they were in a strange country.

The end of this gnosis in a man like St Paul could only be a prayer of glad thanksgiving. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God; how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past tracing out. For who hath known the mind of the

337

Lord, or who hath been His counsellor? Or who hath first given to Him and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and unto Him, are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen." The passage is especially beautiful because of the modesty of this gnostic, who in spite of his great presentiments ever reminds himself that God is too high for him. However far he may penetrate, there remains in God an element of mystery. But for all that, his prevailing mood is one of thanksgiving and of joy. From his own stand point, in the bright light of certain conviction, he can confidently scan the dark riddles and unsolved problems of existence. He knows that all is light for God and will one day be light for him. And he knows the love of God as the end and goal of all that happens in the world. That is Christian gnosis which interprets the world from the experience of faith or of Jesus. In fact, whether he formulates it with Christ or with God as the centre, the whole of his knowledge is one of the great effects which his experience on the road to Damascus produced in him.

We have arrived at the end of St Paul's theology. It has been shown that its roots are to be found in the experience of the vision of Christ and in his apologetic as missionary. In the building of the edifice Jewish material has been used to a very large extent, nor has the Greek been entirely rejected. But the final result is something entirely new and independent compared with all that has gone before. It is an original Christian creation. St Paul's great achievement is that from these two starting-points, Jesus and His Church, everything has been thought out entirely anew, so that scarcely in one single point does the earlier knowledge remain the same, or in the same connection. If the Jesus of the Christians is the Redeemer, then (1) All men must be miserable, lost sinners for whom there is no other atonement but in Christ's death, and no salvation but that through the Spirit of Christ in the Church, with the hope of the glory that is to come, the earnest of which we have in Christ's Resurrection—such are the postulates of the doctrine of salvation; and (2) the law can be no road to salvation—it has been annulled by Christ, whilst faith and the Spirit are a complete substitute for the law in the Church of Christ. Such are the demands of the anti-Jewish apologetic; and (3) the whole of the Old Testament must be a Christian book, and the whole world must be interpreted from the standpoint of Jesus. Such is the postulate of the Christian gnosis. Even the preaching of monotheism receives a Christian content, for the one God is the God and Father of Jesus Christ. It is only the doctrine of the final salvation of the whole of Israel that stands outside of this Christocentric system.

338

Now it is of course true that the Jesus of St Paul is no longer merely the Jesus of the Church of Jerusalem. The Son of God, the Cross and the Resurrection, are here so explained that, as distinguished from the earlier hope in a coming Messiah, the foundation is laid for the later Christological dogma. For the subject of this dogma is not the coming Messiah, but the Son of God who has already come. Moreover, St Paul himself has removed the Son of God very far from humanity, and brought Him very near to God as mediator of the cre-

339

ation and revelation. It is perfectly incredible within how short a time the Jesus of history had to undergo this radical transformation. In spite of this, however, it is just the Jesus of history that St Paul grasped with a deep and clear insight, as the Redeemer who leads us away from the false Jewish idea to the Fatherhood of God and to moral freedom, and who, besides setting the high ideal before us, inspires us at the same time with strength and courage for its realization. It is for this living and loving Jesus that the apostle's high Christology paves a way into the world.

In the next place, the Church, which dominates the Pauline theology second to Christ alone, is for him still identical with the communities which in spite of all imperfections were real instruments of salvation and channels for the influence of Jesus. Hence the practical value of St Paul's ecclesiastical apologetic. Nevertheless it was he who likewise created the Christian idea of the Church in its fanatical narrowness, by pronouncing as he did all who were outside the fold, as a sinful mass of corruption doomed to death, and in many passages at any rate, attaching everlasting blessedness to belief in the ecclesiastical creed. Thereby the same man who led Jesus out into the free world confined Him within a narrow form which does not harmonize with the freedom and the seriousness of the sayings and parables of Jesus.

340

But in spite of all this, Christianity only became a great spiritual power in the world through the theology of St Paul. For through him it obtained a cosmology as a foundation, which enabled it to compete with Greek philosophies and Oriental myths. Through him the Jewish idea was annulled and so Christianity was set free to enter the world. Yes, and at the same time its spiritual character is assured for all eternity. Ceremonies have no value as means of salvation. St Paul grasped the world-historic greatness of Jesus, and compared Him with the first man. The Messianic element is forced into the background; with Jesus a new humanity begins. Paul placed the two great ideas of the Fatherhood of God and the freedom of the Spirit in the centre, as the Christian ideal in religion, and has thereby laid down the safest canon of criticism for every form of religion.

Finally he placed love and practical results higher than enthusiasm and theology, and thereby found the eternal in the transitory. As one surveys the whole of what he achieved, one stands in silent amazement at his greatness as a thinker.

341

RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE CHURCHES.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ST PAUL'S PERSONAL RELIGION.

WE can recognize the effect of Jesus upon His disciples directly from the Gospels. Here we see all that was great and new in Jesus that seemed worth recording. It was this at the same time that struck root and further developed. The effect of St Paul, on the other hand, we can only discern quite indirectly. We can gather what it was, partly from his letters, and partly from those documents of the succeeding age which were clearly influenced by him. Even though these conclusions are mostly hypothetical, we cannot entirely disregard them. Our present object, then, is to discover the characteristics of the earliest Christianity in heathen countries.

Wherever the Christians are gathered together in fully organized communities, there they feel that they are sharply divided not only from the popular religion of their heathen neighbours, but also from the Jewish synagogue. Both constitute for them that world to which they have bidden farewell. Indeed it is contrast with the world that determines the signification of the term Christian. In the first place comes the difference of faith and hope. As compared with the heathen, the Christian confesses the unity of God the Creator, and denies that the gods of the heathens are such to whom worship is due. The great text-book of monotheism is the Old Testament. As compared with the Jews, the Christian confesses that Jesus is the Lord; nay, more, the Son of God who came down from heaven in order to die for our sins, and to guarantee our hope through His Resurrection. This same Jesus shall come again in the near future, as the Saviour of those that believe on Him. Of Him, too, the whole of the Old Testament prophesies. He is now sitting on the right hand of God, and nearest to God, greater than all angels. Besides this, the Christian believes that the Spirit of God or of Christ, called also the Holy Spirit, is given to all believers in the Christian Church. These are the dogmatic propositions which St Paul securely established in all his Churches. He often summarized them as the essence of the faith upon which all depends. As yet the Spirit occupies the least prominent position in the creed, which is natural while he is still an object of experience. There is no need as yet to believe in him first. St Paul himself, however, employs expressions from time to time, in which the threefold formula Father, Son, and Holy Spirit already occurs.

342

The important point to notice here is the theoretical character of the faith, which is guaranteed by the contents. Neither mystical nor ethical elements are contained therein. It consists in assent to the propositions of the preaching. In this assent a certain amount of trust is contained as well. But the question already arises, whether this act of trust was considered as important by the Greeks as it is by us. They believed in the facts of the Gospel, in the fulfilment of the prophecies, in the unity of God, all purely, theoretical objects of belief in the first place. "The devils also believe, and tremble," we read in a later document. We

343

may much rather add in our thoughts hope to the word faith, for faith in Jesus for the purpose of salvation is as much as hope. Thereby it receives a very great accession of value. He that believes may hope to be saved in the approaching day of judgment. "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou and thy house shall be saved," says the Paul of the Acts. Faith saves, justifies, blesses,—expressions such as these obtained currency wherever St Paul had been. Often they were turned into harmful party cries, against the use of which later leaders had emphatically to protest. They went so far as to consider all that were without—the unbelievers—as such, for lost, whatever their works and their character might be.

Other characteristics of the Christian in opposition to the world may be noticed in addition to this the first; *e.g.*, participation in the holy rites of the Church. This would appeal especially to the Greeks, to whom the Christians were, above all else, the saints, *i.e.*, the congregation participating in the true worship. The later 'Sacraments,' Baptism and the Lord's Supper, were in very early times valued by the Greeks as mysterious rites connected with the world beyond. In baptism, the new birth is symbolized by a dying and a rising again. An implanting in Christ takes place whilst the convert passes through the water. The baptized convert is now a citizen of the world that is above: he has a certain claim upon that which is to come. The Lord's Supper then leads him to an even closer and more intimate communion with Christ. But the Spirit of God descends even in the ordinary meetings for divine service, and testifies to His presence by mysterious and miraculous manifestations. St Paul never failed to subject these workings of the Spirit to ethical principles, but his Churches did not always follow his example. The Spirit and the miraculous continued to be interchangeable conceptions for them; only the theological mysteries were counted to be just as certain revelations of the Spirit as ecstasy. Thus the apostle's rich inheritance was at once considerably impoverished. Of all the manifold manifestations of the Spirit two only were in reality preserved, and those the most opposed to each other—ecstasy and theology—both unpractical and morally indifferent.

344

The way is paved for a radical transformation from this point onwards. The greatness of the earliest form of Christianity was essentially constituted by two historical realities—Jesus and the community which attached itself to Him. All that deserves the name of salvation is the effect of these two realities. They were also the two main factors in St Paul's missionary work—the incarnation of the grace of God. But in the Pauline Churches the place of the person of Jesus is occupied by statements concerning the Son of God, the Cross and the Resurrection, which are accepted in faith. Where Jesus stood before, there now stands the dogma of Christ. The social element finds its expression in the Sacraments in which it is believed the present activity of Jesus is experienced. Dogmas and sacraments therefore have ousted Jesus and His community. Now the dogmatic statements were from the first incomprehensible for the most part; the interpretation, the gnosis, was only a later addition. As for religious ceremonies, incomprehensibility is of their very essence. Hence forth, almost

345

immediately after St Paul's death, salvation is experienced in the acceptation of mysterious propositions and in participation in mysterious rites. It was only after the laying of this foundation that the second step was reached—the Christianity of those that have the full know ledge. It might then be said: Christianity exists either as a superstition or as a philosophy. But we are as yet a long way from having reached this stage. The early and marked prominence, however, attached to dogma and sacrament instead of to the actual and historical realities—Jesus and the community—was the beginning of Catholic Christianity. This was far indeed from ever having been St Paul's object, but he did not check the tendency. The Christianity of the earliest Church had been guarded against this perversion.

There was, however, yet one other characteristic which distinguished the Christian from the world, and this constitutes the splendour of the early days of the faith: it was the earnest endeavour to develop the new life of the individual. Conversion was no empty word for great numbers of Christians, but an actual breach with an earlier life which had frequently been stained by vice. The watchful care of the brethren, the compulsion exercised by ecclesiastical discipline, the preaching of the ideal, the expectation of the day of judgment, were all means to perfect that which had been begun. The standard was furnished by some few sayings of Jesus, rather more numerous texts from the Old Testament, and the preaching and the letters of the apostle. And so the brethren began to reorganize the social life of the community in every direction. The worship of idols and immorality were laid aside, marriage was sanctified, attention was paid to the education of children, honesty and truthfulness were encouraged, temperance advocated, vengeance and strife suppressed. There was an increasing eagerness to serve, a growing joy in making sacrifices, in forgiveness and patient endurance, and a striving to yield wherever possible and to give a good example to their heathen neighbours. In a word, the foundation was laid for the regeneration of a society that was for the most part diseased and degenerate. Some Churches—that at Philippi, *e.g.*,—must have been especially bright and shining lights in the midst of their dark surroundings. Paul was a stern judge, but he distributed praise liberally and frequently. And now add to all that has been said the courage and the glad joyfulness of these Churches in supporting petty vexations and trials of every kind, the fervour of their life of prayer, the constancy of their hope—Christians are men that hope, whereas heathen have no hope—and we shall still have but a very weak and imperfect idea of the bright side of this first missionary life which filled the apostle with the fulness of joy.

346

The dark side to this picture was, of course, not wanting. Even in this first age the forerunners of future decadence can be noticed. We may call them 'extra Christianity' and 'average Christianity.' Either separation from the world is exaggerated till it becomes fanaticism and asceticism, or the old world is carried over into the new Church. The very certainty of the hope in the approaching end of the world often disturbed the quiet course of a normal development of character. Still more often the disgust which a man felt when he thought of

347

his own filthy past, drove him into an opposite extreme. One of the strangest features of the age are those Christian betrothals which the First Epistle to the Corinthians mentions without blame when a maiden entrusted herself to the protection of an older man. Thus far everything had gone on well, but it was a dangerous precipice whereon to walk. There are other instances of ascetic tendencies at Corinth. St Paul was officially asked whether a Christian was bound to practise complete continence in marriage. In Rome, on the contrary, total abstinence and vegetarianism were the favourite practices, only, it is true, amongst the weaker brethren. St Paul had to write more than one letter to Thessalonica in order to urge the people not to abandon their daily work. Generally speaking, it will be found that he treated these ascetic tendencies too leniently, out of sympathy with these Christians, who at least had the merit of entire sincerity in their striving after perfection. Later on, the ascetic ideal of chastity was set up in certain churches, not as a commandment but as an extraordinary virtue. The enthusiasm of those who sought for spiritual gifts at Corinth was surely a great deal less dangerous. It quickly evaporated. At Thessalonica there were even some who despised prophesyings. But for all that the opinion remained firmly rooted that the Spirit of God was to be recognized by abnormal manifestations, and that such belong to the Christian perfection.

348

St Paul's attitude to average Christianity was one of uncompromising hostility. He still hoped that it would be rooted out. But in vain. It had been present from the very first in the life of the Christian congregations, in the lives of those members who believed that they themselves were converted because of the conversion of others. It had not crept in, therefore, as a consequence of decay. Each congregation had no doubt a heavy task in combating the most formidable vice of the great cities, sexual excesses; and in the East, resistance was doubly difficult. Then came the specially Greek sins, dishonesty and trickery in the lower classes, litigiousness and wrangling in the upper. And then finally all that the Christian calls superstition, participation in secret, mostly immoral rites, magic books, amulets, incantations. All this existed from the very first in the Christian congregations themselves. The establishment of ecclesiastical discipline always involved a certain amount of loss alongside of the indubitable gain. By the suppression of the coarser elements, room was secured for the development of the finer. But the benefit thus secured was speedily counter balanced by the substitution of fixed rules and rigid customs for the free exercise of the apostle's judgment.

This imperfect state of affairs was not without influence upon the feelings of those individuals who had conceived of the task of the new life in the meaning which St Paul had attached to it.

349

Was there any certainty of salvation, and upon what did it depend? Paul urged his converts to place all their trust in the doctrine of election. Whoever did that placed his reliance upon Christ and upon faith. This could be done either with or without moral earnestness. And there were instances of both these courses, just as there are to-day. Whoever, on the contrary, was more impressed by the fact that Christians fell into sin and were lost,

practically abandoned the certainty of salvation, and of such there were very soon a great number. Contrary conclusions were, however, in turn drawn from this fact again. Some would work out their salvation with fear and trembling, and ensure salvation through entire consecration of life. Others suffered things to take their course, and thought it would be time enough in the last hour. Even the Pauline Epistles themselves refer to all these different possibilities, and we also meet with them later on in close connection. A clear distinction between St Paul and Jesus now manifests itself as regards the effects of their labours: both bound up indissolubly—religion, the life as God's child in God's love—and the claims of morality; but the emphasis was a very different one. Jesus gives prominence to the moral claim, to the true will of God instead of the false. Hence the danger which threatened His community was legalism. Whereas St Paul, building upon grace and the atonement, had almost from the first to guard against the danger of moral corruption. True he struggles against it with all his might and main, especially in Rom. vi., but that is just a proof of the reality of the presence of the danger. Whereas in the earliest Church at Jerusalem one looked down upon the corrupt righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees from the vantage ground of that righteousness which exceeded theirs, in the Pauline communities they who were now reconciled with God as His children regarded the lost heathen with a patronising compassion although they were no better than their neighbours in many points. It must be admitted, however, that St Paul himself gave no excuse for such an attitude. Through his letters he did all that he possibly could to remove every misunderstanding, and to sweep away this idle faith.

350

We can, after all, best arrive at a correct standard of judgment by contrasting the later with the earlier condition of these Pauline communities. Regarded from this point of view, they always appear again in a favourable light. It was a great step to take, and one attended by no little risk, to find a home for the Gospel, the child of Judaism, in the new world, which was in reality so ill-prepared for it. There was scarcely anyone less able to understand Jesus than these Greeks, whose sole surviving art was that of long-winded disputation. And to attempt to bring Jesus actually to such a city as Corinth, was simply an immense undertaking. But it succeeded. The result of the labours of St Paul and his companions, was that round about the Ægean sea the Christian colonies grew up and developed a new, sound, and healthy life. Demons of vice were turned into respectable citizens, thieves and brawlers became useful workmen, and anxious and distressed souls found peace in the love of God. There was a thorough weeding out of all that was foul and corrupt, while the germs of love, patience, chastity, and humility were planted in the soil. True, the clearance was seldom thorough enough; the old roots remained, and were destined soon to put forth new shoots.

351

Yet we will never forget that our own Christianity was a consequence of St Paul's missionary labours. Perfection is not to be found in this world. The question was put to the Greeks: Will you have Jesus, or will you not? They answered: We will have His teaching if

we may have it as Greeks. And so they obtained it as Greeks, and corrupted it to the best of their ability. We, no doubt, would have done exactly the same. But the great result was, that Jesus held His ground, never suffered Himself to be utterly degraded, and ever again uplifted humanity.

No obscurity rests upon St Paul's own personal religion, because he possessed that highest of all gifts, the art of speaking about himself and his own inner life. He understood how to describe the unutterable and indefinable moods of his own soul in such a way that they continued to work on in others. It was just the tenderness of his temperament, that often almost morbidly sensitive basis of his soul with its tendency to the ecstatic, that made of him one of the greatest revealers of the inmost recesses of personal religion. There it lies open for all to behold in his letters, and we can speak of a personal impression that St Paul makes upon us, and even of his redemptive work, as though of Jesus Himself.

The change at his conversion was all-decisive. It imparted to his personal religion the character of strong contrasts which have to be reconciled, and these merely form the transition to new contrasts. The contrasts of sin and grace, of strength and weakness, are placed by St Paul in the very core and centre of religion.

352

Although Paul could boast before his conversion of a blameless life as touching the righteousness concerning the law, he had some bitter experiences even then. He must have sounded the misery of sin, and the torture of a divided mind, down to the very depths. The recollection of it still quivers almost convulsively in the concluding verses of Rom. vii.: "Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this sin?" All the greater is the feeling of pardon in the present, of peace with God combined with the consciousness of deliverance from torture, and the confirmation of the good within him. St Paul, as well as every other Christian who was converted, could indicate the hour of the change, and the recollection of this sudden regeneration gave his religion strength and weight. The old is past; lo! it became new! Being justified through faith we have peace with God. God's love is poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Through St Paul that personal religion was for the first time firmly established amongst Christians, which starts from the basis of the contrast between sin and grace. But this contrast extends far beyond the feelings to the will. Consolation for sin, and at the same time deliverance from the power of sin, are its chief aim. For sin and grace are to succeed each other, and not to co-exist side by side.

353

But is this contrast absolute? Is the breach with the past at Damascus so complete that no consequences of his previous condition can be traced in the present? Even as a Christian St Paul had moments of depression. How could it be otherwise? New temptations perpetually arose from his own nature and from his surroundings. The reconciliation between these moments of depression and the feeling of grace is brought about by faith—*i.e.*, the constant abiding in the love of God which has once for all been manifested in Christ. "That life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God who loved me." "Because

Christ hath loved us, no power on earth shall be able to separate us from God." Thus St Paul was enabled to perpetuate his single experience through faith. It is all repetition, says Kierkegaard. It is no new experience, but constant trust in the old one. Here, too, St Paul is the forerunner of many who lived in later ages.

The other contrast is between strength and weakness. It is of no less importance for him than the former. Through his conversion St Paul was caught up and swept away by the enthusiasm of the earliest Christian Church and learnt to taste of the powers of the great Beyond—a wonderful experience. He fell into ecstasies and saw visions. He was vouchsafed revelations. He saw the Lord. He was caught up into Paradise. He heard heavenly words. Then he was so strong that he felt himself more than man—he was already a spirit. We are not in the flesh—"the life eternal hath begun." But then, on the other hand, came moments of terrible depression, when an angel of the adversary was sent to smite him, when he passed through the "valley of the shadow of death," when he was filled with fear and trembling, and felt powerless to cope with the tasks of the moment. Hence the alternations of communion with God and the sense of abandonment by God in the apostle's personal religion—Paul becomes the type of the mystics.

354

To attain the mastery over these fits of depression is above all the task of that longing and yearning which is nothing but the expression of a heightened feeling of contrast. Out of this longing expectancy St Paul extracts the most wonderful notes in all his letters. The Spirit itself is in bondage to the weakness of creation, so that he prays unconsciously in groanings that cannot be uttered, which God, however, hears. That is the prayer of longing, the groaning and the crying for the freedom of the glory of the children of God. Imprisoned in our earthly tabernacle, in a strange country, we long for our home which is with God. "I have the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that were far better." Once again it is St Paul who was the first to proclaim this feeling of man's deep, wild longing for his eternal home.

But longing is the constant reminder of one's necessities, and perpetually awakens one's consciousness of them. Then St Paul finds the highest comfort of all in a moment of prayer. "My grace is sufficient for thee, for strength is made perfect in weakness. When I am weak then I am strong." He has found peace in perfect trust in God; that, too, is faith. Thereby he can do all things, and boasts even of his necessities. Ecstasy, longing, faith: these are the steps in this religion.

355

The personal religion which has been sketched thus far is essentially one of moods and feelings. For the alternation as well as the harmonizing of contrasts falls under the sphere of the emotional life. This is one of the reasons why St Paul's place in the history of religion is so important. He transferred the real life of religion to the feelings, discovered it in the feelings. Religion, according to St Paul, is fear and hope, possessing and seeking, rejoicing and longing, joy in communion with God, and yearning for God; and by surrendering

ourselves to the divine influence which comes over us, we are saved—*i.e.*, uplifted out of this world into God's presence. Hence an unbroken apostolic succession through St Augustine and St Bernard to Schleiermacher. Paul was the first clearly to experience and express for all time the two sets of feelings: sin and grace, strength and weakness; and thereby the inner meaning and depth of religion were immensely increased. The holy of holies is no longer placed in outer effects and consequences, but transferred to communion with God in the innermost heart. For this emotional life the significance of historical events is exceedingly limited. They are simply considered as means to create moods and to excite feelings. This is just what the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus were for St Paul. By this means the historical tradition and the unbroken continuity with the past are indeed preserved, but the true life of religion is in the present; it is the soul's communion with the living God. Knowledge of the historical fact is but the kindling spark.

The peculiar danger of this emotional form of religion has always consisted in its tendency to allow the field of the active life to lie fallow. Paul escaped this danger, thanks to his calling. As the consciousness of his apostolic calling was fully developed in him, and never for one moment forsook him, it imparted a zeal and a restless energy to him, which made every kind of luxuriating in dreams and visions and every form of idleness a physical impossibility. In this respect Paul became a hero of ethical self-discipline, and of entirely unselfish service to the brethren. He conceived of his especial calling as being at the same time typical. Hence the servile labour to which he compelled his hands, hence the bodily discipline carried to the verge of asceticism, hence his strict temperance and entire sincerity. Paul overcame all obstacles, especially those originating in his own temperament, in a wonderful manner, or used them as stepping-stones. He withstood, too, every temptation to pride, and every tendency to a domineering bearing. But above all he perfected love and self-sacrifice in his calling. He could endure and forgive; he sympathised in every man's afflictions, he collected money for his enemies. In certain cases he sacrificed the freedom of his conscience to his love. For the Jews' sake he was ready to be severed from the Christ. In his old age he took an unselfish delight in the progress of the Gospel in spite of the envy and the wrangling of his associates. Notwithstanding his longing for heaven, he preferred to remain on earth, so as to work and to suffer for the brethren. Each one of his letters to them is a proof of his love. Thus he strove with all his might so that in his own life the panegyric of love passed from words into deeds; this he likewise demanded of every Christian as the visible proof of his belonging to Christ.

356

357

The peculiarity of St Paul's personal religion becomes still more manifest when it is contrasted with the essentially different form of Jesus religion. This is the exact opposite of a religion of emotion. It may be objected that the relative insignificance of the subjective element in the case of Jesus, is due to the impossibility of extracting the true Jesus from His reporters. But to this we may reply: Had Jesus been a mystic, or in any other way pre-emin-

ently a man of feeling, then this would have found expression in His words in spite of all additions or omissions of these reporters. But it is just a peculiarity of His that the inner life of His soul is rarely, or never, reflected in what He says, and that no value of its own is attached to the emotional life. His personal religion is altogether practical. He went about doing good, helping others, struggling for the right—a life concentrated in present tasks and aims, a religion that looked forward to ideals that were to be realized. All Jesus' actions are indeed prompted by feelings—*i.e.*, by the childlike certainty of the love of God and by the deep seriousness with which the great future inspires Him. But these feelings do not constitute separate domains of their own, from which the road to action has subsequently to be discovered. On the contrary, whether consciously or unconsciously, they are the ever present substratum of all that He does. There is an entire absence here of the alternation between the sense of sin and of grace, as well as of that between strength and weakness, at any rate in that degree with which St Paul is acquainted. True there are days in Jesus' life when He ascends to the mountain-heights of enthusiasm, and also there are others when He walks in the valley of disappointment and failure. But how entirely this change of mood recedes into the background behind the total impression left us by a life of constant and conscious progress! We can notice this even in the great moderation with which He judges men. He never considers them as either entirely beyond the reach of sin or as inextricably involved therein. Besides, the style of the sayings of Jesus is the expression of an altogether practical and temperate nature.

358

Both forms of personal religion are justifiable if they have but really been experienced. It is a consequence of the predominance of St Paul's theology, that his personal religion has likewise come to be regarded as the normal type, though, it is true, only after the excision of the really mystical element. But the deterioration of morality has been the regular and inevitable consequence of an exclusive emphasis of the emotional life. Our task to-day is again to bring into the foreground Jesus' own personal religion, and to hold this up as a word of warning to our age.

Paul has left a deeper impression upon history than any other of Jesus' disciples. He transplanted the young religion into the great world of civilization, created its first profound system of thought, and developed a new form of personal religion. In so doing he was the first to introduce Christianity into the world's history. The whole future development of the Gospel is determined by the form imparted to it by St Paul. The measure of his worth lies in the fact that he came to be the greatest minister of the Gospel, and as such has often occupied its place. In more than one instance his work was of a transitory nature: but he himself, the man Paul, is one of the most inspiring and comforting characters in all history, one of those who are an unfailing source of courage and of joy to us a smaller breed of men.

359

360

THE APOCALYPSE.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE PROPHET.

THE Apocalypse of St John no longer belongs to the first period of early Christianity, that is, if we consider the exact date of its composition. The book cannot have been written earlier than the reign of Domitian; the destruction of Jerusalem has taken place long ago, and the outbreak of the great persecutions on the part of the State is anticipated. But as the solitary surviving memorial of early Christian prophecy, and as the product of enthusiasm, it still represents the hopes and thoughts of the earliest age before the development of the ecclesiastical constitution. No living prophet, it is true, here speaks to us: it is a book; but the book is one which claims with its very first words to be prophetic inspiration. Whatever its ultimate origin from Christian and Jewish sources, the book itself emphatically claims to be considered as a whole, and as the expression of Christian prophecy.

The author at once expresses the profoundest consciousness of his call in his opening sentences. God wanted to make known to His servants the prophets a revelation of the things which must shortly come to pass. For this purpose the angel was sent to the servant of God, John, in order that he might hand on the message to others. His words are the words of the prophecy. Happy he that reads, and he that lays them to heart. God Himself speaks through the book.

361

Thereupon the heavenly calling of the prophet is related to us in the vision. When he was upon the island of Patmos, to deliver the message of God and the testimony about Jesus, he found himself in a trance on the Lord's day and was charged by Jesus Himself to write to the seven Churches of Asia Minor what he saw, that which is and that which shall be hereafter.

The seven Epistles which are now dictated to him may be regarded from a twofold point of view. They are messages of the heavenly Messiah to the heavenly leaders of the seven Churches made known to men upon earth by the prophet John. But at the same time they are the oracles of the Spirit; so the close of every letter reminds us, the Spirit is speaking to the Churches. The prophet wishes therefore to be regarded purely as a medium, both in what he promises and threatens as well as in his revelations and exhortations. The difference between St Paul and the author of this book is very striking. St Paul, too, censured various evil practices after a similar manner—*e.g.*, in First Corinthians—employing both promises and threats. But he always speaks as a human being and never as the interpreter of the Spirit.

Next follows the long series of apocalyptic visions, which continues to the end of the book. However constantly the scene changes, the author never forgets to play the part of the prophet. He sees and hears all that goes on in heaven. He is removed from one place to another; he is so intensely affected by what he sees that he bursts into tears. When he has

362

swallowed the little book, at the angel's command, he describes its effect: "It was bitter to my stomach." He speaks with one of the twenty-four elders in heaven. The conversations with angels are of especially frequent occurrence. From time to time the description of the visions is interrupted by short utterances of the Spirit, which then produce an impression of immediate inspiration in contrast with their context: under this category falls the impressive blessing pronounced upon the future martyrs. But then, on the other hand, one is struck by the threefold asseveration of the truth of the inspiration. "These words are faithful and true." Is that the true prophet's language? The conclusion of the book consists of nothing but attestations concerning the divine authorship. First the angel speaks, then Jesus, finally the seer himself. His inspired book, which now possesses divine and legal authority, ends with terrible threats and extravagant promises.

A comparison with some of the products of the Jewish apocalyptic literature, which bear a very striking similarity, *e.g.*, the books of Baruch and Ezra, which were written about the same time, reveals to us the fact that the prophetic consciousness is a great deal more prominent in the case of John. In the former case the pseudonymous author speaks for the most part in his own person, and clearly distinguishes his human words from the divine communications. But in this case everything claims to be revelation from beginning to end. The faithfulness and truth of the divine word is thrice emphasized, and finally the angel, Jesus, and the seer, testify to the divinity of the revelation. The human element and the author's independent position recede entirely into the background.

363

But is the whole book to be really ascribed to prophetic revelation? On the contrary, every page of the book confirms our belief that we are here dealing with fiction. The mythological contents of the visions, the form of revelation by means of angels, the conscious employment of literary art in the construction of the book, the similarity of the style with that of all Jewish apocalypses, are all proofs against the genuineness of the prophecy. Very probably, too, the name of John is intended to denote the celebrated disciple of Jesus, and then the book is pseudonymous, like all similar compositions. It is a literary production from beginning to end. Even the seven Epistles are not real letters which were ever despatched; one does not write to angels.

How are we then to explain the contradiction between the prophetic claims and the employment of fiction in the composition of the book?

The author possessed prophetic gifts and powers. The seven letters and many short oracles of the Spirit scattered here and there throughout the book, can be traced back to a state of inspired enthusiasm as their original source. He may even have had visions, at least one vision which impelled him to write. Above all, he feels himself called to be a prophet because of the terribly critical nature of the times in which he is living. It is an inner compulsion that causes him to sound the battle-cry for the last struggle of the people of God against Rome. He himself has been aroused from his sleep by the storm and stress of the times. Now

364

his office is to act as watchman over the Churches of Asia Minor, to threaten, to exhort, to comfort, that everyone may be ready for the last battle. Thus the Christian prophets of old conceived of their task. The inner moral constraint which bade them speak, whether they would or no, appeared to them then as the Spirit or word of God. But side by side with this the same man is also a writer of apocalypses, a literary prophet. He lives on the learned results of past ages, he has studied books and digested books. He has drawn his great eschatological system from them. He does not hesitate to incorporate fragments of older writers in his own work as though they were his own revelations. This very human wisdom, which is not even his own, he produces as though it were God's word, and he tries to conceal from himself his own insight into the real origin of the book by making as loud assertions of its divine origin as possible.

Thereby his work becomes a memorial of the decay of prophecy. We can learn from him that there were once Christian prophets who possessed God's word and claimed the highest authority. Their enthusiasm, their courage, their holy zeal, speak from every good word in this book. But its author is scarcely himself to be accounted any longer one of them. He would cover his Jewish scholasticism with the mantle of their authority. And in so doing he finally takes refuge in asseverations and attestations, whereby his fiction loses its harmlessness. It is therefore often a hard matter to take pleasure in much that is undoubtedly magnificent in his work.

CHAPTER XX.

THE PROMISE.

As the prophet that he claims to be, the author of the Apocalypse has above all to foretell the future. Indeed, his whole book consists of such prediction. The vast agglomeration of his promises admit, after all, of a very simple division into three parts: (1) The Christian hope in the parousia; (2) political prophecy; (3) conceptions borrowed from the storehouse of Jewish apocalyptical tradition.

The coming of Jesus, the Son of man, down from heaven, stands in the front of the prophecy, that is its Christian element. The old expectation of the earliest Church continues in undiminished strength. The nearness of His coming is, as before, the chief point in connection with it. As the book begins, "For the time is at hand; behold He cometh"—so it ends: "Yea, I come quickly. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" He will come suddenly as a thief, as a judge, as a Saviour of them that are His. The last great tribulation precedes His coming. There will be a sifting of the saints, then it will be decided who shall stand and who shall fall. Such had ever been the hopes of the early Christians, and lapse of time has not effected any change in them. Even the language is almost that of the earliest Church. Since Jesus' departure His second advent has come to be the main factor in the kingdom of God, to such an extent that it has usurped its place in ordinary conversation.

367

And yet this hope has experienced a great transformation through the changes wrought by the course of contemporary history. It comes to be political, because the Roman State has assumed an attitude of hostility to the Christians. One persecution has already taken place in which the blood of martyrs has been shed, and now the last great persecution is close at hand. The thirteenth and seventeenth to nineteenth chapters deal with this especially. The enemy is Rome, the great city Babylon, which has the dominion over the kings of the earth. Already it is drunken with the blood of the saints, and of the witnesses of Jesus. It is the great harlot, the mother of the harlots and of the abominations of the earth. The demoniac power appears in chap. xiii. under the picture of the two beasts, who come up, the first out of the sea, and the second out of the earth. The dragon has equipped the first with his own authority, so that he wars against the saints, and is able to vanquish them: that is the Roman Empire. The second beast is subject to the first. It is the false prophet who deceives men so that they worship the image of the first beast and bear its mark: that is, the priesthood of the Roman emperor-worship. The demand that was made to worship the emperor, and the persecution of those who refused to obey, is the occasion for the publication of our apocalypse. It was the measures taken by Domitian and Trajan which compelled the Christian eschatology to take this political turn. The same position had occurred long ago for the Jews, when Caligula ordered his image to be erected in the temple. The author of our apocalypse takes over these old Jewish feelings of irritability and resentment against the imperial cultus

368

into the Christian Church, and builds up his eschatology on this basis. For him the mark of the times is the struggle between God and the Caesar whom Satan has set upon the throne. Now it is just this struggle which at present ends in the defeat of the Christians that the future is to decide by bringing about the defeat of Rome. And this decision—the victory of the Christians in the contest which is at once political and demoniac—is brought about by the coming of the Messiah. It is here treated as an entirely political occurrence. The Messiah descends from heaven upon a white horse, in the full equipment of battle, surrounded by the heavenly hosts. The beast, the kings of the earth, and their enemies are gathered together to make war against Him. The result is, of course, their entire annihilation. The beast and the false prophet are thrown into the lake of fire, whilst their followers perish by the sword. Hereupon begins the reign of Messiah and of His martyrs, the heroes that fell in battle. This future victory of Christ over Rome is the core and centre of the promise of our book.

In the midst of the political chaos which the prophet predicts, the Emperor Nero appears upon the scene. The belief in Nero's return from the grave had already assumed different shapes. An older form, that he would wage war against Rome in league with the Parthian kings, has now been susperseded by a later, that he was to fight against the Lamb, and be overcome by Him. The celebrated number 666 is supposed to refer to the Emperor Nero. One can scarcely conceive of anything more fantastic than these politics which deal with men and spirits, with devils and angels.

369

No small danger arose for Christianity from this political coloring of its hope. St Paul had declared that every power in the State, even the Emperor Nero, had been appointed by God and was to be regarded as the servant of God. And now in consequence of the entirely new position of affairs the emperor has come to be for the Christians the servant of Satan, and it is from him that he draws all his power. Is the Christian, then, bound to render him obedience any longer? Is rebellion not his duty? But nothing lies further from our author's intentions than any idea of rebellion. His one demand is patience. He would never allow any other form of resistance but that of passive endurance. God alone brings us the victory, not men. On the other hand, the prophet's visions in chaps. xviii. xix. are nothing less than orgies of vengeance. To revel in these affords some little comfort for the misery of the present. The malignant joy, the song of triumph, at the fall of the great harlot, and the description of the destruction of the enemy: "Gather together, ye birds, and come to the great feast of God, to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of commanders, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, the flesh alike of free men and of slaves, and of high and low"—all this confers no distinction upon Christianity. Along with the changed political situation it has forthwith taken over all the thoughts of vengeance, hatred and fanaticism, which were the marks of Judaism. This fact is certain: it matters not whether Jewish or Christian materials are the ultimate source. He that takes delight in such fancies is no whit better than he

370

that first invented them. It is the thirst for vengeance of tortured slaves, who imagine still worse tortures for their masters.

But the Christian hope in the parousia and the political prediction against Rome, after all, only occupy a small portion of the big book. The main body of the prophecies is nothing but old material taken from the storehouse of Jewish apocalytic traditions. If the 'prophet' wished to write an apocalypse, then he had above all else to be careful that the old tradition as to the mysteries at the end of the world should not be lost in his hands. Rather take too much of it than too little. Contradictions do not matter. Put into your book all that you can lay hold of: do not bother about probabilities. As a matter of fact this writer has tied together a whole bundle of eschatologies, often without any mutual connection.

The greatest space is occupied by the description of the preliminary signs and the tribulation. The seven seals, the seven trumpets, the seven bowls, are only variations of similar signs of the last days which occur in all apocalypses. Of these the seven bowls and the seven trumpets are so nearly related, that they are best explained as a twofold copy of the same original. First of all, in each case the earth is smitten—then the sea, then the rivers, then the stars, then the air (true, in a very different manner), then come the Parthians, finally hail, thunder, and lightning. In his descriptions of the preliminary signs and plagues, our author relies mostly on Old Testament material—the vision of the steeds in Zechariah, the conjunction of sword, plague and hunger in Jeremiah, above all, the Egyptian plagues, a regular mine for the apocalyptic; and besides this, on later Jewish uncanonical material. The whole of Nature is introduced into the final drama, and at the same time the political position (the Parthians and Nero redivivus) furnishes favourable subjects. In the fifth seal a Jewish idea, that the number of the righteous must be completed before the end, is changed into a Christian, the martyrs taking the place of the righteous.

371

But the prophet is very far from exhausting all his store of preliminary signs of the end in this threefold use of the number seven (seals, trumpets and bowls). He has to find room for the rest in the insertions which he introduces between the three sevens. To these belong: The sealing of the 144,000 out of the twelve tribes of Israel (without Dan, the tribe of the Antichrist), to whom afterwards the great multitude which no man could number out of all nations and peoples is added. Here the writer has almost certainly introduced an original Jewish fragment into his book.

The desolation of the holy city by the Gentiles. This section dates from some time previous to 70 A.D., and originally predicted the exemption of the temple from desecration.

The sending of the two witnesses—according to an old tradition, Elijah and Enoch—as preachers of repentance to the holy city. They are killed by the beast, but are immediately raised from the dead and ascend up into heaven. All these three insertions are based not merely upon Jewish traditions, but upon written fragments.

372

The supernatural commencement of salvation is really only described when we reach chap. xii.: the birth of the Messiah from the woman whose robe was the sun, the effort of the dragon to destroy him, his translation to God. Thereupon follows the assault of heaven by the dragon, which ends with his defeat by Michael and his being cast down from heaven. Then the dragon persecutes the other seed of the woman—*i.e.*, here the Church of Jesus. For this purpose he hands over his power to has been snatched up to God descends as king from heaven and destroys him.

All this material is of mythological origin, and is no invention of the Christian author's. It can even be traced back right through Hebrew literature to Babylonian myths, but it has been transmitted by Jewish writers. Our author was the first to impress upon it a Christian interpretation. The all-important element in it for him is this: the victory of the Christian has already been decided in heaven, the dragon has been cast out. Hence the certainty of the approaching deliverance.

The final act of the drama is described by him in two stages, and offers a combination of different eschatologies. First of all, after the battle of the Messiah, there is the thousand years' reign of Christ and of the martyrs (the first resurrection), whilst the dragon in the meanwhile is bound in the abyss. This state of things comes to an end with the liberation of the dragon and his renewed assault with Gog and Magog upon the holy city. In the decisive moment fire falls from heaven and consumes the enemies of God. Satan is cast forever into the lake of fire. Hereupon follows the general resurrection of the dead, and the judgment of the world according to each man's works: all sinners fall into hell, the second death. Now comes the transformation of the world into the new heaven and the new earth (where there is no sea). The new Jerusalem descends from heaven. God dwells among men. There will be no more grief. The old order has passed away.

373

This is, indeed, the official Jewish eschatology, but it is presented in such a form that every Christian can easily adopt it. The case is different with the great final picture. Here we are transported, not into the new heaven and the new earth, but into that which is entirely of this earth, into the coarsely phenomenal and Jewish from a narrow national point of view. Our author has again incorporated a Jewish fragment. The new Jerusalem is brought before us in the form of a cube with golden streets, high walls, and twelve gates made of precious stones. There is no temple in it, neither does it need sun or moon. God Himself is there and illuminates the city. The Gentiles are still in their position of subjection; they may bring their treasures as tribute into the holy city, and be healed by the fruit of the tree of life. The main thing is, of course, the presence of God in person—and, adds the Christian, of the Lamb. Now here we have the most entire reversion conceivable to the old familiar national Jewish language. The Christian people takes the place of the Jewish, and takes over its contempt for the Gentiles. The new Israel at the head of the nations, in the holy land and in the

374

holy city—that is the Christian battle-cry. For such Christians the whole transformation which Jesus effected of the conception of the kingdom of God has been in vain.

Throughout the whole of the Apocalypse, however, the picture of the Christian hope is set before us with many beautiful features of great poetic worth and emotional effect. The Christian joy and blessedness are expressed in many sayings, just as simply as in the beatitudes of Jesus. And then again by the side of these, the creations of the wildest fancy, even in the best portions of the book, the letters to the seven Churches: "To him that overcometh, to him will I give of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and upon his stone a new name written which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it." "And he that overcometh, and he that keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give authority over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to shivers, as I also have received of my Father: and I will give him the morning star." It is Jesus who utters such abstruse, essentially unchristian words in these letters. In fact, taking the prophecy of the book as a whole, the name of Jesus has been applied in a manner altogether unsuitable to the Jesus of history. The very role He did not want to play—that of Jewish Messiah in a Jewish kingdom of God—has here been allotted to Him.

What then, after all , is there that is Christian in this prophecy? Set it for a moment side by side with the apocalypse of Ezra, and the answer is not far to seek. There is resignation often akin to despair; here the exultant confidence of victory. With the glad exultant longing and splendid certainty of victory, the little handful of Christians faced their long and arduous struggle against almighty Rome. "The kingdom will still be ours." That was the power which Jesus gave.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE CLAIM.

HE is a prophet who can say what God will do and what men are to do. The claim which our author makes is determined by the great outer and inner dangers of his Churches. Persecutions threaten from without, an increasing worldliness from within. The Jews stir up persecutions against the Christians, and bring false charges against them; the Romans, as judges, do the will of the Jews. In such a time, patience, endurance and fidelity are the most needed virtues. Above all else, the test of a man's Christianity is to be found in his refusal to participate in the imperial cultus. Only he who refuses to worship the beast and to bear his mark is a Christian. There must be no revolutionary resistance. Whosoever shall kill with the sword shall with the sword inevitably be killed. Here the patience and faithfulness of the saints can alone be of any avail.

Be thou faithful unto death! Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth. Every Christian is to be prepared for martyrdom; *i.e.*, here the "keeping of the testimony of Jesus." The prophet has clearly recognized that the great struggle with Rome is now about to begin, and that this struggle presents a temptation for Christians, which all cowardly and weak souls cannot withstand. Hence the powerful glowing language of his call to be up and doing. It is the call to be prepared for death. No wonder that the Church of the martyrs highly esteemed this book and accepted it as canonical. The prophet has only one brother-combatant worthy of his mettle, the author of the concluding verses of Romans viii. "If God is for us, who can be against us?" may be taken as the motto of the book.

377

But if God is to be for us, things must first of all be changed in the Churches themselves. Worldliness has already begun to creep in. Ephesus has lost its first love. Sardis, decayed from its former estate, is spiritually dead. Laodicea is neither cold nor warm, boasts, indeed, of its riches, and is yet so miserable. Here we can see the condition of the Pauline Churches not so very long after the death of their founder. The worldliness is increased through heretical teachers, false apostles and prophetesses, who declare fornication and the eating of meat offered to idols to be allowed, deluding the Christians with the idea that only then the depths of Satan's wiles can be sounded. It is ordinary heathen libertinism which is disseminated by these Nicolaitans, Christian messengers and prophets. Besides this, the catalogue of crimes at the end of the book shows us what kind of people called themselves Christian here and there.

The danger from within appears, according to the letters to the Churches, to be almost greater than that from without. It is especially to guard against it that the prophet cries: "Away with the false teachers; back to the first love." The judgment of Christ will be without pity even upon those that are His. It is works alone that save, deeds of love, of fortitude, of fidelity. There is one thing that can surely save Christians lost in sin and the world, and that

378

is martyrdom. For the first time a longing look is here cast back to the golden age, to the first days of Christianity. "Back to the first beginning" is the watchword.

Taking it all in all, it is an entirely untheological practical kind of Christianity. Fidelity in persecution, resistance to worldliness, clinging to the first love, such is the claim that the seer makes. He is still animated by the genuine enthusiasm of the first great age. We can trace this, even externally, by the fact that there is as yet no set form for repentance, no ecclesiastical law; as long as the judgment is yet to come, so long there is time for repentance. However strict the separation which is demanded from the world, there is as yet no legalism within, because the voice of the Spirit is still heard. But now that the struggle with the Roman empire has begun we can scarcely any longer speak of the Christians as a sect. The former sect takes its place in the history of the world, resolved for the present just to remain true to itself and to look upon world and devil as one.

There is no trace of any opposition to St Paul, however much his formulae may be disregarded. We misconceive St Paul altogether as long as we do not recognize that he would have made exactly the same demands in this position.

CHAPTER XXII.

A LAYMAN'S THEOLOGY.

BEYOND his promise and his claim the author of the Apocalypse pursues no ulterior aim. He feels no need for theological thought and has no time to spare for it. This does not preclude his possessing very definite—though in no wise original—conceptions about God and the things of God. Even though he is layman, he is, after all, a learned layman, who has both read and heard a great deal. Like all laymen, he accepts the most obvious contradictions and does not strive after any inner harmony. His thoughts are never abstractions: they are all fancies calculated for the eye and the ear. It will not be without value to examine the conceptions of a man such as this. For he represents the average Christian, both in his thoughts and in his hopes.

We saw above how pessimistic was his estimate of the political position of the age. Satan is the present ruler of this world. He has given the beast power over all the kings of the earth. As in the letter to the Ephesians, so here: we Christians fight not against flesh and blood, but against the demoniac rulers of the world. One would expect as a consequence of this a strictly dualistic system. The contrary is our author's opinion. God is to him above all the Creator and Lord of this present world. Jubilant psalms sing His praises for His acts of creation: "Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord our God, the Almighty. Righteous and true are Thy ways, thou King of the nations." It is one of the prophet's fundamental doctrines, as to which he never for one moment entertains any doubt, that this world is God's world. He insists upon this almost more than does St Paul. All alike, Nature and history, have come forth from God. Such is his opinion, in agreement with the prayer of the Jewish apocalypses of Baruch and Ezra. It will be just in the signs of the last days that God will prove His power over Nature; then every eye shall see that all these natural forces are at His command to do His will. In heaven God's praises are sung without ceasing, and in like manner the author of this book never wearies in giving vent to his feelings of thanksgiving. No tribulation can cause that stream to cease flowing. On this point his conviction is not to be shaken.

380

"A safe stronghold our God is still,
A trusty shield and weapon;
He'll help us clear from all the ill
That in our days shall happen."

This fundamental faith in a present living God is the basis upon which all the optimistic hope for the future rests.

But how, then, can the power of the dragon and of the Gentiles be explained? The author gives no answer to this, because he has no interest in untying knotty problems. He leaves that to Ezra and his friends. He is content with the fact that the Gentiles are the enemies of God's people and that Satan has given them their great power. But the near future will see the end of this state of things, which is hateful in God's eyes. He who knows that, knows quite enough. That is just a layman's theology, quite unsystematic but full of strength and energy.

381

God Himself is, it is true, a very distant mysterious Being. It is significant that He is described for the most part in accordance with Ezekiel's vision. In His immediate neighbourhood stand the elders of Isa. xxiv., now twenty-four in number, the original twelve tribes having been doubled since the entrance of the Gentiles into the Church. Thunder and lightning proceed from God's throne without ceasing. Before it are seven lamps which are the seven Spirits (archangels), and still nearer Ezekiel's four living creatures. The picture which all this leaves in our mind is neither very clear nor very consistent. Indeed there is only one impression which we plainly derive from it, and that is, that God is unapproachable. Nor do the concluding chapters of the book enable us satisfactorily to unite in one picture the conception of the unapproachable God surrounded by His court of angels and His dwelling upon earth among men. Next, and as a consequence of this inaccessibility, God is described as one to be feared. He is no being in whom one can feel any confidence. He is never called by the name of Father. It is fear and trembling that we feel in the main in the presence of this God.

No wonder, then, that His behests are so exclusively carried out by means of angels. God does nothing Himself. It is angels that bring all the plagues and all the signs, that vanquish Satan in heaven and bind him in the abyss. All God's revelations to men are likewise conveyed by the mediation of angels and explained by angels. From this fact alone one might infer that for many of our author's co-religionists living religion consisted in communion with angels rather than with God. In fact, he twice energetically protests against the worship of angels. It is very significant that this is necessary. Things have already come to such a pass that Christianity has to defend itself against the Jewish and heathen worship of angels. The prophet is of course far removed from anything like polytheism: the angels are no independent beings, but the servants of God. His monotheism, however, would be lifeless were it not for the assumption of these intermediate agencies.

382

Christ appears as the chief of this great host of intermediate beings, and Christ is everything to our writer, therefore possessed of all titles also, only not God. This distinct subordination beneath God is maintained throughout the whole book. Twice in the letters to the Churches Jesus Himself is made to speak of His God. The visions in chaps. iv. and v. clearly distinguish Jesus and God. The Lamb there appears by the side of God between the throne and the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders. In the concluding chapters

the Lamb is never God. He only stands near Him. All our prophet's practical interests are here centred upon this subordination, for only if Jesus is not God can He be conceived of as a pattern for the struggling and victorious Christians—the martyrs. And everything depends upon this for him. "He that overcometh I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with my Father in His throne." That is the Christology of adoption—Jesus has His merits, and in consequence of that His dignity is assigned to Him.

383

But then, how very little our author feels himself bound by these, his own words. All the divine predicates are again heaped upon Jesus almost immediately afterwards, and He is placed high above the angels, and that from the beginning, not only after His exaltation. He is the beginning of the creation of God, the first and the last and the living one, the A and the Ω, the beginning and the end. He is the Redeemer, and will also be the judge over Christian and Gentile. It is especially in the letters to the Churches that one can see that our author has discovered in Christ, to his great comfort, a substitute for the dread and inaccessible God. That, again, is a sign of the layman's theology. God is too far distant, too high for him: one cannot hold intercourse with Him after a friendly fashion. Christ, on the other hand, is known, and can be brought quite near to one. The name for Christ which occurs most frequently in the book is "The Lamb" (taken from Isa. liii.). As a lamb that was slain Jesus has been one of us. If this Lamb sits at God's right hand, then we have a trusty advocate in the highest court of appeal. The want of taste in the figure which he here employs did not trouble him in the least. And after all, "The Lamb" is merely a name for Jesus, just as Babylon is for Rome. Such playing with secret names is a mark of the apocalyptic literature.

What has Jesus done, then, upon earth? As answer to this we are merely told He died and His blood has redeemed us. Thereby we have been legally delivered from the bondage of the heathen and of the devil, and have become members of the people of God. This does not preclude the writer having many other thoughts besides as to Jews' work. But this is practically the most important to him, because he always has to picture the Christians to himself as a people.

384

He did not know Jesus, and so he cannot start from any personal impression. But he is now in the midst of the struggle with the Roman people, and then Jesus must be the king, the leader in this struggle, who has redeemed us for His host. The victory is ours because our King possesses such divine power high above all angels. The future will bring us the terrible and bloody victory, and the reward for those that have died the hero's death. Judaism—the Old Testament and Paul too—have furnished their attributes of Jesus. The author has taken these various heterogeneous elements, and has just placed them side by side. They are only harmonized by his temperament.

It is interesting to see how this layman's book agrees with St Paul's Epistle to the Colossians in the highest attributes of the Christology. The Epistle to the Colossians is directed

against heretical teachers who preached the worship of angels. The Apocalypse likewise rejects angelolatry. In both cases Jesus is exalted high above all angels. First of all, Jesus was compared with the Scribes and the prophet John, and set above them as Messiah. Now He is measured with the Spirits and placed at their head. Soon afterwards follows the comparison with the gods of the heathen, and contrasted with them Jesus appears as the higher God. That is the beginning of the great apologetic of later times. The development of the Church keeps pace therewith: the inner Jewish sect, a religion competing with Judaism, a world religion by the side of the heathen religions.

385

But what now is the origin of all this Christianity of the Apocalypse? Can it be traced back to Jesus Himself, or to the first apostles, or to Judaists, or to St Paul and his companions, or to what other source?

Every direct development from the primitive Palestinian form of the Gospel is excluded. Nothing reminds us of Jesus and His disciples. Scarcely ever do we meet with even a faint echo of any saying of Jesus, the gospel faith in the Fatherhood of God is entirely wanting. There is not even a single instance of the use of the phrase kingdom of God. Whoever knew Jesus Himself or even only His words, could never have suffered these wild fancies of vengeance to hold dominion over him.

On the other hand, Paulinism is certainly the presupposition of this form of Christianity. St Paul's universalism, his entire annulling of the law, his strict separation from the Jewish synagogue, are all taken for granted in this book. The Christology, however, best shows the dependence upon Pauline formulas: Jesus is the Son of God who has descended from heaven. He is highly exalted above all angels, the beginning of the creation of God. He only descended for our redemption and afterwards ascended, and because of His obedience He was highly exalted and shall come again as judge. Such is the unchanging outline of the Pauline Christology. It cannot possibly have originated twice over in different persons, unless indeed there were two appearances on the road to Damascus.

386

The Christianity of the Apocalypse is a development of that form of Christianity which St Paul presented to the Gentiles.

An entirely different element was, however, added to it, viz., Judaism with its apocalyptic literature and all the belief in God, angels and demons and the cosmology which this implies. It is still an open question in what form the Christian prophet appropriated this Judaism, whether he edited an already completed Jewish writing, just inserting a few Christian additions, or whether he independently combined all manner of literary and oral Jewish traditions from the standpoint of his Christian faith. But this question is of secondary importance. In any case he has completed digested Judaism and made it his own before he has uttered his prophecies. It is not improbable that he was himself of Jewish extraction; his style, and especially his knowledge of the Hebrew Old Testament, almost seems to prove this. He then, according to our supposition, would have entered one of the Pauline Churches, and would

have assimilated the new world of thought as far as it suited him. Be that as it may, his Christianity presents a complete fusion of the most heterogeneous materials (we cannot call them hostile: *cf*. 2 Thess.)—Pauline Christianity and Jewish apocalyptic theory.

But out of these materials he created something that was his own. He saw the struggle between State and Church on the point of breaking out; he saw it in the light of an illumination from above: it was the struggle of spirits, and as a Christian he foresaw the victory of his faith under all circumstances. This lifted him high up above his fellow churchmen into the ranks of the prophets. From this prophetic height he issued his instructions for the struggle that was about to begin, like a practised general, who, above all, pays attention to the weak points in his own troops. That which he thus places in the forefront is neither Pauline nor Jewish, but simple Christian commands for the period of persecution. This now succeeds to the missionary period properly so-called, but this change involves a corresponding one in the Christian line of defence and attack.

387

One evil legacy he did indeed bequeath to us: Christianity was drowned in a sea of Jewish fancies and feelings. That was a misfortune from which the new religion was destined to suffer grievously.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS.

Christianity is the result of the labours of men. John is the forerunner as prophet. Jesus comes next, with a consciousness more than human as Son of God. The apostles transmit His message. Prophets and teachers join their fellowship. Paul—stamped as it were out of the ground—brings about the great transition from the Jews to the Greeks under the sense of a divine calling. Finally, on the outbreak of the struggle with Rome, the Christian prophet writes his wild book as the word of God. All of these men live in the firm conviction that God imparts Himself through them, and acts through them. Jesus occupies the first place as leader; His Spirit is to control all the others.

388

All have one and the same message—it is eschatology transformed into a practical demand. It is the message of the judgment and the coming of the kingdom of God in the immediate future. That is the aim of their cry—"Repent ye"; "Watch ye." Be ye saved from the coming judgment. Upon this earth there is nothing left that abideth forever. The Jewish Church is tottering to its fall. The Roman empire is doomed to decay. There is no thought of any new great world-organization. Hence the minimum of ecclesiastical forms.

And if, after all, there is even in this present world something new and that endureth—then it is the life of the disciples of Jesus. Their Church is but miserable to look at; their theology setting aside St Paul's alone—is a wretched jumble of Jewish words and conceptions and Christian insertions and additions. But the new life in these communities is of surpassing greatness: to be a disciple of Jesus means to be a redeemed man—one who exercises self-control, who loves the brethren, and clings to God above all else. It was Jesus who gave them this new life, and therefore they were ready to stand up for Jesus, and if need

be to die for Him. Paul alone speculated about the redemption. But even with him possession is the really important matter. "He that hath not the Spirit of Christ is none of His."

These three points, the presence of men of God, the longing to leave this present world, the new life of the children of God, are the signs of this first creative period. When they are present no emphasis is laid upon the Church. Is not the spirit in the leaders, the spirit that creates and destroys forms; and does not the longing for heaven imply the longing to quit the Church on earth, and is not the new life of more importance than church membership?

And what did this enthusiasm produce? It separated Christianity from Judaism, and started it on its independent course. It began the evangelization of the whole world. It took up the struggle with Rome's world-power. And so within. It produced the first great theology, formed a new kind of literature—the Gospels—created the Apocalpyse; at bottom, all of them unfixed undogmatic creations. How often Paul produces new formulas, and alters the outlines of the whole of his theology.

But at the same time the first beginnings of the Church are developed out of this same enthusiasm: there is the organization of the communities, fixed forms of worship, discipline, church officers, creed, moral regulations; more important than all, St Paul's great theory: no salvation outside of the faith. But all is still provisory—means to the great end. Every Christian wished from the bottom of his heart that his Church might perish, and the kingdom of God begin.

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Indexes

Index of Scripture References

Index of Latin Words and Phrases

Index of Pages of the Print Edition