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*Commentaries*

**GODBNEY'S COMMENTARY  
VOL. VI.  
MATTHEW-JOHN  
HARMONIZED. - PART I.**

By

*Rev. Wm. B. Godbey, A.M.*

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without  
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

**Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World**

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# **COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT**

## **VOL VI. THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, — PART I.**

BY REV. W. B. GODBEY, A. M.,

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“Spiritual Gifts and Graces,” “Holy Land,” “Victory,” “Holiness, or Hell,”  
“Christian Perfection,” “Sanctification,” “Baptism,” “Woman Preacher,”  
and “Footprints of Jesus.”**



**REV. W. B. GODBEY, A. M.**

## LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

### PROLOGUE.

As you are well apprised, beginning with Revelation, we have expounded the books of the New Testament in a reverse order. The primary reason for this procedure was the realization of my incompetence for the great and responsible work of expounding God's Word, and my consequent dread of the Savior's ministry. Feeling more freedom in an attempt to write up the ministry of the apostles, I began with them, thinking perhaps I would never be able to reach the Lord's ministry. But now His good providence has permitted me to expound the whole New Testament in the five volumes, which (D.V.) you have read, and make this second pilgrimage to the Holy Land by way of preparation for the great and responsible work of expounding the personal ministry of our Lord.

As the Holy Spirit is really the Author of the whole Bible, speaking through the prophets and apostles, the ministry of Christ is no exception, as He never began till the Holy Ghost came down from heaven and filled Him, immediately after John, His forerunner, had, by the ordinance of baptism, initiated Him into His official Messiahship. Henceforth He ever "*preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.*" While admitting these facts, we must recognize in Jesus the only absolutely perfect Man that ever trod the earth or ever will. He alone was perfectly free from all human infirmity. While in case of the apostles, though encumbered with infirmities, they were so superseded by grace as not only to be perfectly subordinated to the Holy Ghost, but doubtless, in many cases, so utilized by Him as in the end to magnify the grace of God, yet when we sit under the ministry of Jesus, there is manifest a Divine majesty, a sweetness of spirit, a depth of love, a tenderness of sympathy, a grandeur of omnipotence, and a majesty of execution, descending to profoundest depths, mounting to loftiest altitudes, broadening to grandest latitudes, and sweeping on through illimitable longitudes, thus culminating in a beauty, grandeur, sublimity, and glory transcending the possibility of all human utterances. Hence, with deepest humiliation and profoundest realization of immeasurable responsibility, I enter upon this humble attempt to expound the Gospel of Jesus, as revealed to us through the instrumentality of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Among all the commentaries that have ever been written, expository of our Lord's ministry, no one has been harmonical. What do you mean by a Harmonical Commentary? I mean the ministry of our Lord expounded as it took place, whether given by one, two, three, or all of the inspired writers. We have wonderful favor in our Lord's Gospel in the fact that it is so brief that almost every one may conveniently, at least substantially, commit it all to memory. Besides, we have it by four different authors, differing from each other by personal, experimental, and educational idiosyncrasies. This is a great blessing to us, as we have the same truth given from a diversity of attitudes, the style of the writer adding variety, vivacity, and simplicity.

Some things none but Matthew wrote; others, Mark alone wrote; others, Luke exclusively has given us; while John is quite isolated, running much of the time alone. Matthew wrote for the Jews in the Holy Land, fifteen years after the ascension of our Lord, being himself an eye-witness, as he was one of the original twelve apostles called by the Savior in the city of Capernaum. Mark was not an apostle, but is believed to have served as amanuensis of Peter, writing his Gospel for the Romans

in Rome, as dictated by Peter, thirty years after the ascension of our Lord. Luke was a physician, in the city of Antioch, Syria, and of course practicing medicine there, during the ministry of John the Baptist and our Savior, as we have no mention of him until some time after Christianity had reached Antioch, Paul and Barnabas having preached there a whole year, and made their first great evangelistic tour through Cyprus, Pamphylia, and Lycaonia, returning back to Antioch. Setting out on a second tour, Luke is first mentioned as a comrade of Paul, along with Timothy and Silas, and serving him as amanuensis. He wrote the Gospel that bears his name for the Greeks, while with Paul in Corinth, twenty-five years after the ascension of our Lord. John, like Matthew, was one of the twelve apostles, and wrote his Gospel for the edification of the Christians while at Ephesus, about sixty-five years after the ascension of the Savior.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke all wrote historically. Hence they run much together. John did not write historically, but spiritually and experimentally, for the edification of the Christians, and especially their fortification against dangerous heresies, which had already begun to creep in.

A Harmonical Commentary is something “new under the sun,” in the simple fact that there has never been anything of the kind written and published. At least, I have made diligent inquiry, and have never been able to hear of any. You will find the advantages of a Harmonical Commentary on the Gospels decisive and inestimable; *e.g.*, as you all know, reading Clarke, Whedon, or any other Commentary, you get along nicely, and enjoy everything through Matthew; then in Mark they are constantly turning you back to Matthew. This becomes irksome, and the subsequent expositions, to some extent, become monotonous. There is nothing of this kind in the Harmonical Commentary, as the line of exegesis does not follow Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John, but Jesus only, and taking in the writers as they come, incidentally, in the order of events.

While the Harmonical Commentary will expound every deliverance of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, it will give them incidentally, in the order of time, every one subsidiary to the Lord Himself.

(a) Everything revealed by Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John will be expounded in the order of time as the events transpire in the ministry of our Savior.

(b) Repetitions will be diligently avoided; *i.e.*, when the same thing is said by more than one, there will only be one exegesis given.

(c) The chronological coincidence of the items given by different writers will be diligently observed, so as to keep prominent before the eye of the reader the unbroken, consecutive history of our Lord’s ministry.

In studying the Commentary, you would do well to have the Gospels present, so you can see that everything is expounded, recognize, and keep in mind the consecutive order of the wonderful, eventful ministry of our Lord. As a matter of convenience and economy, we will use abbreviations of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Unless you bear this fact in mind, you may realize confusion, somewhat to your disadvantage. For Matthew, we will only write the single letter M.; for Mark, we will write the two letters Mk.; for Luke, we will write the single letter L.; and for John, we will only write J.

I feel sure that you will not only be interested, but much edified, in the wonderful preaching and mighty miracles of our Savior. I suppose you have not only read the other five Commentaries, but “Footprints of Jesus,” in which you find that I have been on His track, beginning at Cæsarea-Philippi, the northern terminus of His ministry, and following Him round and round over the country, and two days sailing on the Sea of Galilee, the northern center of His ministry and really His home after they rejected Him at Nazareth. On His track, in that far off land, we dictated the Gospel Commentaries to our son-in-law, Rev. F. M. Hill, one of my traveling companions, who wrote them in brief; but now, in the quietude of my dear “Old Kentucky Home,” we rewrite and prepare them for the printers.

The end for which I made this second tour to the Holy Land was, that I might explore more extensively the track of our Savior, and especially that, by walking round in His footprints, and lingering at those places rendered historic and hallowed by His conception, birth, residence, baptism, crucifixion, interment, resurrection, and ascension, that God, in His mercy, might favor me with a deeper insight into Divine things; a more thorough illumination of the Holy Spirit; a clearer apprehension of Divine truth; a more vivid realization of my own momentous responsibility in my humble effort to expound His Word; a deeper crucifixion in my own interior spirit; a more thorough annihilation of the self life; a more total eclipse of the world, with all its vanities and emoluments; and a profounder humiliation of my own soul before God, — thus, not only more thoroughly preparing me for the awful responsibility of expounding to immortal intelligences the Word of my Lord, but a more thorough qualification to meet the thousands of people who read these Commentaries at the judgment seat of Christ.

Now, reader, as you, in the good providence of God, shall examine the subsequent pages of this Commentary, I hope you will have but one end in view, and that is, to know the Word of Him “*who spake as never man spake.*” It is understood that a Holiness Commentary is rigidly non-sectarian and undenominational, but simply an explanation of the Bible, whose central idea is “*holiness, without which no one shall see the Lord.*” I hope no one reading these Commentaries will endeavor to utilize them to bolster up a sectarian dogma; *e.g.*, the baptismal controversy. The Calvinian or the Arminian — as we are reading and expounding the wonderful words and mighty works of our Lord and Savior, I hope you will see Jesus only in all these pages; the heart cry for a greater nearness to God, a deeper similitude to Jesus, and a richer enduement of the Holy Ghost may simultaneously ascend to the mercy-seat. We are sweeping with avalanche velocity into eternity. We have not time to preach anything but Jesus and His great salvation.

The great end for which these Commentaries are written is not only the salvation and sanctification of the readers, but especially the evangelization of the world. “*The Lord is nigh.*” We need millions of blood-washed and fire-baptized men and women to go to the ends of the earth, and preach the everlasting gospel, thus fulfilling the commission Jesus gave us before he ascended into heaven, assuring us that He will come in His glory so soon as we do this work. Not only do men and women need the sanctification and enduement of the Holy Ghost, but the Word of God is the gospel; they must understand it in order successfully to preach it to others. Hence, the explanation of God’s Word is a *sine qua non* to every person who would preach it to others.

The world is full of learning. Infidels, skeptics, and heretics set their traps on all sides to catch the herald of God's truth, and run him into entanglements and sophistical dilemmas. Great human learning is not necessary to the preacher, but a knowledge of God's Word is indispensable. Without this knowledge, and the sanctifying grace of God, the preacher gets caught and hung up, a spectacle of popular ridicule, before he is aware, and in this way is gobbled up by Satan. If these Commentaries are read, in the providence and grace of God, they will make multitudes of preachers. God has given you intellect enough to understand them.

Millions, in all lands, are perishing for the bread of life; *i.e.*, the precious Word of God. Nothing but the Word is the gospel, and nothing but the gospel can save souls. Many Churches, this day, are starving to death for the bread of life; the multitudes in Satan's dark world, and the heathen millions, dead and dying. The great responsibility of giving the gospel to the world devolves on the holiness people. The worldly Churches will never do it. A dead man can not help his neighbor. If you are in the swelling flood, you can not rescue others sinking into a watery grave. God needs all the holy people on the earth to go and preach the everlasting gospel to the dying millions. The evangelization of a lost world is the grand incentive for which I have devoted years of toil, and foregone the perils of sea and land, to give you these Commentaries; not simply that you may get saved, but that you may go and blow the silver trumpet amid the tombs of spiritual death, and see the resurrection power, that lost millions may be saved, heaven populated, and the return of our King expedited.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER I.

### THE INTRODUCTION.

**Luke 1:1-4.** *“Since indeed many have undertaken to set forth a narrative concerning the things which have been fulfilled among us, as those being eye-witnesses from the beginning and ministers of the Word, have handed down to us; it seemed good to me also, following all things accurately from the beginning, consecutively to write unto thee, O most noble Theophilus, in order that you may well understand the certainty of the histories concerning which you have been catechetically instructed.”* We see from this statement that Luke was not one of the old disciples of our Lord, neither was he an eye-witness of His mighty works; as we never hear of him till the second evangelistic tour of Paul, in which he becomes one of his helpers, about A.D. 42. Doubtless he was a practicing physician in Antioch during the entire period of our Lord’s ministry. We have three reasons for accepting the Gospel of Luke without the slightest discount:

1. He received all of his information from the veritable disciples of our Savior, who were eye-witnesses to His mighty works;
2. Paul was his constant companion, and, as we all believe, the dictator of his writings;
3. The plenary inspiration of the Holy Ghost settles forever all controversy in reference to Biblical authenticity.

2 Timothy 3:16:

*“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.”*

*Theopneustos* literally means “God breathed,” involving the clear and unequivocal revealed truth that all Scripture was breathed into the different authors by the Almighty. Hence the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Bible is positively and unequivocally revealed. The rapid spread of infidelity is one of the omens of the last days and the near coming of the Lord. Semi-infidelity, admitting a kind of substantial inspiration, is rapidly filling the pulpits. The true teaching of the Bible is, that “all Scripture” — *i.e.*, every word — is breathed into the writer by the Holy Spirit. Hence the great importance of understanding the original, because there the plenary verbal inspiration alone is to be found, translations only carrying with them this inspiration in a general, substantial sense, as they literalize the original.

Theophilus was a name so common in the gospel ages that we can have no idea who is personally alluded to, but doubtless some noble Christian friend of the writer. Bear in mind that Luke dedicates this Gospel to this noble Christian, Theophilus. As the word means “Lover of God,” it follows, as the legitimate sequence, that this Gospel is dedicated to all the lovers of God. I hope, reader, that includes you.

## OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS.

5. John the Baptist was a bonafide Aaronic priest in a pre-eminent sense, both his father and his mother belonging to the family of Aaron.

6. *“They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.”* While the rank and file of the priesthood, as well as the membership, had degenerated into dead formality and hollow hypocrisy, yet there were a few paragon saints, scattered here and there, in the Jewish Church at the time of our Lord’s advent. They enjoyed the glorious honor of receiving the Christ of prophecy, and introducing Him to the world — a peculiar honor, which God conferred upon all Israel; but, through blind unbelief, pride, and disobedience, they all forfeited it except Zacharias and Elizabeth, Joseph and Mary, Simeon and Anna, and a few others, dispersed hither and thither in the kingdom of Israel. The phraseology in reference to Zacharias and Elizabeth is such that we must conclude they enjoyed the sanctified experience. It seems, however, that Elizabeth enjoyed a deeper spirituality and a brighter type of faith than her husband, who certainly was not free from vacillation.

7. Sterility among the Hebrews was deprecated, not only as a calamity, but an opprobrium, as, in that case, there must follow a forfeiture of their inheritance in Israel as well as the hope of the honored progenitorship of Christ.

8. Since the priests had become so numerous, the institution of the sacerdotal divisions and courses by Abia had obtained, pursuant to which every priest must await his time to officiate in the temple.

9,10. Only the priests were admitted into the temple proper, the multitudes remaining out, having access to the great brazen altar, on which they offered their sacrifices, while the priests within the temple burnt incense to the Lord. On the present occasion, Zacharias was burning the holy incense to the Lord in the temple, and all the people were praying without, at the hour of incense; *i.e.*, nine o’clock in the morning.

11. *“The angel of the Lord appeared, standing on the right hand of the altar of incense: Zacharias seeing him, was excited, and fear fell on him.”* The position occupied by the advocate in court is always on the right-hand side of the judge. Gabriel and Michael are the two great archangels prominent throughout the Bible; the latter always appearing in the interest of the Divine government, and the former in behalf of humanity.

12,13. We see here that Zacharias and Elizabeth had prayed much that God might remove the sterility and give them posterity. As they are now quite old, the faith of Zacharias had much waned, while that of Elizabeth was stalwart and vigorous. *“Thou shalt call his name John.”* John does not occur in the Old Testament, being here given for the first time by the archangel. It means the grace of God, because John the Baptist was the harbinger of that wonderful grace which came to redeem the whole world from endless death.

14. The birth of John the Baptist was the occasion of general rejoicing among all the consanguinity of Zacharias and Elizabeth, as well as the more spiritual people enjoying a degree of insight into the things of God, who entertained hopeful apprehension that a mighty prophet was thus born into Israel.

15. *“For he shall be great before the Lord.”* John the Baptist, the last of all the Old Testament prophets, was truly the greatest, being more than a prophet; *i.e.*, the forerunner and introducer of Christ. *“And he shall not drink wine and strong drink.”* John was a Nazarite unto the Lord, living exceedingly abstemious, and a total abstainant from everything calculated to intoxicate. The Nazarite of the Old Dispensation was identical with the sanctified man of the gospel age. Samson was a Nazarite, this being the secret of his wonderful strength. *“He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from the womb of his mother.”* Here we have an actual case of sanctified infancy, illustrating the gracious possibility of having our infants filled with the Holy Ghost. Doubtless this will become the normal state during the glorious Millennial Theocracy.

16. *“And he shall turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God.”* John the Baptist was a wonderful preacher, his stentorian voice pealing into the popular ear after a prophetic interregnum of four hundred years, thus arousing Israel from her long sleep, emptying the cities and populating the desert, with the spellbound multitudes, listening with burning hearts and penitent spirits to the mighty and irresistible appeals of this wonderful prophet of the wilderness.

17. *“He shall go before His face in the spirit and dynamite of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”* The great and sweeping revival which broke out under the preaching of John the Baptist, stirring the whole nation from center to circumference, was the very thing to bring the people down into the dust of humiliation, and thus prepare them for the grandest opportunity the world had seen in four thousand years.

### **DOUBT AND DUMBNESS ALWAYS CO-EXISTENT.**

18-20. Here we see that Zacharias evinced his doubt of Gabriel’s communication by asking a sign. O how many people now doubt God and wait for signs, instead of taking Him at His word and rejoicing in His promises! The result in the case of Zacharias was, that he became dumb, and so remained till the birth of John the Baptist. If you ever doubt God, you will forfeit your testimony, and become a poor dummy in the meetings. You can recognize it definitely in all cases. So fast as the people give way to doubt, they forfeit their testimony, becoming dumb. Real faith always tells its own story. How common to find whole Churches dumb, thus evidencing the lamentable fact that, if they ever had faith, they have permitted the enemy to steal it away from them! Without faith there is no salvation. Hence you see that all dumb Churches are proper missionary ground. You must get their tongues loose, or they forfeit the hope of salvation.

21-23. Here we see that the words of Gabriel were signally verified when Zacharias, sure enough, was dumb, because he had disbelieved the word of the Lord spoken by the archangel. Be sure you believe all of God’s Word, and keep your testimony ever ringing clear, as otherwise you forfeit your salvation.

**24,25.** Here we find that when Elizabeth realized pregnancy, she went into retirement five months. Why was this? Evidently that she might enjoy uninterrupted communion with God, fasting, praying, and meditating, thus sinking away into His will, adoring His majesty, and contemplating His glory; meanwhile seeking that extraordinary endowment of grace requisite to qualify her for the immeasurable responsibilities of motherhood, and especially the maternity, training, and education of such a man as she knew, by the revelation of Gabriel, that her son would be. In that age of the world, and the ensuing fifteen hundred years, monastic seclusion for spiritual blessings was very common. We seriously feel the need of it now, in this age of superficiality. Nothing is really so much needed on the part of God's people, and especially the ministry of God's people, at the present day, as uninterrupted communion with God. Certainly the reproach of her sterility was gloriously removed in the birth of such a man as John the Baptist, the prince of prophets, and even more the precursor of the world's Redeemer. We have in the birth of John the Baptist a repetition of that supernatural intervention of the Holy Ghost which characterized the birth of Isaac. In that case, however, the faith of Abraham was robust and triumphant, that of Sarah somewhat staggering through unbelief; whereas, in the case of John the Baptist, Zacharias's faith flickered seriously, while that of Elizabeth is unimpeached, and, as we have good reason to believe, was athletic throughout.

### THE ANNUNCIATION TO MARY.

**26-30.** When I visited Nazareth, I spent some time in the Church of the Annunciation, quite magnificent and capacious, said to stand on the identical spot where the angel Gabriel delivered the wonderful tidings to Mary. Here we have it stated positively that Joseph, the husband of Mary, was a descendant of David. While the genealogy of our Savior recognizes the necessity of Mary's personal identity with David's family, and it is so taken for granted, yet it is not directly revealed, except in her wifeness to Joseph; as you must remember the institution of matrimony actually identifies husband and wife, "*They two shall be one flesh.*" In the recognition of this absolute unification through the institution of matrimony, we must concede Mary's identity with the family of David.

**31.** "*And thou shalt call His name Jesus.*" This name is eminently significant of His office and mission to save the whole world, as it is a Greek word, and means Savior.

### THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

**32-34.** "*He shall be called Great and the Son of the Highest; the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and of His kingdom there shall be no end.*" I see no possibility of satisfying these plain and unequivocal affirmations of inspired truth by a simple reference to His spiritual kingdom, which was a glorious verity before David was born, and will be forever. One line of Biblical exegetes spiritualize all the literal Scriptures, while their opponents literalize all, the tendency being to materialistic infidelity, and that of the former into a dreamy Utopianism, doing away with the material, universe, and running into the vagaries of idealism. While David's throne was a temporal reality, visible, tangible, and actual, it was not his own, as he was merely the executive of the theocracy — a man after God's own heart, because he did God's will. (Acts 13:22.) Therefore we are bound to conclude that David's great Son and Successor will restore the theocracy of which David was the executive, extended over, not only this world, but, as it already prevails, over

all other worlds, and reign forever. The magnitude of the Divine attributes, administration, grace, and glory is so incomprehensible by human intellect as to superinduce a constant liability on our part to run into the heresy of minification. Good Lord deliver us! Let us take the Word as we find it, if it decapitates all of our idols!

### MARY'S SUBMISSION.

**34-38.** *“And Mary said, Behold the handmaiden of the Lord: may it be unto me according to thy word.”* Good Lord, give us the faith of Mary, that we may perfectly submit to Thy Word and will, regardless of consequences! Perfect submission is the indefeasible fulcrum on which rests the Archimedean lever by which we tilt the world all out of the heart. In this case, you see, Mary must take the risk of the deepest disgrace in worldly estimation and really the liability of martyrdom as the law specified the penalty of death for prostitution in Israel. Mary's faith here leaps above every intimidation, and soars to the very pinnacle of victory.

**39-45.** It is about a hundred miles, through a rough, mountainous country, from Nazareth to Jutta, the home of Elizabeth, in the tribe of Judah. Upon the annunciation of Gabriel, and the information in reference to Elizabeth, her relative, Mary immediately set out on that long journey, walking, riding a donkey, or perhaps a camel, in order to visit her at her home. It here says that she came into the hill-country with haste, into a city of Judah. On arrival at the house of Elizabeth, wonderful manifestations of the Divine presence transpire. Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Ghost — *i.e.*, the spirit of prophecy comes on her, and she speaks fluently with a loud voice: “Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord may come unto me? For, behold, when the voice of thy salutation came into my ears, the infant in my womb leaped with joy. And blessed is she that believeth, because there shall be a perfection unto those things having been spoken unto her by the Lord.” These inspired utterances of Elizabeth, enunciated in the fullness of the Spirit, should raise the faith of every Christian to the acme of full assurance; as we see, positively and unequivocally, that our faith is the measuring line of our experience. There is no reason why the Elizabethan blessing pronounced on Mary may not be appropriated by every disciple of our Lord. O how appropriate the prayer, *“Lord, increase our faith!”*

**46-56.** *And Mary said: “My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit doth rejoice in God my Savior: because He hath looked upon the humility of His servant; for, behold, from now, all generations shall call me blessed.”* While, of course, we are all to diligently steer clear of the Mariolatry so prominent among the Romanists, yet we must admit that the mother of the Lord, in a most extraordinary sense, is blessed among women, honored far above all others. Well did she predict the encomium pronounced upon her by all generations. This had been the grand aspiration, inspiring millions of Jewish maidens; now she very appropriately realizes this pearl of all blessings within the reach of womanhood: *“The Mighty One hath wrought great things; His name is holy; His mercy is to generations of generations of them that fear Him. He hath humiliated the mighty from their thrones, and exalted the humble. He hath filled the poor with good things, and sent away the rich empty. He hath looked upon Israel, His son, to remember mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his seed forever.”* This brilliant and beautiful prophetic thanksgiving of Mary, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, vividly contrasts the temporal aggrandizement of the worldly with

the spiritual blessings and achievements of the saints, its culminating fulfillment realizable at the second coming of our Lord, when all temporal thrones will fall (Daniel 7:9); every monarch doff his crown, forfeit his scepter, preparatory to the coronation of Jesus as “*King of kings and Lord of lords;*” and the promotion of His bridehood to the thrones, dominions, and principalities of all nations.

## BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

**57-66.** As Mary abode with Elizabeth at Jutta three months, the time of parturition was at hand. A wonderful time of rejoicing took place at the humble home of Zacharias and Elizabeth when this heir of promise was born. Pursuant to the Jewish custom of circumcising on the eighth day (a striking symbolism of regeneration — *i.e.*, the spiritual birth — followed by sanctification, which is spiritual circumcision, in a few days, giving no time for backsliding), they came to administer the rite to the infant. “*And they continued to call him Zacharias, by the name of his father.*” This was very natural, as both the father and the mother had passed the age of fertility, and this child was supernaturally born, and consequently they could never expect another. We do not wonder that they mutually called him by the name of his father, thus seeking to perpetuate the family cognomen. His mother responding, said: “*No; but he shall be called John;*” *i.e.*, the grace of God. We see in all this narrative no discount on the faith of Elizabeth. She has the victory throughout, while her clerical husband has been dumb by reason of doubt. “*And they said to her, “There is no one in thy family who is called by this name; and they were beckoning to his father what he might wish to call him. And asking for a writing tablet, he wrote, saying, His name is John; and they were all astonished.”* As they had neither ink nor paper, this tablet was a smooth board, covered with oil, on which they wrote with a stile. “*And immediately his mouth and tongue were opened, and he continued praising God. And fear came upon all those dwelling around: and all these words were spoken throughout the hill-country of Judea. And all those hearing, placed them in their hearts, saying, What then shall this child be? And the hand of the Lord was with him.*” This whole affair had produced a wonderful sensation, arousing the people on tiptoe of astonishment, as the miraculous and the supernatural are so conspicuous in the whole affair — *i.e.*, the announcement of the archangel, the heroic faith of Elizabeth, her hermitage in order to communion with God, her wonderful blessing under the ministry of Mary, her mighty preaching and stirring prophecy, the visit of Mary, the wonderful power and spirit with which she witnessed and preached the living Word, the dumbness of Zacharias these nine months, and the flood of sanctifying power poured on him when he confesses the grace of God, — had all conspired to interpenetrate the whole community with electric shocks, and thrill all the people with a burning enthusiasm, holding them spellbound with thrilling anticipation of God’s wonderful visitation to Israel through the instrumentality of this child.

**67.** “*And Zacharias, his father, was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying.*” You see here that Zacharias became dumb when he doubted the angel who spoke the word of God. So you — the moment your faith fails, spiritual dumbness will strike you, and your testimony will be minus. You can recognize the spiritual status of the people all around you by their testimonies. All dummies should rally at once to an altar of prayer, and seek the reclaiming grace of God. You see here how faith is made perfect by testimony. The moment Zacharias testifies to the grace of God, his mouth is opened, his tongue loosened, and he is filled with the Holy Ghost, shouting, prophesying, and praising the Lord. So you see that faith and testimony are the two oars by which you row out of doubt

and dumbness into the joyous triumphs of entire sanctification. We also here see the superlative importance of speaking as the Oracles of God; *i.e.*, calling everything by its right name. Zacharias never got the blessing till he called the child John; *i.e.*, the grace of God. If you want to be filled with the Holy Ghost, and have the victory in your soul and life, call your blessing “sanctification.” So long as your faith flickers, you will never get the victory. Swing clear on the line of consecration, faith, and testimony, and assuredly the victory will not tarry.

## ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION THE CENTRAL TRUTH OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

**68-75.** *“Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, because he hath interposed and wrought redemption for His people, and raised up a horn of salvation to His people in the house of David His son, as He spoke through the mouth of His holy prophets from the beginning, and from the hand of all who hate us, to extend mercy with our father, and remember His holy covenant, which He swore unto Abraham our father: to grant unto us, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, to serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness, in His presence, all the days of our life.”* The Abrahamic covenant is primary in the movement of God’s mercy in behalf of fallen humanity, and fundamental in the redemptive scheme. This follows a logical sequence, from its identity with the covenant which God made with Christ to redeem the world by His expiatory death. (Galatians 3:16.) Hence the covenant with Abraham was no *de novo* transaction, but a simple reiteration of the covenant of redemption entered into, in the councils of the Uncreated Three, before sin ever entered into this world; as God, foreseeing the catastrophe, provided the remedy. It was pertinent, in order to its recognition and appropriation by the human race, that this covenant should be reiterated with Abraham, or some other suitable representative of the human race. In this peculiar representative sense, Abraham is the father of all the faithful, from the simple fact that there is no salvation outside the redemption covenant, of which he is the representative, participant, human defender, and exponent; *i.e.*, Abraham is honored by the Almighty as the recipient of the great covenant of human redemption by His Son, and also the paternal representative of this covenant to the whole human race. Therefore, all who have true faith, in all ages and nations, are honored with a place in the Abrahamic paternity. (Galatians 3:7.) Now if we can ascertain the condition of membership in this covenant, we certainly have found out the sure way of salvation. Those conditions and promises are clearly and unmistakably specified in the above Scriptures. Pursuant to this covenant, God promises that, *“being delivered out of the hands of our enemies* [*i.e.*, all spiritual foes, men and devils without, and evil tempers, unholy passions, vicious appetites, and all the debris of the carnal mind within — *i.e.*, being truly sanctified wholly] *we shall serve Him in righteousness and holiness all our days.”* Whereas sanctification is the work of the Spirit, by which we are made holy, holiness is the state which supervenes in the heart and life as the result of sanctification. Hence, you see that the only stipulation of the Abrahamic covenant, by which the world is to be saved, is, that we get sanctified wholly, and abide in the same throughout probationary life. The prerequisite of admission into heaven is a state of holiness, resulting from the utter eradication of all sin, actual and original, God positively assuring us that we shall never see His face without this gracious attainment. (Hebrews 12:14.) Hence, we find perfect harmony throughout the Bible, setting forth holiness as the one condition indispensable to admission into heaven. Life in this world is probationary, giving us all time and opportunity to become sanctified, by the blessed and direct office of the Holy Spirit, applying the redeeming blood and washing away all unrighteousness from our spiritual natures, thus

rendering our hearts pure and holy. We see here that this is clearly and unequivocally promised in the Abrahamic covenant. Not only the grace of perfect deliverances — *i.e.*, entire sanctification — but grace to *“serve Him, in holiness and righteousness, in His presence, all our days;”* *i.e.*, His wonderful keeping power, by His Word, Spirit, and providence, enabling us to keep this holy covenant amid the temptations of this wicked world, thus illustrating to men, angels, and devils our adaptation to the heavenly state, and congeniality to angels unfallen and spirits redeemed. This we are to do here, *“in His presence;”* *i.e.*, God Himself is our Judge, His omniscient eye seeing all of our thoughts, inclinations, and intentions, His infallible ear hearing all the inaudible utterances of our spirit. What a wonderful responsibility is involved in probationary life! Yet the illimitable resources of Omnipotent Grace are abundantly sufficient to qualify all true hearts for these momentous ordeals; and thus fortified by His precious and infallible Word, illuminated and guided by His blessed Holy Spirit, and environed by His merciful providence, like a wall of fire around us by day and by night, there is a blessed possibility that we may live on earth as safe as in heaven. Glory to God for His unspeakable mercies and superabounding grace!

**76-79.** *“And thou shalt be called the prophet of the Highest.”* Things in the Divine order are called what they are. John is not only a prophet, but the greatest of all the prophets, and even the honored harbinger of Jesus: *“Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways.”* The burden of John’s preaching was repentance, which is fundamental in the plan of salvation. The reason why people are not saved is because they do not receive Jesus; the reason they can not receive Jesus is because they do not repent. John cried constantly, with stentorian Voice, *“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”* The King had the kingdom, into which none could enter unless he came by the only door — *i.e.*, repentance; in order to give a knowledge of salvation to His people through the remission of their sins, through the bowels of the mercy of our God. The Jews were the people of God — His by election to the progenitorship of Christ. To them, first, experimental salvation was offered. Many of the Gentiles are the elect of grace, foreknown of God. To them, in the second place, salvation was offered. God knows His own, whether Jews or Gentiles, and reveals to them a knowledge of their own salvation through the remission of sins, in which the *“day-spring from on high”* has looked down upon us. The wonderful mercy of God in Christ is a day-spring from heaven: *“To appear unto those sitting down in darkness and the shadow of death.”* The whole world down, easy, careless, and unconcerned, in spiritual darkness, and in the shadow of that dismal night of hopeless, eternal doom, while hell-hounds, bloodthirsty, are on their track, roaring for their prey. *“In order to direct our feet in the way of peace:”* Instead of sitting down in a careless attitude, we should be up and running for life. The glorious grace of God is here contrasted with the terrible bloody wars raging in the unregenerate heart, and destined to dump us amid the merciless devastations of infuriated devils through all eternity, unless, amid the fleeting opportunities of probationary grace, we may happily exchange the horrific fears of sin and devils for the peace of God in Christ, which is heaven begun in the soul.

**80.** *“The child grew and waxed strong in spirit, and is in the wilderness unto the day of his showing unto Israel.”* As a rule, children grow in sin as they increase in physical power. As John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost from his infancy, his spiritual growth and development kept pace with the physical. Jutta, the place of his birth, is not far from the wilderness of Judea. During the slaughter of the infants at Bethlehem, Zacharias and Elizabeth migrated into this wilderness, in order to protect their son from the cruelties of Herod. They return no more to Jutta, but abode in the

wilderness the thirty years of John's minority, and doubtless to the end of their lives; consequently, John enjoyed the signal blessing of an humble, retired home with the poor people of the wilderness. If you have an intimation from the Lord that there is a child of peculiar promise in your home, you should, by all means, get away from the bon tons of society, find a sequestered retreat among the poor, where you can bring up your children uncontaminated with the popular and fashionable vices and follies. The Essenes — *i.e.*, the holiness people of the Jewish Church — who are generally poor, abode in the desert; hence, John was fortunate to enjoy their influence during the thirty years of his childhood and youth. Thus he studied in God's theological college — *i.e.*, the sandy desert where Moses spent forty years preparatory for the leadership of Israel, winding up with the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire, as revealed in the burning bush. Brush College sends out brighter and better graduates than all of the metropolitan universities.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER II.

### AN ANGEL APPEARS TO JOSEPH.

**Matthew 1:18-25.** We find that Gabriel spoke to Mary when she was wide awake, in broad daylight; but in the case of Joseph, he appears to him in a dream, while asleep; as Mary, if not vindicated by Divine intervention, must have been culpable under the law of Moses, and liable to the penalty of death by stoning. While Joseph, recognizing her physical condition, and was contemplating a private separation from her, in order to protect her from the severity of the law, the angel notifies him relative to the Conception of Jesus by the Holy Ghost, repeating the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14:

“And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins.”

Here we see that the Messianic glory of Jesus, witnessed by both Testaments, is that *“He shall save His people from their sins.”* The world is full of religion — Pagan, Moslem, Papal, and Protestant with an infinite diversity of subdivisions; but the great trouble is that they do not take away the sins of their votaries. For this reason, the people who preach and experience entire sanctification really stand alone as the dispensers of the true Gospel, while on them devolves the magnitudinous work of the world’s evangelization. The Bible is its own expositor. If we are not in harmony with it, we are without hope and without God. Full salvation follows as a logical sequence from the Divinity and consequent omnipotence of our Savior. The world is thronged with millions today who claim to be the followers of Jesus, but do not realize that they are saved from their sins. There is a missing link somewhere in the chain of their profession. If they had Jesus in the true Scriptural sense, they would be saved from all their sins, the Holy Spirit testifying to the fact. The trouble with the world is not about religion, for it inundates the globe, more demonstrative with heathens, Mohammedans, and Jews than Christians; but the problem to be solved is personal, experimental salvation, which, in its intrinsic reality, attested with the Holy Spirit and corroborated by the Word of God, is the only foundation of heavenly hope. When Jesus saves people from their sins, they have them no more. It is an accomplished fact, known and realized beyond the possibility of doubt; has the full assurance, given by the Holy Spirit, to the complete work of Christ in your heart; really precludes all doubt. *“And they shall call His name Emmanuel, which is interpreted, God is with us.”* Here you see a refutation of the idea entertained by some that Matthew wrote his Gospel in Hebrew, and it was subsequently translated into Greek. This inference has doubtless originated from the fact that he wrote it in Judea and for the Jews. But we must remember that the Greek language was universal in the apostolic age, and well known in Jerusalem. The fact that Matthew translates this Hebrew word Emmanuel into Greek, is demonstrative proof that he was writing in Greek. There is a deep and sweet significance in the word Emanuel — *i.e.*, *“God with us”* — in contradistinction to his dwelling, far away in heaven, among the angels. The very fact that He took our humanity, to retain it forever, is demonstrative proof that He has become one of us, to abide with us in this world, and all other worlds, through all eternity. Joseph, awakening from his sleep,

proceeds at once to do as the angel had told him; *i.e.*, receive his betrothed wife, and call the name of her Son Jesus, which is a Greek word, and means Savior, signifying the work He came to do — *i.e.*, to save His people from their sins. Who are His people? All who receive Him; as to them He gives power to become the children of God. (John 1:12.)

## THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

Luke 2:1-7. *“It came to pass in those days [i.e., in the days above mentioned, with reference to John the Baptist and the annunciation of the coming Christ], a decree went forth from Augustus Cæsar to enroll all the world.”* The battle of Actium, between Augustus Cæsar and Mark Antony, gave the former the sole dominion of the known world, his crown radiating the rays of an unsetting sun, and his scepter sweeping the circumference of the globe. *“This enrollment first took place, Cyrenius being the governor of Syria, and all went to be enrolled, each one into his own city. And Joseph went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he is of the house and family of David, to be enrolled, along with Mary his wife, being betrothed to him, being in an advanced state of pregnancy.”* Nazareth is away up north, in the tribe of Zebulun, while Bethlehem is about one hundred miles south of it, in the tribe of Judah. It so happened that they were not living in their own township. Bethlehem is a compound Hebrew word, and means house of bread; very significant, as it is the nativity of Christ, who is the Bread of life to all the world. I have several times visited Bethlehem, which is this day a beautiful little city of eight thousand, much revived by Jewish capital and industry. The great Church of the Nativity — Greek, Latin, and Armenian each denomination holding daily service at respective hours, contains the manger, hallowed to receive the world’s Redeemer, being wrapped in swaddling-cloths, and laid in a manger, because there was no room for Him in the inn. As His parents were poor, He had no fine clothes, and there was no room for Him in the tavern, where the moneyed people lodged. It is literally true, as a rule, this day, that the Savior is excluded from the houses where the well-to-do people abide. Why was the incarnation of the Savior, the most important event of all ages, postponed four thousand years, while multiplied millions swept into eternity?

a. Christ was in the world excarnate — *i.e.*, out of the place from the beginning and through all the ages preceding His birth at Bethlehem; He was here, and omnipotent to save. Hence there was a gracious possibility in all ages for all to be saved.

b. It was necessary that the important event of His incarnation should be postponed beyond the prehistoric ages of myth and fable, lest it be lost in the fogs of ignorance and superstition, and history should not be able to apprehend, appropriate, and transmit it intelligently to all coming ages.

c. Such was the incorrigible propensity of fallen humanity to go into creature worship — *i.e.*, idolatry — that it was necessary to give it the field unobstructed, and opportunity to run its race, do its execution, culminate, and fall into dilapidation, before the great and notable event of our Lord’s incarnation and evangelization to all the nations of the earth.

This was actually done. The Baal idolatry — *i.e.*, the worship of the sun-god, as well as many other forms of idolatry had actually monopolized the world, received the adoration of all nations four thousand years, proved unsatisfactory; ostensibly inadequate to the consolation of the human heart,

and the solution of the great problem of humanity: Who am I? whence came I? and what is my destiny?

d. Human learning, unsanctified by grace, has in all ages fostered pride and arrayed itself against God.

Hence it was important to give it rope enough to hang itself, and time and opportunity to do it. This was done in the four thousand years postponement. If you will travel through Egypt, Greece, and Rome, you will certify me that the surviving monuments of human art, genius, and learning forces on us the conclusion that in the anti-Christian ages, they actually made greater proficiency and reached loftier achievements than the attainments of any subsequent period; therefore, when infidelity arrays human learning against the Bible, and would extol its superiority as an antidote to the wants of humanity, the argument breaks down, from the simple fact that the arts, sciences, and every ramification of human learning, had the world four thousand years, unobstructed by the revealed Word, meanwhile making the loftiest attainments possible, and still signally failing to satisfy the longings of the immortal soul, condole the griefs of a broken heart, and deliver humanity from guilt and sin, and solve the great problem of experimental salvation.

e. When the postdiluvians, under the leadership of Nimrod, resolved to build a tower so high that another flood could never pass over it, God arrested their impious enterprise by confounding their language, and thus filling the world with innumerable dialects.

In order to the universal propagation of the gospel, it was important to girdle the globe with one common language, spoken by all the nations of the earth. This was done by the universal conquest of Alexander the Great, placing the Greeks, with their beautiful, vivacious, and comprehensive language, in the leadership of every nation under heaven, thus enveloping the globe with one common language.

f. As the world was occupied by an infinite variety of different nations, so that an army could scarcely pass out of the shadow of its own capital without invading the territory of its neighbor, and all these arrayed against each other in deadly conflict — amid this state of infinite and antagonistical political divisions, it would have been impossible to verify the Commission, *“Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”*

A great, universal military Government was an indispensable prerequisite to the world’s evangelization. This actually obtained in the universal conquests of Rome, throwing the Briarean arms of a powerful military despotism around all the nations of the earth. Under this universal military Government, the apostles were permitted to go to the ends of the earth — Matthew to Ethiopia and Central Africa; Mark to Egypt and Northern Africa; Peter to Rome; Paul to Eastern Asia and Western Europe; the two Jameses to Jerusalem and Palestine; Andrew to Armenia; Philip to Syria; Bartholomew to Phrygia; Jude to Tartary; Thomas to India; and Simon Zelotes to the British Islands, their comrades actually dispersing to the ends of the earth. If all these countries had not been under the one great military Government of Rome, it would have been impossible for them to carry out the Commission in the peregrination of the globe; for as soon as they passed into another nation, they would have been arrested, imprisoned, and probably put to death. Now that all of these

important and indispensable events. have transpired, Pagan polytheism has run its race without a competitor, and is on the universal decline. Human learning, with the world for its dominion, has gone to the acme, and signally failed to solve the grand problem of human life and destiny. The Alexandrian conquest has put the Greek language, the finest the world ever saw, in every nation, actually making it the *shibboleth* of the globe; while the Romans have triumphed on all the battle-fields of earth, enveloping all nations in the mystical network of an invincible universal despotism, thus obliterating the incorrigible obstructions of national boundaries, unifying the world, and turning it over to the heralds of gospel grace.

g. Besides the removal of the above difficulties, and the opening of all nations to the ingress of the gospel, there has already sprung up a universal anticipation, not simply among Jews, blessed with the light of prophecy, but all the Gentile world have, in some way, received the impression and reached the conclusion that a Divine messenger is about to come into the world — really, all nations are on tiptoe with anticipation of the coming Messiah.

“Hark! a glad voice the lonely desert cheers:  
Prepare the way! a God, a God appears!  
Lo! earth receives Him from the bending skies;  
Sink down, ye mountains; ye valleys, rise;  
With heads declined, ye cedars, homage pay;  
Be smooth, ye rocks; ye rapid floods, give way;  
The Savior comes, by ancient bards foretold;  
Hear him, ye deaf; and all ye blind, behold!”

The advent of Christ is the greatest event that has ever transpired upon the earth, actually inundating the globe with the grace of God, and bringing salvation within the reach of every fallen son and daughter of Adam’s lost race. While His first advent floods the world with grace, the second will inundate the world with glory; thus His two advents constituting the great salient epochs of the world’s history — the one, the ineffable transition out of legal bondage into the triumphs of free grace; and the other, sweeping on from grace to glory. As the Incarnate Christ is the very impersonation of redeeming grace, inexhaustible and omnipotent, poured out on every human being without money and without price, so when the Lord comes again, He will be the incarnation of glory, bringing His glory with Him, and freely transmitting it to all His saints. I do not see that His glorious coming will do away, or even supersede His omnipotent grace; but it will be an accession to it, both grace and glory surviving, accumulating, and augmenting through all eternity.

## THE SHEPHERDS.

**8-20.** *“The shepherds were at that time tenting out, and keeping watch over their flock through the night.”* This fact refutes the popular idea of the birth of our Savior taking place in midwinter, thus locating Christmas, December 25th. In the summer time, sheep lie in the shade through the heat of the day, and graze at night; whereas during the winter, they sleep in the night and graze in daytime. If it had been midwinter, the shepherds would not have been out with their flocks at night, but in houses, caves, or kraals. The critics have settled on April 5th as the Christmas. I doubt not but they are correct. *“Behold the angel of the Lord stood over them, and the glory of the Lord shone*

*around them; and they were affrighted with a great fear.*” The shepherds’ field, where these notable events took place, is in full view of Bethlehem, perhaps a couple of miles east. The angel said to them: *“Fear not; for, behold, I proclaim to you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people: for this day a Savior is born unto you, who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David.”* Bethlehem was generally known as the city of David as it was the home of Boaz, Obed, Jesse, and David. *“And this shall be the sign to you: you shall find an infant, wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.”* The English uses the article, and reads, *“The babe,”* which is incorrect; the article is not in the Greek, whereas it destroys the meaning. A babe lying in a manger, wrapped in swaddling cloths, was really the sign designated by the angel. It was a sure sign, good enough; as you might travel round the world and not find it. *“And immediately there was a multitude of the heavenly host along with the angel, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will among men.”* When the lonely angel had revealed the news to the shepherds, his testimony was corroborated by a multitude, praising God, and shouting the beautiful doxology, *“Glory to God in the highest.”* All the glory of human salvation belongs to God, as it is utterly impossible for any of us ever to bring Him under the slightest obligation to show us mercy. Christ, by His own atonement, made peace on earth with every human being, not only appertaining to God, but one another. There was no reason why peace with God and every human being should not cover the whole earth, and flood every soul with the heavenly prelibation. The wonderful work of Christ actually has brought good will to every soul and every home, not only toward all the world, but toward God. No reason why the whole earth should not be filled with the glory of God, since Christ has swept every difficulty away.

*“And it came to pass, when the angels departed from them to heaven, and the men [i.e., the shepherds] said to one another, Let us go even unto Bethlehem, and let us see this thing which has taken place, which the Lord has made known unto us. And they, hastening, came and found both Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger.”* See the contrast between verse twelve, where infant and manger both occur without the article, as the shepherds knew nothing about the circumstances, and the event and finding an infant wrapped in swaddling cloths lying in a manger, was to be the sign to them that the angel’s testimony was true. Now having come, they find an infant lying in a manger, wrapped in swaddling cloths, as the angel had said, thus literally verifying the angel’s testimony. Now in verse sixteen the Greek article occurs both with infant and manger, because the sign of the angel being verified, they know now that they have found the identical infant, precluding all possibility of mistake. *“And seeing they knew with certainty concerning the word which was spoken unto them”* about this little child; *i.e.*, the sign given by the angel being now literally verified, assures the shepherds beyond all doubt as to the identity of the babe.

*“And all those hearing were astonished concerning those things which were spoken to them by the shepherds.”* See how God honored these shepherds above all the aristocrats, princes, and potentates of the earth by really making them the first witnesses to His Incarnate Son, and the first heralds of the best, greatest, and most wonderful tidings that ever rang in mortal ears. In all ages, the people who herd the flocks day and night have, as a rule, been poor, humble, and ignorant.

19. *“Mary kept all these words, laying them up in her heart.”* She saw how the testimony of the shepherds corroborated the annunciation of Gabriel at her humble home in Nazareth nine months

preceding. The meaning of heart is spiritual rather than mental. Mary, under the illuminations of the Holy Spirit, kept rigid spiritual cognizance of everything appertaining to her child.

*“And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things which they heard and saw, as was spoken to them.”* There is no doubt but these shepherds were not only godly men, like Simeon and Anna looking for the Messiah, but that they enjoyed an extraordinary depth of spiritual illumination, and were thus prepared for the exalted honor conferred. We see they had the grace of humility too copious to imbibe spiritual pride, even over this exalted encomium, as they return betimes to their waiting flocks. As they have no fences in that country, all stock are herded, and there is this day much of it there.

## **CIRCUMCISION OF JESUS AND HIS PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE.**

**21-24.** *“And when the eight days for circumcising Him were fulfilled, and He was called Jesus, being called by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.”* Gabriel brought His name down from heaven, designative of His office and character, which is to save all the people from their sins who will let Him. *“And when the days of their purification were fulfilled, according to the law of Moses, they brought Him to Jerusalem; as has been written in the law of the Lord, That every male opening the matrix shall be called holy to the Lord; and to offer sacrifice according to that which has been spoken in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”* The Scriptures setting forth the law of the Lord appertaining to the purification of the mother and the presentation of the child to the Lord are found in Leviticus 12, Exodus 13, and Numbers 8. Thus we see that, as Mary and Joseph were godly people, every ramification of the law was to be rigidly fulfilled, even in case of Him who made the law. Though the circumcision means sanctification by the elimination of the old man of sin, and Jesus had no sin, yet as it behooved Him to fulfill all righteousness, He received circumcision like the sinful men whom He came to save. The purification which the law required of His mother, after thirty days, was to be accompanied by the offering of a lamb; but in case of the poor, they might bring the cheaper offering — a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons. Hence, the parents of Jesus being poor, they offered the cheap sacrifice. We see in everything, that our Lord, His family, prophets, apostles, and friends, rank among the lowly. Still the people all want to get up. Jesus is our Paragon. We ought to want to live and die as He did.

## **SIMEON AND ANNA.**

Whereas it was the glorious privilege of all Israel to receive Christ and proclaim Him to the world — an honor above the angels — yet we see but very few; *e.g.*, the shepherds of the field, Zacharias and Elizabeth, Joseph and Mary, Simeon and Anna, the apostles and sainted contemporaries of our Lord, constituting but a handful of the great Jewish nation, were all who enjoyed this exalted honor, the rest being blinded. Whereas it is certainly the glorious privilege of the whole Christian Church to enjoy the transcendent honor and blessing of receiving Jesus at His second coming, descending from the skies, and witnessing to His glory, yet it is highly probable that the proportion of the elect who shall enjoy this privilege will not be greater than at His first advent.

*“And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem to whom was the name Simeon: the same man righteous and godly, awaiting the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.”* Simeon

was gloriously sanctified, filled with the Holy Ghost, and on the constant outlook for the appearing of his Lord. If we are not in a similar attitude, we will certainly be without excuse, as we live in a much brighter dispensation than he. *“And it had been revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before that he may see the Christ of the Lord.”* O what a wonderful Pentecostal experience Simeon enjoyed, and how should his testimony put to the blush the halting Christians of the present day! Simeon was living in advance of his dispensation — *i.e.*, up in ours; whereas so many in our day are back in the dispensation of Moses. Here we see that Simeon was not only filled with the Spirit, but led by Him, as we all ought to be. And he came in the Spirit into the temple. The critics tell us that none but the priests were admitted into the temple proper, and when we read so frequently about the temple in the biography of our Savior, it means other buildings connected with it, which were many and capacious, on the Temple Campus.

*“And while the parents brought in the little child Jesus, that they may do according to that which is required of the law concerning Him; and he received Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said, And now permit Thy servant, O Lord, to depart in peace, according to Thy Word; because mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all Thy people: a light unto the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.”* Thus far, Israel had been the custodian of the Divine Oracles and the dispensers of truth. Now the time has come for them to propagate this heavenly benediction to all the nations of the earth, themselves being the recipients of this unearthly glory; meanwhile the Gentiles, wrapped in heathen darkness four thousand years, are to receive this *“day-spring from on high,”* a glorious sunburst from the throne of God, chasing away the dismal night of sin, and revealing the ineffable glory of salvation, rich, sweet, full, and free, to the old, the young, the great, the small, the rich, the poor, the wise and the unwise.

*“Joseph and His mother were wondering over the things spoken by him. Simeon blest them, and said to Mary His mother, Behold, He is appointed for the fall and the rising of many in Israel, and a sign that shall be spoken against.”* O how signally and sadly was Simeon’s prophecy verified! The rank and file of the great Jewish Church, both ministry and membership, rejected Him and fell; while not a few received Him, leaping into life. And O the contradiction which clamored against Him from Dan to Beersheba! How Jerusalem roared with the ejaculation, *“Crucify Him!”*

*“And a sword shall go through thy soul.”* How was this fulfilled in the case of Mary? She, like his other faithful disciples, failing to apprehend the prophecies relative to His crucifixion, believing that He was the Christ and invulnerable, expected Him to live forever. O how the sword darted through her soul when she saw her beloved Son, whom she had expected to redeem Israel, demonically murdered! Again, she was but a fallen being, like others, needing personal salvation, which she could only receive by the Sword of the Spirit. *e.*, the Word of God — going through her soul, thus destroying all the virus of original sin.

*“In order that the thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”* It was absolutely necessary that Christ should come, suffer, and die, to satisfy the penalty of the violated law, in order that the Holy Spirit, the Illuminator, Electrifier, and Sanctifier of the human soul be given. Hence, you see the Holy Ghost, the Revelator of all human thoughts through the words of Christ, is given to all the world, revealing the deep things of the heart, to our unutterable astonishment, simultaneously

revealing the glorious remedy, the open, flowing fountain of the Savior's precious blood, and inspiring the consecration and faith requisite to plunge beneath the cleansing wave, and

“Rise, to walk in heaven's own light,  
Above the world and sin,  
With heart made pure and garments white,  
And Jesus crowned within.”

**36-38.** We see here that Anna was a preacher too — *i.e.*, a prophetess — identical with the called and sent preachers of the gospel dispensation. She was eighty-four years old; having married at maturity, and been left a widow in seven years, she devoted her life to the ministry of the Word, abiding in the temple day and night. So you see she was no backwoods preacher, but a metropolitan, enjoying a settled pastorate at Jerusalem. Her grand theme was Jesus and the expectation of His immediate appearing. So, at the present day, the glorious theme of every true gospel preacher is Jesus and the constant watch for His appearing. The glorious dispensation of entire sanctification, in which we are permitted to live, involves the gospel message of entire sanctification, the fullness of experience, and the constant expectancy of the Lord's appearing.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER III.

### THE ORIENTAL MAGI.

**Matthew 2:1-12.** *“Jesus having been born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, behold, the magi came from the East, saying, Where is He who was born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the East, and have come to worship Him.”* These magi, or wise men, were the priests, diviners, and astrologers of Persia, Media, Babylonia, and Arabia. From what country they came, we know not, as they were scattered all over the great East. Astrology is the science by which future events are predicted from the motions and phenomena of the stars. God availed himself of the profession of these influential men to give publicity to the advent of His Son. The Arabs and Babylonians were the most proficient astronomers of the early ages, always identifying it, more or less, with mythology and enchantment. Hence, these magi were accustomed to spend whole nights gazing skywardly, and diagnosing the movements and the relative brilliancy, as well as other phenomena, of the stars. Behold, in the Oriental firmament, a new star is seen, identified with none of the constellations with which those professional stargazers are so familiar. Behold, this star turns meteor, and shoots far away into the Western heavens. As the whole world is on the outlook for the Messianic advent, and these magi, standing at the front of the religious movements in the East, receive a Divine intimation that this star is ominous of that glorious coming King, from time immemorial expected by the Jews, consequently they immediately set out, and follow this moving star till they reach the land of Judea; proceeding at once to Jerusalem, the center of population, government, and influence, supposing that they can there get information in reference to the birth of the Mighty One adumbrated by the new star, which they have followed from their Eastern home.

*“Herod, the king, hearing, was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.”* As Herod’s father was an Idumean, and his mother an Arab, he doubtless feared the influence of a native king, lest he supersede him. Whereas, Herod’s long reign of thirty-eight years had been characterized by cruelty and blood, as he never stopped till he had actually hunted up and massacred all the Maccabean family, not even sparing his own wife, Mary Anne, nor his sons, Alexander and Aristobulus; doubtless the Jerusalemites dreaded the bloody revolution that would arise in an attempt to supersede him in the kingdom. *“Assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquires of them where Christ is to be born, and they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it has been written by the prophet [Micah 5:2], And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not least among the princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come a Governor, who shall shepherd My people Israel.”* How strange, when these chief priests and scribes were so well posted in the Messianic prophecies as upon the first inquiry correctly to locate the birth of Christ, and then, when the test came, reject Him as an impostor!

*“Then Herod, secretly calling the magi, inquired from them the time of the appearing of the star, and, sending them to Bethlehem, said, “Go and search diligently for the young Child, and when you find Him, report to me, in order that having gone, I may worship Him also.”* King Herod was a very bold and prominent professor of the Jewish religion, having rebuilt the temple with great

magnificence, and done many things to promote the interest of the Jewish Church; now, in the attitude of a devout Jew, watching and waiting for the Christ of prophecy to make His appearance, he treats the magi with appreciative courtesy, requesting them to go on to Bethlehem and find out whether Christ has there been born, as revealed by the star, and in that case, by all means, give him word without delay, that he may go and enjoy the privilege of worshipping Him; while at the same time he had deliberately made up his mind to slay the very Infant pointed out by the magi. How wonderfully history repeats itself! The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of Christ. The true holiness movement is the manifestation of the Holy Ghost, as the human body of Jesus is the manifestation of Christ. Nothing is more common in the present age than for people claiming conservatism to holiness, and even identity with the movement, to be its bitterest enemies, and only watching an opportunity to exterminate it. Herod stood at the head of the visible Church, claiming to be a true worshiper of Jesus, and at the same time seeking to kill Him. So the Church this day abounds in Herods, claiming to be the votaries of holiness, and seeking to destroy it.

*“And hearing the king, they departed, and, behold, the star which they saw in the East led them in advance, until having come, it stood over the place where the young child was. Seeing the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy.”* On the road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem there is a well, about a mile from the city, called the Well of the Star, because they say that when the wise men reached it, and looked in, they saw and recognized the star which had appeared to them in the East and led them on their way. Then the star evaded their gaze no more, but led them on till it paused over the cradle containing the world’s Redeemer. The conclusion from the facts revealed seems legitimate, that when the magi turned away from the direct route to Bethlehem to go to Jerusalem, the great metropolis, and consult the mighty men, the star eluded their vision, appearing to them no more till they get back on the direct road to Bethlehem, then reappearing, and leading them to the identical One for whose sake they had taken their long journey. So the Divine leadership is a bright star of present security and heavenly hope. It will never forsake us while we keep in God’s order, treading steadfastly the narrow way of holiness. But when we take our destiny into our own hand, and turn away into big places to consult great men, and do things with a big auger, we are sure to get out of kelter. Bethlehem was a little, obscure village. If they had followed the star, paying no attention to the big city and the great men, they would have found the Savior quickly, and had no trouble with King Herod. So, if you want to find Jesus quickly and satisfactorily, follow the Holy Star (*i.e.*, the Holy Spirit), giving little or no attention to big preachers and influential Churches.

*“Having come into the house, they saw the little child, with Mary His mother, and falling down, they worshipped Him, and opening their treasures, they offered Him gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”* When I was at Bethlehem, the guide showed me a church edifice, about five hundred yards from the Church of the Nativity, which contains the manger in which Jesus was born, and said that this church stands on the spot originally occupied by the house in which Mary and Joseph lived with the infant Jesus, perhaps a month after He was born. This corroborates the statement here, that the wise men came into the house, not the manger. Of course, they either traveled on foot, or on camels or donkeys, occupying considerable time in their journey. No mention here is made of Joseph, as he happened to be absent at the time of their arrival. How wonderfully God provides for coming emergencies before we have the slightest inkling of their approach! Do you not see how very opportune these valuable gifts came to Joseph, just at the time he needed money to defray their expenses to Egypt, though he had not yet dreamed of going. The frankincense and myrrh were

exceedingly valuable Oriental aromatics, which they could sell for money, and with the gold brought by the magi, have a splendid outfit for the great and expensive journey which lay immediately before them, though they apprehended it not.

*“Being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed by another way into their own country.”* Daniel says *“the dream is from the Lord.”* The Bible abounds in dreams, revealing Divine truths of greatest importance to humanity. Hence we must not depreciate dreams, but open our understanding and invite God to speak to us, *ad libitum*, in our dreams or our waking. Doubtless cruel Herod would have imprisoned, and perhaps killed, the magi if he could have gotten his hands on them. God defeated him, and protected them by a dream. So, lookout! God, in His own way, will take care of you.

### SOJOURN IN EGYPT.

**13-15.** Now Joseph, a true, godly man, dreams. God talks to him in the stillly hours of his nightly slumber. It is a long way for Mary to ride a donkey, and carry the Babe in her lap. Fortunately, He is now a month old. Then there was a complete overland route from Canaan to Egypt through the Isthmus of Suez, which, a few years ago, has been cut through by a canal, one hundred miles long, one hundred yards wide, and thirty feet deep, at the cost of one hundred millions of dollars. I have several times crossed the track of Joseph and Mary, with Jesus, into Egypt. I was in the house — now a Coptic church — in Old Cairo, where they say the holy family spent the time in Egypt; also, under the great sycamore-tree, twenty miles from that house, where tradition says they tarried and rested. Hosea foresaw this event long centuries before it occurred, and wrote, “Out of Egypt have I called My Son.”

### SLAUGHTER OF THE INFANTS.

**16-18.** Herod’s cruelty was simply horrific, killing his wife and three sons — Antipater, only five days before he died; all the Maccabean family; and all others who were even suspected of political rivalry. So now he sends forth and deluges Bethlehem with the blood of the innocent infants, taking all, indiscriminately, two years old and younger, so as to make sure that he got the right one, as he was determined at any cost to hold fast the royal scepter. See how wonderfully God defeats the devil in the interest of his true people! While Herod was ransacking all Bethlehem, and cutting the throat of every infant, so as to make sure that he got Jesus, He was perfectly safe in His mother’s arms, far away in another continent, so that Herod had all of his slaughter for nothing. Jeremiah 31:15, with prophetic ear, long centuries antecedent to it, hears the awful weeping in Bethlehem: *“A voice was heard in Rama, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning: Rachel weeping for her children, and was not willing to be comforted, because they are not.”* Rama is the name of the country in and about Bethlehem. Rachel’s Tomb is in full view of Bethlehem, and only a mile distant. Here, long centuries after she is dead, she is described as weeping over her children, and refusing to be comforted, because they are dead. The simple solution of the matter is, that Jeremiah, who was a brilliant poet, here turns loose his poetic imagination, personifying the weeping mothers of Bethlehem, whose dear babes were thus slaughtered, by Rachel, a mother in Israel, whose body is there with them sleeping in the dust. It is a strong figure, representing this dear mother, who had been so long dead, as now waking and weeping over her slaughtered children.

## THE HOLY FAMILY RETURN FROM EGYPT.

**19-23, and Luke 2:39,40.** *“And Herod having died.”* We do not know how long they remained in Egypt, but evidently the period was brief. Scarcely has the wail of the slaughtered infants died away on the air of Bethlehem till the cruel old king, becoming quite ill, goes to Jericho, where he had a palace and a pool, that he may avail himself of the sanitary warm baths for the recovery of his health. Even there he slays Antipater, his only surviving son by his first wife, Mary Anne, whom he had slain, with her other two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus; this dark crime only preceding five days his own exit to meet God and enter upon the awful retributions of eternity. *“Behold, an angel of the Lord appears to Joseph in a dream in Egypt: Arise, take the young child and His mother, and go into Israel, for those seeking the life of the young child are dead. And he, rising, took the young child and His mother, and came into Israel. And hearing that Archelaus rules over Judea in the room of Herod his father, he feared to go thither.”* Archelaus, being the only surviving son of Herod, received the government nominally by inheritance. We must remember that after the battle of Actium, which left Augustus Cæsar sole proprietor of the Roman Empire, which had conquered the whole world, consequently no king in any country could reign till he went to Rome and received his crown at the hand of the emperor; consequently, immediately after the death of Herod, Archelaus went away to Rome, a long and perilous journey for those times, in order that the emperor might crown him king of the Jews. Now it is a simple fact that the emperor positively refused to crown him, so that Archelaus was really never king of Judea. On the contrary, the emperor sent Coponius to Judea, in the capacity of proconsul, thus dismantling the kingdom, and turning it into a Roman province, no longer having its own king, but simply a governor, sent out by the Roman emperor, to rule that country as a Roman province. Now why did this transition take place at this peculiar time? Why, it was a fulfillment of prophecy, which says, *“The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, till Shiloh [i.e., Christ] comes.”* Now do you not see this wonderful fulfillment of prophecy? Augustus Cæsar had crowned Herod king of the Jews, and why not now crown Archelaus, and let the Jews have their kingdom, instead of reducing them to a state of vassalage by taking away their kingdom, and making them a Roman province? The solution is plain. Shiloh had already come, and the scepter had departed from Judah. Though the Roman emperor knew nothing about these prophecies nor their fulfillment, yet arbitrarily taking the bit in his teeth, he proceeded, undeviatingly, literally to fulfill the prophecies. So are wicked worldly people this day fulfilling the prophecies with astounding accuracy.

“Being warned in a dream, he departed into the regions of Galilee. Having come, he dwelt in a city called Nazareth; in order that the word spoken by the prophets may be fulfilled, that He shall be called a Nazarene.” (Isaiah 11:1.)

The village of Nazareth was so obscure and insignificant as never so much as to receive a mention in all the Old Testament Scriptures. It was proverbial for ignorance and poverty, so that the maxim obtained, *“No good can come out of Nazareth;”* thus illustrating the universally patent fact that this world is upside down, human estimation all wrong, and the very opposite of the Divine and true. Though Nazareth in human estimation was the most worthless place on the earth, it has come to the front, more celebrated and honored than all the time-honored metropolises on the globe. The same is true of the people. Examine all history. Those who have risen to true eminence have emanated from utter obscurity; while the high-born, as a rule, dwindle into insignificance, never amounting

to anything. I did so much enjoy my sojourn in Nazareth, happily reached by Jewish and Christian enterprise, now quite flourishing, with a population of seven thousand. How I did enjoy walking through the house where Jesus dwelt thirty years; visiting Joseph's carpenter-shop, where He labored with him at the work-bench; and the old synagogue, where He actually worshipped the God of Israel thirty years! The primitive Christians were called "Nazarenes."

*"And the little child grew and became strong in spirit, being filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him."* (Luke 2:40.) No wonder the body of Jesus grew and symmetrically developed with rolling years, as He had no physical infirmities, superinduced by the fall. Consequently He never had any sickness to impede His growth, His physical life throughout being like that of Adam before the fall, perfectly healthy, natural, and free from all ailments of any kind. This conclusion follows as a legitimate sequence from the very fact that He took our nature, without sin and its consequence; *i.e.*, without infirmity. His spiritual development was truly marvelous, from the simple fact that His intellect was perfectly clear and cloudless, never muddled, nor confused, nor in any way thrown off its equilibrium. His affections were perfectly pure, and never contaminated by anything vile. His memory was perfect, so that He never forgot anything, while His judgment was infallible, even while in childhood. Hence He was actually filled with the true wisdom of God peculiar to the heavenly state; while the grace of God, not only filled, but crowned Him.

### JESUS TWELVE YEARS OLD.

This inspired omission of our Lord's biography the first thirty years of His life, with the single exception of His visit to Jerusalem when twelve years old, has been a puzzle to thousands. It is certainly very plausible, as we are not interested in that period of His life in any essential or saving sense, from the fact that, pursuant to the Mosaic law, He patiently waited the arrival of Jewish majority before He entered upon His official Messiahship. If this had been written, it would make the New Testament too voluminous for the mind to grasp and the memory to retain. Hence the omission of non-essentials is a great blessing. So we proceed now to investigate the only item in His history during the first thirty years intervening between His birth and His baptism.

**Luke 2:41-52.** We have here the statement that when they journeyed from Nazareth to Jerusalem, one hundred miles, on foot, in order to attend the great annual Passover, when Jesus was twelve years old, having spent the time (eight days; *i.e.*, beginning on the Sabbath, running through the week, and closing on the Sabbath), and with their company — band of relatives and friends traveling together for mutual security and companionship — and stopping at nightfall, they first miss the Child, as so many are going along together, they at first suppose that He is with some of the relatives and friends. (I passed by the village of Beeroth, twelve miles north of Jerusalem, where it is certified that the parents first missed the Child.) Getting ready, and starting perhaps about noon, and traveling on foot leisurely, on account of the women and children, they would journey about a dozen miles by the time to stop and fix up for the night encampment, as was their custom, and is yet, in that warm country. When they miss Him, search thoroughly, and settle the matter that He is not in the crowd, they return to Jerusalem. After three days spent ransacking the city, they find Him, sitting in one of the temple buildings, of which there were very many on the Holy Campus, *"in the midst of the teachers, hearing them and asking them questions. All hearing Him were astonished at His understanding and His answers. And seeing Him, they were overwhelmed with surprise and delight,*

*and His mother said to Him, Child, why did you do so to us? Behold, both Thy father and I continued to seek You sorrowing. And He said to them, Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that it behooveth Me to be in the affairs of My Father?"* In the Jewish economy, a priest was said to become the son of the law at the age of twelve, being then old enough to understand the commandments and keep them. So here, Jesus seems to accept that situation in the attitude of a faithful Priest in His dispensation. Hitherto in the home, lovingly obedient to His earthly father and mother, we do not know that He had given them any direct information relative to His Divinity and His Messiahship. Now we see that He puts all scruple and inquiry on their part to a quietus by a positive announcement of His Divine Sonship, and His mission on earth, not to do the will of earthly parents (which of course He did, subserviently to the law), but to execute the will and purpose of His Heavenly Father, who had sent Him into the world to perform the stupendous work of redemption.

*"They understood not the word which He spoke to them. And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them. And His mother kept all these things in her heart."* Of course, from the first announcement of the archangel Gabriel, Mary had diligently and enthusiastically remembered everything which seemed to shadow forth the Divinity of her child. Yet doubtless His daily presence with them, thus becoming so familiar and common, as an incessant inmate of the home, they did not apprehend and realize the Divine majesty which so far was hidden in the humanity.

*"Jesus increased in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and men."* During the thirty years of His minority, before His reception of the Holy Ghost, immediately after His baptism, His beautiful, amiable, and irreproachable life, brightened with all the loving graces of an innocent and holy disposition, overflowing with kindness and love to everybody as a normal consequence, popular favor and kindly estimation and appreciation turned on Him from all the people. Doubtless all were delighted with Him as an active and prominent member of the synagogue. But you see, so soon as He returned home from the baptism of John and the induement of the Holy Ghost, they all fell out with Him and tried to kill Him. Hitherto He has been an irreproachable member of the Church; now, He is a fire-baptized, Spirit-filled Preacher of the gospel. Therefore His words hew Adam the First all to pieces; then He well says, *"The world hateth Me."* So His favor with men evanesced.

## GENEALOGIES.

Matthew 1 and Luke 3. There is but one fact of vital importance in all of these genealogies, and that is the transmission to all generations, an infallible history of our Lord's progenitorship, setting forth, beyond controversy, the fact of His human descension from Adam. In order to reach man in the plan of salvation, He must be a Man; in order to save men, He must be God. While His miracles and fulfillment of the prophecies prove His Divinity, the inspired genealogies prove His humanity. That the testimony shall be indubitable, it is given by two of our Lord's inspired biographers, which can not be a copy either of the other, because of their dissimilitude, running in opposite directions.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER IV.

### MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST BY MATTHEW, MARK, AND LUKE.

**Luke 3:1-2.** *“In the fifteenth year of the dominion of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod tetrarch of Galilee, and Philip his brother tetrarch of Iturea and the Trachonitis country, and Lysanias being tetrarch of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness.”* Luke gives us important specifications, stating that Tiberius was emperor of the Roman world; Pontius Pilate, governor of Judea; Herod — *i.e.*, Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great, who was on the throne of Judea when our Savior was born, and slew the infants — was tetrarch of Galilee. His jurisdiction also included Perea, east of the Jordan. As both of these countries were traversed by our Savior, it is important that they appear in this introductory. The Philip here mentioned, the brother of Herod, and governor of Iturea and Trachonitis, was not the one whose wife, Herodias, Herod Antipas took; but she was the wife of another Philip, who was a half-brother to Herod. Abilene, the tetrarchy of Lysanias, was a region of country in Anti-Lebanon, between Damascus and Heliopolis. We have Annas and Caiaphas here, both spoken of as high priests; and we see, in our Lord’s arraignment, He was brought before each one of them. The solution of the matter seems to be that the Roman authorities favored the high-priesthood of Annas, and the Jewish that of Caiaphas. After Zacharias and Elizabeth fled away from Jutta, near Bethlehem, into the wilderness of Judea, to protect their child from the cruelties of Herod, they returned no more during the minority of John. Consequently, upon reaching the age of thirty, he entered at once upon his ministry there in the desert (Matthew 3:1,2), *“preaching in the desert of Judea, and saying, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”* Mark 1:4, *“John came baptizing in the desert, and preaching the baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins.”* I here use the word “desert,” in lieu of “wilderness,” because the latter is utterly illusory to the American reader. By wilderness, in this country, we understand a wild region of country, overgrown with briars, brambles, and brush, as well as forest trees. That is not the Bible meaning of the word *eremos*, which means a region of country either destitute of water, because the rains do not fall on it, or at least partially destitute, because of insufficiency of rains. Four times have I traveled through the wilderness of Judea, where John the Baptist was brought up and did his first preaching. It is a desert, dry and unproductive, seldom seeing a green leaf, because of insufficient rains. Mosses, ferns, and nettles grow there, fed on by the goats, donkeys, and camels. In the deserts there are oases, like islands in the ocean, where springs of water so irrigate as to produce some sustenance for man and beast, and these are the places of habitation. John was brought up in that poor, wild, sterile desert of Judea, lying between Jerusalem and Bethlehem on the west, and the Dead Sea on the east.

Here we see that the burden of John’s Gospel is repentance unto the remission of sins. When man truly repents, God always forgives. John cried, with stentorian voice, *“Repent, because the kingdom of heaven is at hand;”* *i.e.*, Christ the King is at hand, who, of course, brings the kingdom with Him. Matthew 3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4. *“The voice of one roaring in the desert, Prepare ye the way of the Lord: make His paths straight.”* “Crying,” E.V. is “*boontos*,” from “*boo*,” the noise an ox makes

when he lows. Hence it means roaring like an ox. We see from these facts that John had a stalwart, robust constitution, having been brought up in the rough and tumble life of the desert, and now, thirty years old — *i.e.*, a grown young man — in his vigor, filled and flooded with the Holy Ghost, he throws his great mouth wide open, and roars, like an ox bawling. His message was simple and brief. He had but one theme, and that was repentance unto the remission of their sins, confirming their covenant by water baptism. His stentorian voice, and the burning truth, which leaped like forked lightnings from his lips, stir the people terrifically, as he assures them that the King of heaven is already on the earth, and the most important enterprise of life is to prepare to meet Him, which they can only do by repenting of all their sins, unto a conscious experimental remission, which he proposed to confirm by water baptism. A true repentance is accompanied by restitution, which undoes all the bad work of the former life, making all wrongs right so far as possible, God taking the will for the deed in case of impossibility. If you would get saved, the Lord must come into your heart. He will not travel over a crooked road. Hence you must make his paths straight — *i.e.*, make straight ways for the Lord to come into thy heart; *i.e.*, you must straighten out all of your own crooked ways — otherwise the Lord will never come into your heart, and you would better never have been born. John gave the trumpet no uncertain sound. He had both the thunder and the lightning — the former, to call attention and terrify; and the latter, to kill. O how the Lord needs such preachers now, to arouse a slumbering world and a dead Church from the lethargy of swift damnation!

**Luke 5,6.** *“Every valley shall be filled up, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low.”* True repentance brings the king, the queen, the nobleman, the great man, the bon tons of society, down low in the dust at the feet of Jesus, where they can get religion, and be humble enough to black their own shoes, cook, and wash dishes, delighted to wait on themselves and their friends, and live the life of the meek and lowly; while the wonderful redeeming grace of God lifts up beggars, drunkards, and harlots, and transforms the very *“filth and offscouring of the world”* into mighty men and saintly women, whose seraphic voices hold multitudes spellbound, and whose mighty works will glorify God in the day of eternity. *“Crooked things shall be straight, and rough places shall become the smooth ways, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”* These wonderful transformations of redeeming grace and sanctifying power, transforming the roughest reprobates into the most amiable saints, and the most stupid simpletons into fire-baptized witnesses for Jesus, the blackest debauchees into bloodwashed pilgrims for glory bound, tells the wonderful secret of the world’s evangelization. There is no other way to bring about this *summum desideratum*, for which every true heart sighs night and day. Hence it devolves on the holiness people of all lands to verify the Commission, and “preach the gospel to every Creature.” O what a glorious privilege, to be numbered with the Sacramental Army, going forth to conquer the world for Christ!

### JOHN’S LIVING.

The great reason why we can’t evangelize the world is, the puzzling problem of ministerial support. The Bible answers all questions and sweeps away all difficulties. Here we have John the Baptist, the greatest preacher the world saw in four thousand years, and a paragon for all others to imitate. See this wonderful prophet of the desert, with a huge stone for a pulpit, and an audience of ten thousand, standing on the burning sand, listening hour after hour, so utterly spellbound that the sun goes down before they are aware. The preacher has nothing on his body by way of apparel but

the coarse, shaggy, camel's-hair mantle, worn by the poorest people, and tied around his loins with a strap of rawhide; *i.e.*, actually clothed like a beggar. Now what about boarding the greatest preacher the world had ever seen? It is an unequivocal truth that he lived on the locusts, sweetened with the wild honey gathered from the rocks in the mountains, as the "wilderness [desert] of Judea" is one continuous bed of rugged, precipitous, cavernous, barren mountains, where very little rain falls in the winter, and none in the summer, producing very scanty vegetation but a short period in the year. I am aware that great efforts have been made to explain away the idea that John really ate the locusts. There is a tree in the Holy Land called the carob or horn tree, bearing fruit eaten by poor people, much resembling the American honey-locust. Many have claimed that this was the food of John the Baptist. Even my Arab guide pointed it out to me as the food which John ate. I must state here, once for all, that the theory is utterly untenable. The fruit of that tree is called *keration*. (Luke 15:16.) The prodigal son actually ate it, along with the hogs, which are very fond of it; while the word translated locusts, and specifying the food of John the Baptist, is *akris*, and has no meaning except the animal locust. Hence there is no dodging the issue without flatly contradicting the Word of God. So set it down as a matter of fact that John lived on locusts. This clear revelation of God's Word is abundantly corroborated by all the collateral facts and circumstances appertaining to the case.

(a) This day the locusts abounded in the very country where John lived thirty years and entered upon his wonderful ministry. I have seen them, in quantities so great that I could have filled a bushel basket in a diameter of a single rod.

(b) It is a well-known fact that the Bedouins, living in the desert now, eat the locusts, not simply in case of emergency, but they are very fond of them, regarding them as a luxury, and devouring them voraciously, preferring them cooked, with salt, but eating them unhesitatingly raw, with salt if they have it, and without it if they have it not. They traverse the desert, hunting them; fill great sacks with them; carry them on camels and donkeys to their tents, and feast like kings so long as the locusts last.

(c) The poor people in the desert, with whom John was brought up, habitually eat the locusts. Of course they invited their preacher to eat with them, giving him such as they had; *i.e.*, locusts sweetened with wild honey. My Arab guide, accompanying me when I saw the locusts in the "wilderness of Judea," and dismounted so as to enjoy a good look at them, as they manifested no disposition to get out of my way, told me that they taste much like fish, and are quite palatable. I took his word, and was satisfied without testing the matter. The locusts which I saw were very fine looking, and several times so large as the grasshoppers in the American deserts, of which the Indians are so fond.

(d) Good Lord, deliver us from criticizing Thy Word, and give us grace unhesitatingly to take the Bible as it says, and save us from all efforts to explain it away! John the Baptist had no money, and needed none.

We do not conclude from this that we should not give the preachers money, or anything else we have and they need. But we do conclude that the person who waits for money is out of God's order. John had none, and was not in a place to get any. Myriads are now called by the Holy Ghost under similar circumstances. O how they grieve the Spirit when they wait, year after year, for money to

defray traveling expenses, pay board, and purchase clothing and books, while millions are dropping into hell! I find men and women everywhere who confess that they are called by the Spirit, and are not in the work. An awful responsibility awaits them at the judgment bar. They should go, like John the Baptist, waiting for nothing. "The Lord will provide."

"It may not be my way,  
It may not be thy way;  
Yet, in His own way,  
The Lord will provide."

If I could be a thousand men, I have open doors enough for them all to enter. What about the support? That is already settled with a draft on heaven's bank.

Can we not have the faith of Sister Amelia Andrew, the wife of the sainted bishop? The Confederate War has swept over the country, a deluge of blood and fire, disorganizing Churches and revolutionizing society. General Lee has surrendered, and the war is over. Bishop Andrew, though now an octogenarian, is much concerned for the work in Texas, which has received no attention during the dark quadrennium.

He says to his sanctified Amelia, "O, how I'd like to go to Texas, and look after the interest of God's kingdom in the great 'Lone Star State!'"

"My dear, why do you not go?"

"No money."

"I can send you to the boat-landing on Tombighee River, in my carriage, without any money."

"But what can I do when I get there, with no money to defray my traveling expenses?"

"The Lord will provide," responded the sanctified wife.

The venerable bishop acquiesces, and goes away by faith alone, without a cent of money. On arrival at the boat-landing, he meets a steamboat captain, a dear old friend, who kindly invites him to accept a free ride to New Orleans. On arrival at New Orleans, he meets a sea captain, a precious old friend, so glad to see him, who invites him to enjoy a free ride on his ship to Galveston, Texas. O how the Texans are delighted to receive him! God blesses his ministry. He stays long, sees the glory of God, and returns to his Alabama home with money in his pocket.

But this was a good run of luck. O no! It was the good providence of God. I have seen it all my life. The difficulty of ministerial support is the devil's trump-card, in the game he is playing with the Church for the damnation of the world. The argument in the case of John the Baptist is unanswerable, covering all the ground, and applicable under all circumstances.

## JOHN'S INFLUENCE.

**Matthew 5:6, and Mark 1:5.** *“Then there went out unto him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the regions round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.”* Six millions of people are included in these countries. O the wonderful power and magnetism of John's preaching! He actually emptied the cities and populated the desert with thronging millions. From dewy morn till dusky eve, the rich on camels, the middle classes on donkeys, and the poor trudging on foot, literally crowd the way, off into the desert wild and drear, carrying their food and bedding, that they may spend a fortnight in the grandest camp-meeting that the world has seen in four thousand years. Water is very scarce in the *“wilderness [desert] of Judea.”* Traveling through it four times, I saw none but the Brook Cherith. I have heard of it, however, in other localities of that desert. Doubtless the scarcity of water to supply the multitudes and the animals they rode, as well as for baptismal demands, induced John to go away to the Jordan, only a dozen miles from this desert. The Jordan rises in great Mt. Hermon, ten thousand feet high, capped with a world of snows, all through the long summer incessantly melting, and keeping the river abundantly supplied with plenty of water for all purposes. Behold John, standing on the beautiful, spreading plain of the Jordan, surrounded by an audience of fifty thousand people, listening spellbound to his thunder peals, while the lightning of conviction is flashing from the skies, electrifying all hearts, with the gushing tears of a soul-crushing repentance. Moses was a great baptist, baptizing all the people at the tabernacle door upon the ratification of the Sinaitic Covenant. (Hebrews 9:10-12.) Judaism, with its vast and operose ritual, the Messianic hemisphere, offering millions of slain victims, typifying the atonement of Christ, while the spiritual was equally operose, emblemizing the work of the Holy Ghost by the innumerable watery ablutions for the purification from all sorts of ceremonial uncleanness. Hence the Johannic dispensation must be characterized by ceremonial purifications. At the present time, the Oriental religions gather by thousands upon the very spot where John baptized the Savior, the priest dipping the cross three times in the name of the Three Persons of the Trinity, they all simultaneously plunge themselves under the rolling wave of the holy Jordan three times; not doing this for baptism as the initiatory rite into the Church — this they have already received — but as a holy ablution to sanctify them, as they all believe the baptism of the Savior sanctified the Jordan. As John had neither the time nor the physical ability to handle his converts, they either plunged themselves under the rolling tide, or John, after the manner of the Jewish priest (and he was one), dipping the hyssop in the water, sprinkled the multitudes, somewhat as a Catholic priest nowadays sprinkles his audiences. The Jordan has plenty of water, and there is plenty in all parts of the earth. Be sure you satisfy your conscience as to this duty.

## JOHN REJECTS THE BON TONS OF THE CHURCH.

**Matthew 3:7,8; Luke 3:7,8.** Among the teeming myriads, here came the Pharisees, with their boasted orthodoxy; and the Sadducees, with their “higher criticism,” cutting up God's Word to suit their carnal natures, — both feeling sure that John will be glad to get them, and have their influence; as the Pharisees rule by their official power, and the Sadducees by their money. The trouble with great people is, they are too high for the graces of God, which, like water — their symbol — always flows down. John had the spiritual gift which we all need, and it is our privilege to have; *i.e.*, discernment of spirits. He saw they did not repent — and good reason: they thought they were all right. That is the way Satan fills up hell with the great people of the Church. They will not repent,

because they think they are Christians. While Satan has his arms round them, dragging them into hell, they think he is an angel of light, lifting them up to heaven. God is no respecter of persons. The king has to be saved just like the crank, and the proud society woman must get low down in the dust, and cry to God like the poor harlot, whose heart the lightning of conviction has torn all to pieces.

### THE ABRAHAMIC PATERNITY.

**Matthew 3:8-10**, and **Luke 3:8-10**. O the withering denunciations which leaped from the eloquent lips of John, like lightning from the skirts of the clouds! *“Ye generations of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of repentance; and do not think to say among yourselves, We have father Abraham: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. Already, indeed, the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree, not producing good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.”* The rank and file of fallen Judaism at that day, like the Moslem millions now, as well as the unbelieving Jews, were depending upon their Abrahamic lineage to save them, pursuant to the infallible promises of God to that patriarch and his seed, constituting the Abrahamic Covenant. This is all a fond delusion of the devil, a greased plank, over which he has slidden countless millions into hell. Under the Mohammedan priesthood the barbaric children of Abraham, through Ishmael and Esau, this day expect heaven pursuant to the Abrahamic Covenant. Really there is no Abrahamic Covenant, but it is simply the Covenant of Redemption, which God made with His Son, before Abel died, to save all the faithful in Christ. This identical covenant God reiterated and established with Abraham. (Galatians 3:16.) Hence the Abrahamic paternity is not carnal, but spiritual, including all the saved in Christ. (Galatians 3:7.) The viper of the Old World is the congener of the rattlesnake in this country. The serpent is the progeny of Satan, having been subsidized by him in the abduction of humanity, and anathematized by the Almighty (Genesis 3:14) in his transformation into the groveling, obnoxious, poisonous progeny of the archenemy. Stones here symbolize the flinty hearts of Satan-ridden reprobates, which the Holy Ghost is abundantly competent to transform into the sanctified children of heaven, thus making them the spiritual children of Abraham. The ax symbolizes Divine retribution; the tree, every human being. The whole human race are under a dispensation of grace, whether they have ever heard the gospel trumpet sound a solitary note. A momentous crisis came to the Jews with the ministry of John and his introduction of Jesus. Hitherto they could be saved by the Excarnate Christ, under the ministry of the law and the prophets. Now that He has come in human flesh, they must receive Him, or grieve away the Holy Spirit and take the fatal plunge into reprobacy and damnation. O what a flood-tide, led by those proud Church-rulers, to whom John was preaching this awfully plain truth, did reject Christ and take the horrific plunge into irretrievable woe!

### GENUINE FRUITS OF REPENTANCE.

**Luke 3:10-14**. *“The multitudes continued to ask him, saying, What then shall we do? Responding, he says to them: Let the one having two coats, give to him having none; and let the one having food do likewise.”* John was no shoddy preacher, daubing with untempered mortar. He preached a gospel which will stand the judgment fires. “Repentance unto remission of sins” was his constant theme. A Methodist circuit rider, on his first round, preached on repentance; on his second round, gave them repentance again; and so on till the year is half gone. The people, tired and bored, asked him:

“Brother, can you not give us a new subject? We are tired of the old one.” “O yes; but I am just waiting on you to repent, and can’t change my subject till you do.” He was right. All religion is shoddy and spurious without a true evangelical repentance, which is the only foundation. (Hebrews 6:1.) Now true repentance always makes people philanthropic — doing unto others as we would have them do unto us. When man repents, God always forgives, witnesses to it by His Spirit, and fills the heart with that love which will always do good to others. John’s doctrine is safe: *“Repentance unto remission of sins,”* R.V.; *i.e.*, you are to repent until you are forgiven, the Holy Spirit bearing witness. *“And the publicans came to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which has been appointed unto you.”* The publicans — *i.e.*, the Roman officers collecting the revenue — had general notoriety for fraudulent exactions of more than their due, and rascality in their dealings with the people. John knew that a true repentance would settle all this crooked business, and settle it forever, which is true. O how we all ought to thank God for honest sheriffs, as I believe they generally are in this country! In the Old World, especially Asia and Africa, public fraud prevails to an appalling extent; *e.g.*, in the corrupt Turkish Government, in the Holy Land this day, I am reliably informed that the sheriffry is sold to the highest bidder, the incumbent, instead of receiving remuneration from the Government, actually paying the Government for the privilege of serving in the office, and of course depending on theft and robbery for his entire remuneration. This is a simple item in the awful desolation which afflicts that land. Come, Lord, come quickly! Deliver Thy patrimony and a dying world from Satan’s power! *“And the soldiers continue to ask him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said to them, Oppress no one, defraud no one, and be content with your wages.”* Military despotisms have been the scourge of the world in all ages, but the true grace of God, superinducing repentance unto remission, transforms the panoplied soldier into a messenger of mercy. Captain Webb, of the British army, was the first Methodist preacher in America. William Penn, an officer in the British army, became one of the sweetest preachers, whose lovely character ever adorned the Friends’ Church.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER V.

### THE BAPTISM WHICH JESUS GIVES CONTRASTED WITH THAT OF JOHN.

**Matthew 3:2; Mark 1:7,8; Luke 3:16.** *“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but the One coming after me is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am unworthy to carry; He will baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire.”* John and all other authentic preachers of the gospel administer the symbolic baptism with water, not only in this way sealing the covenant of repentance, but beautifully typifying the real baptism which Jesus gives with the Holy Ghost. Whereas, Matthew and Mark give us here the statement *en hudati*, the dative of instrumentality, showing up the fact that John used the water in an instrumental way, Luke simply says *men hudati baptizo humas* — *i.e.*, *“I indeed baptize you with water”* — omitting the preposition *en*, as you see, confirming the fact that *hudati* is the dative of instrumentality, clearly and unequivocally involving the conclusion that John handled the water instead of the people. This preposition *en* in this passage — used by Matthew and Mark and omitted by Luke — has several meanings, among which “in” and “with” are most prominent. God forbid that any one should think I want to encourage controversy in a matter so small and unessential as the quantity of water and the manner of its application! You read the Word of the Lord, and be sure you satisfy your conscience. (1 Peter 3:21.) We also have, in certain localities, a controversy involving the fire phase of our Savior’s baptism. Here, with the inspired Greek under my eye, I see that Matthew and Luke give us, *“He will baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire,”* while Mark omits the fire altogether, simply stating, *“He will baptize you with the Holy Ghost,”* clearly involving the conclusion that the fire normally inheres in the Holy Spirit — *i.e.*, is inseparable from Him: “God is a consuming fire.” (Hebrews 12:18.) You know the Holy Ghost is none other than very and eternal God; therefore, when you receive the Holy Ghost, you receive the baptism of fire:

“For He is like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap.” (Malachi 3:2.)

Thus, fire and soap being the great purifiers, are here associated, denotative of that wonderful purification which the Holy Spirit always executes when you receive Him into your hearts. The teaching of a fiery baptism, separate and distinct from that of the Holy Spirit, antagonizes Ephesians 4:3, where Paul certifies that there is one, and only one, baptism in the gracious economy, the fire not being a separate and distinct baptism, but a concomitant of the Spirit; while the ordinance with water is not intrinsically a baptism, but symbolically typifies the real baptism of the Holy Spirit administered by our Savior. In connection with these facts, it is pertinent to consider 2 Timothy 1:6:

“On account of which cause, I remind thee to revive and refire the gracious gift of God which is in thee for the laying on of my hands.”

The English word here, “stir up,” is *anazopurein*, which is a compound from *ana*, re; *zao*, life; *pur*, fire. Hence you see that the plain meaning of this triple Greek compound is “revive” and “refire.” We receive spiritual life in regeneration, but frequently need reviving, and will till this

mortal puts on immortality. We receive the fire of the Holy Ghost in sanctification, which should be revived and renewed, ever and anon, throughout our pilgrimage. You take food to revive your physical life, as otherwise it would evanesce, and you would die. You frequently put on fuel, stir up, and renew the fire, as otherwise it would go out, and you would freeze out in the North-pole atmosphere of this wintry world. Let us not get wise above what is written; but take the plain Word of the Lord in every case, and you will keep out of these tangles, in which Satan is so fond of perplexing the people of God. There is no danger of getting too much life and too much fire if you get it from God. Man has fox-fire, the devil has hell-fire, and God has heavenly-fire. The Holy Ghost is God. If you seek a baptismal fire separate from the Spirit, you open the door for men and devils to deceive you with their “strange fire,” for which Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, fell dead when they offered it to the Lord. So beware, lest you offer strange fire to the Lord, and fall dead spiritually, as we seriously fear some are doing. If you seek any blessing separate from God, you run headlong into fanaticism. Feel perfectly free to get revived and fired all you possibly can, but get it all from God, remembering, amid all that God says, there is but one baptism. (Ephesians 5:4.)

**Matthew 3:12; Luke 3:7.** *“Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purify His threshing-floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”* In the blessed Word, God has given us “line upon line and precept upon precept” — knowing and pitying our stupidity, He leaves us without excuse. The preceding verse is a beautiful elucidation of the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire.

Another dangerous heresy has been deduced from these Scriptures; *i.e.*, that the baptism of fire here means the baptism of the wicked with hell-fire, corroborating this conclusion by the burning up of the chaff with unquenchable fire. Now, to the law and the testimony: *“He will baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire.”* *Humas*, “you,” in this statement of John, is the second person, plural number, and absolutely inseparable. The inspired Baptist here tells us most unequivocally that the very same, identical people shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire. There are no sinners addressed in this pronoun, from the simple fact that John applies it exclusively to the people whom he baptized with water, and you know that he rejected even the great preachers and high officials of the Church who did not repent. Again, John refused to count the repentance valid till they reached the remission of sins. So, you may depend on it, there is no flaw in John’s theology. The people here addressed had repented unto the remission of their sins. These same people, whom John had baptized with water, he positively certifies, Jesus will baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire. Hence they are all Christians, and simply receive at the hands of the Savior the sanctifying baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. You must remember that our Savior’s disciples were in this crowd, coming to Him through the ministry of John, who actually received this baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire on the day of Pentecost. “Threshing-floor” is the visible Church, which underwent a thorough purgation in the ministry of Christ, the Omnipotent Fan coming like a tornado from heaven, and blowing out of it the multitudes who lack the grit and grace to stand the truth, not even sparing the leading clergy and officials, cutting down the membership to one hundred and twenty who received the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire at Pentecost. While “Church” means the “called out,” having a subjective signification, the kingdom of God is objective. Hence they are called out in order that they may enter the kingdom here symbolized by “garner” — *i.e.*, heaven’s granary in this world receiving nothing but the pure wheat, ready for the Lord’s mill, and a grand festival among angels and archangels; while our Lord literally burns up the chaff with unquenchable fire, not meaning the wicked, who

burn forever and are never exterminated, but the depravity in the hearts of God's true people, which it is the province of a sanctified Church, through the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire, to utterly exterminate. Now, remember that Jesus does not gather the wicked into the Church, but the regenerated — *i.e.*, the wheat — in order that He may sanctify them wholly preparatory for immortal citizenship in heaven. This chaff has not an individuality separate from the wheat, hence it can not be applied to the wicked. You can not raise a crop of wheat without chaff. But you can raise a crop of chaff without wheat, as sometimes the grain is blighted, and it all turns out to be chaff and straw. As this world is full of depravity, you can have plenty of it without grace, but you can not, *ab initio*, have grace without depravity, which God will remove in due time, utterly consuming it with the fire of the Holy Ghost, graciously exterminating it, world without end.

**Luke 3:18.** *“Therefore, indeed, also exhorting them as to many other things, he continued to preach the gospel to the people.”* We find that John was not only a wonderful preacher, but a powerful exhorter. Let me remind you all to seek the grace of exhortation. Preaching is generic, including exhortation and teaching — the former, to convict the wicked and bring them to God; and the latter, to edify the saints and establish them in holiness.

### THE BAPTISM OF JESUS.

**Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-23.** *“Then Jesus comes from Galilee unto Jordan to John, to be baptized by him.”* Our Lord was six months younger than John, and hence He awaits the arrival of His majority — thirty years — before He will enter upon His official Messiahship. As John was sent from God to introduce Him to the world, he is the man to inaugurate Him into His ministry. *“John continued to decline Him, saying, I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou unto me?”* John was no exception to the human race, born with a depraved heart, which must be sanctified with a baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. Of course, I am satisfied that John already enjoyed the sanctified experience, like his prophetic predecessors, in advance of his dispensation. We are to understand this, as a statement of a great generic truth, that not only John, but every other human being, needs the baptism of Jesus to sanctify him for heaven. *“And Jesus responding, said, Permit it now; for thus it is proper for us to fulfill all righteousness; then he permits Him.”* Our Savior is Prophet, Priest, and King. The Levitical law positively required the high priest to have the anointing oil poured on his head, as Moses in the case of Aaron, before he is permitted to enter upon the duties and privileges of his office. This is the righteousness here pertinent; as our Savior never needed righteousness in the sense of justification, we are only permitted to give the word a ceremonial signification, complying with Old Testament law. *“And Jesus, having been baptized, came up immediately from the water;”* E.V., “out of the water,” is corrected in R.V., rendering it “from the water,” as *apo* does not mean “out of,” but only “from.” *“And, behold, the heavens were opened, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and coming upon Him.”* The Holy Ghost here assumes His symbolic form of a dove, becoming visible to mortal eyes. The cooing of the dove thrills the heart with melancholy, reminding us of the Holy Spirit, grieved over the wickedness of the world, and bewailing the hardness of the human heart. It is a significant fact, as is positively affirmed, that you can not make the dove angry; but you can grieve him so he will leave you and never return. *“Behold, a voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am delighted.”* O what a popular sensation is aroused when John, on tiptoe, cries aloud, *“Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!”* thus boldly notifying the multitude that the

wonderful Shiloh of prophecy, Redeemer of Israel, whom he has all the time been preaching to them, is already on the ground. All eyes are turned in utter bewilderment, looking about, and many shouting, "Where is He?" The multitude spontaneously crowd together, as if moved by sacred awe, forming a long aisle, through which the Prince of glory, walking down, meets their preacher, demanding baptism at his hands. Ten thousand eyes are now centered on this wonderful scene, the Prince of glory meeting the prophet of the wilderness at the baptismal waters. Luke says, "*Jesus, having been baptized, and while praying, the heaven is opened;*" simultaneously the Divine voice roaring out from the blue dome of heaven, "*This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased!*" O what a stir throughout the multitude! Some say, "*It is thunder, ringing down from a cloudless sky.*" Others say, "*That is impossible; but an angel spoke to Him.*" Now, all eyes are strained and looking after Him. But He is gone, led by the Spirit away into the wilderness, to be tempted by the devil.

### THE TEMPTATION.

**Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12,13; Luke 4:1-13.** Matthew says that "*He was led by the Spirit into the desert, to be tempted by the devil.*" Mark says: "*The Spirit immediately impels Him away into the desert. And He was there in the desert forty days, being tempted by the devil; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels continued to minister unto Him.*" Luke says: "*Jesus, full of the Holy Ghost, went away from the Jordan; and was led by the Spirit into the desert, being tempted by the devil forty days. And He ate nothing during those days; and they being completed, He was afterward hungry.*" I have gazed much upon the Mount of Temptation, lifting his bleak, rugged summit immediately west of Old Jericho, whose walls fell down responsive to the shouts of Israel, and about twenty miles from the ford of the Jordan where Jesus was baptized. It is a bleak, desolate, rugged, dreary region, inhabited only by wild beasts and robbers, unless the Bedouin, in his wanderings, here pitches his tent. The fact that Matthew and Luke positively state that He became hungry after the forty days, and Mark certifies that the angels were ministering unto Him throughout these forty days, involves the conclusion that He was supernaturally kept, in a state of spiritual rhapsody, like Moses and Elijah, during the forty days, so that He did not realize the sensation of hunger until after their expiration; and the ministering angels retiring, the natural, physical condition returns, and with it an intense sensation of hunger, as He had been forty days entirely without physical nutriment. Mark and Luke both state that the temptation was going on during the forty days, while Matthew states that after the forty days, the tempter coming to Him, said, "*If Thou art the Son of God, say that these stones may become bread.*" From these concurrent testimonies by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, we conclude that during the forty days He was undergoing a temptation by the combined minions of perdition, and the powers of darkness turned loose against Him; meanwhile, the angels are present with Him, and through their sympathetic and consolatory ministrations, He enjoys a heavenly prelibation to such an extent as to fill His spirit with an unearthly rapture, the indwelling Holy Spirit, whom He had received when He descended on Him at the Jordan, so thrilling Him with heavenly ecstasy as to supersede and hold in suspense the physical appetites, so as to suspend the sensation of hunger during the forty days of angelic ministration. During this period, while evidently the powers of darkness are turned loose against Him, and doubtless the monsters of the pit swarm around Him, their hideous howling commingling with the growl and the roar of the wild beasts, yet, amid all, He enjoys a glorious victory, so that His spiritual rapture enables Him so to triumph over the physical destitution and depletion as to utterly suspend the sensation of hunger. At the expiration of

forty days, the angels having retreated away, and the roar of the hell-hounds, the hissing of reptiles, and the ferocity of the wild beasts all combine to augment the dismal solitude and the awful peril of the situation, suddenly King Diabolus, having vacated his ebony throne in the Pandemonium, and assuming the form of a great and mighty man, like Napoleon Bonaparte or Alexander the Great, dressed in all the pompous costume of royal majesty, approaches Him, and enters upon a personal interview. The ministering angels have retreated away; His spiritual rhapsody no longer holding in suspense the physical functions, a fearful collapse of exhausted nature now supervenes, the intensity of His hunger, after a fast of forty days, being utterly inconceivable. Here we see Jesus at the greatest possible disadvantage.

(a) He is in the enemy's territory, surrounded by desolation and horror; the ferocious wild beasts ready to devour Him, and more ferocious demons and hellish monsters on all sides, every angel having retreated away, and the bright glory of heaven mantled in dark eclipse, with the awful intensity of hunger, super induced by a forty days' fast.

(b) In addition to all this, the prince of the Pandemonium, with the cultured intelligence of an archangel, now meets Him, with a personal appeal for a moment to lay under contribution His omnipotence, in order to satisfy His poor body with bread.

We must remember that, as Jesus was free from infirmity and from all physical ailment, which so frequently, in our case, suspends the appetite for food, His hunger subsequently to the expiration of the forty days and the angelic ministry was unutterably intense. While the Divinity of Christ could not be tempted, His humanity was tempted, in all the three great departments constituent to our being; *i.e.*, the physical, spiritual, and intellectual.

(c) You observe from the inspired narrative that Satan made his first assault against the physical nature of Jesus, availing himself of the most superlative case of intensified hunger in order to induce Him to satisfy it by resorting to a miracle, which would be out of harmony with the Divine economy, because in probationary life we must be true to providence as well as grace, the former appertaining to the body, and the latter the soul; hence it was pertinent that Jesus, like every other man, should await the providence of God to satisfy His hunger.

In the case of Adam the First, Satan began with the physical, as now in the temptation of Jesus, it so turned out that he economized two thirds of his ammunition, achieving a complete victory in his first assault; *i.e.*, slaying Adam on the first round. If he had failed in the temptation of his body with the fruit, he would then have proceeded to carry the war with all possible expedition into the dominion of spirit and intellect. Not so in the case of Adam the Second; there, Satan used all of his ammunition and lost it all.

(d) You see here the simple method by which Jesus defeated the devil:

*“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth through the mouth of God.”*

He is our Infallible Example, who alone has a right to teach the Christian soldier how to fight. If we will follow His example, we are certain to always have victory. You may fight the devil with your creed, and he will run over you rough-shod. Fight him with the plain, simple Word of God, and, like the Salvation Army song,

“If you want to see the devil run,  
Always shoot him with a gospel gun.”

(e) “Then the devil taketh Him into the holy city, and places Him on a pinnacle of the temple, and says to Him, if Thou art the Son of God, cast Thyself down; for it has been written, He gives His angels charge over Thee, to hear Thee up, lest Thou dash Thy foot against a stone.” (Psalm 91:2)

Satan is a great Scriptorian, always ready to quote it; but never giving it correctly. So you find Satan’s preachers, always twisting and turning the Word of the Lord to suit their creed. In this quotation, Diabolus very adroitly omits the clause, “In all Thy ways.” We can perfectly rely upon the keeping power of God, so long as we are in the Divine order; but when we get out, then the devil drops a lasso round our necks. In this assault — *i.e.*, Satan’s second campaign against Jesus — he directs his ammunition against the citadel of His human spirit, the receptacle of Divine grace and keeping-power through faith. Consequently the enemy makes a gattling-gun attack on His faith, using all of his chicanery to vitiate it, by turning it into presumption, which is the devil’s counterfeit for faith. O how Satan manipulates to supply the pulpits and the pews with this counterfeit at which is but a trap-door to let them fall into hell! The people believe their creed and support their Church, and presume that they are Christians, while experimentally ignorant of that faith which alone can move the mountains of sin out of their hearts. Again, Jesus uses the Sword of the Spirit, responding to Satan,

“Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.” (Deuteronomy 6:16.)

This consummates the second victory which Jesus won in that memorable wilderness battle. The holy city here, as revealed by Luke, was Jerusalem, whose magnificent temple, so splendidly and artistically built and repaired by Herod the Great, had several lofty towers, to the highest of which Satan now leads Jesus, and having Him now in position and plight to leap away and take chances on the stone pavement several hundred feet below, he makes the bold challenge. It is about twenty-five miles away from the Mount of Temptation in Judea to Jerusalem. I trow, Satan, in gaudy sacerdotal robes, or perhaps royal regalia, in human incarnation, actually became the concomitant of Jesus for a period of time not here specified, but beginning at the end of the forty days.

(f) “*Again, Satan takes Him into an exceedingly high mountain, and shows Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of the same, and says to Him, All these will I give unto Thee if, falling down, You may worship before me.*” Luke states, “*Because it has been given unto me, and I give it to whom I wish.*”

Here we see that Satan resorts to a positive and unequivocal falsehood; though he has a false claim on the world, and a dominion over it which he has usurped, and for the time being — for reasons not well known to us, but doubtless lying deep in the probationary economy — he is

permitted, in a sense, to reign over the world during the present evil age. (2 Corinthians 4:4.) Where E.V. represents God as calling the devil the “god of this world,” the true reading is the “god of this age,” as the world is to be gloriously redeemed after the Satanic age has come to an end. This is peculiar to Satan’s method of lying, especially to the people of God. While it is a substantial falsehood, it exhibits a phase of truth, in the simple fact of his usurped and temporarily permitted dominion over this world, which, even in the most plausible aspect, is subordinated to the sovereign, discriminating providence of God. We have no specification here as to what mountain this was. Mt. Olivet, east of Jerusalem, is the highest in all Southern Palestine. Mt. Pisgah, in full view, in the Land of Moab, east of the Dead Sea, is the highest in all that region. Mt. Hermon, two hundred miles north, ten thousand feet high, is actually the highest in all the Land of Canaan. As Luke says Satan “showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time,” he must have resorted to a panorama, in which he exhibited before the eye of Jesus all the time-honored kingdoms and mighty empires possessing and ruling the world at that time. This temptation was an assault against the powerful, unfallen intellect of Jesus. The greatest minds the ages have ever known, have all been embargoed, darkened, and paralyzed by the fall. As an Intellectualist, the Man Jesus stands alone in the world. Do you not see in His life how all the genius and the learning of the world and the fallen Church were laid under contribution to confuse, tangle up, and perplex Him? In all the histories of the ages, no other absolutely imperturbable man has ever been found. All the sophistry of priests, theologians, and politicians combined, signally failed in any case to embarrass or confuse Him. This final assault of the enemy, on the line of human ambition, appeals to His wonderful intellect. Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander, and Julius Cæsar had deluged the world in blood, in order to conquer and possess it. These were all powerful intellectualists. The greater the intellect, the more incorrigible the ambition. The Greek *proskuneses* not only means worship, in the sense of adoration offered to a god, but it means that homage and civility which we extend to persons of royal rank and dignity.

(g) You must remember that Satan before his fall was a great archangel, one of the brightest that ever shone around the effulgent Throne.

The Son of God is uncreated and co-eternal with the Father. Doubtless, during this interview, which was probably more prolix than we generally think, Satan adverted to their old friendship in the regions of fadeless bliss, and perhaps appealed to His sympathies; as amid those terrible troubles which had already resulted in his ejection from heaven, he had resorted to an effort to enlarge his dominions by the accession of this world to the contracted regions of woe; and now, “O Son of God, that You have come to dispute my claim to the planet Earth, I propose to compromise the whole matter by surrendering up to You the sole and exclusive dominion of this controverted territory, with the understanding that You shall have it and reign over it forever, while I will reign in the dominion of Hades; meanwhile, I shall enjoin but one condition on Your part, and that is, that You and I shall be friends again, as in bygone ages in celestial worlds.” Of course, any complicity with Satan would have abducted the humanity from the Divinity, which, in that case, would have returned back to heaven, the plan of salvation collapsing forever. *“Then Jesus says to him, Get behind Me, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord God; Him only shalt thou serve.”* (Deuteronomy 6:13.) “Then Satan leaves Him,” as Luke says, *“for a season.”*

*“Behold, the angels came and continued to minister unto Him.”* Here you see that a single stroke with the Sword of the Spirit repels Satan, and consummates the victory. There is now good reason for his final and utter withdrawal from the battle-field. Every army retreats the moment their ammunition is all expended. As Satan had no possible access to the Divinity, he could only work on the humanity, which, pursuant to the Divine similitude in which man was created, has but three entities — *i.e.*, the physical, spiritual, and intellectual. When Satan had turned all the battering rams of hell against these three towers of Mansoul, and in every case suffered signal defeat, he could do nothing more than retreat from the field, crestfallen and hopelessly defeated. What a decisive contrast with his first battle against humanity in Eden, where he saved two thirds of his ammunition, Adam falling on the first assault! But now, in his campaign against Adam the Second, you see he used all of his ammunition, and lost it all. Glorious victory for you and me, and all who, through evangelical repentance and humble faith, will receive it!

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER VI.

### JOHN'S GOSPEL.

You observe, thus far, not a word has been said about John's Gospel. Matthew, Mark, and Luke all wrote historically. Consequently, they go much together, most felicitously corroborating one another. Matthew wrote for the Jews, fifteen years after the ascension of our Lord; Luke, for the Greeks, twenty-five years after the ascension; and Mark, for the Romans, thirty years after the ascension. John wrote for the Christians, not so much historically as doctrinally, experimentally, and spiritually, about sixty-five years after the ascension of our Lord. A.D. 95, Domitian, the Roman emperor, had John thrown into a caldron of boiling oil at Rome, to make soap of him. In the providence of God, his work wasn't done. Consequently he did not saponify, but enjoyed the hot bath, floundering round and shouting "Hallelujah!" Then the emperor had him taken out, and banished to the Isle of Patmos, in the Ægean Sea. I sailed by it the other day in my detour from the Holy Land. At that time it was so infected with malaria as to be uninhabitable, and was used by the Roman emperors as a place of banishment for the worst criminals. His custodians arriving with him late Saturday afternoon, and throwing him out on the bleak rocks of that desolate shore, hastened away, leaving him alone, with the bones of his predecessors bleaching in the moonlight on those barren heights. The man of God prays all night. Next morning, which was Sunday (Revelation 1), the glorified Savior comes down from heaven amid lightning, thunders, and splendid corruscations, bringing heaven with Him; throws open the door, and invites His beloved apostle to look in, contemplate the wonders of the latter day, and write them to the people.

John spent the last years of his long and eventful life at Ephesus, the metropolis of Asia Minor, where history keeps track of him till A.D. 101, when, losing sight of him, we have no record of his death, Justin Martyr and Irenæus, who lived in the second century, and John Wesley, as well as many others, believing that he was translated to heaven alive, like Enoch and Elijah.

### THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

**John 1:1-5.** *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* "Word" means revelation. The incarnation of Christ is the greatest revelation of God ever made to man. Hence, Word here simply means the Incarnate God. *"The same was in the beginning with God."* Hence, you see that the Son, like the Father, is uncreated, never having had a beginning, and can never have an end. *"All things were made by Him, and without Him there was nothing that was made."* You see from this, not only the co-eternity of the Son with the Father, but that He actually created all things; *i.e.*, the Divinity becomes creative in the Second Person.

(Colossians 1)

"In Him was life, and the life was the light of men; and the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not."

Darkness is the concomitant of death, and light that of life.

## TESTIMONY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

**John 1:6-51.** *“There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, that he may testify concerning the Light, in order that all may believe through him. He was not that Light, but that he may testify concerning that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.”* John the Baptist clearly and powerfully preached the gracious possibility of universal salvation, involving the saving efficiency of Christ from the foundation of the world. Darkness here means sin, and light means grace. Hence, you see that the true, saving grace of God in Christ is actually given to every human being, of all ages and nations, Pagan, Mohammedan, Papist, and Protestant. Christ died for all, and by His Spirit shines on all. Hence, none will have an excuse for their own damnation, as all they have to do is to walk in the light God gives, and in that case, “the blood cleanses from all sin.” (1 John 1:7) Hence, people are only lost for rejecting the light, as God only requires all to be true to the light and the grace given.

*“He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.”* The Savior was unknown, misunderstood, falsely accused, unjustly condemned, and cruelly put to death. Two hundred millions of martyrs have added their blood to His for the same reason; *i.e.*, because the world knew them not. Jesus and the martyrs suffered condemnation and death as malefactors, while they were the best people in the world. Such will always be the case till our Lord comes in His glory. The people of this wicked world will never understand God’s true people. When they understand and appreciate you, an awful suspicion arises that you have gotten wrong. *“He came unto His own, and His own received Him not;”* *i.e.*, He came to the Jews, His own consanguinity, and given to Him in an everlasting covenant. Because they were carnal and worldly, they misunderstood, disowned, and killed Him. If He had been carnal, like themselves, they would have received Him all right, as they did several false Christs within forty years after His crucifixion. But in that case, He could not have saved them, but must have failed, like all of those false Christs.

*“But so many as received Him, unto them gave He the privilege to become the children of God, to them that believe on His name, who were born, not of bloods, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”* In this wonderful and beautiful passage, setting forth so clearly and gloriously the great fundamental doctrine of regeneration, the word translated “power” in E.V. is *exousia*, signifying, not only power, but more properly, privilege, right, authority. The word most prevalent in the New Testament and translated “power” is *dunamis* — *i.e.*, dynamite, an infinitely stronger word than *exousia*. It means the very omnipotence of the Almighty; whereas, *exousia* here means the right or the privilege of every one that receives Christ to become the children of God through faith, salvation being optionary with the recipient; *i.e.*, you can all believe and be saved, or disbelieve and be lost. The specification here given on the negative side is exceedingly valuable, as it is God’s warning against Satan’s delusion. “Not from bloods.” Until the date of this Scripture, all Church services consisted in bloody sacrifices. Hence the conclusion, that no one can be regenerated by water baptism, the eucharist, good works, or ritual ceremonies of any kind; nor “from the will of the flesh” — *i.e.*, you can not receive the Divine birth by the carnal will. *“The Ethiopian can not change his skin, nor the leopard his spots.”* Wonderful force in this Scripture! The black man may exercise all the power of his will, and put forth the greatest possible resolution to become a white

man, and yet his skin remains black as an Ethiopian sky ever tanned. This certifies the utter impossibility of regeneration superinduced by everything we can possibly do. *“Nor from the will of man.”* The pope of Rome, and all the interceding priests on the face of the whole earth, and you may add to them all the apostles, if they were risen from the dead, can not possibly impart life to the dead soul of the sinner. As inspired John here well says, none but God can possibly do this work. When God calls you from death to life, He always reveals to you the glorious fact. How few, comparatively, have the witness of the Spirit that they are born of God!

*“The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten with the Father, full of grace and truth.”* As depravity, in all its forms and phases, is antithetical to grace, it is impossible for any one to be full of the latter and contain any of the former. A bucket is not full of water if it has a quantity of rock or dirt at the bottom. Hence, we see this statement annihilates a dogma somewhat now afloat; *i.e.*, that Jesus had depravity, having inherited it from His mother.

“For we have not a High Priest who is not able to sympathize with our infirmities; He also having been tempted in all things, in like manner, without sin.” (Hebrews 4:15.)

This Scripture sweeps all controversy from the field. They argue that the fact of His temptation is a proof that He had depravity. You see this Scripture covers all the ground, though He was tempted in all things as we are, yet He was without sin. The Word of the Lord is the end of all appeal. Consequently this question is settled. Sin and error are Siamese twins, which always live and die together. Jesus was full of grace; therefore He had no sin, and no depravity, which is but another word for sin. Neither did He have any infirmity, which is the normal effect of sin. He was full of truth; therefore He had no error.

*“John testifies concerning Him, and cried, saying, This is He of whom I spoke; He that cometh after me was preferred before me, because He was before me.”* While John the Baptist stood before the people as the forerunner and introducer of Jesus, he is very emphatic in his testimony to His uncreated eternity. *“Of His fullness, we all receive grace upon grace,”* or grace in addition to grace; *i.e.*, the grace of sanctification in addition to the grace of justification. *“Because the law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”* The law never had any power to save, but only to convict, and thus prepare people for the saving grace and truth which God gave in Christ.

*“No one hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, being in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.”* Did not Moses stand face to face with God on Mt. Sinai? Did not the Lord visit Abraham’s tent at Mamre, and eat with him? These, like the “Form of the Fourth,” seen by Nebuchadnezzar in the fiery furnace, were all manifestations of Christ, the Jehovah of the Old Testament being identical with the Christ of the New, and the incarnate manifestations to Moses, Abraham, and Nebuchadnezzar being adumbrations of His first coming, like His appearing to Paul near Damascus and in the temple at Jerusalem, anticipatory of His second advent.

**Verses 19-22.** Here John relates the history of the Jews sending priests and Levites to John the Baptist, to interview him directly with reference to a problem much agitated among them; the learned clergy and theologians standing on the desert sand hours together, straining their eyes, looking over

the long rolls of prophecies, diagnosing and investigating the phenomena of John's ministry, and trying to settle the question whether he is the Christ; but finally sending their delegation to interrogate him in presence of the multitude, "*Art thou the Christ or do we look for another?*" John the Baptist puts a final quietus to all their inquiry by a candid and unequivocal negation, responding,

"I am not the Christ, but the voice of one roaring in the desert, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, as Isaiah the prophet said." (Isaiah 40:3.)

Here, as recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, John the Baptist certifies constantly and repeatedly that his office is to roar out the warning to the people to repent and make straight ways to the Lord; — *i.e.*, get rid of all their crookedness, so the Lord can come into their hearts.

**Verse 28.** "*These things took place in Bethany, beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.*" E.V. has here Bethabara, which is incorrect; Bethany, which means "house of dates," being the correct reading. "The town of Bethany was ten miles up the Jordan in Perea, on the other side, the Baptist having moved thither since our Savior's baptism."

**Verse 29.** "*The following day, John sees Jesus coming to him, and says, Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.*" This occurred the day following the transactions of the preceding verses, and after Jesus had been baptized and gone away into the wilderness, spent the forty days and more, and has now returned to the scene of John's baptism, ten miles up the river, and on the other side, at the town Bethany. O that all the world would take this good, solid, Baptist doctrine! John the Baptist preaches no shoddy gospel, but entire sanctification all the time. He does not represent Jesus as suppressing sin or conquering it, and leaving it, like a rattlesnake, coiled up, and hidden in the deep subterranean regions of the fallen soul; but he describes Him as taking it away, world without end. The world is full of counterfeit salvation, multitudes standing in the pulpit and preaching a counterfeit Savior, who does not take away sin. Remember that sin here is in the singular number, not meaning simply sinful acts, but the sin principle; *i.e.*, the body of sin, root, branch, germ, and seed, the entire entity, without any exception. It is the sin peculiar to the world — *i.e.*, the depravity — which, though operating in different ways, is identical with all races, colors, sexes, and nationalities. If you could leap through the earth, and jump out in China, you would find sin there just what it is here. Jesus came, not to wash, dress, educate, and control it, but to take it away. This is simple, unmistakable gospel truth, preached by holy John the Baptist. Good Lord, help us all to receive it and preach it to others! O how few this day stand up and cry, "*Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!*" Here, again, John asserts the priority of Jesus.

**Verse 31.** "*And I did not know Him; but in order that He may be manifest to Israel, on this account I came baptizing with water. John testified, saying, That I saw the Spirit descending like a dove from heaven, and He remained on Him. I did not know Him, but the One sending me to baptize with water, He said to me, On whom you may see the Spirit descending and abiding on Him, the same is the One baptizing with the Holy Ghost. And I have seen, and I have testified that He is the Son of God.*" We are not to conclude from these statements that John was utterly unacquainted with Jesus before the baptism, as they were related by consanguinity and the families acquainted. But God had revealed to John that he should have the indisputable confirmation of our Lord's identity by the descension of the Holy Ghost on Him and His abiding there, thus revealing to John, and all the

people, that He is truly the Christ, the only One in all the universe who baptizes with the Holy Ghost; John, His precursor and introducer, faithfully preparing the people by not only preaching to them a genuine, evangelical repentance, which was to be perseveringly perpetuated “unto remission of sins,” but it was his office also to symbolize the baptism of Jesus with the Holy Ghost and fire by the baptism with water. You see here in verse 34 that John, like Mark, omits the fire in the record, Matthew and Luke giving it, illustrating and confirming the fact, as attested by Paul (Ephesians 5:4) — *i.e.*, the unity of baptism — the fire being a concomitant of the Spirit, and the water the symbol.

## DISCIPLES OF JESUS.

**Verses 35-43.** “*On the following day, John again stood, and two of His disciples, and looking upon Jesus walking about, says, Behold the Lamb of God. And the two disciples heard Him speaking, and follow Jesus. And Jesus turning, and seeing them following, says to them, What are you seeking? And they said to Him, Master, which is interpreted Teacher, where dwellest Thou? And He says to them, Come and see, And they came and saw where He dwelleth, and they abode with Him that day; it was about the tenth hour;*” *i.e.*, four o’clock in the afternoon. The Apostle John, the author of this Gospel, is too modest to call his own name, always alluding to himself in some indirect way. Lord, help all of us preachers to profit by John’s modesty! How many are not satisfied with their names, but want D.D. and LL.D. added to them! Here, John specifies that Andrew was one of those two disciples, but does not give the name of the other, there being no doubt but he himself is the other one; and I believe, as these two were the first disciples of Jesus, that John himself led the way, being actually the first of all; as you see here they are falling in line, and following Jesus, at the instigation of John the Baptist, who, in the Divine economy, taught the primary department in the school of Christ, thus preparing His disciples for Him, as the disciples of Christ, including the apostles, were first the disciples of John the Baptist, this explaining the reason why none of the original apostles were baptized with water after they followed Jesus, they all having received the baptism of John.

**Verse 40.** “*Come and see.*” When John and Andrew, pursuant to the diagnosis of John the Baptist, said to Jesus, “*Master, where dwellest Thou?*” (“Where is Your lodging, that we may appoint a time to come and see You?”) Jesus said, “*Come now.*” Lord, help us to profit by Thy example, and quit all of this buncombe of appointing an hour to call! Now is the accepted time. Tomorrow may never come. We should be always ready for the Lord’s work. “The King’s business requires haste.” The sainted Miller Willis, during a fashionable, worldly, pseudo-revival, while the pastor, in a very formalistic way, was announcing from the pulpit that penitents could call upon him at his office at a stated hour, or, if they preferred it, call upon one of his official members at another hour, startled the whole congregation by a loud, sudden exclamation, “The Lord Jesus Christ is ready at all hours!” so that no burdened soul need wait a moment. Immediately after John and Andrew followed Jesus, the latter finds his brother Simon and notifies him: “*We have found the Messiah, which is interpreted Christ; and he led him to Jesus. And Jesus looking on him said, Thou art Simon, the son of Jonah; but thou shalt be called Cephas, which is interpreted Peter.*” Cephas means rock in Hebrew, and Peter in Greek. The moment Jesus saw Simon, He looked down into the deep interior of his heart, and saw his wonderful solidity and stability, and consequently named him Cephas in Hebrew and Peter in Greek, which means rock. Did not Peter show much vacillation and instability? He did, till the sanctifying fires of the Holy Ghost, which he received at Pentecost, burnt out the vast

accumulations of debris with which hereditary depravity had encumbered him. After this glorious work, the rock was clearly revealed to all who knew him. He was steadfast as Mt. Zion, and inflexible under the combined powers of earth and hell. He lived a hero and died a martyr. So it is with all of us; like Peter, we are unstable as water and unsubstantial as mud till we receive the sanctifying fires of Pentecost.

**Verse 44.** *“On the following day [i.e., the day after Jesus called Peter], He finds Philip, and says to him, Follow Me. Philip was from Bethsaida, from the city of Andrew and Peter.”* Bethsaida stood on the northwest coast of the Galilean Sea, at a great spring, which issues from the base of a mountain contiguous to a beautiful, fertile plain, quite convenient for the site of the city and its gardens. Jesus pronounced an awful woe against it (Matthew 11:21), which has been signally fulfilled in its utter desolation, with scarcely a vestige to mark its situation, and many centuries without an inhabitant. As the situation is beautiful and the water excellent, it is a favorite camping place. Our party stopped and lunched there. This city was the home of Peter and Andrew and Philip. However, in the days of our Savior, Peter was a married man, having left the home of his nativity and settled in Capernaum, which became the home of Jesus after His rejection at Nazareth, and, as we believe, making the house of Peter His home. *“Philip finds Nathanael, and said to him, We have found Him of whom Moses and the prophets in the law did write, Jesus the Son of Joseph, who is from Nazareth. And Nathanael said to him, What good is able to be from Nazareth? Philip says to him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, says concerning him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile.”* Nathanael is a Hebrew word, and means “Given of God.” We here see that he enjoyed the sanctified experience, being a guileless Israelite, confirmatory of the conclusion that he was saved from all depravity; i.e., sanctified wholly. *“Nathanael says to Him, Whence do you know me? Jesus responded and said to him, Before Philip called you, I saw you while you were under the fig-tree. Nathanael responded and says to Him, Master, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel. Jesus responded and said to him, Because I said to thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, dost thou believe? Thou shalt see greater things than these And He says to him, Truly, truly, I say unto you, You shall see heaven opened, and the angels ascending and descending upon the Son of man.”* Here we find that Nathanael was thoroughly convinced of the Christhood of Jesus because He saw him under the fig-tree. He was there alone, sequestered and hidden, and Jesus was nowhere about there, but away beyond great mountains and obstructions, so he knew that He had no chance to see him; hence, when He told him that He saw him, he knew that He was omnipresent, and believed in His Divinity unhesitatingly. Here our Savior alludes to the ladder which Jacob saw in his night vision, while sleeping on Mt. Bethel. Hence we see that Jacob’s ladder, connecting earth and heaven, was a type of Christ, who is the Mediator between God and man, bridging the intervening chasm, and bringing heaven and earth into intercommunication. “The Son of man” has a deep signification, and is quite a favorite phrase in the diction of our Savior. Humanity, before the fall, enjoyed membership in the Divine family. In the fall, spiritual life was forfeited and superseded by death. Therefore the wicked are denominated the children of the devil (John 8:44), spiritual life and Divine sonship only being regained by the regeneration of the Holy Ghost. Now, since Jesus is the only unfallen Son of Adam, He, in an exclusive and peculiar sense, is truly the Son of man.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE MARRIAGE AT CANA OF GALILEE.

**John 2:1-12.** *“On the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.”* This marriage was the third day after His departure from Bethany, the scene of John’s baptism, that He may return to Nazareth, His home, accompanied by these four disciples — *i.e.*, John, Andrew, Peter, and Philip. Cana is about five miles east of Nazareth. At present it is said to contain one thousand inhabitants. A Latin monastery occupies the site of the house of the groom, and a convent that of the bride, who were united in matrimony on the occasion here mentioned. We visited the spring from which they say the water was carried which Jesus turned into wine. This is more than likely, as it is the only one in the city, all depending on it for water.

*“Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. And the wine failing, the mother of Jesus says to Him, They have no wine. Jesus says to her, What is that to Me and to thee, O woman? for My hour has not yet come.”* Here we see that Jesus does not on this occasion recognize the motherhood of Mary; but He uses a word which, in the East, denotes great respect. The truth of the matter is, Jesus is the common Savior of the whole world, and the time had come when that fact was to be recognized, His family relation no longer separating Him from the human race in its universal integrity. Hence He was no longer to be regarded as the Son of Joseph and Mary, but as the “Son of man” — *i.e.*, the Son of the whole human race, and the common Savior of the whole world. *“And His mother says to the servants, Whatsoever He may say to you, this do,”* thus illustrating the fact that she had a Divine inkling that something wonderful was coming.

*“And there were six stone waterpots sitting by, according to the purification of the Jews, containing about two or three firkins.”* We constantly see the women walking to and from the fountain, carrying on their heads these great earthen vessels, filled with water, wine, or some other fluid. They exhibit great dexterity, walking about with them sitting on their heads, unsupported by hand. These six vessels would contain an enormous quantity of water, which was a guarantee against counterfeit; *i.e.*, if the quantity had been very small, legerdemain might have been brought to bear in playing off a delusion. But with so great a quantity, it was impossible for a stratagem to have been manipulated. *“Jesus says to them, Fill the vessels with water. And they filled them unto the brim; and He says to them, Now draw out, and carry it to the master of ceremonies; and they brought it to him. And when the master of ceremonies tasted the water which had been made wine, and did not know whence it is, but the servants who had drawn the water knew, the master of ceremonies calls the groom, and says to him, Every man first sets forth the good wine, and when they may have drunken it, then the inferior; but you have reserved the good wine until now.”* There was no possible room for any fraud in this miracle, as the whole crowd saw the water brought; and the same waiters who carried it from the fountain, immediately drew out the very same water and found it to be wine, the wedding boss witnessing to the fact. In this great and indubitable miracle, we have a magnificent illustration of regeneration and sanctification: the water uniformly symbolizing life, and the wine the Holy Ghost. When chemistry was unknown and alcohol accidentally discovered, they thought the

change was due to spiritual influence, and consequently designated the alcoholized beverages as spirits. In the regenerated experience, we receive the water of life, and in sanctification, the new wine of the kingdom. In this illustrative miracle the Savior really teaches us how to get sanctified. Let regenerated people make the complete consecration, and then turn over their experiences to the Omnipotent Sanctifier, implicitly trusting Him to give them their sanctified experience. Then follows testimony, in which the seeker dares, with his eye of faith on the infallible promises, to testify to the experience, the leader of the meeting — symbolized by the chief ruler in this wedding festival — being the judge as to the genuineness of the experience. This problem is very beautiful, and if you will test it, will furnish its own solution in your happy experience of entire sanctification. All that these servants knew about it was the simple fact that they had put the water in the vessels. Now when wine is called for, they draw it out, and bring it to the master of ceremonies, having nothing to do with the wonderful change from water to wine, Jesus having effected the paradoxical transition. So you can not cleanse your own heart; but trusting the Omnipotent Jesus to do it, perfecting your faith by your testimony, you can rise and witness to the fact, the Omnipotent Sanctifier, pursuant to His own infallible promises, simultaneously, and in a manner to you indissolubly mysterious, can and will change the water of regeneration into the wine of sanctification. Glory to His name for His unspeakable grace!

*“Jesus did this beginning of the miracles in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed on Him.”* Already He had called four disciples, whom afterward, with eight others, He commissioned as apostles. *“After this, He and His mother and His brothers and His disciples went down to Capernaum, and He abode there not many days.”* The brothers of Jesus were Simon, Judas (*i.e.*, Jude), James, and Joses, of course younger than Himself, as He was the first-born. The Roman Catholics claim that the brothers and sisters of Jesus were children of Joseph by a former marriage. Mere guess work, as we have no assurance that Joseph had ever been married before. We see here that they abode at Capernaum but a short time, because the Passover was nigh, and Jesus must hasten away to Jerusalem, in order to enter upon His official Messiahship.

## PURIFICATION OF THE TEMPLE.

**John 2:13-25.** *“And the Passover of the Jews was nigh, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.”* The Passover began April 14th, through all the ages of Israel, celebrating the exodus out of Egypt, when the destroying angel slew the first-born in every Egyptian home, and passed over the houses of Israel because he saw the blood of the slain lamb — which vividly typified the blood of Christ shed on Calvary — sprinkled on the doorposts and lintels of their houses. As this great Passover festival, to which the myriads of Israel gathered annually and spent eight days, typified the atonement Christ came into the world to make, it plays a most conspicuous part in our Lord’s ministry, marking the inauguration and the conclusion; as our Savior’s ministry occupied three years, beginning at a Passover, and winding up at another, and including two in the interim. You will find the division of our Lord’s ministry by these four Passovers a great convenience in studying the Gospels. The prophets had predicted that Christ would come at once to the temple, and purify it at the very beginning of His ministry (Malachi 3:2,3); as you remember, He told His mother at Cana that His time to preach and work miracles had not yet come, contemplating entering upon His ministry at the Passover, which speedily followed.

14. *“And He found in the temple those selling oxen, sheep, and doves, and the money-changers sitting.”* Many and magnificent buildings at that time stood on the great and beautiful Temple Campus, containing thirty-five acres, in order to accommodate the thousands of Israel assembling at their great periodical feasts. These pollutions were not in the temple proper, but in those other buildings which stood on the whole ground, and were consequently included in the dedication to God. The end in view was to keep on hand a supply of sacrificial animals, ready to sell to the pilgrims, who came from afar to worship the God of Israel, the more wealthy purchasing an ox; the middling class, a sheep; and the poor, a dove. As all these foreign pilgrims brought Greek and Roman money, or that of some other nation, they had to exchange it for the Jewish half-shekel, the temple offering prescribed in the law, foreign money being rejected.

*“Having made a whip of rushes, He cast them all out of the temple, both sheep and oxen, and poured out the money of the exchangers, and overturned their tables, and said to those selling the doves, Take these away; do not make the house of My Father a house of merchandise.”* The conclusion that He used the whip on the people is not sustained by the original. The long, nimble rushes were lying in quantities on the floor for the animals to lie down on. Taking some of these, He plaited them into a whip, and drove all the animals out, pouring out the money of the exchangers and turning over their tables. We see here a very obvious manifestation of His Divinity, as no other man in the world, ranking simply as a private volunteer, would have been permitted thus to interfere with all of those people in their business transactions. A Divine awe settling down on them held them, in a semi-paralytic suspense; astounded and lost in wonder, they are incompetent to interfere and prevent the expurgation which they see so strangely going on around them, through the intervention of this total stranger, their own acquiescence and non-intervention turning out to them even a greater surprise than the astounding invasion of the uninitiated Young Man, who is thus paradoxically exercising so much authority. “His disciples remembered that it has been written, The zeal of Thine house doth eat me up.” (Psalm 64:9.) *Oikos* here means, not simply house, but family. Jesus is our Paragon. He was literally carried away and consumed with zeal for the promotion of God’s family in the earth. Lord, help us to walk in Thy footprints, sacrificing everything, “spending and being spent,” in the interest of God’s family and for the upbuilding of His kingdom in every nation!

*“Then the Jews responded and said to Him, What sign do you show us, that You do these things? Jesus responded and said to them, Destroy this temple, and I will build it in three days.”* The authority by which He was purifying the temple was simply the fact of His Christhood, as that temple did not belong to man, but to God alone. Therefore His Messiahship, identifying Him with very and eternal God, actually gave Him personal charge of God’s house. Now, in view of the fact that His Christhood was confirmed and demonstrated by His death and resurrection, He points them to these great salient facts of His ministry as a demonstrative proof of His right to control the temple. *“Then the Jews said, Forty and six years was this temple being built, and dost Thou rear it up in three days? But He spoke concerning the temple of His body. Then when He was risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this, and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus said.”* The Jews had even a superstitious veneration for the temple, running into idolatry in that way. Consequently they held this declaration against Him, clamoring over it ever and anon, and even founding on it a charge of blasphemy, for which, having hounded Him the three years of His ministry, on the day of His death they hideously howled for His blood; yet all this time having stupidly misapprehended His words, applying them to the temple edifice, while He meant the temple

of His body, thus beautifully affirming His resurrection as the indubitable confirmation of His Messiahship. At that time, forty-six years had rolled away while building the beautiful and magnificent temple, under the patronage of King Herod, who ascended the throne sixty-eight years previously to that date, amid great political perturbations and much opposition, which, under Roman support, he, in a few years, exterminated in blood, thus centralizing and consolidating his kingdom, he devotes the balance of his thirty-eight years on the throne to rebuilding the temple in greater magnificence than any of his predecessors since Solomon. At the time of this record the temple was not yet entirely finished. So they continued the work, reaching its final completion A.D. 64. In A.D. 66, Gallus Cestius, the Roman general, laid siege to Jerusalem at the head of a great army, followed, in 68, by the Emperor Vespasian, who continued it two years, being succeeded by his son, the Emperor Titus, who consummated the destruction of the temple, the city, and the desolation of the land, in A.D. 73. As Jesus predicted that one stone would not be left on another, the Roman soldiers utterly demolished it, taking up the very foundation, hunting for the hidden treasures.

*“And when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed on His name, seeing His miracles which He was doing. But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knows all people, and He has no need that any one would witness concerning man; for He knew what was in man.”* He is our only Exemplar. From His verdict and procedure here, we should learn a most important lesson; *i.e.*, never to put confidence in a human being. They are all fallible, mutinous, and unreliable. More human woe, wreck, disappointment, and ruin come in that way than any other. We should have no faith in man, but all in God, who never disappoints. Here our Savior inculcates a glorious lesson on entire sanctification, which throws a total eclipse over all the world, so we wear it like a loose garment, ready to drop it off at a moment’s warning; meanwhile, the true and genuine experience of full salvation sinks us away into God.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER VIII.

### REGENERATION THE GREAT SINE QUA NON.

**John 3:1-21.** *“There was a man of the Pharisees, whose name was Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; the same came to Him by night, and said, Master, we know that Thou hast come a Teacher from God; for no one is able to do these miracles, which Thou art doing, unless God may be with him.”* On the road from Jerusalem to Joppa, I passed through the city of Ramlah, now quite prosperous, with a population of eleven thousand, and a large element of Jews and Christians. It is on the Mediterranean plain, about fifteen miles from the coast. My dragoman told me that the current tradition points out that city as the home of Nicodemus. He was not only a learned Jewish rabbi, but, as we see here, he was a ruler — *i.e.*, a member of the Sanhedrin. Now that Jesus has properly entered upon His official Messiahship, the purification of the temple being His initiatory administration, He is preaching incessantly, and doing many mighty works, of which only a small proportion have been put on record by the four inspired penmen. It has been the privilege of Nicodemus, at this early period of His ministry, to hear Him preach and witness His mighty works. That he is already under a powerful conviction is very clear from his admissions, and I have no doubt but he is this day a member of the blood-washed throng, though we have no direct record of his conversion. Learning, wealth, office, social position, ecclesiastical emolument, all conspired against him. However, when our Savior is on trial he ventures to speak in His vindication. Finally when He was cruelly murdered, Nicodemus gets bold, comes to the front, side by side with his rabbinical comrade, Joseph of Arimathea, and takes a most active part in the interment, furnishing a hundred pounds of valuable Oriental aromatics for the embalmment of the mutilated body of Jesus, thus boldly confessing Him in His death.

*“Jesus responded and said to him, Truly, truly, I say unto thee, Unless any one may be born from above, he is not able to see the kingdom of God.”* “Man” in E.V. is not a correct translation of the indefinite pronoun *tis*, which means every human being that ever has had an existence or ever will. Thus it is a sweeping and unequivocal abnegation of every human soul from the kingdom of God without this new birth from heaven. The statement of our Savior is absolute and unexceptional. “Again” is not a good translation of another, which simply means from above, affirming the absolute necessity of receiving Divine life from God out of heaven, administered by the Holy Spirit. Without this great intervention of the Almighty, heavenly hope is but the *ignis fatuus*,

“Whose delusive ray  
Lights up unreal worlds,  
And glows but to betray.”

It is only this heavenly nature that can even discern the kingdom of God. Hence, unregenerate people are utterly ignorant of God’s kingdom, having all sorts of fantastical ideas about it, thinking it is the visible Church, or ecclesiastical rites and ceremonies, or something else, manipulated by Satan to augment the delusion and certify the damnation. “Again” in E.V. has led to the conclusion

that the spiritual birth must always follow the natural, which is incorrect, and in that case would consign to perdition infants dying unborn; whereas the true reading, “from above,” is as clear in case of prenatal regeneration as the postnatal.

“In Adam all die, but in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:22),

involves the conclusion that every human being died in Adam, and shall be made alive in Christ. When God created Adam, He created the whole human race, as there never was but one creation, Eve being no exception to the rule, but a transformation from Adam’s rib. The theology frequently preached from popular pulpits, that infants do not need regeneration, and may be so brought up that they will go to heaven without it, is not only flatly contradictory of the Savior, but it throws wide open the Church door, and invites the devil to come in and run it. All human generation is in Adam the First, and consequently locked fast in spiritual death. “Christ tasted death for every one.” (Hebrews 2:9.) The original, *pantos*, means every human being that ever has existed or ever will. You see in the Gospels of our Savior how He not only recognizes unsinning infants as members of His kingdom, but even holds them up for model members. How is this? Whereas the whole human race fell in Adam, the propagation of the species on earth has always been in Adam the First. Adam the Second is the antithesis of Adam the First, the two running as parallel lines throughout the Bible, both representing the whole human race — the latter in grace, and the former in sin. Now, remember this grace is Omnipotent, always taking effect when not resisted by human agency. Before the age of accountability, the will has no power to resist the saving grace of God. As this grace is for “every one,” so soon as soul and body united constitute personality, this redeeming grace normally prevails, administering life to the dead soul. Of course, this is prenatal. Consequently, by the grace of God in Christ, and not by original purity, every human being is born in the kingdom of God, and only gets out by sinning out, as we see in the case of the prodigal son; both being born in the Father’s house — *i.e.*, the kingdom of God — the younger sinning out, and the elder staying in. This explains our Savior’s treatment of infants as model members of His kingdom. God’s time for people to be converted is before they are old enough to commit sin, as He has certainly made no provision for sin; and in that case, infantile justification would never be forfeited. Then in what would the conversion consist? Of just what it means — *i.e.*, a turning — as regeneration does not take away depravity, that being the prerogative of sanctification. Consequently all infants are born with depravity in their hearts, which does not condemn them, as it was transmitted to them without their volition; but it turns their faces away from God and predisposes them to go into sin. So here is the infant, born in the kingdom, with his face away from God. If let alone, when it reaches responsibility and starts off in its own way, it will go directly off, out of the kingdom, like the prodigal son. We should tell it about God, and its need of a Savior, and preach Jesus to it; get it convicted and genuinely converted — *i.e.*, get it turned round and introduced to the Savior, that it may get acquainted with Him, receive the brightness of His countenance and the redeeming benedictions of His grace, and showers of blessing falling upon its infantile heart, rivers of love springing up; it will then spontaneously start out in the track of Jesus, heaven-born, and heaven-bound. Every adult sinner is a backslider, like the prodigal son at the hog-pen, and the thing for him to do is to come back to his Father’s house, where he was born.

*“Nicodemus says to Him, How is a man able to be born when he is old? Is he able to enter the second time into his mother’s womb and be born?”* While Nicodemus was a great, learned, and

influential preacher in the true Church of God, he was utterly ignorant of first principles; not only unsanctified, but unconverted. Doubtless his succession in the present age ought to be named “Legion.” The great trouble with Nicodemus was his materialistic doctrine, thinking that the new birth had something to do with his body. His successors this day identify water baptism with the new birth, thus making it a physical rather than a spiritual transaction. They certainly ought to profit by the mistake of Nicodemus, which our Savior so faithfully and decisively corrected. *“And Jesus responded, Truly, truly, I say unto you, Unless any one is born of water and the Spirit, he is not able to enter into the kingdom of God.”* The Holy Spirit is emblemized frequently in the Bible by water, wind, fire, and oil. That water in this passage symbolizes the Spirit, and typically includes water baptism, we do not call in question; but exhort all of our readers to fully satisfy their conscience on that subject. (1 Peter 3:21.) But that our Savior here means literal water, unless it be in this mere symbolic sense, just read on into the next chapter, where there is so much more said about water; the woman at Jacob’s Well thinking He meant the water in the well, but Jesus Himself correcting her misapprehension by stating that it is the water of life about which He is speaking, — and you have the problem solved. Every one must be born of this living water and the Holy Spirit.

*“That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”* The word here translated flesh, in E.V., is *sarx*, which is antithetical, not to the human spirit, but to the Holy Spirit, *soma* being antithetical to the human spirit. Hence *sarx* in this verse is a spirituality homogeneous to Satan, and dominating the body of fallen humanity. Perhaps this verse would be better understood if it should read:

“That which is born of depravity is depravity, and that which is born of the flesh is flesh.” “To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God: for it is not able to be. Those who are in the flesh are not able to please God.” (Romans 8:6-8)

In these forcible Pauline Scriptures, the word in each verse translated “carnally,” “carnal,” and “flesh,” is this word *sarx* in the text. Hence, you see it means carnality, the carnal mind, depravity, original sin. In the fall, the Holy Spirit evacuated the human spirit, Satan succeeding Him by his own nature — *i.e.*, depravity. Hence the virus of the original sin is transmitted in all human generation, just like the poison of the rattlesnake; pursuant to which recognized fact, John the Baptist and Jesus call unregenerate humanity, “Generations of vipers.” It is impossible for the stream to rise above the fountain; therefore fallen humanity can never regain an inch of lost ground without a merciful Divine intervention.

*“Marvel not that I said unto thee, It behooveth you to be born from above.”* This sentence follows a logical sequence from the preceding. All the culture of the universities, all the genius of the ages, and the royal blood of a thousand dynasties, can never add an iota of spiritual amelioration to fallen humanity. You dress up the gorilla like a king, and still he is a groveling animal. The Divine nature must come down from heaven, by the intervention of the Holy Spirit, and enter the fallen human spirit, in order to elevation a solitary iota. “You must be born from above” carries with it an emphasis, veracity, and force which earth and hell combined can never gainsay. Theologians may dodge it, ignore it, and explain it away; but still it stands, like a Popocatepeti, between every soul and heaven.

*“The Spirit breathes wheresoever He willeth; and you hear His voice, but you do not know whence He cometh, and whither He goeth; so is every one who has been born of the Spirit.”* It is really astounding that the E.V. has “wind” in this passage. It is really inconsistent with itself, translating *pneuma* “wind” at the beginning of the verse, and “Spirit” at the conclusion. The English reader is doubtless surprised to learn that the very same word, *pneuma*, at the beginning of this verse, translated “wind,” also occurs at the end, where it is translated “Spirit.” Now, bear in mind that *pneuma* is the word constantly occurring for the Holy Spirit, and so translated; while *anemos* is the word for wind, but does not here occur. It is a significant fact that, while *pneuma* occurs so very frequently in the New Testament, being the word constantly used to reveal the Holy Spirit, this is the only passage in which the E.V. translates it “wind.” In connection with this exalted theme, so astounding and paradoxical to Nicodemus, with all his learning, our Savior in this verse beautifully alludes to the Divine sovereignty: The Spirit breathes where He willeth; *i.e.*, this heavenly birth, which is indispensable to salvation, is wrought by the Holy Spirit in the human spirit pursuant to His own sovereign will, of course responsive to the human conditions of repentance and faith in case of adults, but indiscriminately to all human spirits the moment personality obtains, responsive to the universal redemption of Christ. The reason why the world goes headlong to hell, is because they do not hear the voice of God, whose solution is the fact that dead men do not hear anything, and all are spiritually dead till quickened into life by the breath of the Almighty, when the Holy Spirit breathes into the human spirit the Divine life. *“And thou hearest His voice.”* The moment the Divine life enters the human spirit, the senses of the soul — *i.e.*, sight, hearing, smelling, taste, and feeling — spring into life, so that you actually hear the voice of God. *“But thou dost not know whence He cometh nor whither He goeth;”* *i.e.*, no one can possibly know the mysterious movings of the Holy Spirit. Frequently we see many at an altar, seeking: here one uses, with shining face, and testifies to the life that comes down from God out of heaven; while others, here and there, remain dumb.

*“Nicodemus answered and said to Him, How are these things able to be? Jesus responded and said to him, Art thou a teacher of Israel, and knowest not these things? Truly, truly, I say unto thee, We speak what we know, and testify what we have seen, and you receive not our witness.”* Jesus here severely, though lovingly, reprimands Nicodemus for his gross ignorance of the most prominent truth in the Bible, especially considering the fact that he was a teacher in Israel. When I crossed the Atlantic Ocean the second time, I became well acquainted with a very learned, highly cultured, genteel Roman Catholic priest, who, having been liberally educated in America, had spent four years in the Vatican College at Rome, and much reminded me of Nicodemus, as we conversed freely on Scripture, religion, and Christian experience, and he expressed inutterable astonishment when I told him that there was something in regeneration besides water baptism. Doubtless Nicodemus has multitudes of gospel sons, in the ministry of the present day, as ignorant of regeneration as he was — to their shame and confusion, because they are teachers in Israel, standing in the pulpits to teach the people what they themselves know not.

*“If I told you things upon the earth, and you believed not, how will you believe if I tell you things in heaven?”* Regeneration for sinners and sanctification for Christians are mighty and mysterious works of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, but to be received in this life; *i.e.*, they are performed, not in heaven, but upon the earth. This entire life — probationary is but a beginning of an immortal career, that shall sweep on, accumulating new beauty, luster, and glory through the flight of eternal ages. Now see the force of Our Savior’s castigatory response to Nicodemus, *“If you,*

*a prominent teacher in Israel, can not understand the works which the Holy Ghost performs in our hearts while in this life; if you thus stagger when I tell you the stupendous miracle of the new birth, — what would you do if I should relate to you the ineffable glories which await the saints in coming eternity?”* While Nicodemus was sincere and honest, as well as learned and influential, you see plainly he was hardly an abecedarian in spiritual things. Lord, help us all to profit by his deficiencies and mistakes!

*“No one hath ascended up into heaven, but He who came down from heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven.”* While the humanity of Jesus was on earth and not in heaven, His Divinity was omnipresent, in heaven, on earth, and in all worlds. *“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, even so does it behoove the Son of man to be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on Him may not perish, but have eternal life.”* Jesus makes this allusion to the manner of His death here, in the beginning of His ministry, reiterating it ever and anon throughout. If the Jews had put Him to death, He would have been stoned, this being the penalty for blasphemy, of which they falsely accused Him, crucifixion being a Roman punishment, never used among the Jews. Here we have the illustrative portion of our Savior’s wonderful sermon to the Jewish rabbi; having first given him the truth directly and categorically, He now enforces it by a familiar item in Jewish history, utilizing it to pour on His learned auditor floods of light, of which he had never dreamed. Three things God never created — *i.e.*, a devil, a sinner, and a snake. Originally, all created intelligences throughout the celestial universe were evidently on probation. In many of the heavenly worlds that probation has already expired, our earth rapidly hastening to the end. These angels, created in the different celestial worlds, “did not all keep their first estate” (Jude 6), Lucifer — *i.e.*, lightbearer — one of the brightest and greatest of all the archangels, leading off the apostasy (Isaiah 14:12): “How thou art fallen, O Lucifer, the son of the morning” — *i.e.*, the morning star, which is the meaning of Lucifer. John says “his tail” — *i.e.*, his influence drew after him one-third of the heavenly host. (Revelation 12) God created man upright — *i.e.*, perfect [Hebrew] — but unfortunately abducted by Satan, who is fallen Lucifer, he sinned, thus forfeiting his probation, and becoming a sinner. The popular idea that a big snake tempted Mother Eve is not only unscriptural, but revoltingly unreasonable. Conceive a huge old boa-constrictor climbing up one of the trees of Paradise, projecting his monstrous head down over a limb, Opening wide his horrific mouth, and entering into a social conversation with Mother Eye, pure, holy, innocent, and sinless! How many of you believe in the feasibility of such a transaction? I, for one, am satisfied she would have turned her back and run like a race-horse.

The Bible says the *nahash* beguiled her. Now what was this *nahash*? We are informed that he was the most subtle — *i.e.*, the shrewdest, the most intelligent of all the animal creation, consequently ranking second only to man, who stood at the head of the zoological column. Many of the biped species at the present day, walking on two feet, using their hands, much resembling human beings; and even many of the quadrupeds (*i.e.*, the horse, the dog, the elephant) exhibit a degree of intelligence decidedly superior to that of the serpent. I doubt not but the *nahash* which tempted humanity was a biped, and, as you see from the Bible, having the power of oral communication. Consequently it was no surprise to Mother Eve when he spoke to her. You see the result of his subordination by Satan, and utilization as his medium in the abduction and ruin of the human race, resulted in his own transformation, pursuant to the righteous anathema which God pronounced on him because of the mischief he had done:

“Because thou hast done this, on thy stomach thou shalt go, and dust shalt thou eat, all the days of thy life; and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” (Genesis 3:14,15.)

Methinks I see the *nahash*, a biped, the intermediate link between man and the animal creation, standing up in the presence of Jehovah, receiving the awful, withering woe, justly following his unfortunate instrumentality in human ruin as a righteous retribution. Meanwhile his awful doom is ringing out on the balmy breezes of Eden; the transformation supervenes, his neck and head assuming a fearful elongation and a hideous deformity, his arms absorbed and disappearing, his posterior members consolidated; the long, hideous body, followed by the obnoxious, wriggling tail, tumbling prostrate on the ground, and running away amid the roses and lilies with horrific hissing and hideous coils, now and henceforth the detestable, venomous serpent, having inherited the narcotic poison from the devil, which he transmits through his cruel teeth, slaying his victims, and vividly emblemizing the awful power and effect of sin.

When Israel refused to pass into Canaan from Kadesh-barnea, the nigh way, and, following the advice of the cowardly spies, turned back into the dreary desert of Arabia, God put them under an awful discipline, sending among them destroying angels, wasting pestilences, and fiery serpents. They have pitched their tents on the desert sands. The whole earth seems to be full of snakes, which did not appear on the surface; but having their dens in the sands, and caverns, which everywhere abound, they issue from the earth, come into the tents, wound the people, and they are dying on all sides. The word “fiery” means the awful narcotic poison which these horrific reptiles imparted to their victims. The ordeal is terrible. They die too fast to bury them. The camp is heaped with mountains of the dead. Moses, who carries the millions of Israel on his breast, falling on his knees, intercedes with Jehovah in importunate pleading in behalf of the dying. The Divine response orders him to manufacture a brazen serpent, after the most perfect similitude to these awful, poisonous reptiles; suspending it high on a pole, elevated high on the pinnacle of the tabernacle, in the center of the encampment; simultaneously sending swift couriers throughout all the tribes of Israel, with trumpet voices, calling aloud to all, to notify the wounded and the dying to behold the brazen serpent, shining in the splendid air of that cloudless, Oriental sky, where the brand new brazen serpent so radiated the splendors of an Arabian sun as to literally shine with an effulgence dazzling the eye. To the unutterable joy of the hosts, every one that looks is instantaneously healed. The result is, a wave of joyous enthusiasm rolls over the vast encampment, as a thousand people in a minute, from different directions, are gloriously healed by a look at the bright brazen serpent, suspended high in the air. These all run precipitately every way, shouting the good tidings. A few minutes have flown; ten thousand witnesses are running at race-horse speed through the encampment, shouting uproariously the glad tidings. O, what a happy exchange of the mournful wails which a few minutes ago rang in lugubrious howls throughout the vast encampment! Now they’re exchanged for shouts of joy, everywhere roaring and reverberating in the air. O, how beautiful, how grand the similitude we here find, and how gloriously illustrating the mighty work of our Christ! You see, the brazen serpent was made in the form of the fiery serpents. Do you not know that we all became a race of snakes in the fall? Jesus and John the Baptist called us generations of vipers. You have heard the old maxim, “It takes a rogue to catch a rogue.” Our Savior took the form of us snakes, so He could run into all the snake holes and dens in all this wicked world, and save them. In order to reach us poor,

lost sinners, it was necessary that He be a Man, looking like one of us, and actually mistaken by the preachers in His day and killed for a bad man.

You see in that notable wilderness transaction a wonderful exemplification of the primary truth appertaining to the plan of salvation:

(a) That brazen serpent was perfectly clean and pure.

Though having the very form and looking like the poisonous serpents which infested the camp, it had not a single atom of poison in it. Hence it follows, as a legitimate sequence, that though Jesus had the form and looked just like the people of this world, who are all full of sin — *i.e.*, totally depraved — He had not a particle of sin nor infirmity of any kind, but was perfectly pure and sinless.

(b) As those bitten Israelites were poisoned throughout (which you know to be true, as poison is a blood trouble, and by the circulation carried into all parts of the organism; the blood being the constituent element, every tissue of the constitution is contaminated); hence it follows that the virus of inbred sin — *i.e.*, the poison of the serpent has reached every fiber of the spiritual organism.

See those Israelites had nothing to do but look on the brazen serpent, and they were all healed. Therefore you see that all the sinners of this world have to do is to believe on Jesus; as here you see that our Savior makes faith, on our part, synonymous with the looking in the case of those dying Hebrews.

*“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him may not perish, but have eternal life.”* You see in this beautiful passage, enunciated by our Savior, that the love of the Father is the great, fundamental fact underlying the plan of salvation. “He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not, has already been condemned, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God.” O how grandly, indubitably, and irrefutably does Jesus preach salvation through faith alone! Of course, this is the same gospel which John the Baptist preached from the standpoint of repentance, which must, in every case, precede justifying faith, as it is the only believing ground John the Baptist preached repentance, thus establishing the people on believing ground, and thus preparing them to receive the gospel of Jesus by faith. Here our Savior certifies that He did not come to condemn the world, but to save it. Where there is sin, condemnation is an inevitable concomitant. Now what is the attitude of the Churches at the present day, both Papal and Protestant? We are sad to say that, with few exceptions, they preach a sinning religion, which must keep their members under perpetual condemnation. The consequence is, they preach a Christ of condemnation, inculcating the dogma that He saves them in their sins. Do you not know that this is untrue, and that a Christ of condemnation it not the Christ of the Bible, but an idolatrous Christ? Because the Christ of the Bible, as He here says, did not come to condemn, but to save, and actually does save, all who come unto God through Him. Hence, in order to worship the Christ of the Bible, you must receive Him in the capacity of Savior from all your sins, as any other acceptation would not apply to the true Christ of the New Testament at all, but simply implicates you in idolatry, as the worshiper of a false Christ.

19. *“This is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light; for their deeds are evil, and every one doing evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, in order that his works may be convicted; he that doeth the truth cometh to the light, in order that his works may be made manifest that they have been wrought in God.”* Right here, Satan so adroitly manipulates to deceive the multiplied millions of candid worshipers in all sexes and nationalities, a person has to have a deep conviction, like David, who said, *“The sorrows of death encompassed me, and the pains of hell got hold of me,”* before he will make up his mind to come to the light, have all his evil deeds exposed, and embark in what is to him a forlorn enterprise of getting rid of them altogether. Entire sanctification is the only religion that faces the music of heaven, and says: *“Give me all the light, and reveal all of my meanness; let me see the very worst; and help me, O God, to be true to the heavenly calling unto an uttermost salvation.”* It is the only religion that withholds nothing, makes no compromise under any circumstances; but walks in the clear and cloudless light of God’s Word, Spirit, and providence, realizing that “the blood cleanses from all sin.” O the millions of souls now in hell because they never did make a clean breast, and seek the clear and cloudless light! When we courageously walk in all the light which God gives us, our wrongdoing all being convicted and brought into the full blaze of heaven’s cloudless day, faithfully put under the blood, confidingly committed to the consuming fires of the Holy Ghost, doubtlessly relying upon Omnipotent Grace for their utter extermination — soon will come the happy crisis in our experience, when the Holy Spirit will witness to our spirit *“that our deeds are wrought in God.”*

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER IX.

### JESUS PREACHING IN THE COUNTRY.

**John 3:22-26.** *“After these things, Jesus and His disciples came into the Judean country, and He there tarried with them, and baptized.”* Our Lord, having begun His ministry in Jerusalem in the purification of the temple, avails Himself of the vast multitudes attending the Passover to preach His glorious gospel, and corroborate it by working miracles; after the Passover, He goes out into the country, there continuing His preaching, meanwhile His disciples baptizing His converts; as it was the prerogative of Jesus to baptize with the Holy Ghost.

*“And John was baptizing in Enon, near unto Salim, because there were many waters there; and they continued to come and be baptized; for John had not yet been cast into prison.”* Jesus, accompanied by His disciples, went out into the country north of Jerusalem, there prosecuting His ministry, and John, having left Bethany, east of the Jordan, had come back to the west side, and is now preaching in Enon near Salim, this being a valley running down into the Jordan from the west. Enon is a Chaldaic word, in the plural number, which means “springs,” “because there were many waters there” — *i.e.*, a land abounding in springs; to this our dragoman testified when he pointed it out to us. The multitudes attending John’s ministry needed abundant supply of water for their animals and culinary operations, while John wanted an ample quantity for his baptismal administrations. The destitution of water in so many localities in that semi-tropical country occasions frequent allusions to it, such as we do not have in a land like ours, everywhere abounding in an ample supply of this indispensable providence.

*“Then there was a dispute from the disciples of John with the Jews concerning purifying.”* Here we have a clear definition of baptism, as in a number of other passages, which we will meet in the gospel of our Savior. The context here shows most unequivocally that this dispute involved the relative importance of the baptisms administered by John and the disciples of Jesus, while we see that purifying is the clear, salient, and unequivocal definition of this word baptism, in reference to which there has been much controversy. You will find the same definition in Mark 7 and Luke 11. The Old Testament economy exhibits two grand symbolic hemispheres — the bloody sacrifices typifying the work of Christ, and the watery ablutions that of the Holy Ghost. We are now in a grand transition period, and a time celebrated for purifications, the Johannic dispensation constituting the intermediate link between the law and the gospel, John being the last of the prophets, and thus preaching the valedictory of the Old Dispensation, and the honored harbinger of the New, introducing to the world the Savior, for whom they had looked four thousand years; baptizes all of his converts, thus symbolizing the purification necessary to enter his own dispensation, which is the initiatory of the kingdom. Now, our Savior, having been inaugurated into His ministry by John the Baptist, proceeds to unfurl the blood-stained banner of the kingdom which John had assured them was at hand, and have His converts baptized by His disciples, thus symbolizing a higher promotion and a deeper and richer grace than the initiatory gospel which John preached. As the ministry of John and Jesus brought to Israel the greatest revivals they had ever seen, these grand and glorious

benedictions, which were falling in copious showers from God out of heaven, are abundantly and beautifully symbolized by water baptism, here (verse 25) denominated purifying. This definition was very familiar, and well understood by all the Jews, who, from the days of Moses, had been accustomed to these aquatic ablutions for the removal of ceremonial defilement, which they were liable to contract in many ways; *e.g.*, coming in contact with Gentiles, dead bodies, lepers, and unclean animals. Hence, to the Jewish mind, there was a deep and obvious significance in these baptisms with water.

### TESTIMONY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

John 3:22-36. *“And they came to John, and said to him, Master, He who is with thee beyond Jordan, and to whom thou hast borne witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all are coming unto Him.”* For more than six months, John had been, not only the sensation of Israel, but of the world. But a few days ago, Jesus, having been baptized by John, has begun to preach. Whereas John wrought no miracles, Jesus, from the beginning, electrified the people with his stupendous miracles. Now they are so close together that intercommunication is going on between their disciples. Some of these honest, well-disposed disciples of John wait on him, with the news that the multitudes are all pouring now to Jesus, who is preaching and baptizing (through his disciples) as well as John.

*“John responded and said, A man is not able to receive anything unless it may be given unto him from heaven. You testify to me that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him.”* Here John corrects the idea of his informants that Jesus was a rival of his, and about to supersede him in his office and ministry. *“The one having the bride is the Bridegroom, but the friend of the Bridegroom, standing and hearing Him, rejoiceth with joy on account of the voice of the Bridegroom; therefore this my joy is complete.”* John being an Old Testament prophet, classifies himself with the saints of the former dispensation, here, as you see, abnegating their identity with the bridehood of Christ, and only claiming to be the friends of the Bridegroom. O, how fortunate we are to live in the gospel dispensation, having access to the richest blessing this side of heaven — *i.e.*, the bridehood of Christ — as here you see that Christ woos, wins, and weds His loving bride after His incarnation, the Old Testament saints, even including John the Baptist, being friends of the Bridegroom!

*“It behooves Him to increase, and me to decrease. He that cometh from above is above all; the one being from the earth is of the earth, and speaketh of the earth.”* All John means here is, that he is simply a man, a member of the human race, like all others, while he is impressing the people that Jesus is Divine, having come down from heaven; thus he is illustrating the infinite difference between them. *“The one coming from heaven is above all; and whatsoever He has seen and heard, this He testifies, and no one receives His testimony.”* This sounds rather strange, that no one receives His testimony. It is a simple statement of a fact. Among the multitudes who are crowding in His track and thronging His ministry at this early day, we do not know that any one, except John the Baptist, entertained a correct conception of His Messiahship. They believed on Him on account of His miracles; but Elijah and Elisha had both wrought great miracles, even raised the dead. They believed on Him as a mighty prophet sent of God; but it was late in His ministry before even His apostles came out in an unequivocal confession of His Christhood.

*“He that receiveth His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.”* All the revelation which God had ever given to Israel in the Old Testament culminated in Christ. When you write a letter, last of all you seal it. So the advent of Christ sealed — *i.e.*, indubitably confirmed — all the Scriptures that had ever been written. Hence, the one receiving Him has a perfect faith, sealed against all further doubt and uncertainty. Experimentally, we receive this seal from God in entire sanctification.

*“For whom God sent, speaketh the words of God; for God does not give His Spirit by measure.”* Jesus, having no depravity nor infirmity to impede the fullness of the Spirit, was literally filled and flooded, soul, mind, and body, all the time. It is our privilege to be like Him. *“Every one who has been made perfect shall be as his Master”* (Luke 6:40) Entire sanctification removes every impediment to the incoming of the Holy Ghost. O, what a glorious privilege to receive Him without measure as an incoming flood, overmastering Niagara, and an inundating sea!

*“He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.”* O how clear and explicit John the Baptist here corroborates the preaching of Jesus, in this same chapter certifying most unequivocally that the one who believes on the Son already has eternal life! God help us all to believe Thy Word as here so clearly preached by Thy servant, John the Baptist! How awful the doom of the unbeliever, as he shall not so much as see life, much less enjoy it, through all eternity, while the wrath of God, which is poured out on all sinners, “abideth on him!” This verb “abideth” is the perpetual present, setting forth the fact that it will never cease through all the ages of eternity. The wrath of God is already on the sinner. Jesus came to take it off. He can not do it unless the sinner believes on Him. So here, in this verse, we have a clear and unequivocal affirmation of the endless punishment which awaits the wicked. The rapid increase of infidelity in the world is an exceedingly distressing phenomenon, ominous, with other signs, of our Lord’s near coming. Thus this wicked world is fast ripening for destruction. Not only is this phenomenon fearful in heathen lands, where infidel preachers are now zealously proclaiming their soul-destroying lies, the multitudes dropping their heathen religions and espousing infidelity; but especially in gospel lands do we see, to our sorrow, a wonderfully rapid spread of infidelity within the last ten years. As I travel from ocean to ocean, I meet this sad phenomenon, to the grief of my spirit. In some of our large cities, nearly every other man I interview about his soul, avows down right infidelity; while church members and even their pastors, by millions are fearfully diluted with it, so that they openly proclaim, from pulpit and pew, their skepticism in reference to portions of God’s revealed truth.

## JESUS GOES TO GALILEE.

**Matthew 4:12; Mark 1:14; and Luke 4:14.** *“And after that John was cast into prison, Jesus came unto Galilee.”* Having entered upon His official Messiahship by purifying the temple at the Passover, and preached to the multitudes gathered on the Temple Campus during the great national feast; delivered that wonderful discourse to Nicodemus at night, the Apostle John bearing witness; and having wrought many miracles of which we have no specification; after the Passover, going out into the country north of the metropolis, He continues to preach and work miracles, His disciples baptizing the people, John the Baptist preaching in Enon near by, so that intercommunication between the audiences springs up, all observing that while Jesus is rapidly rising and magnetizing the multitudes, John is waning, — a crisis supervenes, resulting from the arrest of John the Baptist

by Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great, and king of Galilee and Perea. Immediately after this, Jesus leaves Judea, and goes away to Galilee, apparently because of John's arrest and imprisonment lest a similar fate shall overtake Him, and thus interfere with the work which He came to do. We see many judicious precautions adopted by Him at different times in order to prevent the interruption of His ministry till His work is done,

### ARREST AND IMPRISONMENT OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

**Matthew 14:3-5; Mark 6:17-20; Luke 3:19-21.** Mark: *“For Herod himself, having sent, arrested John, and bound him in prison, on account of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, because he married her. For John said to Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have the wife of thy brother. And Herodias hated him, and wished to kill him; and was not able. For Herod revered John, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man; and he continued to hold him in prison, and hearing him, continued to do many things, and he was hearing him delightfully.”* Matthew: *“And wishing to kill him, he feared the multitude, because they had him as a prophet.”* Luke: *“And Herod the tetrarch, being convicted by him concerning Herodias, the wife of Philip, his brother, and concerning all those wicked things which Herod did, added also this to all, he also shut up John in prison.”* We see from the concurrent histories of this dark tragedy, as given by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, that John the Baptist extended no royal courtesy whatever to the king and queen; but, looking them in the face, thus boldly and fearlessly exposed them in the presence of all the people, pronouncing his withering condemnation against their unlawful matrimony, Herodias, being the legal wife of his brother Philip — not the Philip who was at that time tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis (Luke 3:1), but of another Philip, who was his half-brother. Here we see a notable case of an honest preacher going into prison and to the executioner's block, losing all his liberties, and even his life, rather than withhold a solitary item of the truth. If the preachers nowadays were to expose and condemn all of the unlawful marriages in their congregations, thousands of them would lose their pastoral heads, especially in the wealthy city churches. O how the present age needs preachers having the backbone of John the Baptist! This illustrates the absolute necessity of entire sanctification on the part of the clergy, as nothing but this grace can qualify the preacher to tell the truth under all circumstances, regardless of his reputation, financial interest, and his ecclesiastical head. In this whole transaction, Herod shows up a better spirit than Herodias. You see plainly from Mark that Herod imprisoned John, and kept him in prison nearly two years, to keep Herodias from killing him. If he had not been protected by those impregnable prison-walls, and kept night and day under lock and key, the queen would have hired an assassin to go and murder him. Machærus, a city and strong fortification, which our dragoman pointed out to us, on the east bank of the Dead Sea, where Herod also had a palace and spent a portion of his time, was the place of John's imprisonment. During these twenty months, which wound up with his decapitation through the stratagem of Herodias, Herod frequently heard John preach. Mark says: *“Knowing him to be a righteous and holy man.”* We become righteous in regeneration, and holy in sanctification. Hence you see that King Herod, an intelligent, unconverted Church-member, had gumption enough to believe in the two works of grace — *i.e.*, regeneration and sanctification — and see them both in John the Baptist. Mark here informs us that John's preaching had a powerful effect on Herod, who, like multiplied thousands of unsaved Church-members, wanted to be good. *“And hearing him, he continued to do many things, and he continued to hear him delightfully.”* All this took place during those twenty months of his imprisonment at Machærus, where Herod had a palace, and spent much of his time, meanwhile

holding John in prison to keep his haughty wife from having him killed, she, of course, being too mad at him to ever hear him any more, though her royal husband heard him very frequently, ever and anon, and was delighted with the wonderful truth so ably and faithfully dispensed by his prisoner. *“He continued to do many things;”* i.e., he was very religious, and obeyed John in many things, being literally carried away by the red-hot truth which he preached; yet he never made the final surrender and got saved; finally permitting his diabolical wife to constrain him to imbue his hands in the innocent blood of the preacher under whose ministry he had been delighted these two years, shed many a tear, and made many a holy vow.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER X.

### JESUS PREACHES TO THE SAMARITAN WOMAN.

**John 4:1-41.** *“When our Lord knew that the Pharisees heard that Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John (indeed, Jesus himself did not baptize, but his disciples), he left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.”* While the English construction leaves here an open problem, susceptible of the conclusion that Jesus did baptize His disciples, remember once for all that such an inference is utterly and positively precluded by the Greek, which sweeps all controversy from the field, and settles the matter positively and unequivocally that Jesus did not baptize any person with water, it being His prerogative to baptize with the Holy Ghost, while His disciples did baptize with water. Jerusalem and Judea were the populous regions of the country. Jesus, as we see, preferred to keep this ministry somewhat unostentatious, as there was a probability of His being troubled by Herod, as John the Baptist had already been arrested; or, in case of excessive ado over Him, the multitude would very likely crown Him King, in which case the Romans would kill Him immediately as a rival of Cæsar. Consequently, leaving Jerusalem and Judea, He goes away to the less populous regions of Galilee.

*“And it behooved Him to go through Samaria.”* On the map you will see that Samaria reaches across Palestine, from the Jordan to the sea. Therefore the route from Judea into Galilee necessarily leads through Samaria, unless they go through Perea, thus crossing the Jordan twice.

*“Then He comes into a city of Samaria, called Sychar, near the land which Jacob gave to Joseph his son.”* I traveled this same route during my late tour. It is about thirty miles. Sychar is synonymous with Shechem in the Old Testament, being quite a notable city, in the valley of Succoth, between Mt. Gerizim on the south and Mt. Ebal on the north, and situated on the old caravan road from Jerusalem to Damascus. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and other patriarchs and prophets, were all here frequently. When Jeroboam led off the ten tribes, he made this city his capital. Here Moses commanded six tribes to stand on Mt. Gerizim, and enunciate the blessings that would come to Israel in case of obedience; and the other six to stand on Mt. Ebal, and reiterate the curses destined to come upon Israel in case of disobedience. Before I went to these mountains and tested the matter, becoming acquainted with their amphitheatrical conformation, producing jointly a vast whispering-gallery, having the form of an ellipse, with two foci, and so constructed as to transmit sounds from one focus to the other, I used to wonder how six hundred thousand people could all intelligently hear the same utterances of the human voice. This city continued to be the capital during the reign of Jeroboam, his son Omri changing to the city of Samaria, twenty-five miles northeast. Though Reuben was Jacob’s first-born, he forfeited the birthright — *i.e.*, a double portion of the patrimony — by his misconduct, Jacob taking it from him and giving it to Joseph, the first-born of Rachel, his favorite wife. For this reason, Joseph received two portions in the land of Canaan, which Joshua gave to his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, including this land of which we speak.

*“And there was the well of Jacob. Therefore Jesus, being weary of the journey, sat thus upon the well, and it was about the sixth hour.”* O how I enjoyed my visit to Jacob’s Well as I knew I was then in the track of Jesus, for which privilege I traveled seventeen thousand miles; there never having been any dispute in reference to this location. Hence, when pilgrims cross oceans and seas to walk in the track of the Savior, they all know they have achieved the end in view when they walk about Jacob’s Well. This well is seventy feet deep, and was doubtless considerably deeper in the days of our Savior, as Jacob dug it as a guarantee against a water-famine, lest in that delightful and fertile region, where springs abound, they may all go dry during the long summer droughts, and his herds and flocks famish for water. During the occupancy of the Holy Land by the Christian Crusaders, A.D. 1099 to A.D. 1187, they had a stone church-edifice over this well, which, after the conquests of Saladin, and the expulsion of the Crusaders from that country, was taken down, doubtless some of the stones being permitted to drop into the well, partially filling it up; so when I saw it, November, 1899, there was no water in it. The people said it had been dry but a short time, and, as the winter rains were even then beginning, they were looking for the water to come into it. Perhaps Jacob made it ninety to a hundred feet deep, finding there an inexhaustible perennial fountain. Here we read of Jesus being weary, but nowhere is it stated that He was ever sick; sickness being the result of sin, which He never had, and weariness only that of excessive toil.

*“The woman comes from Samaria to draw water. Jesus says to her, Give me to drink. For His disciples had gone away into the city, in order that they may purchase food. Then the Samaritan woman says to Him, How do you, being a Jew, ask to drink with me, being a Samaritan woman? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.”* When Shalmaneser, the Chaldean monarch, carried away Israel captive to Babylon, B.C. 721, leaving only a few very poor people in the land; as the years rolled on, and the wild beasts were about to take the country (of this you would not wonder, when they have so many hiding-places in the mountains), Esarhaddon, king of Babylon, sent people from different parts of his great heathen empire to come and inhabit the land, they being not only aliens, but idolaters. When Israel returned out of captivity, under Nehemiah, B.C. 490, and began to build the temple, these Samaritans, under the leadership of Sanballat, their governor, wanted to fall in as loyal Israelites, help to build the temple, and participate in the worship. On their rejection by Nehemiah and the elders of Israel as aliens and heathens, they became very mad, and did their utmost to defeat the building of the temple. This alienation developed into bitter antipathy, which was only intensified as the years rolled on. We are not to conclude that this woman was not willing to give Him a drink, but observing from His costume and physique that He is a Jew, she indulges in momentary tantalization; *i.e.*, *“Though you Jews despise all of us Samaritans, yet now, that You are weary and thirsty, You will condescend to take a drink at the hands of a Samaritan woman. Jesus responded and said to her, If you knew the gift of God, and who is the One speaking to you, Give Me to drink, you would have asked Him, and He had given you living water.”* Here we see the solution of the water-problem raised in the preceding chapter, “Born of water.” This woman thought He meant the water in the well, whereas He here perfectly relieves the matter, and solves the mystery, by telling her that He means “living water” — *i.e.*, the water of life.

*“The woman says to Him, Sir, You have no drawing-rope, and the well is deep; whence then have You living water?”* The disciples had gone on to the city a nearer way, doubtless carrying the rope with them, ready for use in this well or any other, as we see they bought their food and ate it at their

own discretion, which is the current custom of that country at the present day, our party observing it.

*“Art Thou greater than our father Jacob, who gave to us the well, and he himself drank of it, and his sons and his herds?”* You must remember that the Samaritans, though in the main aliens and heathens, and consequently reprobated by the Jews, claimed the *bona fide* lineage of the patriarchs, through those few Israelites who survived in the land after the Babylonian captivity.

*“Jesus responded and said, Every one drinking of this water, shall thirst again; but whosoever shall drink of the water which I will give unto him, shall never thirst; but the water which I will give unto him, shall be a fountain of water, springing up unto eternal life.”* You see here that while the water in the well, which had to be drawn out, emblemizes regeneration, this springing water is an artesian well, which the Savior puts in the heart when He sanctifies us wholly. While running along through the Great American Desert, on my way to California, I look out and see a beautiful green farm, wrapped in verdant meadows, luxuriant gardens, prolific orchards, and fruitful fields. I wonder why this inspiring relief in the midst of the rainless, burning deserts. Now I see the problem solved. There is an artesian well in the midst, pouring out a constant stream of water, about six inches in diameter, perennially, night and day, shooting up into the air, the excessive overflow forming a beautiful limpid lake, from which all that country is abundantly irrigated. The sanctified man has this artesian well in his soul, shooting up a living stream, night and day, wherever he goes. He has plenty for himself, and it is a joy in the community.

*“The woman says to Him, Sir, give to me this water, in order that I may not thirst, nor come hither to draw.”* Occidental women have no conception of the toil endured by their Oriental sisters in carrying water from the fountains, frequently to a great distance, as this well is about a mile from the city.

*“Jesus says to her, Go, call your husband, and come hither.”* Why this sudden transition of the subject? Jesus is a Model Preacher, and knows precisely how to do it. Your preaching will never be a success without true and radical conviction, which strikes deep into the heart, takes hold of the interior spirit, and never loses its grip. As Jesus knew all about her life, He here sends a thunderbolt into the secret citadel of her soul, going down and striking the taproot of that native evil, which had developed into her besetting sin.

*“The woman responded and said, I have no husband. Jesus says to her, You spoke truly, That I have no husband. For thou hast had five husbands, and the one whom thou now hast is not thy husband; thou hast spoken this truth.”* This poor woman was a freeloader, this being the grand citadel of her soul's enemy. Jesus struck the great rock of her sinful nature in the center, the breakage radiating in all directions. Therefore He had a glorious case of lightning conviction. Lord, help us to preach like Thyself! I am an old revivalist, having been preaching forty-six years, and am now used of the Lord mainly on the teaching line. When I enjoyed my physical vigor, I never found a place where I couldn't have a revival. I always began with the Sinai gospel, preaching for conviction till it came on my congregation like a nightmare from the eternal world. You see here that Jesus begins with conviction, adopting the only available method of securing it; *i.e.*, looking His auditor straight in the face, and telling her the blackest sin of her life.

*“The woman says to Him, Sir, I see that you are a prophet.”* You see, conviction has already reached her, and this total Stranger, on whom she has been looking with the odium of a Jew, she now confesses to be a prophet of the Lord.

*“Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, and You say that Jerusalem is the place where it behooveth us to worship.”* From the time Nehemiah and the elders at Jerusalem rejected the cooperation of Sanballat and the Samaritans, they had turned about and built a great and magnificent temple on Mt. Gerizim, as a rival of the temple on Mt. Moriah at Jerusalem. When I was there, I climbed great Mt. Gerizim to its summit, visiting that temple, which is yet majestic, though in ruins. On the beautiful plateau surrounding that temple, the Samaritan millions were accustomed to gather and keep the Passover and other institutions of Moses.

*“Jesus says to her, Woman, believe Me, that the hour cometh when you will neither worship the Father in this mountain, nor at Jerusalem. You worship you know not what.”* That was true, because their worship was really a mixture of Judaism and idolatry. *“We worship what we know, because salvation is of the Jews;”* i.e., the Savior was to come of the Jews, and bring salvation to all the world. *“But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for such the Father seeketh worshipping Him. God is a Spirit, and it behooveth those worshipping Him to worship in spirit and in truth.”* These deliverances of our Savior certainly sweep away forever the local ecclesiasticism which existed in the Hebrew nation down to the Messianic advent, a necessity of the times, in order to identify the progenitorship of Christ, revealing clearly to all the world His lineage from Adam, and establishing, beyond the possibility of controversy, His identification with the human race, which is indispensable to His efficiency as a Mediator, without which the plan of salvation would be as chimerical as the legends of the Hindoo gods, having their abodes in the skies, and little sympathy with suffering humanity. Therefore the Jewish religion focalized at Jerusalem, rigidly inhering in the Abrahamic seed, fortified impreguably in its exclusiveness by the irrefragable laws of the Mosaic theocracy. The egregious mistake of the Christian ages has been the institution of local, and, in many instances, national ecclesiasticisms, a practical return to the Jewish dispensation. The New Testament organization recognizing no officers but the pastor, in charge of the spiritual interest; the deacon, the temporal interest; and the eldership, the general interest, and is so simple and uncomplicated as to peregrinate the globe with the moving tide of population, incurring not the slightest inconvenience, having no Jerusalem but the city beyond the stars, whose Builder and Maker is God, as the heralds of the universal commission, recognizing the “world as our parish,” every continent and island our meeting-house, the cerulean dome of the arching skies the covering of this universal temple, in which we worship God; as Jesus here assures us that the *“true worshipers do worship Him in spirit and in truth,”* recognizing the essentiality of no interceding priest but Jesus, who is our Great High Priest, and no baptism but that of the Holy Ghost and fire, which He gives. Thus panoplied with the infallible Word of God, we march forth, claiming the world for Christ, with all possible expedition evangelizing all nations, in constant anticipation of our glorious coming King, riding down on a cloud, crowned and sceptered, King of kings and Lord of lords; thus verifying this grand truth He here preaches to the woman at the well, as the glorious ultimatum of His incarnation, that this whole world shall be turned into a Jerusalem, in which *“the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth.”* When the Lord hears the cries of His saints, and projects a holiness movement in the earth, it is always free from the entanglements of human ecclesiasticisms — the gospel, the true Church, the kingdom of God, is a

pure spirituality, as here we see clearly taught by our Savior. If the present holiness movement ever crystallizes into an ecclesiasticism, her power is gone, like Samson; shorn of her locks by the Delilah of carnal sectarianism, she will wake up to the fact that the Holy Ghost has retreated away, and she has no more power than her sisters.

*“The woman says to Him, I know that Messiah cometh, who is called Christ; when He may come, He will proclaim to us all things. Jesus says to her, I am He, the One speaking to thee.”* You will find that more than two years had rolled away before our Lord openly declared His Messiahship to the Jews. One good reason for His reticence on this subject was, that they all understood that the Christ was to be their King, and would have crowned Him unhesitatingly. In that case the Romans would have put Him to death as a rival of Cæsar. But when you recognize the fact that the Gentiles did not want a Jew for their king, you see at once that there was no need of this reticence as to His Christhood while preaching to the Gentiles, such as these Samaritans and the Gadarenes, to whom He openly proclaimed His Messiahship. In some way the expectation of the Messianic advent was at that time anticipated in the whole world. Here you see this fallen heathen woman had it at her tongue’s end.

*“At this His disciples came, and were astonished because He was speaking with the woman.”* The reason of their astonishment was because they had no idea that He would preach to the Samaritans; this being a brilliant scintillation of the oncoming conflagration destined to roll the fires of the Holy Ghost over the Gentile world. *“No one indeed said, What do you seek, or why do you speak with her?”* A realization of the Divine presence evidently overawing the disciples.

*“Then the woman left her water-pot, and went away into the city, and says to the people, Come, behold a Man who told me all things whatsoever I have done; whether is not this One the Christ? They came out from the city, and came unto Him.”* We see here that this woman was really electrified through and through. Having come for water, leaving her water-pot, she fled away, and stirred the city by her vehement proclamations. *“Meanwhile His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, eat; and He said to them, I have meat to eat which you know not. Then the disciples said to one another, Whether has any one brought Him anything to eat? Jesus says to them, My food is, that I may do the will of Him that sent Me, and I shall perfect His work.”* We are not altogether dependent on material food for the sustenance of our bodies. Moses, Elijah, and Jesus all fasted forty days without feeling a sensation of hunger, supernaturally sustained by the Holy Spirit in a state of ecstasy. Rich spiritual experiences economize a vast amount of table expenses. Here we have the proof, as Jesus is our Exemplar. This problem I wonderfully realize in my personal living. I have traveled in Europe, Asia, Africa, and forty States in America, never finding a place where I could not live bountifully, having everything I wanted to eat, on fifteen cents a day.

*“Do not you say that it is yet four months and the harvest cometh? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and see the fields, because they are already white unto the harvest. He that reapeth receiveth a reward unto eternal life, in order that the sower and the reaper may rejoice together. In this, the word is true, That one soweth, and another reapeth. I have sent you to reap that on which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their toil.”* It was the month of May at that time, when the barley harvests are all ripe, the wheat being harvested in June, these two whole months thus being devoted to the harvest in Palestine; the sowings having taken place the

preceding winter, four months previously. Now the application of this illustration is simple and clear. In that country, just about four months elapse after the sowing till the reaping. The fields at that time were everywhere ripe and white, inviting the sickle. In the case of the gospel, we do not have to wait the four months. We can sow today, and reap today. With God, one day is as a thousand years, and a minute as good as a month, the execution of His mighty works in regeneration and sanctification depending on our repentance, faith, and consecration. It is our privilege to reap a harvest speedily, or it may be prolonged many years. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joshua, and the prophets had all preached in that country, and now He is preaching. There is no need of waiting for the crop to grow and mature, as already the sowings of their predecessors are ripe for the sickle. Besides, such is the omnipotence of gospel grace, that the seed He is sowing at that very time may spring up, develop into a glorious harvest, and be reaped that very day. Hence, gospel workers have wonderful encouragement. We can sow for others to reap after we are dead and gone; we can reap what others sowed before we were born; or we can sow and reap the same day, and even the same hour. If we can not reap, let us be content to sow for others to reap. If we can not sow, let us be content to reap what others have sown. Glory to God for His unutterable grace!

*“And many of the Samaritans from the city believed on Him on account of the word of the woman testifying, That He told me all things so many as I did. Then, when the Samaritans came to Him, they asked Him to abide with them, and He remained two days. And many more believed through His word. And they continued to say to the woman, That we no longer believe on account of thy gabbling; for we ourselves have heard and know that He is truly the Christ, the Savior of the world.”*

Here we see that Jesus stops and preaches two days in Shechem (Sychar), the old capital of Samaria, and one of the oldest cities in the world, often visited by Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the prophets. The result of His preaching is a great, spreading revival. Proud Churches contemptuously reject the testimony of fallen women. Here you see these heathens not only receive her testimony, but they are so moved by her ministry that they run away in great crowds to the well, to see the Man whose preaching had so powerfully converted their neighbor. The Greek *lalia* (“speech”), as applied to this woman, means gabbling, indicating the uncouth dialect of this poor, ignorant, illiterate woman. Here we see our Savior’s approval of woman’s ministry in a very broad sense, as this poor fallen woman was not only His only auditor in His first sermon at the well, but becomes His efficient witness and prominent helper in the great revival which follows. After so many Samaritans receive Him with joy, and confess their faith in His Christhood, they proceed to notify the woman that, while she was instrumental in moving them to seek Jesus, and they set out relying on her testimony, that they are no longer dependent on her *ipse dixit*, as they have personal assurance that this Man is none other than the Christ, the Savior of the world. There is but one way they could possibly have such an assurance, and that is to come to Jesus, and get intelligently and experimentally saved. Hence, there is no doubt but the fruits of that glorious revival will be seen in the day of eternity.

Let us never be discouraged with a small audience; as here you see this glorious Samaritan revival began with a solitary auditor, and she such as the respectable Churches reject with contempt. Here we have these two notable cases in our Savior’s ministry — the fallen woman at Jacob’s Well and Nicodemus in Jerusalem, each one complimented by the Savior with a gospel sermon, which has been ringing round the world ever since, and bringing thousands to God. When you preach to an individual, there is no room for dodging. Never is the gospel so potent as in case of direct personal appeal. Here you see our Savior spending His precious noonday, preaching to this lonely fallen

woman. But she gets gloriously saved, runs away and stirs the city by her testimony, so that many come running, hear the gospel, and get saved too. So, if you want a revival in the community, follow the example of the Savior — make a specialty of some hard reprobate. When you get one notorious sinner gloriously saved, he or she will stir the whole community, and give you a great revival.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XI.

### JESUS PREACHING IN GALILEE.

**John 4:43-45; Matthew 4:17; Mark 1:14,15; AND Luke 4:14,15.** *“And after two days He went out from thence, and departed into Galilee. For Jesus Himself witnessed that a prophet has no honor in his own country.”* Now what is the force of this affirmation of Jesus? You must remember that Nazareth, where He was brought up and spent the first thirty years of His life, is in Galilee. So He was denominated a “Galilean.” Having entered upon His ministry in Jerusalem by purifying the temple, and spent the eight days of the Passover preaching to the thronging multitudes, and perhaps a month following in the populous regions of Judea, His fame spreading abroad, and attracting vast multitudes to His ministry; John the Baptist, who had been the sensation about eight months, somewhat waning, while the trend of the multitude is to Jesus. The tendency of His rapidly increasing popularity is to arouse the Jews to crown Him King, which would have interfered with His ministry; whereas it was transcendently important that He should be permitted to finish His work. Consequently He leaves the populous regions of Judea, and goes away into the comparatively thinly populated country of Galilee, where they will not make so much ado over His ministry, nor be so likely to interrupt His work by precipitating His royal coronation. In addition to this fact, His nativity and residence in Galilee had conduced somewhat to render Him common, and would militate against the probability of that great popular excitement which would be likely to result in crowning Him King.

**Mark:** *“He was preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, That the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God draweth nigh; repent and believe in the gospel.”* **Luke:** *“The fame went throughout all the surrounding country concerning Him, and He was teaching in their synagogues, being glorified by all.”* The seventy weeks of Daniel — *i.e.*, the four hundred and ninety years, according to the year-day system peculiar to prophetic interpretation — had already expired. The scepter had already departed from Judah; besides, there was a general fulfillment of the prophecies pointing to the coming Messiah about that time, John the Baptist, the greatest of the prophets, having not only preached Him, but pointed Him out, introducing Him to the people by baptism; while the Holy Ghost from heaven had descended on Him, and the Divine voice, from God the Father, had rung in the ears of the multitude, *“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”* Of course, the kingdom of heaven (Matthew all the time says, “Kingdom of heaven,” and Mark, “Kingdom of God,” they being precisely synonymous) is at hand in very truth, because the King is here, and of course having the kingdom with Him; as a kingdom means a government. Hence, all the true disciples of Jesus come under His government, and become citizens of the kingdom. While repentance was the constant, burning appeal of John the Baptist, we see that when Jesus comes, preaching the gospel, He not only preaches repentance, thus fully endorsing and corroborating John, but He preaches faith, commanding all to repent and believe the gospel. Repentance breaks the yoke of Satan, an indispensable prerequisite to their reception of Christ, as they could not serve two masters. As Luke says, *“Glorified by all.”* Hence we see that, as His fame

went abroad into all lands, a wonderful tide of popular excitement immediately sprang up in all directions, concentrating on this wonderful Prophet of Galilee.

**John 4:45.** *“Then, when He came into Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all things which He did in Jerusalem during the feast; for they also came to the feast.”* The Jews, from all parts of the world, were accustomed to gather at Jerusalem at the time of the great national festivals; e.g., the Passover in April, Pentecost fifty days afterward, and the Feast of Tabernacles in September. These Galileans, who had witnessed His miracles during the Passover (of which there is no record, this being the only allusion to them), and heard His preaching, now rally to Him from all parts of the country, stirring all the people, telling them that a wonderful Prophet, like unto Elijah and Elisha, had risen in Israel.

### **JESUS HEALS THE SON OF THE ROYALIST.**

John 4:46-54. *“Then Jesus again came into Cana of Galilee, where He turned the water into wine; there was a certain royalist, whose son was sick in Capernaum. He, hearing that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, came unto Him, and asked Him that He may come down and heal his son; for he was about to die. Then Jesus said to him, Unless you may see miracles and wonders, you will not believe. The royalist says to Him, Lord, come down before my little child dies. Jesus says to him, Go, thy son liveth. The man believed the word which Jesus spoke to him, and departed. And he, already coming down, his servants met him, and announced to him, saying, Thy child is alive. Then he asked of them the hour at which he began to convalesce; and they said to him, That yesterday the fever left him at the seventh hour. Therefore the father knew that in that hour in which Jesus said to him, That thy son liveth; and he and all his house believed. Again, Jesus did this second miracle, having come out of Judea into Galilee.”* I use the word royalist instead of nobleman, as E.V., because the Greek is *basilikos*, from *basileus*, “a king,” and means a kingly man. He was evidently a member of the Herodian family, who were the kings of that country. Some identify this case with that of the centurion. (Luke 7) This is a great mistake. The centurion was a Gentile; this man is a Jew, belonging to the royal family; i.e., a Herodian. The centurion is characterized by very strong faith, so that when Jesus proposed to go to his house, he refused to give Him that trouble, but said, *“Speak the word only, and it is done.”* This man had faith in Jesus, or he would not have come from Capernaum to Cana after Him. But the royalist's faith was weak, and for that reason he insisted hard that Jesus should go to Capernaum and heal his son. In order to strengthen his faith, Jesus does not go, but simply tells him that his son is healed. Capernaum stood on the northern shore of the sea of Galilee; Cana about forty miles southwest, near Nazareth. I visited both of these places last November. At that time traveling was generally on foot. Doubtless the man traveled as a pedestrian or equestrian; and receiving the message of Jesus at one o'clock, set out for home at once, traveling constantly through the afternoon and night, and arriving early the next morning, perhaps before day. His servants meet him, perhaps at the gate, and bring him the joyous news that his child is alive, the power of the disease being broken, and every symptom of recovery. He then asked them at what time he began to convalesce; they say, *“At one o'clock yesterday the fever left him.”* This produced a powerful effect on him and his whole family, wonderfully booming his faith and inspiring the faith of his household, so they had quite a hallelujah time, all believing in Jesus and sweeping into the kingdom. You see here the signal wisdom and mercy of our Savior in refusing to go, but simply giving the man His word, illustrating the fact the very opposite of popular opinion. We generally

think the demonstrative sights, sounds, and excitement the measure of true faith and real efficiency. The very fact that Jesus saw that the man's faith was weak was a reason why He would not go, but leave the man simply to take Him at His word. The effect was to wonderfully increase his personal faith, and inspire that of his whole family. Strong faith sets but little store on signs and demonstrations, being perfectly satisfied with the simple Word of God.

### **JESUS REJECTED AT NAZARETH, MIGRATES TO CAPERNAUM.**

**Luke 4:16-31; Matthew 4:13-16.** *“He came into Nazareth, where he was brought up, and according to the custom to Him on the Sabbath-day, He came into the synagogue, and stood up to read. And the Book of Isaiah the prophet was given unto Him, and opening the book, He found the place where it was written [Isaiah 61:1], The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel unto the poor; sent Me to heal the broken-hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives, and sight to the blind; to send away with liberty those who are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And closing the book, giving it to the officer, He sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were concentrated on Him. And He began to speak to them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.”* Isaiah has been denominated the Messianic prophet, because his writings so copiously, brilliantly, and triumphantly set forth the Christ, the Shiloh of prophecy, the Redeemer of Israel, and the Savior of the world. Jesus now preaches to them these Scriptures, assuring them that they are fulfilled. This is to them, not only astounding, but paradoxical. He had spent His life there. They looked upon Him as one of them, and the idea that these grand prophecies are fulfilled in Him is more than they can receive.

*“And all continued to witness to Him and to be astonished at the words of grace which proceeded out of His mouth, and said, Is not this the son of Joseph?”* When I was in Nazareth, I visited Joseph's workshop, and saw, in beautiful and impressive statuary, Joseph and Jesus working at the carpenter's trade, and Mary sitting by looking at them. The scene was wonderfully sweet and charming, especially the statue of the loving boy Jesus, working with His hands. They had known Him thirty years as the son of the carpenter Joseph. There were no common schools in that country; no educational opportunities except the rabbinical colleges at Jerusalem, the prophetic schools of Elijah and Elisha being institutions of the past. They knew He had never gone away to college. Hence they are astonished, and all eyes centered on Him, and all minds wrapped in bewilderment. The birth of Jesus in Bethlehem symbolizes the regeneration of the human heart by the Holy Spirit, while His induement with the Holy Ghost, immediately after His consecration to the official Messiahship by the baptism of John, responds to our sanctification; as you must bear in mind that the negative work of sin's removal had no place in His experience as in ours. Hence, He only had the positive side born in Bethlehem, and filled with the Holy Ghost at the Jordan. During the thirty years of His minority at Nazareth, His life was perfectly irreproachable, and He was a paragon saint in His disposition, attending the synagogue worship regularly as a faithful Church member. But now they see a wonderful change in Him. Such is His magnetism that all eyes are centered on Him. While they all know Him, having been acquainted with Him all His life, they can scarcely believe their own eyes and ears when they see such a change in the flash of His eye, the tone of His voice, the character and manner of His speech. What is the solution? Why, He has been filled with the Holy Ghost since they saw Him, so that now His words are like flaming fire, burning their way into the deep interior of all hearts, arousing the carnal mind with rattlesnake venom and retaliation. Doubtless, during the

years of His young manhood, He had taken an active part in the synagogue worship; but never before had they realized those fiery thunderbolts, going down into the deep interior of their spirits, producing heart-ache intolerable, and arousing Adam the First to fight for his life.

*“And He said to them, Truly do you speak to Me this parable, Physician, heal thyself; so many things as we have heard having been done in Capernaum, do even so here in Thy own country.”* As they had heard of His working mighty miracles in Capernaum (of which we have no record except this terse allusion), now they demand of Him to do the same in Nazareth; and as He is a citizen of Nazareth, the old medical problem, *“Physician, heal thyself,”* is here applied. *“As You are a Nazarene, and in healing the Nazarenes, You would heal Yourself.”* *“And He said, Truly, I say unto you, A prophet is not acceptable in his own country.”* He also said He could not do many mighty works there on account of their unbelief. This illustrates the importance of leaving home, pursuant to the Commission, *“Go and preach.”* We must not forget, that “Go” is a part of the Commission as well as preach. Even our Savior found it necessary to go away from Nazareth to do His mighty works, as their unbelief laid an incorrigible paralysis even on the ministry of Jesus. Multitudes of good preachers blight their own usefulness by staying where they were brought up, and so frequently by remaining too long at any one place.

*“But in truth I say unto you, There were many widows in the days of Elijah in Israel, when heaven was shut up, as there was a great drought on all the land; and Elijah was sent to no one of them except to a widow woman in Sareptah of Sidon. And there were many lepers in Israel in the days of Elisha the prophet; and no one of them was healed except Naaman the Syrian.”* Our Lord here sets forth the sovereign, discriminating mercy of God, as illustrated in the case of Elijah and Elisha, the greatest prophets — the one only sent to relieve one widow, and she not an Israelite, but a Gentile; and the other only healing one leper, and he was not an Israelite, but a Syrian. So we really deserve none of God's mercies. Whatever He does is a sheer gratuity; and if He does not relieve us, we have no right to complain if He simply lets us alone in the sin and misery which we have brought on ourselves.

*“And they were all in the synagogue, hearing these things, filled with rage.”* They regard His talk as an impudent insinuation against them, as if they were not as good as the people in other cities where He had done these mighty works of philanthropy and benefaction. He had attended service in that synagogue thirty years; they felt that He was one of them; and they had a right to the wonderful benefit of His prophetic services. Now they conclude that He has gotten above them, treated them with contempt, as if they were not as good as other people. Therefore, instead of receiving the truth and getting convicted, they become violently angry.

*“And rising up, they were preparing to cast Him out of their city, and were leading Him to the brow of the mountain, on which their city was built, in order to precipitate Him down; and He, going through the midst of them, departed. And He came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee.”* When I was in Nazareth, I visited this synagogue, as they claim, yet standing, a venerable stone edifice, where Jesus worshipped during the thirty years of His minority, and where they finally rejected the burning truth which He preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and, rising up, led Him away, to cast Him down from a precipice, and kill Him. The young men went from this synagogue directly to the Mount of Precipitation. They point out two precipices, both claiming to

be the height from which they aimed to cast Him. The one more distant from the city is quite a conspicuous mountain, which we had in full view two days in our peregrinations. We see that Jesus changed his residence to Capernaum, where many of the people believed on Him, and He received much appreciation. The people of Nazareth had gotten along with Him, so far as we know, without any trouble all His life till He got sanctified; *i.e.*, filled with the Holy Ghost. Then His words were like forked lightnings, burning them through and through, and utterly intolerable to the carnal mind. Though you have always gotten along pleasantly in your Church till you go away to a holiness camp and get sanctified, — but do not be surprised or discouraged, when you go home, if they reject your testimony, and even get so mad at you that they “cast you out” — *i.e.*, turn you out of the Church — and feel like killing you. This was precisely the history of Jesus. His example is before you. When they rejected His testimony at Nazareth, He went away from His native home, and never lived there any more. At Capernaum, whither He went and fixed His abode, He received much encouragement. Peter, Andrew, James, John, and Philip, noble apostles, and many disciples, He received at Capernaum.

**Matthew:** *“Leaving Nazareth, having come, He dwelt in Capernaum, by the seaside, in the coast of Zebulun and Naphtali; in order that the word spoken by Isaiah the prophet may be fulfilled, Thou land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people sitting in darkness saw a great light; and to those sitting in the valley and shadow of death, light sprang up.”* Capernaum is on the northern coast of the Sea of Galilee, in the tribe of Zebulun, but near the border of Naphtali, and a short distance west of the Jordan, which was the boundary of the Jews and Gentiles at that place, the country lying east of the Jordan and the Sea of Galilee being occupied by the Gadarenes and the Decapolis. Hence the fulfillment of this prophecy, as our Savior made Capernaum his headquarters. The wonderful influence of His ministry brought a sunburst on all that country, bringing untold blessings to both Jews and Gentiles.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT OF FISHES.

**Luke 5:1-11.** *“And it came to pass, while the multitudes were pressing on Him to hear the word of God, and He was standing near the Lake Genesareth [i.e., the Sea of Galilee], and He saw two ships standing by the lake, and the fishermen having gone from them were washing their nets, and entering into one of the ships, which belonged to Simon, He requested him to shove out a little from the land, and sitting down, He was teaching the multitudes from the ship. And when He ceased speaking, He said to Simon, Lead out into the deep, and spread your nets for a draught. And Simon, responding, said to Him, Master, toiling through the whole night, we caught nothing; but at Thy word I will spread the net. And doing this, they caught a great multitude of fishes; and their net was breaking, and they beckoned to their comrades in the other ship, having come to assist them; they came, and filled both the ships, so that they were sinking. Simon Peter, seeing, fell before the knees of Jesus, said to Him, Depart from me, because I am a sinful man, Lord; because affright took hold of him, and all those who were with him, on account of the draught of fishes which they received; likewise, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were companions of Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, Fear not; from now you shall be catching men. And hauling their ships up on the land, leaving all, they followed Him.”* **Mark** says: *“Immediately He called them. And leaving their father Zebedee in the ship, with the hired hands, they departed after Him.”* The beautiful sea of Galilee, clear as a crystal, limpid and bright, sixteen and a half miles long, seven and a half miles wide, with seventy miles of coast, one hundred and thirty feet deep, this day abounds in a vast variety of most excellent fish. My hotel-keeper said he caught five thousand pounds at a single draught. The prophetic desolation has been on that country so long — being mainly given up to the wandering Arabs, who exhibit but little skill in fishing — they have accumulated in vast quantities, ready for the returning children of Abraham, who are fast coming back, and quite a number have recently gathered about this beautiful sea, so memorable in the history of our Lord. This scene took place near Capernaum, headquarters of our Savior and His disciples, and resulted in the call of Peter and Andrew who were brothers, sons of Jonah, and James and John, who were brothers, the sons of Zebedee and Salome. They were professional fishermen, and, as we see before, owned ships — *i.e.*, fishing-boats — and hired hands, to serve them in their business. Hence it seems that they were doing well. While this wonderful and miraculous draught of fishes, looking like they had struck such a run of luck that they would certainly get rich quickly, was calculated so to encourage them in their business that they would certainly hold on; but grace prevails and gets the victory. They leave their ships, and their hired hands — their livelihood, and with no prospect of temporal support, relying only on the good providence of God, they forsake all and follow Jesus, who has already assured them that He will make them fishers of men. How magnificently true! Who can count the numberless host that had been won for Jesus through the living ministry of these four apostles, and their words of steel and lightning left shining in God's blessed Book? This wonderful miracle, right on the spot where they had fished all night (a better time than the day) and caught nothing; now they catch so many that they fill both ships, and they are sinking under the intolerable quantity of large and splendid fishes — no wonder they are overwhelmed with the realization that they are in the presence

of a Superhuman Being; the very consciousness of the Almighty inundates them with reverential awe, and appalls them with the apprehension of the Divine presence and power. Consequently, Peter naturally deeply sensitive and excitable, shouts: *“Lord depart from me, because I am a sinful man.”* Peter was not sanctified till Pentecost, three years subsequently; hence he is affrighted with the realization of his sinful nature. O what a happy choice did these four bright young men make when they exchanged their fishing-boats for the silver trumpet! The manner of their lives, inured to the hardships of sea and land, toiling all night, exposed to the chilly waters and the arduous, constant toil, had proved to them a most valuable gymnasium, which had developed in them an iron constitution, and eminently prepared them for the conflicts, exposures, privations, burdens, and toils of missionary life, far better than any theological curriculum they could have gone through. While intellectual culture is not to be depreciated, but continued through this life and, doubtless, coming eternity, the physical constitution and the spiritual experiences and enduements constitute the preponderant qualifications of a gospel preacher.

### HEALING OF PETER’S MOTHER-IN-LAW.

**Matthew 8:14-17; Mark 1:2-34; and Luke 14:3-41** **Mark:** *“And immediately coming out of the synagogue, came into the house of Simon and Andrew and James and John. The mother-in-law of Simon was lying down scorched with a fever; and immediately they speak to Him concerning her; and coming to her and taking her by the hand, He raised her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she continued to minister unto them. And it being evening, when the sun went down, they continued to carry to Him all the sick and the demonized; and the whole city was gathered at the door. And He healed many sick with various diseases, and continued to cast out many demons; and did not suffer the demons to speak, because they knew Him.”* Matthew gives a wonderful prophecy of Isaiah 53:4:

“He took our infirmities, and carried our diseases.”

That prophecy, corroborated by our Savior, is really wonderful on Divine healing, certainly setting forth our blessed privilege in the atonement to have our bodies healed. We need physical health in order to do the work the Lord has given us, to bless mankind and glorify God in this life; our faith being the measuring-line of blessings for body as well as soul. This case of Peter's mother-in-law, in his house in Capernaum, was really notable.

**Luke** says, *“She was afflicted with a great fever.”* The healing was so decisive that she got up at once, and proceeded to do her housework. I have seen that very case duplicated repeatedly. Last August, at Scottsville (Texas) Camp-meeting, we prayed for a lady in her tent who was burnt with a terrible fever, at the same time anointing her with oil. The fever left her immediately she got up and went to meeting within fifteen minutes. I saw her in the meetings constantly till the adjournment of the camp, with no sign of fever, and testifying to her healing. We see here that when the sun went down, they continued to bring the sick; as this was midsummer, and the sea of Galilee is seven hundred feet below the Mediterranean and surrounded by highlands, it gets exceedingly hot on the coast. Hence the importance of waiting until sunset, and perhaps in order to command necessary help, as men have more leisure at night than during the day. We see here that Jesus cast out the demons and healed the sick, thus ministering both to soul and body, converting, saving, and

sanctifying the soul and healing the body. He is the same, “Yesterday, today, and forever.” O what a Savior we have! His mercies are boundless and free. It is our glorious privilege, not only to have all the demons cast out of our souls, but to have our bodily ailments healed. We should go to the ends of the earth, as our Lord commissioned us, casting out demons and healing the sick. We see here that, while all of those demons wanted to confess the Christhood of Jesus, His Divine Sonship, He prohibited them. How did they know Him? All these demons were once angels, as God never created a devil. During the bygone ages, before they forfeited their probation and were cast out of heaven, they all beheld the bright glory of the Son of God. Hence they recognized Him; but I am not astonished that He was unwilling for these fallen spirits to become the heralds of His Divinity. He preferred to let His mighty works vindicate His claims to the Messiahship.

### EVANGELISM OF JESUS.

**Mark 1:35-39; Luke 4:42-44.** From Capernaum, His headquarters, He now radiates out through the surrounding country, accompanied by His disciples, Peter, Andrew, James, and John, going everywhere preaching the Living Word. *“And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and casting out demons.”* We find the constant work of Jesus, in all His ministry, consisted in demoniacal ejection in the interest of the soul, and physical healing in the interest of the body, thus gloriously fulfilling His mission as the Redeemer of mankind. Lord, help us to be true to our calling, and walk in Thy footprints! In that case we will labor incessantly in the work of both soul and body. Man is a dependency, and consequently always actuated by spiritual influence, either demoniacal or Divine. As Satan is the great deceiver, it becomes his climacteric stratagem so to delude his votaries as not only to render them unconscious of demoniacal possession, but even plunge them so deeply into infidelity that they do not believe in diabolical existence. Humanity is uniform in all ages. We see, everywhere, bodily ailments prevalent, and readily admit the need of the Healer. With the needed spiritual illumination, we would equally obviously recognize demoniacal possession on all sides, and the imperative need of the Omnipotent Ejector. The idea generally prevails that these demoniacal possessions were only peculiar to the time and place of our Savior's ministry. This is a mistake. They are everywhere, and will continue till Satan is cast out. Whereas the E.V. calls them devils, you will observe the R.V., in harmony with the original, calls them demons, “devil” being the appropriate cognomen of Satan, and a translation of the Greek *diabolus*; whereas, in all of these cases, where the E.V. speaks of “casting out devils,” *diabolus* does not occur in the original, but *daimonion*, “demon.” These demons are the innumerable host of evil spirits which now throng this world, all seeking a home in some human beast. Some have many of these demons, like the Gadarene; others, fewer. But all who are not dominated by the Holy Spirit, are more or less demonized.

**Matthew 4:23-25.** *“And Jesus was going round all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every malady among the people.”* The old prophets all vividly predicted the coming kingdom; John the Baptist, with stentorian voice, proclaimed its ingress; while Jesus, following him, preached the kingdom as a present reality, exhorting the people to fly thither, thus finding refuge from death and hell. During the gospel dispensation, the kingdom of God on earth is encompassed on all sides with Satanic antagonism, only becoming the asylum of the faithful few, who live in constant anticipation of the return of our glorious King, when He will cast out the enemy and conquer the world.

*“And His fame went abroad into all Syria.”* Whereas Galilee, which is bounded on the south by Samaria, west by the great sea, east by the Jordan, and north by Syria, was the center of our Savior's evangelistic peregrinations, and the scene of most of His mighty works.

*“And they brought to Him all those who were afflicted, being possessed with various diseases and troubles;”* i.e., from all parts of the surrounding country, they are now bringing the people who are afflicted with every diversity of diseases and physical ailments, and He is healing them, to the infinite joy of the poor sufferers and their friends and the ineffable glory of His ministry. *“And the demonized;”* i.e., the people who needed spiritual help, because they were possessed with demons, which must be cast out or they will drag them into hell. *“And the lunatics.”* In that day they had no lunatic asylums for the benefit of the people thus unfortunately afflicted with mental derangement, but their friends had to take care of them the best they could, or let them run at large, the terror and annoyance of the community. Doubtless many of these lunatics were epileptical. *“And the paralyzed; and He healed them all.”* Nervous paralysis, which is very common at the present day, as a rule, is incurable by medical skill. Here we see the Great Healer finds no stubborn cases — fevers retreat away, paralytics leap and run to tell the glorious news, lunatics and epileptics are healed in a moment by His word, while all demons, evacuating their victims, retreat before Him.

*“Many multitudes followed Him from Galilee.”* The whole country, from the Jordan to the sea, from Samaria to Syria, stirred as by a sweeping avalanche, rises up and follows this wonderful Nazarene. *“And Decapolis.”* This proper name is from *deka*, “ten,” and *polis*, “city,” and means the ten cities, with the country they represent, lying east of the Jordan and southeast of the sea of Galilee, and inhabited by Gentiles. *“And Jerusalem, and Judea, and beyond the Jordan.”* Almost one year of our Lord's ministry has passed away. His fame has not only spread throughout all the land of Israel, but has swept over the surrounding Gentile countries like a tornado, bringing multitudes from the ends of the earth to satisfy their curiosity, and see whether the paradoxical reports they have heard are true.

## HE HEALS A LEPER.

**Matthew 13:2-4; Mark 1:40-45; and Luke 5:12-16.** Mark: *“And a leper comes to Him, calling upon Him, and kneeling down before Him, and saying to Him, If You may wish, You are able to cleanse me. And Jesus being moved with compassion, and reaching forth His hand, touched him, and says to him, I am willing; be thou cleansed.”* The Greek for “be thou cleansed,” is *katritheti*, which is in the imperative mode, passive voice, and aorist tense. Therefore it literally means, *“Be thou completely cleansed instantaneously;”* “Be thou clean,” E.V., is too weak a translation of the word our Savior spoke. Luke says this man was “full of leprosy,” in contradistinction to a case of leprosy occupying a part of the body. No wonder he was exceedingly importunate, as he was leprous all over.

*“And charging him, He immediately sent him away, and says to him, See that you tell nothing to any one; but go, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded for a testimony unto them.”* The lepers in Palestine still have their separate quarters in the cities, dwelling to themselves, as in the days of Christ. I met them at Shechem and at Jerusalem. The popular idea that the separation is because of the contagion of the disease is utterly incorrect. It is not contagious. If it were, what would become of the priests, who, in the discharge of their

official duties, are in constant contact with it? See the law of the leper (Leviticus 14), and you will find that when the priest made the examination, and pronounced it leprosy, the victim must go away from society, and live in the leprous quarters. It was well understood among the Jews that leprosy was utterly incurable by human agency. Hence when God, the only Healer, had mercy on the poor leper, he must go to the priest, submit to his diagnosis, and receive from him a certificate of healing, before he was allowed to go into society. While leprosy is not contagious, and not so understood where it is prevalent this day — as I came in contact with them, laying a coin on each arm reached forth in supplication, both hands having been eaten off by leprosy — yet it is incorrigibly hereditary, from the fact that, like scrofula, it is a blood trouble, affecting every corpuscle of blood in the system, so that it is invariably transmitted to the succeeding generation. Leprosy is a most vivid emblem of inbred sin, which is not necessarily contagious, but inevitably hereditary. Infants born of leprous parents are bright and sprightly, exhibiting no signs of the disease. Yet, soon or late, it is certain to make its appearance, if they do not meet the Healer. So infants born into the world have no actual sin, but have inherited the sinward tendency, which, if not eradicated by grace, will certainly develop into actual transgression. The bite of the rattlesnake when a little thing, soon after evacuating the egg, will not hurt you. But the time will come when he will poison and kill you. While the leprous taint in the blood emblemizes inbred sin in the irresponsible infant, the eruptions on the body represent actual transgressions. O what a striking symbol, not only of inbred sin, but the awful spiritual death which supervenes! You have leprosy in your blood, and feel vigorous and healthy. Before you are aware, it develops on your finger and it drops off; continues its work of destruction till your hand drops off at the wrist. It begins on your face; takes away your nose, and then an eye; reaches your brain, and, fortunately, death comes suddenly to your relief. The reason why the law of Moses required them to live separate was because of the awful loathsomeness of the disease indescribable, horrific, living death! Leprosy, fortunately for us, is not common in America, though I have seen cases of it; but quite common in the Bible lands, where I met them during both of my tours, thus, like everything else in those countries, so wonderfully corroborating the Bible.

*“And He, having gone out, began to proclaim everything, and spread abroad the history, so that He was no longer able to come publicly into the city; but was off in desert places, and they continued to come to Him from all parts.” Luke: “But He was away in the deserts, and praying.”* Why was Jesus so much opposed to their publishing His mighty works, and why could He not come into the city at this time, but must hide away in the deserts — *i.e.*, in an uninhabited region of country? From time immemorial, the Jews had all understood that Christ was to be their King. At that time the nation was in deep distress, because thirty years had elapsed since the death of Herod the Great, and during which they had no king, but had been reduced to a Roman province, and were ruled by a proconsul sent out from Rome, thus their liberties gone and their people subject to the Gentiles. Hence, throughout the Hebrew nation, there was a deep sigh, and a perpetual cry to God to break the Roman yoke, restore to them their independence, and give them a king of Hebrew blood to reign over them. These wonderful miracles, when published abroad, raised the people on tiptoe to crown Him King of the Jews. In that case the Roman authorities would have killed Him before He had completed the work He came to do.

Hence, in order to prevent His own coronation, and the sudden outbreak of a terrible, bloody war, which would have interrupted His ministry and expedited His death, He found it necessary to avoid the multitude. These intervals, which He spent off in the desert in communion with His Father, were

wonderful times of refreshing to His spirit, and invigoration for the arduous work and terrible ordeals which awaited him.

## HE HEALS A PARALYTIC.

**Matthew 9:2-8; Mark 2:1-12; and Luke 5:17-26.** **Mark:** *“And again He came into Capernaum during those days, and it was heard that He is at home. And immediately the multitudes came together, so that there was no room, not even at the door; and He continued to speak the word to them.”* **Luke** says: *“The Pharisees and teachers of the law, who had come out of every village of Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem, were sitting around.”* In that day they had no newspapers, steam-engines, telegraphs, nor telephones, the news only going on the back of a camel, a fleet horse, or a swift pedestrian; yet, to our inextricable puzzle, the tidings flew everywhere with astounding velocity, notifying the people, as here Luke says, not only in the cities, but all the villages, that Jesus has come back from His retirement into Capernaum, His headquarters, and is again preaching to the multitudes, healing the sick and casting out demons.

*“They come to Him, carrying a paralyzed man, borne by four. Not being able to reach Him, on account of the crowd, they took up the roof where He was, and lifting it out, let down the bed on which the paralyzed man was lying down.”* **Luke** says: *“Mounting up on top of the house, they let him down through the tiles, along with the bed, in the midst, in the presence of Jesus.”* The houses in that country have flat roofs, covered with stone, with stairways ascending up, and tiling arranged for removal at their option, when they wish to go out on the roof. The first time I ever entered Jerusalem, my guide escorted me through a lofty mansion by internal stairways, leading up through the roof, giving me a grand view of the city, which was impossible from the streets. As there is no doubt but this was Peter's house in Capernaum, and the home of Jesus, the presumption is, it was not very high, the multitude being outside. These importunate friends of the paralytic, pressing their way through the crowd, use a ladder to climb the house from the outside, reaching the solid stone roof, cemented together so that it looked like a single great limestone rock covering the house, as I have so often seen and walked over them; coming to this movable door, take up the tiles, and let the man down, lying on his bed, lowering him to the very presence of Jesus, in the midst of His sermon.

*“And Jesus, seeing their faith, says to the paralytic, Child, thy sins are forgiven.”* Here we have a wonderful demonstration of prevailing faith. There is no doubt but the paralytic had faith in Jesus to heal him, as these four friends, all round him during the long journey while carrying him on his bed, heaving like volcanoes, had inundated him with an atmosphere red-hot and electrified with indefatigable faith, so that, if he didn't have it before, he certainly had imbibed it from his company by the time he reached the feet of Jesus; yet we have no allusion whatever to the faith of the patient, but it is unequivocally certified that the healing resulted from the faith of his four friends, who certainly abundantly proved their faith by their works in thus bringing him to the presence of Jesus, despite every conceivable difficulty. O that the perishing myriads all round us could only have friends enough to carry them to Jesus on the pinions of a faith that will take no denial! What a transcendent inspiration to all Christian workers, this notable case, where Jesus healed the man responsive to the faith of his friends!

**Luke 21.** *“And the scribes and Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this One who speaketh blasphemies? Who is able to forgive sins except God alone? And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, responding, said to them, Why do you reason in your hearts? Why is it easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven, than to say, Arise and walk? But in order that you may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, He said to the paralyzed man, I say unto thee, Arise, and taking up thy bed, go to thy home. And immediately arising in presence of them, taking up that on which he was lying down, he departed to his own home, glorifying God. And ecstasy seized all, and they continued to glorify God; and they were filled with fear, saying, That we have seen paradoxical things this day.”* While the Jewish Church was awfully unspiritual, and the preachers, as a rule, without an experimental knowledge of God, they held pertinaciously to the cardinal truths of the Bible, one of which here very lucidly crops out; *i.e.*, that none but God can forgive sins. Many modern Churches, who are depending on priestly absolution, water baptism, sacraments, and good works, to take away their sins, would do well to heed this fundamental truth, here enunciated by the fallen clergy of apostate Judaism; *i.e.*, that none but God alone can forgive sins. Therefore we must all pass by our own works, Church rites, water baptism, clerical intercession, and everything else, and go to God alone, on our knees, and stay till He, for Christ's sake, forgives all our sins, and witnesses to the same by His blessed Holy Spirit. In this case, Jesus avails Himself of the smaller work — *i.e.*, bodily healing — which was visible to mortal eyes, and incontestably demonstrated by the uprising of the patient, and the carrying of his bed away to his home, in order to illustrate the greater work — *i.e.*, the forgiving of his sins — which either directly or indirectly had brought on him the paralysis, which is not hereditary, like leprosy, which typifies inbred sin; and consequently, as it originates from violation of the hygienical laws, represents actual sins, which must be removed by pardon, while original sin can only be expurgated by the cleansing blood of Jesus and the refining fire of the Holy Ghost. It is highly probable that this paralytic was a very bad case, of long standing, and extensively known by those people. Hence, his sudden and perfect healing, so clearly demonstrated, produced an intense excitement, not only filling the people with delight to see the mighty work, but overawing them with profoundest reverence in the realization of the Divine presence.

### CONVERSION OF MATTHEW.

**Matthew 20:9; Mark 2:13,14; and Luke 5:27-28.** **Mark:** *“And He went out again by the sea; and all the multitude came to Him, and He continued to teach them. And passing along He saw Levi, the son of Alpheus, sitting at the toll; and He says to Him, Follow Me. And rising, he followed Him.”* **Luke:** *“And leaving all things, rising, he followed Him.”* **Matthew:** *“Jesus, going on from thence, saw a man sitting at the toll called Matthew, and says to him, Follow Me, and rising up, he followed Him.”* This took place in the city of Capernaum, the home of Jesus, Peter, Andrew, James, John, and Matthew, who is also called Levi. Here we have the very brief account of the conversion and call to the apostleship of Matthew, one of the writers of our Lord's Gospel. He and John were apostles among the original Twelve, Mark serving as Peter's amanuensis and Luke that of Paul. Matthew's conversion, here so briefly given, is quite remarkable. He is not only in the bloom of youth, but the incumbent of a lucrative office. He is no poor man, but he is rich, living in affluence, with the broadest possibilities of worldly aggrandizement spread out before him. He suddenly and unhesitatingly leaves all for a life of toil, poverty, and persecution, and a cruel death to wind up. Suddenly converted, we never afterward hear of his wavering. In the distribution of the world among

the apostles, pursuant to the Commission, receiving Ethiopia as his field of labor, he faithfully went, and preached heroically till he sealed his faith with his blood, and flew up to join his Master in celestial glory.

We have now followed our Lord through the first year of His ministry, all of which He spent in Galilee, His home and favorite field, except about two months at the beginning. The Feast of the Passover, instituted and perpetuated to commemorate the Divine mercy shown to Israel the last night of their sojourn in Egypt, when the destroying angel came down and slew the firstborn in every house in all the land, but in mercy passing over the houses of Israel besprinkled with the blood of the slain lamb, symbolic of the *“Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.”* Our Savior gave special attention and peculiar honor to this institution, beginning His ministry at a Passover, and winding it up at another three years subsequently, two Passovers intervening in the interim. Now, the first year of His ministry having passed away, the fame of His mighty works having filled Palestine and mightily stirred the Gentile world, till all eyes are turned toward Him, most momentous inquiries are everywhere ringing from the popular lip, “Is not this the Shiloh of prophecy, the Christ of God, the Savior of the world, and the Redeemer of Israel? If He is not truly the Messiah who is to come, He is certainly the greatest prophet whom God has ever given to Israel.”

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE POOL OF BETHESDA.

**John 5:1-47.** *“After these things there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.”* You always find the phraseology in the Bible, *“Go up to Jerusalem.”* This was literally true, as Jerusalem is high up on Mt. Zion. It is also a peculiar Orientalism, in harmony with the phraseology of all nations, who, through the ages, have always thus alluded to the seat of Government, whether it be on a lofty mountain or down on the seashore.

*“There is in Jerusalem a pool at the sheep-market, called Bethesda in Hebrew, having five porches. In these were lying down a great multitude of the sick, the blind, the lame, the paralyzed, awaiting the moving of the water.”* Bethesda means “house of mercy,” because it was a celebrated sanitarium. It is near the gate now called St. Stephen's, because they say that he was dragged out through this gate, and stoned in front of it, pointing out to us the place of his martyrdom. I went into this pool during both of my visits at Jerusalem. The five porches, with their stone arches, are still there. Verse 4, in E.V., about the angel coming down and troubling the water, and the first incomer being healed, is not in the original, but an interpolation which some one has added.

*“And there was a certain man there, having thirty-eight years in sickness. Jesus seeing him lying down, and knowing that he already has much time, says to him, Do you wish to be made whole? The sick man responded to Him, Lord, I have no man that, when the water may be troubled, may cast me into the pool; and while I am going, another goes down before me. Jesus says to him, Arise, take thy bed and walk about. And immediately the man was made whole, and took his bed and continued to walk round. And it was the Sabbath; on that day therefore the Jews continued to say to the man who had been healed, It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. He responded to them, The One having made me whole, He said to me, Take up thy bed and walk about. Then they asked him, Who is the Man who said to thee, Take thy bed and walk about? And the man who had been healed did not know who He is; for Jesus went out, the multitude being in the place. After these things, Jesus finds him in the temple, and said to him, Behold, thou hast been made whole; sin no more, in order that something worse may not come upon thee. The man departed, and reported to the Jews that Jesus is the One having made him whole. Therefore the Jews continued to persecute Jesus, and seek to kill Him, because He was doing those things on the Sabbath. And Jesus responded unto them, My Father worketh, and I work also, even till now. Then the Jews, on this account, continued the more to seek to kill Him, because He was not only breaking the Sabbath, but was even saying that God is His own Father, making Himself equal to God.”* While the Jews could not criticize the miraculous philanthropy of healing the poor man, who had suffered thirty-eight years, they now focalize all their diabolical malice on the Sabbath question, alleging that He was going right ahead with His work on the Sabbath-day. How stunningly Jesus answers them, *“My Father worketh, and I work even until now!”* — i.e., God goes ahead with His work all day Sunday, keeping the planets spinning in their orbits, worlds moving, systems revolving, the sun shining, rivers flowing, all hearts beating, the blood circulating, the vital functions all going on, and the mighty

machinery of the boundless universe still moving along its appointed way. If God did not work on Sunday, the worlds and systems of worlds would cease to move, vital currents no longer flow, and life cease in all the universe. This they could not deny. So Jesus certifies that He is working on through the Sabbath-day in harmony with the example of His Father. Now remember that His example is ours too. Therefore we have no right to spend the Sabbath in idleness, worldly pleasure or pastime. But, like Jesus, we should work hard on the Sabbath, doing good, saving souls, glorifying God, and laboring to girdle the world with gospel grace and heavenly philanthropy. Like all fallen Churches, the Jews had run the forms of religion into silly fanaticism, taking the shadow for the substance. The Sabbath is all right in its place, and we should certainly keep it holy; but remember that it is to be subordinated to the glory of God, and devoted to works of mercy, those of necessity being also recognized. Every age has had its fanaticisms. In my travels I frequently meet these Sabbatical fanatics, preaching holy days instead of holy hearts, disturbing and unsettling the people of God, much to the detriment of our Savior's kingdom. If the heart is holy, the Sabbath will be kept, and all other duties faithfully performed. I find another class of fanatics preaching baptismal regeneration, thus worshipping a water-god, while the poor Sabbatarians worship a day-god. Good Lord, deliver us from all sorts of idolatry!

*“Then Jesus responded and said to them, Truly, truly, I say unto you, The Son is not able to do anything of Himself unless He may see the Father doing something; for whatsoever things He may do, these the Son doeth likewise.”* These statements certainly do prove the identity of the Father and the Son, which is in perfect harmony with their distinct personalities. I am editor in the morning, teacher in the afternoon, and preacher at night, thus exhibiting to the world three personal characters, and still I am but one.

*“For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things which He doeth; and greater works than these will He show unto Him, in order that you may be astonished.”* Though our Savior, during the first year of His ministry, had wrought many wonderful works, yet those attending His crucifixion witnessed far greater; *i.e.*, the darkening of the sun, the earthquake, the rending of rocks and the temple veil, and His own resurrection and glorious ascension, transcended anything they had hitherto witnessed.

*“For as the Father raiseth up the dead and createth life in them, so the Son also createth life in whom He willeth.”* Not only does this wonderful and comprehensive statement apply to the resurrection of the body, but pre-eminently to that of the soul, whom God raises from the dead in regeneration, actually “creating life” in that dead human spirit as really as the creation of a world. So Jesus here affirms that He raises from the dead, human souls and bodies, just like the Omnipotent Father.

*“For the Father judgeth no one, but hath given all judgment to the Son, in order that all may honor the Son as they may honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father who sent Him.”* This not only sweeps away one hundred and seventy-five millions of Mohammedans, who are very zealous worshipers of the Father, but it demolishes all of the Unitarians, who claim to worship and honor the Father, ignoring the Divinity of the Son, and thus insulting Him with the vilest dishonor by degrading Him to the status of a man. Truly do Jesus and Paul say that Christ is a stumbling-block, over which millions stumble and plunge headlong into hell.

O how stoutly the Moslem millions do argue and preach against the Divine Sonship, alleging that it is utterly incompatible with the character of God to have a Son!

*“Truly, I say unto you, That the one hearing My Word, and believing on Him that sent Me, hath eternal life, and doth not come into condemnation, but has passed out of death into life.”* O what a grand, unmistakable, and irrefutable declaration of salvation through faith alone! In this wonderful verse we see the subject has already passed out of spiritual death into spiritual life, so that he already has in his heart the eternal life, which the angels and redeemed around the throne enjoy, while there is no human condition specified but hearing the Word and believing. Repentance is involved in faith, being a prerequisite, to put us on believing ground, while obedience and a holy life follow invariably, as the stream flows from the fountain. In this one verse we have the whole plan of salvation in a nutshell. What a wonderful text from which to preach the everlasting gospel!

*“Truly, truly, I say unto you, That the hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and hearing, they shall live.”* This has direct allusion to spiritual resurrection. That very moment, the Omnipotent Son of God was standing before them, whose providence it is to speak the dead to life. O what an auspicious time and golden opportunity the thronging multitudes attending the Passover enjoyed! What a pity they let the devil, through the influence of their preachers and leaders, blind their eyes and plunge them into irretrievable ruin, their bodies hastening to an awful death in the destruction of Jerusalem, and their never-dying souls into the doom of a Christless eternity!

*“For as the Father hath life in Himself, so He has also given unto the Son to have life in Himself.”* Here we see the co-equality of the Son with the Father, having life in Himself, which is peculiar to God alone, thus proving most unequivocally the Divinity of Christ.

*“And He hath given Him power also to execute judgment, because He is the Son of man.”* It is a precious consolation to know that a member of our own race, in purest and truest sympathy with us, is to judge us in the great day. Whereas fallen human beings are the children of the devil (John 8:44), Jesus is the only Son of unfallen humanity the world has ever seen. Hence the Man Jesus is perfectly free from every taint of human corruption. Consequently we know that His judgment in our behalf is not only infallible, but sweetened with that unutterable love which brought Him from heaven to die for us.

*“Be not astonished at this; because the hour cometh in which all who are in their graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth: those who have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and those who have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”* Here we have a clear and positive revelation, assuring us that all, both good and bad, will be raised from the dead. While the resurrection and glorification of the bodies of the saints, and their reunion with their spirits, will prove a glorious augmentation of their happiness, it follows, as a legitimate sequence from the law of Divine retribution, that the physical resurrection of the wicked will infinitely increase their torments in the regions of endless woe. There are mysterious problems connected with these momentous truths, solvable only from the consideration of the participation in good or evil appertaining to these bodies. Man is mysteriously and wonderfully made, consisting of spirit, intellect, and body, and all immortal, like God, who created him *“in His own image and likeness.”*

Therefore the body of man is as immortal as his soul. You see how these words of the Savior sweep away the silly dogma of the annihilationist, showing clearly that the bodies of the wicked will be raised in the general resurrection, clothed with immortality, again becoming the receptacles of the wicked souls once inhabiting them, and soul and body, thus reunited, cast into hell, sinking down to deeper depths and more horrific retributions than ever known in the disembodied state. On the contrary, though the saints, disembodied, are perfectly happy in heaven, as everything there is perfect, yet when, responsive to the archangel's trump, they shall descend and receive their bodies, lustrous with the resurrection glory, and, soul and body united, fly away to explore the boundless celestial universe, with adoring wonder eternally contemplating the ineffable glory of creative Omnipotence, profounder depths, broader latitudes, more infinite longitudes, and more glorious altitudes will continue to burst upon the enraptured soul, now not only in possession of the glorified intellect, but the risen, transfigured, and immortalized body; thus, with ever-increasing sunburst of ineffable glory and immortality, triumphant humanity, probation left far behind in total and eternal eclipse, will sweep on, parallel with the flight of celestial cycles, accumulating new luster, exploring hitherto unseen worlds, and will sweep on through ceaseless cycles of eternity.

*“I am not able to do anything of Myself; as I hear, I judge; My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of the Father who sent Me.”* Of course, the Divine will of the Son is identical with that of the Father, while His human will must be perfectly subordinated to it, otherwise a trend to aberrate from the Divine will would supervene, which could only prove detrimental and focalize ultimately in self-will. As the Man Jesus is our Paragon, and He ignored His own will to do that of His Father — thus His human will, not only being subsidiary to, but identical with, the Divine will — so in our case, self-will must be totally abnegated and absorbed in the will of God. You must remember that while Jesus is perfect God, He is also a perfect Man, having a personal human will, like all other men, with the single exception that, having no participation in the fall, His will was always perfectly free from every taint of selfishness.

*“If I testify concerning Myself, My testimony is not true.”* Lord, save us from testifying about ourselves! Jesus abnegated it. While on earth, He was God's Witness, testifying to the word the power, love, and grace of the Father. We should do likewise — go and tell the people about God, His wonderful salvation, at the same time, in the attitude of His humble witnesses, testifying to a lost world His power to save, witnessing to all His mighty works in our own souls and bodies.

*“There is Another who testifieth concerning Me, and I know that His testimony is true that He testifieth concerning Me. You sent to John, and he testified to the truth; but I do not receive the testimony from man; but I speak these things in order that you may be saved. He was a bright and shining light, and you were willing to rejoice for an hour in his light.”* John the Baptist, the last of the Old Testament prophets and the greatest of all, was sent of God to witness to the people the Christhood of Jesus. He did his work faithfully, courageously, and unequivocally, not only preaching to the multitude the presence of the Messiah on the earth, but actually pointing Him out, and formally introducing Him to the gazing throng. Those very people, to whom Jesus is here preaching on the Temple Campus, had sent a delegation of priests and Levites to John to make a special inquiry in reference to this momentous issue. To these, John gave a most unequivocal answer, making them all witnesses to his testimony to the Christhood of Jesus. Here our Savior tells them how they “rejoiced for an hour” in the grand and glorious light of John the Baptist. Here He touches a

memorable and significant fact; *i.e.*, the evanescence of that wonderful Johannic revival which, beginning in the desert of Judea with the illiterate peasantry, swelling out, magnetized Jerusalem, Judea, and all the regions round about Jordan, so that, dropping their employments, they hastened away to hear the wonderful prophet of the wilderness: the tide rising, the revival wave broadening, multitudes coming from foreign lands; *e.g.*, Apollos from Africa, such a revival having never been known in the annals of the world. Yet how transient the effect! Well does Jesus speak of it as lasting but “an hour.” While that was true of the great multitude, the same tumultuous throng who hung spellbound six solid months on the lips of the eloquent Baptist, three years subsequently, manipulated by their leading ministers, shouted, uproariously, “Crucify Him!” Yet we must remember that the apostles and the original disciples of Jesus, the faithful few who followed Him in all of His peregrinations, and stood by Him in all His persecution — His enemies hounding Him for His life — subsequently receiving the Pentecostal baptism, and preaching the gospel to the ends of the earth, were, in the main, disciples of John the Baptist.

*“I have a testimony greater than that of John; for the works which the Father gave Me, in order that I may perfect them, these works, which I do, testify concerning Me, because the Father hath sent Me; and the Father having sent Me, Himself hath testified concerning Me.”* While the testimony of John and many others is really conclusive and unanswerable, yet the stupendous miracles which Jesus was all the time performing — so many cases of bodily healing and demoniacal ejection that we may justly conclude that the New Testament record is but a tithe — prove and demonstrate His Christhood, to the satisfaction of every diligent inquirer after truth, beyond the possibility of cavil.

*“You have never heard His voice, nor seen His face, and you have not His Word abiding in you, because you do not believe Him whom He has sent.”* Did not God come into the garden and speak to Adam and Eve face to face? Did not Moses look upon the rear of His person as He passed by, putting His hand over him that he might not see His face? Did not Moses abide with Him, hear His voice, and see His face forty days on Mt. Sinai when He gave him the law? Did He not come, accompanied by two angels, to Abraham's tent at Mamre, conversing and eating with him? There are two Hebrew words occurring throughout the Old Testament representing God — *i.e.*, *Elohim*, which means God Almighty, the word being in the plural number, including the Son and the Spirit; and *Yehovah* — *i.e.*, Jehovah, which means the Excarnate Christ. John the Baptist (Mark 3) and Paul (1 Corinthians 10) certify the identity of the Jehovah of the Old Testament with the Christ of the New. Hence these personal manifestations of God in the Old Testament are the Excarnate Son; as we must remember that Christ has always been in the world, throwing wide open the door of God's saving mercy to all appreciative souls, making salvation graciously possible in all ages and nations, and under all circumstances, as He is the *“True Light, which lighteth every man which cometh into the world.”*

*“And you have not His Word abiding in you, because you do not believe Him whom He has sent.”* Now, remember, Jesus rang out this awful truth in the faces of the pastors of the popular Churches, the great preachers, the ruling elders, and the Official Board. If these people, who claimed to understand and love the Word of God, were in this awful dilemma, *“without the Word abiding in them,”* should we not all profit by their sad example?

*“Search the Scriptures, because in them you think you have eternal life, and they are the witnesses testifying concerning Me; and you do not wish to come to Me, in order that you may have light.”* Those people, with the highest culture of the age, graduates from the rabbinical colleges, expounders of the Scriptures in the synagogue, lights and leaders of the people, could not see that the Bible was literally full of Christ. The same phenomenon this day confronts us on all sides: men of highest culture, with collegiate diplomas, standing at the front of the Churches, leaders to whom the multitudes look for light, example, and wisdom, can not find Christian perfection in their Bibles. What is the solution? The Bible is a sealed book until revealed by the Holy Ghost. These people are without the indwelling Expositor, standing precisely where the clergy and official members stood in the days of Christ. They would not come to Christ because they believed they were already saved, when they were barbarically ignorant of first principles.

*“I do not receive glory from men; but I have known you, that you have not the love of God in yourselves.”* Jesus here uses that profoundly significant word *agape*, which means the Divine nature, and constitutes the essence of human salvation. The Holy Ghost pours it out into the heart in regeneration (Romans 5:5), while it is made perfect in the sanctification, which eliminates away all depravity, leaving this love to reign in the heart and life without a rival. The very fact that these preachers and influential Church members, to whom Jesus made this statement, were without the love of God abiding in their hearts, simply means that they were sinners, exposed to wrath and hell. Lord, help us to profit by their fatal mistake!

*“I have come in the name of My Father, and you are not receiving Me; if another may come in his own name, him you will receive.”* A number of false Christs did rise, within the next forty years after this utterance, whom those same people did receive and follow. It is equally true this day, that if a man wants a following, he must come in his own name, with a flourish of trumpets, high-sounding titles, and human display. If he sinks away into God, the world will lose sight of him, and the worldly Churches reject him.

*“How are you able to believe, receiving glory from one another, and you do not seek the glory which is with God alone?”* Here we see that human ambition, in all of its forms and phases, is incompatible with real faith. For this reason, everything possible should be done to divest preachers and Church members of all human eclat, worldly aggrandizement, and vain glory. Ministerial ambition ruins the clergy and the Churches, defeating all efforts in the way of their sanctification; as no one can be sanctified who is a candidate for anything but reproach, persecution, and heaven. The New Testament bishop is simply a pastor — *i.e.*, a leader of a holiness band, as the apostolic Churches knew nothing about human ecclesiasticisms, but were simply holiness bands. The creation of these high, honorable, and remunerative ministerial offices is calculated to ruin all of the young preachers, inflating them with ambition, and stirring them up to seek office, place, and emolument — *i.e.*, human honor — which Jesus here utterly condemns, certifying its irreconcilable disharmony with faith, without which neither preacher nor people can be saved.

*“Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; Moses, in whom you have hope, is the one accusing you. If you believe in Moses, you believe in Me; for he wrote concerning Me. If you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”* Our Savior's learned audience at this time boasted in the discipleship of Moses, claiming to keep every ramification of the Mosaic law, and

making it their daily business to expound to the people the Scriptures of Moses; yet Jesus certifies that they didn't believe them. Of course, they thought they did. Do not forget that the preaching of Jesus is as applicable to the present generation as to His contemporaries. His audience verily thought that they not only believed the Pentateuch of Moses, but were walking daily in obedience to the same. The mystery clears away when we remember that the Bible is a spiritual book, having a spiritual interpretation, of which unspiritual people are utterly ignorant. God's religion is a secret, which none but God — *i.e.*, the Holy Ghost — can reveal. The apostate Jewish Church had fallen into the hands of the unspiritual clergy, who are utterly incompetent to dispense to the people the bread of life, because they themselves were spiritually dead, and dead men are not very suitable to feed others. John is the only evangelist who gives an account of our Savior's visit to Jerusalem at this time, attending the second Passover, of His ministry, and preaching to the vast multitudes convened on the Temple Campus. In this chapter he gives us one of the Master's powerful sermons, which shot the lightning of conviction in forked horrors in all directions, hewing down the tall clergy without distinction or mercy, revealing inbred sin in its Gorgon horrors, and sending the dynamite of conviction into the deep interior of all appreciative hearts, thus scoring deep with the gospel ax, and hewing to the line of the infallible plummet.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XIV.

### JESUS RETURNS TO GALILEE.

**Matthew 12:1-18; Mark 2:23-28, and Luke 6:1-5.** We find that our Lord spent but two weeks at Jerusalem during this tour, preaching and working miracles all the time, of which we have no record; but the fifth chapter of John giving us one notable miracle and one powerful sermon. Luke informs us that the incident, here recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, took place on the Sabbath following the Passover, which began on the Sabbath, ran through the intervening week, and closed on the ensuing Sabbath; thus, according to Luke's testimony, giving our Savior two-weeks' evangelistic tour in Jerusalem. Inquiry naturally rises why He returns to Galilee so soon, when He had spent about ten months of the preceding year in that country. Our Lord gives the reason (John 4:44). Jerusalem and Judea were the regions of great population, while Galilee was the more thinly settled. Again, as He was a native Galilean, His ministry would not attract the amount of popular attention there as at Jerusalem, and especially on occasions of the great festivals, thus augmenting the probability of their cutting short His ministry by crowning Him King. Therefore He did most of His preaching and performed most of His mighty works in the comparatively thinly populated regions of Galilee.

**Mark:** *“And it came to pass that He was journeying on the Sabbath, through the corn-fields, and His disciples began to pursue the journey, plucking the ears [i.e., the wheat-heads]. And the Pharisees continued to say to Him, Behold what they are doing on the Sabbath, which is not lawful. And He said to them, Have you not read what David did when he had need, and he and those who were with him were hungry? How he entered into the house of God, in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which it is not lawful to eat except for the priests, and he gave it to those who were with him? And He said to them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.”* **Matthew:** *“Have you not read in the law that the priests on the Sabbath in the 'temple do profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? But I say unto you, There is One here greater than the temple. If you had known what that is, I wish mercy and not sacrifice, you would not have condemned the innocent.”* Matthew, Mark, and Luke all relate this incident, which transpired on the Sabbath following the Passover, while our Lord and His disciples were prosecuting their pedestrian journey back to Galilee. Remember that we are now in the beginning of the second year of our Savior's ministry, two more years and two Passovers yet to come. We see our Lord's critics raise no objection to their plucking the wheat-heads, rubbing them out in their hands and eating them (it is more probable it was barley, as this occurred about the first of May, the beginning of the barley harvest, the wheat coming on about a month later), as this privilege was granted in the law of Moses (Deuteronomy 21:2,25); but they arraign Him for violating the Sabbath, as this happened to take place on that day, showing how very fanatical they were, that they wouldn't allow them to get a little something to eat on the Sabbath. Excessive zeal on non-essentials has characterized the fallen Churches of every age. At this point they murdered the martyrs, too blind to see their holy lives, and actually massacring them because they did not conform to the non-essential human regulations of a fallen ecclesiasticism. Our Savior here gives them the case of the

priests, who offer the sacrifices, and work hard in the temple on the Sabbath, and are blameless. He also corroborates it by the case of David (1 Samuel 21:1-7), who, in his flight from Saul, came to Nob, in the days of Abiathar, the priest, he and his men, in their extremity and destitution, eating the shewbread in the temple, which was lawful only for the priests to eat. "I wish mercy and not sacrifice" is the key to this entire problem. God wants a broken heart and a contrite spirit, a penitent soul, on whom He can have mercy, free and unlimited — *i.e.*, save him for nothing, except the vicarious work of Christ — instead of a great sacrifice, offered in pomp and demonstration by some rich person, whose heart is far from Him, vainly flattering himself that he can pay his way to heaven. In this way millions of wealthy Church members make their bed in hell, depending on their offerings to the Lord, instead of falling, a miserable, bankrupt suppliant, at the feet of Jesus, and there crying for mercy till the heavens bow, and God comes down and answers the prayer of the broken-hearted penitent in the mighty uplift of His omnipotent hand.

### THE WITHERED HAND.

**Matthew 12:9-14; Mark 3:1-6; and Luke 6:6-11.** Our Lord and His disciples have again reached Galilee, their native land. Luke notifies us that this incident transpired on the Sabbath following the preceding, and that it was the right hand which was utterly paralyzed and withered away. **Mark:** *"And he came again into the synagogue, and there was a man with a withered hand. And they were watching Him if He will heal him on the Sabbath-day, in order that they may accuse Him. And He says to the man having the withered hand, Rise up in the midst. And He says to them, Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath-day or to do evil, to save life or to kill? And they were silent. And looking round on them with anger, being grieved on account of the hardness of their heart, He says to the man, Reach forth thy hand, and he reached it forth, and his hand was made whole as the other. And the Pharisees, going out, immediately took counsel, along with the Herodians, against Him, in order that they may kill Him."* Doubt less you are surprised over the extreme fanaticism of the Jews on the Sabbath question. You must remember that the penalty for Sabbath-breaking under the law of Moses was death. Sabbath is a Hebrew word, which means rest; *i.e.*, that perfect rest which the sanctified soul finds in Jesus. Now you know that God's method with sin is destruction. You can not have this blessed Sabbatic soul-rest until you crucify the man of sin. Then it is impossible for you to keep it unless you deal death to every disturber; *i.e.*, keep the Sword of the Spirit unsheathed and lifted high, ready to strike the death-blow and cut off every snake-head that pokes out. Therefore the symbolic dispensation punished the Sabbath-breaker with death, confirming to us this grand and glorious truth of entire sanctification by sin's annihilation, received and perpetuated. The fact is, even at that early day in His ministry, the leading preachers and official laymen had determined to kill Him, and were only seeking an opportunity. They thought that if they could condemn Him for Sabbath-breaking, they could secure the edict of the Sanhedrin, which was death by stoning. You see in this, the Pharisees and Herodians unite against Him, taking mutual counsel for His death. Do you not know the Pharisees were the orthodox denomination of the Jewish Church and leaders in the opposition to Roman rule, which they had then endured thirty years, while the Herodians were a political party in favor of the Roman Government. Hence, you see, they were bitter enemies, either to other. Yet we here find them uniting their forces against Jesus, and taking mutual counsel to kill Him. How wonderfully history repeats itself! Holiness is the abstract of which Jesus is the concrete. Opposition to holiness is nothing more nor less than opposition to Jesus. How frequently do we find the warring sects laying down the cudgel of controversy, and all mutually uniting against holiness!

During our Savior's response to them on this occasion, **Mark** says, *“Looking round upon them with anger, being grieved on account of the hardness of their hearts.”* Here he uses the same word, *orge*, which Paul used (Ephesians 5:26), “Be ye angry and sin not.” Now how can we be angry and sin not? Why! in the same sense in which Jesus “looked round on them with anger,” as Mark and Paul both use the same word — the former applying it to Jesus, and the latter to the saints of all ages. We can be angry and sin not precisely as Jesus did on that occasion. Fortunately, we have an inspired definition of our Lord's anger on that occasion, *“Being grieved on account of the hardness of their heart.”* Hence, we see, the anger of Jesus consisted in holy grief. Therefore this is the only sense in which we can be angry and sin not. The more holy we are, and the more like Jesus, the more we realize holy indignation against all sin, in every conceivable form and phase. Hence “anger,” in the sense of holy grief, is characteristic of every true Christian. In this sense, *“God is angry with the wicked every day.”* Lord, make us all like Thyself!

### WONDERFUL FAME OF JESUS.

He has again reached the sea of Galilee, so exceedingly conspicuous in His ministry. I spent two bright autumnal days sailing over this sea, so delighted to traverse, drink, and bathe in those waters where my Lord moved hither and thither, drinking and washing in the same. We sail completely around that sea, stopping at many of the noted historic places. **Mark 3:7-12:** *“And Jesus departed, with His disciples, to the sea, and a great multitude followed Him from Galilee, from Judea, from Jerusalem, from Idumea, and from beyond Jordan; and those about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, hearing how many things He was doing, came unto Him.”* We see here that not only Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem, all the Jewish countries, are pell-mell on His track, but the tawny sons of Esau are here from Idumea, away out toward sunrise; the Ammonites, the Moabites, and the tribes of Arabia are also on His track; while from the west, reaching out to the great sea, the multitudes of old Tyre and Sidon are thronging around Him. He made no appointments, they had no mail facilities, locomotives, or telegraphs; yet his fame has gone to the ends of the earth.

*“And He said to His disciples that a small ship may wait on Him, on account of the crowd, in order that they may not throng Him. For He healed many, so that they are falling on Him, that He may touch them, so many as had diseases.”* He avails Himself of this opportunity to preach the gospel to this vast multitude. The sea of Galilee is seven hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean, and, as a natural consequence, surrounded by highlands. You see how a man in a boat near the shore, with the people on elevated ground in front, would enjoy a good opportunity to address them.

*“And unclean spirits, when they saw Him, fell down before Him, and cried out, saying, Thou art the Son of God. He rebuked them much, that they may not make Him known.”* These lecherous, impure, and brutal demons, rendering their poor victims debauchees and harlots, had once been spotless and bright, shining among the unfallen angels; as God never created an unclean spirit, they were victims of their own apostasy (Isaiah 14:12, and Jude 6); having in bygone ages gazed upon the ineffable glory of Jesus, now recognizing Him, they spontaneously confess Him before the multitude. Why did He forbid them? You must remember He did not openly avow His Christhood among the Jews until about one year subsequently to this date, as such an avowal would have precipitated His regal coronation, plunged the country into a bloody war, and expedited His own death prematurely.

During the first two years of His ministry, He turns on the people a floodtide of truth appertaining to His Messiahship, gloriously corroborated by His incontestable miracles, preferring that the truth He preached and the mighty works He wrought should proclaim His Christhood; at the same time, in Gentile countries, such as Samaria and Gadara, He unequivocally proclaimed His Christhood, as there was no liability of their crowning Him King.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE FIRST AND SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

**Matthew 12:15-21.** “*And Jesus, knowing, departed thence* [i.e., when He ascertained that the Pharisees and Herodians were counseling to kill Him, He departed from that place where He had healed the withered hand on the Sabbath]; *and many multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all.*” What a wonderful Physician we have! He never fails to cure the patient, our own faith being the measuring-line of His efficiency, whether for soul or body. When your work is done, and the Lord is ready to take you to heaven, though you will have abundance of faith for your soul to sweep into glory, you will have no faith for your body to be healed. That will be a glorious day, because heaven is so much better than health.

“*He charged them that they may not make Him known,*” — i.e., the notoriety of His mighty works would excite the multitude to crown Him King, as the Jews all understood that Christ was to be their King, and they were so tired of the Roman yoke, which they had carried thirty years. O how they longed for Messiah to come and break it off their necks!

“*In order that the word spoken by Isaiah the prophet may be fulfilled, saying, Behold My Servant, whom I have chosen, My Beloved in whom my soul delighteth; I will place My Spirit upon Him, and He will proclaim judgment to the Gentiles.*” This is a beautiful prophetic allusion to the glorious coming of our Lord, when He shall girdle the globe with the splendors and triumphs of His Millennial Theocracy, all the nations of the earth gladly bowing down to His benignant, equitable, and heavenly administration, bringing back the bright days of Eden, which have so long lingered only in the memories of the past, while the nations will “*beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks, and learning war no more.*” The sad memories of the long, bloody ages, which have ground down the nations of the earth into the dust of degradation and oppression, and whitened the plains, will be forgotten, amid universal peace, prosperity, philanthropy, and happiness, all nations delighted with the mild and amiable reign of the glorious King of kings and Lord of lords.

“*He shall not strive, nor scream, neither shall any one hear His voice in the streets.*” Paul says, “*It does not behoove the man of God to strive.*” Hence, in harmony with Jesus and Paul, while we should earnestly “*contend for the faith once delivered to the saints,*” we should not do it in a controversial spirit, but love predominating, having no desire for self-aggrandizement, but only the glorification of God in the proclamation and vindication of truth. There is nothing in this passage against street-preaching, which Jesus and His apostles practiced all their lives. While the people of God preach on the streets, and everywhere else, they are characterized by meekness, humility, and love, in contradistinction to the selfish and uproarious manner of worldly people, shouting aloud, advertising their merchandise, and prosecuting their various secular employments. There is a quietness, resignation, and humiliation peculiar to the saints, most decisively contrastive with the rush and precipitation peculiar to the worldly rabble. This verse lucidly describes Jesus in His humiliation, contrastively with the preceding, which describes Him in His glorious dominion.

*“The bruised reed, He will not break.”* This is a beautiful symbolism of the humble penitent, crying to God with a broken heart and a contrite spirit. *“He will not quench the smoking flax.”* Here we have a vivid symbolism of the struggling soul, crying to God for the sanctifying baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. *“Until He may send forth judgment unto victory.”* Here we have both works of grace in beautiful juxtaposition the former, describing the agonizing penitent under the strong figure of a bruised reed, which Satan is trying to break and destroy forever; and the latter, under the vivid metaphor of the flax, smoking and trying to burn, and the enemy throwing on it the chilling waters to put it out, thus beautifully typifying the seeker after a clean heart, longing for the sin — consuming fires of the Holy Ghost from heaven to fall. In both of these cases, it is here certified that our Savior will *“send forth judgment unto victory”* in the case of the poor sinner seeking pardon — *i.e.*, *“the bruised reed;”* since He has bled and died, and paid all the debt He owes, in the full light of heavenly jurisprudence, He can give an eternal judgment of acquittal, thus justifying Him freely through the atonement. The fact is equally pertinent in the case of the Christian seeking full sanctification by the refining fire going through the heart in sin-consuming flames — *i.e.*, *“the smoking flax;”* instead of extinguishing with the cold water of dead formality, He fans it into a roaring flame, wrapping the soul in the copious baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. As the complete expurgation of every sinful taint has been abundantly provided for in the cleansing blood and the refining fire, He can, in the full light of heavenly jurisdiction, administer a verdict in favor of the entire sanctification of all who approach Him by way of complete consecration and doubtless faith.

“And in His name shall the Gentiles hope.” (Isaiah 42:1.)

He is the *“Lion of the tribe of Judah,”* whose roaring reverberates round the world, His tread shaking every hand, and His power breaking every chain, and liberating the captive nations whom Satan has bound through the ages.

## HE CALLS THE TWELVE APOSTLES.

**Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:13-19; and Luke 6:13-16.** **Mark:** *“And He goes up into a mountain, and calls to Him those whom He wished, and He made twelve, that they may be with Him, and that He may send them out to preach, and to have the power to heal the sick and to cast out demons.”* Luke says that *“He went out into the mountain to pray, and was spending the night in the prayer of God. And when it was day, He called His disciples, and selecting twelve from them, whom He called Apostles.”* Bishop Taylor used to make it a rule to spend a night in prayer before he sent away the missionaries to their respective fields of labor. Rev. A.B. Simpson anticipates those wonderful, unprecedented, and paradoxical missionary collections by a night of prayer. O what an example here for Annual Conferences, and other responsible transactions in the kingdom of God! Where E.V. says, *“He ordained twelve”* (Mark 3:14), the original is *epoiese*, which simply means “made;” *i.e.*, He selected twelve out of the company of disciples who followed Him, and made them apostles. The word apostle is from *apo*, “from,” and *stello*, “send.” Hence it means persons sent forth, as the inspired Twelve were commissioned and sent into all the world. King James’s translators used the word “ordained,” here and elsewhere, in order to sustain the Church usages and authority, there being no such a meaning in the original. Our Savior made the twelve apostles just like He makes you what you are, if true to His providence and grace. He has a vast diversity of workers in His kingdom. He made them all what they are. We have nothing to do but perfectly submit to His Word, Spirit, and

providence, and rest assured He will make us efficient workers in His vineyard, though infinitely diverse, either from other. Paul says,

“He gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints.” (Ephesians 4:2.)

Hence, you see, all of these offices are perpetuated to the end of time. Under the shibboleth of Church ordination, floods of ecclesiastical misrule and tyranny have been turned on the Church, terribly to the detriment of her efficiency in the salvation of the world. The great dogma of ordination, as claimed and practiced by the High-Church *isms*, is unknown in the Bible, a true translation eliminating it altogether. It is all right for the Churches to corroborate the Holy Ghost in the ordination of God's saints for the work to which He calls them.

**Matthew:** *“He placed on Simon the name Peter;”* i.e., “rock,” which the world never saw till after the fires of Pentecost burnt up the debris, and swept away the cowardice, and revealed the solid rock. *“James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and on these he put the names Boanerges, which is, Sons of thunder.”*

This name is very significant, showing that James and John had tremendous voices, so they could roar like thunder. O, what a blessing — a stalwart physical constitution and stentorian voice! If the Lord has given you a strong voice, appreciate the honor of a Boanerges, and consecrate this rich and valuable gift to God. *“And Andrew, Philip, and Bartholomew;”* i.e., son of Tolmai, a patronymic for Nathanael. *“Matthew, Thomas; James the son of Ahpheus [also called James the Less]; and Thaddeus [i.e., Jude], and Simeon the Canaanite.”* Matthew and Mark call him the *“Canaanite,”* while Luke says, *“Simon, called Zelotes”* — i.e., *“the zealot.”* Now if you will look in a Greek dictionary, you will find *“zelotes”* and *“canaanite”* synonymous, neither of them being proper names, as E.V. has them. The simple lexical meaning is, *“zealous,”* setting forth the fact that Simon was a red-hot holiness evangelist, full of life and fire. *“And Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.”* What a momentous transaction took place on this mountain, when our Lord selected these twelve men, not from the colleges nor the palaces, but from the lower walks of labor and private life, and invested them with the commission to preach the gospel to all the world! To this they all proved true but Judas Iscariot, whom Satan unfortunately captured before he received the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire, the indispensable qualification of them all. However, he was nobly succeeded by Matthias, who, with the other eleven, received his allotment in the distribution of the world among the Twelve, going to Abyssinia; Mark, to Egypt; Matthew, to Ethiopia; Peter, to Rome; Andrew, to Armenia; Bartholomew, to Phrygia; Philip, to Syria; Jude, to Tartary; Thomas, to India. After our Lord's ascension, He augmented this number by the addition of five more noble apostles — i.e., Paul, Apollos, Barnabas, and James and Judas, the brothers of the Lord — the two Jameses included in the original Twelve both suffering martyrdom in Jerusalem.

**Luke 17.** *“And coming down along with them, He stood on a level place.”* The Mount of Beatitudes, hanging over the city of Capernaum, has a nice plateau, about half-way down from the summit, which is doubtless the plain on which our Lord halted with the Twelve, whom He had constituted apostles. *“A multitude of His disciples, and a great host of the people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and Tyre and Sidon by the seaside, who came to bear Him, and to be healed of their*

*diseases, and those troubled with unclean spirits; and they continued to be healed. And the whole crowd sought to touch Him, because power was going out from Him and was healing all.*” After the night of prayer, spent high up in the Mount of Beatitudes, calling His disciples to Him, He proceeds to select from them the twelve apostles, accompanied by whom He descends from the summit about 8 A.M. No sooner does He descend to the plateau till the people, recognizing Him, come rushing from all directions. Moved with sympathy, He now does a mighty work of bodily healing and demoniacal ejection, thus wonderfully saving the people, both from sin and sickness. Where E.V. says, “*Power was going out from Him and was healing all,*” the Greek says “dynamite,” a word which men of science have recently Anglicized and adopted, to indicate the greatest mechanical power in the known world, and very appropriately, as it is the word constantly used in the New Testament to reveal the matchless wonders of omnipotent grace.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XVI.

### SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

**Matthew 5-7, and Luke 6:20-49.** A few days ago it was my privilege to spend two beautiful bright days at the sea of Galilee, sailing over it, and visiting the places of historic note. Our dragoman escorted us up Mt. Hattin, which hangs over the city of Tiberias on the west coast, and said to us, “This is the Mount of Beatitudes.” I correct this mistake, lest you fall into it. While perhaps all the guides through that country would corroborate our dragoman, the Word of the Lord is the end of all controversy. Mt. Hattin, so celebrated as the battlefield on which the Christian Crusaders suffered their last and final defeat by Saladin, the Mohammedan general, A.D. 1189, after which the Cross retreated from the Holy Land, the Crescent superseding even till this day, is twenty miles from Capernaum overland, and ten by sea. Hence this can not be the Mount of Beatitudes, as we see (Matthew 8 and Luke 7) that when our Lord concluded this sermon, and they descended from the mount, they were at the city of Capernaum, which is on the north coast. From these Scriptures, we see very clearly that the great mountain, rising in his majesty, immediately back of Capernaum, is really and unmistakably the Mount of Beatitudes. This conclusion satisfies the Scripture at all points — *i.e.*, the location of the mountain; the plateau, about midway from the summit down to the sea, where Jesus descended with his apostles; and the city of Capernaum, down on the plain, hard by the sea.

*“Seeing the multitudes, He went up into the mountain, and having sat down, His disciples came to Him.”* Our Lord, having already this morning done a mighty work of bodily healing and soul saving, retires from the multitude, leaving them on that “level place” — *i.e.*, plateau, on the southern slope of the Mount of Beatitudes, Capernaum and the sea of Galilee being down at the base — retires back into the mountain, where He had spent the preceding night in prayer, organizing the Apostolate about sunrise. Though at the beginning only His disciples came to Him, the multitudes doubtless follow on.

*“Opening His mouth, He continued to teach them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit, because theirs is the kingdom of the heavens.”* **Luke:** *“Lifting up His eyes toward His disciples, He said, Blessed are ye poor, because yours is the kingdom of God.”* Here, as uniformly in the Scriptures, “heaven” (E.V.) is “heavens” in the Greek, corroborating the astronomical revelation of many worlds constituting the celestial universe. “Kingdom of heaven” and “kingdom of God” are everywhere precisely synonymous — here, Matthew giving the former, and Luke the latter; simply meaning the Divine government, including all the saints and angels in glory, and the holy people under the reign of grace on the earth. Spiritual poverty stands at the head of these seven wonderful, spiritual Beatitudes, corroborating the uniform teaching of God's Word, setting forth humility as the fundamental and primary grace of the Holy Spirit, without which every other is defective and evanescent. Conviction, superinduced by the straight preaching of the awful Sinai gospel prerequisite in every substantial work of grace. John Fletcher was once interrogated, “What is the most important Christian grace?” He answered, “Humility.” “What is the next?” His response was,

“Humility.” To the third inquiry he gave the same answer. When John Wesley preached the funeral sermon of that good man, he said: “The most saintly man I ever saw lies in that coffin, and I never expect to see another such till I go to glory.” Perfect humility is the corner-stone of all Christian perfection.

*“Blessed are they that mourn, because they shall be comforted.”* When the Holy Spirit transmits His wonderful light into the deep interior of the sinner's heart, revealing to him his absolute destitution and hopeless bankruptcy, he is inundated with a Bochim of weeping, refusing to eat or sleep; but crying to God out of a broken heart, mourning night and day, despite all efforts to comfort him, till Jesus sends into his troubled breast the infallible Comforter. Hence, you see the logical connection of these two Beatitudes — “poverty of the spirit” preparing the way for the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

*“Blessed are the meek, because they shall inherit the earth.”* Meekness is a strong, clear case of humility, bringing us down low at the feet of Jesus, there to abide in the bottom of the valley of humiliation, from which we can never fall, as we are already on the bottom, and no place into which to fall. The meek here signifies the genuine humble saints of God in all ages and nations, in whom the Holy Ghost has wrought the glorious work of pride's extermination. Here our Savior flashes out a glorious anticipation of the Millennial Theocracy, when the humble saints of God, who have lived and died in poverty, many of them sealing their faith with their blood, shall be promoted to the thrones and principalities, and, as the subordinates of the glorified Christ, rule the world. We are very sure that the Lord's meek and holy people have not yet inherited this earth. With very little exception, it is in the hands of Satan's people. The Word of the Lord can not fail. I am living in constant anticipation of the trumpet call, responsive to which the saints, living and dead, will fly up to meet the Lord in the air. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.)

*“Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, because they shall be filled.”* Here we have another beautiful couplet of these Beatitudes; meekness, which is perfect humility, puts us in position to be filled with the Holy Ghost. Are you hungry? Do you not hear the invitation ringing? Your chair is vacant at the table of the Lord, which is groaning beneath the very bounty of heaven, the blessed Master sitting at the head, and saying to all, “Help yourselves,” while the angels are all around you, with smiling solicitations to partake of this and that, and everything sweet, delicious, and nutritious; the fatted calf floating in his gravy, bread enough and to spare, milk and honey flowing, delicious grapes of Eshcol, strawberries, cream, and every edible desirable or conceivable, without money and without price. Are you thirsty? The crystal river of life is flowing at your feet, and Jesus is ready to turn the water into wine. It is your privilege to eat to gluttony and drink to intoxication. I fear the trouble is, that you do not hunger and thirst. Thirty thousand promises in God's Infallible Word assure you, that heaven is full of salvation, and you have nothing to do but tap the ocean by faith and you will get full. Even now is the auspicious moment for you to eat and drink and be filled.

*“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.”* The merciful man is merciful to everything that has feeling. His heart leaps over the ocean, and breaks with sympathy for the heathen millions, *“sitting in the valley and the shadow of death.”* He cries to God to make him a blessing to all his neighbors and friends. O how gushingly and genuinely he loves his enemies! He is full of

kindness to the horse, cow, hog, sheep, dog, cat, chicken, and every living creature. He longs to do good to everybody and everything. O how he loves the anti-holiness people, who fight him so pugnaciously! He does not feel like leaving his Church, where God needs him to show mercy to the unsaved. If they turn him out, he is still the more flooded with loving sympathy and tender mercy, crying out, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." This blessing takes away all your horns, hoofs, claws, sharp teeth, and leaves you harmless as a wasp whose sting has been extracted. These Beatitudes run in couplets: Spiritual poverty puts you down where you can mourn and be comforted. Meekness is still a deeper humiliation, preparatory for the filling of the Holy Ghost. From the bottom of a deep well, you can look up and see stars at noonday. If you want to see the deep things of God, close your eyes. The blessing of mercy is still progressive in the sphere of humiliation, and a glorious preparatory school for the happy graduation, which follows in the next Beatitude; *i.e.*, a clean heart.

*"Blessed are the pure in heart, because they shall see God."* Our Savior has decreed that none shall see the kingdom unless they are *"born from above;"* and now we hear the irrevocable decree ringing out, *"None but the pure in heart shall see God."* The heart is never pure, so long as it contains any malevolent affection; — *i.e.*, pride, vanity, folly, envy, jealousy, revenge, selfishness, bigotry, sectarianism, anger, malice, ambition, avarice, lust, or any other incentive out of harmony with pure love, the character of Jesus, the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and the will of God. The precious blood of Jesus, applied by the Holy Spirit, through humble faith, preceded and accompanied by complete consecration and obedience to God, is the heavenly elixir for the purification of the heart.

*"Blessed are the peacemakers, because they shall be called the children of God."* Things are very apt to be called what they are. The Bible was first written in Hebrew, which is a rigidly significant language, every name having a meaning. Consequently, when Adam, before the black darkness of sin fell on his intellect, looked on the animals which God had created and brought to him, he had no trouble to name them all, not haphazardously, but significantly of their character, by the wonderful intuition of his unfallen intellect looking into the very nature of every animal, diagnosing its constitution, recognizing its character, and calling it just what it was. That mutation is still in the world in a modified state, as a rule calling everything by its right name; *i.e.*, what it is. When you receive a clean heart, you, *ex-officio*, become a peacemaker; *i.e.*, like a ministering angel, you make peace among all the inmates of your house, not only with one another, but with God, thus rendering your home a little heaven. You become a peacemaker in your community, reconciling alienated friends; rising above partisan strife, whether political or ecclesiastical; shedding a benignant, heavenly influence all around. Is there any serious trouble between neighbors or Church members? You run, lest some one may anticipate you, and take the blessing which God has for the peacemaker, and you may miss it. Religious professions which do not illustrate and verify these Beatitudes are all counterfeit and spurious.

*"Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, because theirs is the kingdom of the heavens."* Such is the importance of the blessing of persecution that our Lord here repeats it in a more elaborate form: *"Blessed are ye when they may revile you, and persecute you, and say every evil word against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad, because great is your reward in the heavens; for thus they persecuted the prophets who were before you."* Luke gives this

blessing so grand and beautiful, we give you the full benefit of his testimony: *“Blessed are ye when the people may hate you, and when they may turn you out of the Church, despise and cast out your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of man. Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy; for, behold, your reward is great in heaven, for according to these things their fathers were accustomed to do unto the prophets.”* The old prophets, like the apostles, suffered a terrible persecution all their lives, many of them sealing their faith with their blood. You wonder why I give you this Scripture from Luke, *“Turn you out of the Church.”* The word which our Savior used is *aphorisosin*, and means separate — *i.e.*, separate you from their fellowship; *i.e.*, turn you out of the Church, which was currently customary during all the persecutionary ages, when they burned the heretics, invariably excommunicating them from the Church antecedently to their martyrdom. When they burned Bishops Latimer and Ridley at Smithfield, during the reign of Bloody Mary, the Roman Catholic bishop turned them out of the Church before they took their lives. Much of this excommunication is now going on — a matter of great encouragement to God's true people, because it is a literal fulfillment of our Savior's prophecy. What shall we do amid all these persecutions, excommunications, and everything they dare to undertake? as they certainly would expose God's people to martyrdom now, as in bygone ages, if the civil arm would only enforce ecclesiastical law. Our Savior tells us what we are to do amid all these persecutions, (Luke 6:23), *“Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy; for, behold, your reward in heaven is great; for according to these things their fathers were accustomed to do unto the prophets.”* Hence, you see, it is no time to put on a long face, turn blue, and complain, *“O they have done me so much evil, and even turned me out of the Church.”* Do you not know that all your murmuring and complaining grieves the Holy Spirit and pleases the devil, and at the same time shows to the world that your place is down low at the altar, where you are to stay until you get a clean heart? Do you not see here that persecution is a blessing, and actually climaxes the preceding six? If you were sanctified wholly, then persecution would be a blessing to you, and you would rejoice in it. The joy of perfect love can not be quenched out by the devil's cold water. When you get this catalogue of blessings, as you see, culminating in a clean heart, then you will be in fix to obey the Savior, who commands you to rejoice in your persecutions, and leap for joy, even in case that they turn you out of the Church, ignoring you as a heathen or a publican. Rely upon it, this is all true.

These Beatitudes are a glorious and ineffable reality. If you are not sanctified wholly, having a genuine case, in harmony with the Scriptures, wrought by the Holy Ghost, persecution will not be a blessing to you; as it is very likely to upset you, provoke you to commit sin, and bring you under condemnation. While, if you really have a clean heart, filled with the Holy Ghost, you will stand on an eminence, not only above, but out of reach of persecution, so that you will actually get happy, rejoice and leap for joy, amid the persecutions; not that you rejoice over the persecution, but your eye is on that great reward in heaven, the persecution serving as an exceedingly valuable test, throwing wide open the door through which God pours a flood of blessed assurance, which lifts you above all the raging storms and black tornadoes which earth and hell combined can raise against you. Remember, the blackest clouds are white as snow on the upper side, where the sun is shining in his beauty. These seven Beatitudes are the sapphire steps of Jacob's ladder, by which you climb above every storm, tread the bright plateaus of the Delectable Mountains, where the Sun of righteousness eternally shines in His undimmed glory, and the fadeless flowers of Paradise emit their heavenly fragrance on celestial airs, their fadeless tints and hues flashing in the gorgeous glory of the Sun that never sets.

*“Moreover, woe unto you rich people, because you exhaust your consolation;”* not, as E.V., *“have your consolation,”* as in that case it would read *echete*, whereas we have *apechete*, which means exhaust. How is this? Why the rich, worldly people have only the consolation of this world, which is fleeting and transitory. Therefore they exhaust their happiness in this life — *i.e.*, use it all up and have none left for eternity.

*“Woe unto you who have been filled, because you shall hunger.”* Still speaking of these rich, worldly, unsaved people, who have been filled — *i.e.*, satisfied with the bounty of this world, which they must quickly leave, and go away to hunger through all eternity. *“Woe unto you who laugh now, because you shall weep and mourn.”* It is impossible to live for this world and for heaven at the same time, as they are utterly out of harmony, either with other. Here is the turning-point in human destiny. We are all brought face to face with the issue: Take this world or heaven.

*“Woe unto you when all the people may speak well of you; according to these things their fathers were accustomed to do unto the false prophets.”* During an Annual Conference, a petition was brought before the Cabinet, requesting them to send a preacher who would please, not only the Methodists, but other denominations and the outsiders, specifying, “We want a well-rounded man.” The presiding bishop observed, “There is but one round figure, and that is zero, all the rest having sharp corners; so go and tell them I haven’t got the man. But be of good comfort; for they can pick him up anywhere, as there are plenty of them.” It is a significant fact that the climacteric effort is made in pulpit and pew to please everybody, which is inevitably self-condemnatory, at the same time illustrating their unhappy identity with the false prophets, and confirming the sad conclusion that we live in an age of fallen Churches and false prophets; also warranting the conclusion that the false prophets of the old dispensation were the popular preachers, beloved and applauded by the people, who believed them to be orthodox, genuine, and true, while they persecuted Elijah, Elisha, John the Baptist, and all the glorious prophetic procession from righteous Abel down to the present day.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XVII.

### SALT.

*“Ye are the salt of the earth; if the salt may become vitiated, in what shall it be salted? It is yet good for nothing, except having been cast out, to be trodden under foot by the people.”* The salt in the ocean preserves it from putrefaction and stagnation. Consequently the ocean is the great conservator of atmospheric purity. Hence sea voyages always improve the health. These Commentaries in that respect have been a blessing to me, giving me eleven thousand miles plowing through oceans and seas. If the salt were not in the ocean, its waters would stagnate, generate malaria, which the winds would carry throughout all the continents and islands, rendering the atmosphere so pestilential as to be uninhabitable by man and beast; thus ultimating in the depopulation of the globe, and the destruction of all the air-breathing animals, turning the world into a bone-yard. Hence the tremendous force of our Savior's metaphor, involving the conclusion that if all the Christians were out of the world, the human race would be hopeless, as the inmates of hell, not ignoring the possibility of salvation, but the probability. This illustrates the necessity for the destruction of the antediluvians, as God knew they would never repent, but get worse indefinitely, as every stream falls in its onward flow. I've seen this vitiated salt in the vicinity of the Dead Sea. It is an utter and hopeless deadener of the soil, and an incorrigible preventive of all production. We do not want it in the “washes,” as we desire that they shall accumulate soil and become productive. As Jesus here well says, it is fit for nothing but to make walks, for the convenience of people who want to keep out of the mud. O what an appalling truth! The Christian religion is the salt which God uses to save the world. The Holy Ghost is the savor. Therefore when religion is without the Spirit, consisting only of the dead form, it is fit for nothing on earth except to make walks for the convenience of the multitudes traveling down to hell.

### LIGHT.

*“Ye are the light of the world. A city located on a mountain can not be hidden; neither do they light a candle, and place it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before the people, that they may see your beautiful works, and glorify your Father who is in the heavens.”* In the Old World, nearly all the cities are built away up on the mountains. The dispersion of the population throughout the country, every man living on his own farm, is peculiar to America, as we see almost nothing of it in the great East, the people as a rule living in cities and villages, and going away into the country to till the soil. We see no wooden houses in the Old World, except thatched huts of the peasantry, which is not at all common, as they more generally use mud, stone, or live in caves. As the stone on the mountains is the most available building material, cities are built on the mountains, the valleys and plains being devoted to agriculture. I am here reminded of the great castles built on all the lofty mountains in Europe and Asia during the Dark Ages, that memorable period of a thousand years, Satan's millennium, during which not one man in a thousand could read or write. As life and liberty were only held by the stern arbitrament of the sword, and there was no civil government on earth competent to protect its

citizens, therefore the people erected these formidable castles on all the mountain summits, whither they could fly for refuge, and protect themselves from marauding bands and invading armies. These castles beautifully illustrate the impossibility of hiding a city located on a mountain; whether on sea or land, we see them a great way off. Therefore the light of a true Christian can not be hidden from men or devils. Our Savior's warning here against putting our light under a bushel, and His admonition to us to put it in a conspicuous place, where nothing will obstruct the emission of its hallowed rays in all directions, and their utmost availability in the expulsion of the black darkness with which Satan has enveloped this poor fallen world, are exceedingly pertinent to those holiness people who spend their time in little isolated bands, working hard, with no material to work on, wasting their ammunition on one another when they do not need it. The bands are all right, but they should work in the Churches, on the streets, or preach from house to house, utilizing the light which God has given them to expel the darkness in which Satan has wrapped his millions while he is leading them to hell. For the sake of the dying millions for whom Jesus bled, when you hold your little band meeting, and wait before the Lord till he fills you with the Spirit, be sure you go out and let your light shine on the people who sit in darkness. For this reason you may glorify God by retaining your membership in a dead, worldly Church, as there you have a precious opportunity to *“let your light shine, in order that they may see your beautiful works, and glorify your Father who is in the heavens.”* The adjective “beautiful,” here qualifying “works,” means the beauty of holiness. O the power this beautiful holiness wields no tongue can tell! When the Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites had all united against Judea, King Jehoshaphat went out with his army, not to fight, but to “sing the beauty of holiness.” Meanwhile a hundred thousand voices rang out the “beauty of holiness;” God utterly defeated their enemies, so they fled from the field, leaving the earth burdened with rich spoils. Both in 1895 and 1899, when I was there, I visited the Vale of Berachah — *i.e.*, the Valley of Blessing — where Jehoshaphat assembled all Israel in a three-days' Hallelujah Convention, that they might bless the Lord for his great deliverance

## LAW.

*“Do not think that I come to destroy the law or the prophets; I come not to destroy, but to fulfill. For truly I say unto you, That till heaven and earth may pass away, one iota or one point can in no wise pass from the law until all may be fulfilled. Whosoever may break one of the least of these commandments, and teach the people so, shall be called least in the kingdom of the heavens; but whosoever may do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of the heavens.”* This is very plain and explicit. The climax of all the commandments is perfect love; *i.e.*, *“Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy soul, mind, and strength, and love thy neighbor as thyself.”* Hence, when you experience and verify perfect love, you fulfill the whole law:

“Love is the fulfilling of the law.” (Romans 13:10)

A terribly wicked delusion is frequently propagated from the pulpit, ignoring the law, and telling the people that as we are not under the law dispensation, we do not have to keep the law, thus loosening the obligations of the popular conscience, which every preacher should endeavor to his utmost to tighten up. While it is true that we are not under the law dispensation, we should remember the words of Jesus, that He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. Hence, the province of the gospel is to fulfill the law, and the man that doesn't do it is out of harmony with the gospel

dispensation. The bloody rites and sacrifices all typified Christ, and received their fulfillment when He bled and died, and normally evanesced. In a similar manner the Decalogue, and all other commandments given to man, must be verified in our experiences and lives. There is some terribly pestilential preaching along this line. Lord help us to be true to the words of Jesus! O what a withering woe He has pronounced on those who break even the least of the commandments and so teach the people! *“The same shall be called least in the kingdom”* — *i.e.*, they shall not be at all recognized as citizens of our Lord's kingdom; while a most inspiring blessing is here pronounced on all who do and teach these commandments: *“The same shall be called great in the kingdom”* — *i.e.*, they shall not only have a place in the kingdom, but as members of the bridehood, shall be promoted to extraordinary honors and emoluments.

## RIGHTEOUSNESS.

*“For I say unto you, That unless your righteousness may superabound that of the scribes and Pharisees, you can not enter into the kingdom of the heavens.”* The scribes were the pastors of the popular Churches, and the Pharisees the influential members and officers. So you see plainly that our Savior preaches a standard of salvation which throws the popular religion, with its members and preachers, into total eclipse. “But the Churches are better now than then?” On this statement it certainly would be very risky for us to depend. Doubtless some of them were better and others worse. It is certainly very unsafe for us to discount, or in any way evade, the force of our Savior's statement. The safe plan is to take it as He gave it. In that case, you see positively that unless your religion goes ahead of the popular Churches, including pulpits and pews, you are without hope. This reminds us of that remarkable affirmation, *“The saved are few.”* Instead of taking the preachers and Church members for our paragon as to holy living, we should take Jesus Himself, whose biography we fortunately have transmitted to us by four inspired evangelists, who are now playing on their golden harps. Instead of taking their experiences as our paragon, we should take the infallible Word of God: *“You must be born from above;”* *“Without holiness no one shall see the Lord.”*

## RIGHTEOUS RETRIBUTION.

*“You have heard that it was said to the ancients, Thou shalt not murder, and whosoever may murder shall be subject to the judgment. But I say unto you, That every one who is angry with his brother shall be subject to the judgment; and whosoever may say to his brother, You scoundrel, shall be subject to the Sanhedrin; and whosoever may say, Thou fool, shall be subject unto a hell of fire.”* In every village there was a committee of three to seven appointed to investigate and enforce the law against criminals, while the graver offenses were referred to the Sanhedrin, the council of seventy elders. Our Lord here refers to these institutions of judicial administration by way of illustrating similar and infinitely graver adjudications in the kingdom of God, adding also that most terrible and dreadful of all retributive judgments, which consigned offenders to hell-fire. Now this word *raka*, E.V., which means “scoundrel,” and “fool,” which is *moros* — *i.e.*, a natural fool, simpleton, or idiot — and not *aphron*, used in reference to our Savior and Paul saying, *“Thou fool,”* *“O, ye fools,”* which has a spiritual signification, meaning fools for the want of that spiritual illumination which is freely given to all who will receive it appreciatively. Consequently, if you are an *aphron* — *i.e.*, a fool because you reject the light which the Holy Spirit alone can shed on your intellect you alone are responsible for your folly; but *moros*, which means a natural simpleton, is utterly irresponsible,

and consequently becomes a term, like scoundrel, fraught with debasement and reproach. Now why are you in that case, not only in danger of condemnation and the reprobation of the heavenly Sanhedrin, but even exposed to hell-fire, if you apply these epithets to your brother or sister? The solution is easy. The very use of these opprobrious epithets prove demonstratively the indulgence of evil tempers, which, if not sanctified away, will plunge you into hell-fire. The phrase “hell-fire,” here occurring, is *gehennan tou puros*. This phrase among the Jews originated from the Valley of Hinnom, southwest of Jerusalem, which is a deep gorge, down at the foot of Mt. Zion. From the time of Solomon, Moloch, the Ammonitish god, was worshipped in that valley. His image, in the shape of a man with the head of an ox, his arms reaching up to receive the infants they placed in them for sacrifices, was hollow, and heated by an internal fire, so that the children laid in his arms would be burned to death. The Bible alludes to this appalling idolatry, stating that they caused their children to pass through the fires of Moloch. He was regarded as an evil demon, whose anger was to be appeased by placing these infants in his fiery arms. When Josiah became king, under the happy tuition of the holy prophetess Huldah, he wrought a radical purification from idolatry throughout all the land. So he destroyed the shrine and broke up the worship of Moloch in the Valley of Hinnom, commanding the offal and the dead animals of the city to be thrown into it, which they burned, thus keeping perpetual fires in that valley. In this way it became the symbol of the eternal fires which consume the wicked in the world of despair. Here our Savior refers to the judgment, Sanhedrin, and the perpetual fires in the Valley of Hinnom, all of which were familiar and forcible to His Jewish audience, in order to elucidate the corresponding adjudications and retributions awaiting all the people who indulge in evil and angry tempers. O what a warning, and what an incentive to us all to get sanctified wholly, having all of these angry tempers, which lead us to offer insults to our fellow-travelers in this probationary pilgrimage, expurgated away!

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### CONFESSION.

*“If therefore you may bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that thy brother has something against you, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then having come, offer thy gift.”* This is the missing keystone from the fallen arches of so many Christian characters — some little thing between you and your neighbor, which stands like a mountain between You and God, towering high as heaven, reaching down deep as hell, and projecting its Briarean arms around the world. It can only be taken away by an honest confession. A young lady was in deep agony at the altar. A worker asked her if she had not something that she ought to confess. Rising, she goes to the rear of the audience, throws her arms around her young comrade, and said, with gushing tears, “O Lizzie, please forgive me for everything I have done or said about you!” That moment her face brightens, and she shouts aloud. Lizzie is struck with deep conviction, and rushes to the altar to seek the blessing her companion has so recently found. Will you not cut the work short in righteousness by confessing to everybody, and thus getting every obstruction out of the way, so God can pour on you showers of blessing? Whole Churches thus get stranded, pulpit and pew all blockaded, and no access to a throne of grace. Satan has bagged them solidly, and is dragging them into hell.

### RECONCILIATION.

*“Be thou reconciled with thy adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him, lest the adversary may deliver thee to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and thou mayest be cast into prison. Truly, I say unto thee, That thou canst not go out from thence until thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.”* The symbolism of this paragraph is plain, clear, and forcible, illustrating human destiny by a judicial transaction. Adversary means an opposer, who is endeavoring to resist a trend and turn it the other way. This world is going pell-mell, helter-skelter, down to hell. Jesus came into the world six thousand years ago, in ample time, and with abundant resources, ready to save all who will let Him. Hence He is the Opposer of humanity, rushing headlong to perdition. While in probationary life, you are *“in the way with Him.”* So lose not a moment in your expedition to be reconciled to Him, lest *“the adversary may deliver thee to the judge.”* Now, who is the judge? We have already learned that the Son of God will judge the world. He is now bringing into availability all of His omnipotent grace to save you. If you will not let Him, you must quickly stand condemned at His tribunal, dumbfounded, and confessing judgment against yourself, because the very Judge on the bench actually died to save you, and you would not let Him. Thus the Mediatonal Christ is your Adversary, actually blockading hell with His crucified body in order to keep you out. While the Judge in this Scripture is the Judicial Christ to whom the Mediatorial Christ delivers you in case of non-reconciliation, now who is the officer? Satan is the officer of hell. What is the prison? The bottomless pit. So if you will not have the Mediatorial Christ, you must stand before the Judge of quick and dead, who can only turn you over to the devil, with whom you have staid till the last opportunity of escape has fled away. The devil is the officer of hell, and has no other place to put

you. Hence, the Pandemonium is your inevitable doom. Will you not hasten to be reconciled, while you are in the way with Him? What about paying the uttermost farthing? The simple truth is, you have nothing to pay with, neither in this world nor in the world to come. Therefore it is utterly impossible for you ever to satisfy the Divine law, which requires a holy heart, as you have already rejected the last opportunity to receive the sanctifying work of Christ.

### ADULTERY.

*“You have heard that it was said, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, That every one looking on a woman, in order to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart. If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members may perish, and not that thy whole body may be cast into hell. If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members may perish, and not that thy whole body may depart into hell.”* “Man looks on the outside, but God looketh on the heart.” The immortal spirit, dwelling in the body, is the man himself, and not the body. God sees our spirit through and through, reading every thought of the heart, diagnosing every emotion of the soul. Hence, the inward thought and volition really constitute the act, and not the outward verification through the body. This exegesis of adultery, locating it in the heart, independently of all physical reciprocation, gives light on the entire problem of sin, as the same is true of murder, theft, and every item of the black catalogue. “Offend” here is *scandalizo*, from *scandalon*, “a stumbling-block.” Here you are traveling to heaven, and are sure to get there if you don’t fall, and you can never fall unless you stumble. “Right eye” and “right hand” emblemize all things which we count dear and valuable, and symbolize the unequivocal conclusion that we are to permit nothing conceivable or inconceivable to deflect us from the narrow way. The stumbling precedes the fall. You may fall instantly when you stumble. If you stumble much, you are certain to fall. Hence, the true policy is simply to take away every stumbling-block, and thus clear the road for heaven. This is your only safe economy. Anything else exposes you to an awful risk. When Sister Glide, of Sacramento, California, whose husband is a millionaire, was seeking sanctification, and saw the Salvation Army women running round in their plain, cheap costume, visiting the poor, the sick, and the fallen, distributing tracts and holiness literature, her heart turned away with contempt. Fortunately, grace prevailed. She put on a plain dress and coarse shoes, and put out, loaded with tracts and holiness literature, running into the hovels of poverty, dens of iniquity, and sinks of debauchery; down on her knees, on the dirty floors, praying, and with tearful eyes exhorting them to flee the wrath to come, and at the same time cheering their hearts with temporal benefactions, till God flooded her soul with a sunburst of glory, which has been shining and shouting ever since. Thus she beat the devil at his own game. Dear soul, as I shall meet you at the judgment-bar, I beg you never to leave a handle anywhere for the devil to get hold of. If you do not want to fall and plunge into hell, clear the way of all stumbling-blocks at every cost.

### DIVORCEMENT.

*“But it was said, Whosoever may send away his wife, let him give her a divorcement. But I say unto you, That every man sending away his wife, except for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and if any one may marry her who has been sent away, he committeth adultery.”* A very sad mistake, in the E.V. in this thirty-second verse, has led the popular mind to stray, as, you

see from my translation, the prohibition from marrying the divorced woman is not in this passage nor any other. The case here is plain and simple, and very pertinent to those Jews who so frequently sent away their wives for no justifiable cause. *Apoleluminen*, translated in E.V. “her that is divorced,” is the perfect passive participle, from the verb *apoluo*, which simply means “send away.” Consequently, instead of “her that is divorced,” the correct reading is, “her that has been sent away;” *i.e.*, this woman who has not been divorced, but simply driven away from home by her husband. The reason why the man marrying her commits adultery is, because she is a married woman, the wife of the man who drove her away from home. *Apotasion*, the word for divorce, just means apostasy. Now you know that the apostate from the kingdom of God has become a poor, lost sinner, as he was before he was converted. Hence, you see that as apostasy nullifies and reverses the work of grace in the heart, so the divorce, when legally given (not by State law, but the law of God, which permits it only for the cause of fornication), radically rescinds the matrimonial alliance, returning the parties to the ranks of celibacy whence they came, and thus conferring on them marriageable privileges again. So if this “castoff” woman were Scripturally divorced from her cruel husband, she would have a right to marry again, and the man would have a right to marry her “only in the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 7:39.) Divorcement is a Divine provision for the benefit of the innocent party, and, as a normal consequence, liberating the guilty also. We see here that fornication is the only justifiable cause for a divorce. This follows as a logical sequence from the very nature of matrimony, which unifies the wedded; since this violation of the matrimonial covenant, in its very nature, destroys the unity, the formal divorce merely ratifying the matrimonial dissolution, which has already taken place, and thus protecting injured innocence. It is really deplorable to see the Bible ignored by the State authorities on all sides, granting divorces for a diversity of causes other than the Scriptural one.

What shall be done in case of the innumerable unlawful marriages? Shall they all separate? We fear that in many such cases the last error would be worse than the first. These matters should all be diligently turned over to God, who will in every case give light and grace to qualify you to choose the less of two evils. Moses granted divorces for a vast diversity of causes, on that principle of choosing the less of two evils, one of which being inevitable. As this was out of harmony with Christian perfection, the standard of the gospel dispensation, our Savior repudiated it, coming back to first principles, which recognize husband and wife as “*one flesh*,” which unity is only destroyed by adultery.

## **PERJURY AND PROFANITY.**

*“You have heard that it was said to the ancients, Thou shalt not swear falsely, but shall perform unto the Lord thine oaths. But I say unto You, Swear not at all: neither by heaven, because it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, because it is the footstool of His feet; nor by Jerusalem, because it is the City of the Great King; nor swear by the head, because thou art not able to make one hair turn white or black. But let your speech be Yea, yea; Nay, nay; but whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one;”* *i.e.*, the devil, as *tou ponerou*, the concrete, actually means the devil himself — “evil,” E.V., the abstract, being entirely too weak. There is a close affinity between false swearing and profanity, as they really resolve themselves mutually, the one into the other. The profane man is constantly swearing falsely, while the perjurer is black with profanity. This rigid prohibition of swearing has no reference to legal oaths, administered by magistrates and other persons in authority, as we see, in Matthew 26:63, our Savior Himself responded to Caiaphas when he administered to

Him the legal oath. Also, Paul (1 Thessalonians 5:27), administers the same legal oath to the saints at Thessalonica, *“I swear you, in the name of the Lord, that this letter shall be read to all the brethren.”* Hence, when we see Jesus and Paul — the former responding when under legal oath, and the latter administering it to the saints — we can not conclude that it is included in these strong prohibitions. Moreover, the specifications show up and authenticate the conclusion that He is simply abnegating and condemning all sorts of profane oaths: from the specifications, we see that the prohibition excludes the use of bywords and all sorts of insignificant slang, condemning them as coming from the evil one — *i.e.*, the devil. God requires purity of speech, as well as heart, our language being the invariable exponent of the soul. Hence, you can decipher the contents of the heart by the utterances of the lips. *“Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh.”*

### RETALIATION.

*“You have heard that it has been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, Resist not evil; but whosoever smiteth thee on the right cheek, turn to him also the other; and to him wishing to prosecute thee at law and take away thy coat, give to him the cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him asking thee, and turn not away from him wishing to borrow from thee.”* The great utility of the law is conviction, which is primary in every work of grace, all professions proving spurious without genuine conviction. Consequently the stern rigor of the Mosaic law requires a full requital of every injury inflicted. While this is true, it is simply a matter of just retribution, perfectly free from all the carnal complexity of retaliation, characteristic of worldly people, having nothing in it after the similitude of revenge; but still the Divine vengeance is close on the track of every transgressor, as God says, *“Vengeance is Mine, and I will repay.”* While the law says, *“Pay me what thou owest me,”* the gospel says, *“I freely forgive thee all.”* The law says, *“You owe me your coat, and I must have it;”* the gospel says, *“Here, take my coat and my cloak also”* — as the Jews wore two garments, the inner and the outer. The law says, *“You owe me one-mile’s journey;”* the gospel says, *“All right; here I give you two.”* Hence, you see the gospel economy, not only satisfies the law in the administration of justice in every case, but goes infinitely beyond, and overcomes evil with good.

### CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

*“You have heard that it is said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy.”* (Leviticus 19:19.) The latter clause of this passage, *“Thou shalt hate thine enemy,”* appears only in the gloss of the Rabbis; however, it follows as a logical sequence from the organization of the Jews as a theocratic people, secluded from the world and looking upon all Gentiles as enemies — a state of things eminently qualified to develop jealousy and animosity toward all other nations. *“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you; in order that you may be the sons of your Father who is in heaven, because He makes His sun to rise upon the wicked and the good, and sends rain upon the just and the unjust.”* If we are going up to live with God in heaven through all eternity, we must get like Him before we leave this world, otherwise disharmony would mar the glory of the celestial universe. The rain and the sunshine are the greatest temporal blessings, which God bestows indiscriminately on the righteous and the wicked. Hence we must become like Him, doing good to our enemies and friends indiscriminately. *“For if you love them that love you, what reward have you? Do not even the publicans the same? And if you salute your brethren only,*

*what do ye more? Do not even the publicans the same? Therefore ye shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”*

**Luke 6:33:** *“If you do good to those doing good, what grace is there to you? for the sinners do the same. If you borrow from those from whom you hope to receive, what grace is there to you? for sinners lend to sinners, in order that they may receive an equivalent. Moreover, love your enemies: do good and lend, hoping nothing in return, and your reward shall be great, and you shall be the sons of the Highest; because He is good to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father is merciful.”* We see from these deliverances of our Savior that we are to do good indiscriminately, without any reference to temporal remuneration, aggrandizement, or emolument; *i.e.*, we are to loan, simply actuated by the love of God and humanity, without any reference to the probability of reciprocation. In that case, we are living in anticipation of our reward in heaven, which is infinitely better and greater than any reciprocation of favor possible in this world. Our Savior is a plain Preacher, and transcendently practical. Now He climaxes this beautiful paragraph on the Divine love, which the Holy Ghost has poured out in our hearts (Romans 5:5), reaching out indiscriminately to the good and the bad, doing good and not evil, from the simple fact that sanctifying grace has taken out the latter, leaving the former to reign without a rival, — by the summary commandment, *“Ye shall be perfect, as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.”* Just as He has Divine perfection and the angels angelic perfection, so must we have Christian perfection, if we are going up to live with them in heaven. All this is homogeneous, showing up the fact, as illustrated above, by this Divine love bestowed indiscriminately on all sides — illustrated by the unutterable benignity of our Heavenly Father. Special force here in the imperative “shall,” peculiar to the Decalogue, giving Christian perfection the full force of the Ten Commandments, leaving no loop-hole through which to evade the issue, and no defalcation; but it is rigidly applicable to every one: *“Ye shall be perfect.”*

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XIX.

### VAINGLORY.

**Matthew 6.** *“Take heed that you do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them; but if not, you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven; and when you may do alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets; truly, I say unto you, They exhaust their reward;”* i.e., as they will receive no reward in eternity, they get it all here; simply the praise of men, and so they exhaust it. It was customary for the benefactors of the poor to sound a trumpet, to call up the beggars to receive their contributions; but the Omniscient Searcher of the heart knew that notoriety and the praise of men were the incentives. *“But thou, doing alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth; and thy Father, who seeth in secret, shall give unto thee.”* An advocate always stood on the right hand of the judge. The right hand symbolizes the spiritual and the left hand the temporal side of life, which are frequently antagonistical either to other. Giving alms with an eye single to the glory of God is quite an available test of true spirituality. *“And when you may pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites; because they love to pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the street, in order that they may appear unto the people. Truly, I say unto you, They exhaust their reward;”* i.e., they receive the praise and commendation of the people, which is all they will ever get, as they have no reward in heaven. Consequently they completely exhaust their reward in this world. *“And when you may pray, enter into your closet, and having closed your door, pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father, seeing in secret, will reward you.”* Secret prayer is one of the surest indices of true piety. Our Savior used to go away alone, and pray all night. The reason why I always lodge alone in my peregrinations is, that I may have ample time for secret prayer. *“But praying, use not vain repetitions, as the heathens do; for they think they shall be heard in their much speaking.”* Mohammedan and heathen priests will spend whole days in their temples, repeating their prayers over and over. The same is largely true with the Greek and Latin priests and all of the Oriental Churches. These prolix and repetitious prayers and ceremonies, along with Church machinery of all sorts, are vain attempts to substitute for the Holy Ghost. When services are truly spiritual, they are never encumbered with these vain repetitions. In this way Sunday-schools, prayer-meetings, and all sorts of social meetings, as well as the Sunday services, are literally killed out, till they become a dead routine, without edification or inspiration. If you will guard this one point, the interest will never flag. Thunder without lightning never does any execution. Whether you pray, testify, sing, exhort, or preach, it must be done with life and energy, and in the Spirit, or the effect will be negative rather than positive, becoming a dead weight on the machinery. If the prayer or testimony had occupied but two minutes instead of ten, using all the lightning and simply omitting the superfluous thunder, execution would follow every time. There is a volume of truth in this one short sentence, spoken by our Savior, *“Use not vain repetitions,”* neither literal nor substantial. *“Therefore be not like unto them, for your Father knows of what things you have need before you ask Him.”* Then why should we ask Him? He extends this peculiar courtesy to our free agency, which He has given us, that He has made the petition the antecedent of the blessing, our asking being a simple act of our free volition. Such is His respect for our free agency, that He will not save us against our will.

## THE DISCIPLES' PRAYER.

Our Savior, in signal mercy, has left all of His disciples without excuse, giving us the very form and phraseology with which He would have us pray. If every Church member would lead in prayer, promptly, responsive to the opportunity, the whole Church would always be full of life and availability, and never backsliding; but always move forward, like an army with banners, conquering and to conquer. Not one can possibly frame an excuse for not praying orally when called on, as all can commit to memory this brief form left us by our Savior. In that case, you would soon find the Spirit leading you out, and putting in your mouth more words and phrases than you find in this form, which is simply given as a basis on which to build your superstructure. People starve their own souls, and dry the Church into a crackling, because they will not lead in prayer. They ought to be down at the altar seeking the grace of God, as the difficulty is not intellectual, but spiritual. Our Savior taught His disciples to pray. How dare a preacher in charge of a congregation, thus occupying the place of the Great Pastor, as His subordinate, neglect his inalienable duty to teach his people to pray? As this is the only panoply with which they can successfully fight the devil and come off conqueror in the end, terrible will be the responsibility of that delinquent pastor, when his members meet him at the judgment-bar, unprepared for the terrible ordeal. It is the inexcusable duty of every pastor to teach all of his members to pray orally as well as secretly. If they rebel against this privilege, he should then preach to them the thunder and lightning of Sinai till they see hell open and the devil after them, get convicted, so they can neither eat nor sleep, tumble down at the altar, and stay till they get truly converted. Then he will have no trouble to teach them how to pray. *“Therefore after this manner pray ye: Our Father, who art in the heavens, hallowed by Thy name.”* This would preclude all irreverent and frivolous mention of His adorable Name, which is only to be uttered in most profound veneration for His majesty and realization of His eternal and absolute sovereignty. *“Thy kingdom come.”* The kingdom of God is the magnitudinous conception of the universe, predicted by the old prophets, proclaimed by John the Baptist, preached by the Savior and His apostles as a present gracious reality, whose doors redeeming mercy has thrown wide open to the brokenhearted fugitive from Satan's miserable slavery. Church and kingdom are counterparts of the same grand reality, the former meaning the called out and the latter the Divine government. When we hear the call of the Holy Ghost and come out of this wicked world, leaving it, with all its iniquities, debaucheries, sins, and crimes, then we are members of the gospel Church, and proper subjects for the Divine administration, which is the kingdom of God. While Church is subjective, kingdom is objective, each one constituting a hemisphere of that grand globe — *i.e.*, the redemptive scheme — from beginning to end. As this prayer is given to the disciples, who are already citizens of the gracious kingdom, therefore this coming kingdom must in some way differ from the kingdom of grace, of which every real saint is a member. Our Savior said, *“My kingdom is not of this world.”* He did not say that it would never be of this world in the sense that it will take it in. Then what do we mean by the kingdom coming? We simply mean that the kingdom of God, of which we, through His redeeming grace, are members, and which embraces and rules over all the celestial worlds, is also coming to this world, to conquer it and add it to the Celestial Empire; so our glorious King will actually reign from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same; yea,

“He shall have dominion o'er river, sea, and shore,  
Far as the eagle's pinion or dove's light wing can soar.”

While very few preachers are preaching the *“coming kingdom,”* I am glad they are all praying for it, as they all use this prayer, delegated to us by Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. *“Thy will be done as in heaven even upon the earth.”* Here you have a beautiful revelation, setting forth the gospel standard of Christian experience and life; *i.e.*, we are to do our Heavenly Father’s will like the angels and redeemed spirits do it in heaven. None but those who in this world are living the life of heaven will go to heaven when they die, as death has no power to change the character, but only the state. Our immortal spirits live right through physical death, and subsequently without undergoing any moral change, as death does not affect us spiritually in any way, but only physically. Hence, you see clearly and indubitably that entire sanctification is the New Testament standard of Christian discipleship. As in heaven no sin is committed in thought, word, or deed, but all delightfully do the will of the Father, so it must be on earth with all the candidates for heaven. *“Give us this day our daily bread.”* As the soul is infinitely superior and more important than the body in every respect, this is not to be construed as simply involving physical sustenance, but infinitely and pre-eminently spiritual pabulum. *“Forgive us our debts, as we have also forgiven our debtors.”* The true Greek has *aphekamen*, *“have already forgiven,”* the perfect tense, and not the present as E.V. Now it is certain, if you do not ask forgiveness, you will never get it. While that is strictly true, be sure you do not forget that asking God to forgive you will never amount to anything unless you have already forgiven everybody who has transgressed against you, or is in any way indebted to you. This is the great secret of the power everywhere lost by Churches and individuals. They have not forgiven everybody, consequently their prayers are solemn mockery in the sight of God. They are under condemnation and on their way to endless ruin. *“But they have not asked me to forgive them.”* That has nothing to do with your justification before God. If you do not forgive them, asked or unasked, you had better never have been born, as you are certain never to get a petition up to the Mercy-seat. *“Should holy people, who have been pardoned and sanctified, and are now so kept by the grace of God as to live holy lives, committing no sin in thought, word, or deed, offer this prayer to God?”* Most assuredly.

Sins are of three kinds — actual, original, and unknown. In the old dispensation, sins of ignorance needed a sacrifice. The most holy people are liable to sins of ignorance — *i.e.*, mistakes and blunders — all of which need the atonement. While sanctifying grace, with its extraordinary illuminations, is a wonderful fortification against these infirmities — *i.e.*, unknown transgressions of the perfect law — yet we will never be free from sins of ignorance this mortal puts on immortality, and glorification sweeps away all of our infirmities, enabling us to enter heaven in the enjoyment of the angelic perfection, which precludes all infirmities, as the unfallen angels never had any. *“Lead us not into temptation.”* This is an Orientalism for *“Suffer us not to go into temptation,”* as Eliezer said to Bethuel and Laban, *“Send me away,”* when he simply meant, *“Let me go.”* In this petition we have a full recognition of the Divine leadership, which God administers, through His Word, Spirit, and providence; to which, if we are true, we will never encounter temptation greater than we can bear; the temptation itself, in that case, proving a blessing, as we gain strength by the conflict and courage by the victory. *“But deliver us from the evil one,”* *i.e.*, the devil. The E.V. here, *“Deliver us from evil,”* is entirely too weak, using the abstract instead of the concrete, which we have in *tou ponerou*, the words of our Savior, which literally mean the “evil one” *i.e.*, Satan himself. So we have here the wonderful consolation assured by the infallible promise of our Omnipotent Savior to answer the prayer He has given us; *i.e.*, deliver us, not only from all evil, but from Satan himself, thus enabling us actually to get rid of the devil. O what a glorious privilege, and how few realize it! The pulpits

are so utterly befogged that they preach us a standard so low as to never let the people even think of getting rid of the devil, their glorious felicity in the triumphs of their Omnipotent Savior. This is the conclusion of the prayer, the doxology in E.V. not appearing in the original, but evidently being an interpolation.

*“For if you forgive the people their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you forgive not the people, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”* The plan of salvation, fundamentally and ultimately, contemplates our assimilation to God. A true repentance, which is the foundation of all hopeful salvation, so smashes up the stony heart as to superinduce a gushing, spontaneous forgiveness, reaching out indiscriminately to everybody and everything. Without this genuine, radical repentance, the most eloquent prayers will never avail. Hence, before we approach a Throne of Grace, we must literally clear up everything. O, how adroitly Satan, at this point, locks the wheels of Zion, till the train gets stock-still, then strategically reversing the motion, starts them down the Black Valley Railroad, and they land in hell, looking out for heaven!

*“But when you fast, be not like the hypocrites, of a sad countenance; for they disfigure their faces, in order that they may appear unto the people fasting. Truly, I say unto you, They exhaust their reward.”* The poor hypocrites get no reward in the world to come, but the retribution of a lost soul. Hence the commendation of the people, the social privileges and favors in this world, are all they get. Fasting is a means of grace, helpful to spiritually, and here so recognized by the Savior. Away with the modern dogma which would depreciate or do away with fasting as a means of grace! All truly spiritual people have so tested and proved the blessing of fasting as to be ready witnesses when that Bible doctrine is assailed. The Orientals make great demonstration, fasting and mourning for the dead, with their apparel unchanged, hair uncombed, all ablutions for cleanliness and comfort being neglected. *“But thou, fasting, anoint thy head, and wash thy face, in order that thou may not appear unto the people fasting, but to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father, who seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.”* Who is a hypocrite? The word simply means an actor on the theatrical stage, who performs a part in which he represents another person, entirely different from himself. Hence all the people who simply act out — *i.e.*, play religion — are hypocrites. It is very deplorable to hear a man stand in the pulpit and unblushingly preach that religion is simply something to be done, instead of a Divine reality to be received into the heart, giving us a new nature, and so utterly transforming and revolutionizing us, as in every case, to superinduce a radical change of life and deportment, not assumed, but spontaneously, lovingly, and joyfully verified in the regenerated and sanctified life. No wonder Churches get filled up with hypocrites, when the preacher boldly proclaims to them salvation by their own good works, which he calls obedience, thus actually preaching to them downright hypocrisy. The Church was full of hypocrites in our Savior's time, as we plainly see from His ministry; *i.e.*, people who are depending on works to save them, and at the same time strangers to the experimental reality.

### HEAVENLY TREASURE.

*“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust corrupt, and thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”* Nothing but immortal souls and glorified bodies can go to heaven. Therefore,

all the time and money we expend on transitory things are lost in eternity. True wisdom would concentrate all the powers and resources of mind, spirit, body, and estate in the salvation of souls.

“Man wants but little here,  
Nor wants that little long.”

We will get through this world some way. Therefore our only opportunity to lay up a reward for the future is to invest it in human souls, and take them to heaven. *“The light of the body is the eye. If thine eye may be pure, the whole body shall be lighted; but if thine eye may be evil, the whole body shall be dark. And if the light which is in thee is darkness, how great is the darkness!”* The eye is the most important of the five physical senses, and when pure — *i.e.*, free from disease — it illuminates the whole body; while the body of a blind man is enveloped in rayless night. The soul has the five senses like the body — *i.e.*, sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch — of which sight is the most important. A dead man does not see, though he has eyes. All sinners are dead, and wrapped in the black night of perdition, though they have eyes. In regeneration, the light comes to the eye of the soul, but not clear and cloudless till sanctified wholly.

### GOD AND MAMMON.

*“No one is able to serve two masters; for he will hate the one and love the other, or he will cleave to the one and despise the other. You are not able to serve God and mammon.”* Here is the salient issue on which turns the weal or woe of every human being. Since Satan captured the world in the fall, it is antagonistical to God. Comparatively few succeed in so appropriating redeeming grace and sanctifying power as to rise superior to all the charms and emoluments of this fallen world and take God for their portion. With God, they not only have this world so far as it is possible for it to be a blessing to them, but multitudes of bright, heavenly worlds, infinitely more valuable and enjoyable than this. But Satan manages to keep before the eye a constant panorama of this world, shown up in an utterly false light, with greatest possible carnal allurements, while he maneuvers cunningly to keep a black veil before the eye, obstructing every attempt to look away and catch the light of the bright, celestial spheres, which shine with a glory so ineffable as to throw this poor, fallen world into total eclipse if we could only once apprehend even a glimpse of the unutterable splendor and beauty!

### WARNING AGAINST SOLICITUDE.

*“Therefore, I say unto you, Be not solicitous for your soul, what you may eat, nor your body, as to what you may be clothed; is not the soul more than food, and the body more than raiment?”* The Greek *psyche*, “soul,” here occurring, includes animal life — *i.e.*, the life of the body — for whose perpetuation food is needed. *“Look toward the fowls of the firmament, because they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and your Heavenly Father feedeth them; are ye not much more valuable than they?”* The conclusion from this statement of our Savior is, that we should trust God to feed us like He feeds the birds, who neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns. It does not follow that we shall not sow, reap, and store the fruits of the earth; but it does follow that we are to be perfectly free from solicitude, resigned to the good providence of God, who never forgets any of us. The E.V. here, *“Take no thought,”* is misleading, as we can not do our work without giving it reasonable attention. But the word of our Savior simply means that we should be perfectly free from

all of that worrying solicitude which fills the mind with anxious cares, and distracting fears, and foreboding anticipations of coming calamities, especially poverty and starvation, developing a state of solicitude and anxiety, which is incompatible with that perfect spiritual repose we must all have in Jesus, in order to be sanctified wholly, and utilize our full resources of soul, mind, and body for the salvation of the world and the glorification of God, who wants us to be free and happy as the birds of paradise. *“Which one of you, being solicitous, is able to add one moment to his existence?”* The “cubit to the stature,” as in E.V., adding eighteen to twenty-two inches to your height, would make you monstrous, and be undesirable. Hence no one is solicitous for that, while all are prone to solicitude for life prolonged. *“And why are you solicitous concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin. But I say unto you, That Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed as one of these.”* In that day, when they had no factories, clothing was scarce and costly as we can hardly now conceive. Hence it ranked along with gold and silver and other valuables, the poorer classes, and among them God's prophets — e.g., Elijah, Elisha, and John the Baptist, the greatest of prophets wearing the rough, shaggy mantle woven out of camels' hair. Now, how beautiful the illustration of Jesus, calling attention to the lilies growing in the valleys, and challenging comparison with the royal robes of King Solomon, the greatest and most celebrated monarch of the world, at the same time giving His verdict in favor of these beautiful and lovely lilies! *“And if God so clothes the verdure of the field, living today and tomorrow cast into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?”* As we look round we see forests blooming, gardens smiling, and fields wrapped in the radiant splendors of nature's ineffable beauty, now let us remember that no factory on earth can equal these beauties. Yet as we are infinitely more valuable than the flowers that bloom, and the green grass that wraps the fields with its carpet of verdure, beautified with floral splendor, let us remember that God wants to adorn us with robes of beauty which outshine all of these; i.e., with the blood-washed mantles of entire sanctification, shining with the beauty of holiness, the admiration of angels unfallen and saints redeemed. *“Then be not solicitous, saying, What must we eat? or What shall we drink? or With what shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the heathen seek; for your Heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things.”* When we are solicitous about the necessities of life, we are like the heathens who know not God. The children of the loving Heavenly Father ought to have such confidence in His parental affection and care as to live utterly free from all solicitude. O how the Church of the present age needs the appropriation and utilization of this wonderful truth! What a shame to be living like the heathens, who look directly to the necessities of life instead of looking to God, resting in Him, receiving in Him all things needful for this life and that which is to come, and daily realizing that in Him we live, and move, and have our being!

*“But seek ye first the kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.”* Do you not see here you have a check on heaven's bank for everything you need in this world, if you will only seek the kingdom and the righteousness of God, which is true holiness? You enter the kingdom in regeneration; in sanctification you receive the righteousness of God. O what a sunburst of glory on the suffering and troubled millions of earth! Instead of seeking after all these temporal blessings — food, raiment, home, education, books, friends, social position, and earthly achievements — seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and He will add to you all these other things, so far as in His omniscient wisdom He sees that they will be a blessing to you. What an awful blunder is made by the multitude, running after transitory things and neglecting God! Here you see the first thing that we are to seek, when launched into mortal existence, is the kingdom and

righteousness of God, with the positive assurance that these temporal blessings shall also be added. *“Therefore be not solicitous in reference to tomorrow; for tomorrow will be solicitous for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil of the same.”* Will we never cease from this awful, pernicious habit of borrowing trouble from the future? The most of trouble I ever had, I never had.

I borrowed it from the future, and it never came. O what a trick of the enemy, to wear us out with solicitude about coming troubles which never do come! Praise the Lord, I have long ago quit borrowing trouble from the future. Will you not quit too? Our Savior is a powerful preacher on entire sanctification, which is the only possible remedy for this worrying solicitude, thus giving us perfect rest in Jesus; so, like a tired infant reposing in its mother's arms, we rest each fleeting moment, leaving time and eternity with Him who loves us so dearly that He is certain to manage everything for our good and His glory.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XX.

### CRITICISM.

**Luke 6:37; Matthew 7:1.** *“Criticize not, in order that you may not be criticized; for with whatsoever criticism you criticize, you shall be criticized; and with whatsoever measure ye measure, it shall be measured unto you.”* **Luke** says: *“Criticize not, and ye can not be criticized; condemn not, and ye can not be condemned.”* Lord, help us to profit by these plain, practical truths and solemn warnings! The critic's cap, manufactured in hell and dispensed by the devil, is not at all becoming a saint of the Lord. Luke says if you do not criticize others you can not be criticized. Well, it has been said that curses, like chickens, will come home to roost. If you criticize no one, you will find no trouble by the criticism of others; if they undertake it, it will prove a failure, rebounding on their own heads. A critical spirit is incompatible with deep piety, and if indulged will sap the foundation of a Christian experience, and retrogress sweet, perfect love back into sour godliness, which is Satan's counterfeit holiness. Lord, save us from a critical and condemnatory disposition!

### GOOD MEASURE.

Luke 6:38. *“Forgive, and you shall be forgiven; give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, heaped up, shaken together, running over, will they give into your bosom. For with the same measure you measure, it shall be measured unto you.”* This day in Jerusalem all travelers are astonished at the striking fulfillment of this commandment. Go through the bazaars, and you will see them fill the vessel, shake it down, and run it over. The old Quaker, measuring his wheat and doing just as Jesus commanded, filling, shaking down, and running over, when asked why he gave so bountiful measure, said: “I never can travel this road any more; so I am determined to make everything right as I go along this time.”

### BLIND LEADERS.

*“And He spoke a parable to them, Whether is the blind able to lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch?”* No wonder our Savior forbade His own apostles to go out preaching the gospel until they had received the sanctifying baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. The departure of the Church from that Divine precept has filled the world with blind leaders. The only available remedy in this case is the sanctification of the ministry and the official members.

### OUR SAVIOR'S STANDARD OF PERFECTION.

*“The disciple is not above his Teacher; but every one who has been made perfect shall be like his Teacher.”* Jesus is the only unfallen Son of humanity. Perfection is from *facio*, “to make,” and *per*, “complete.” Hence it means “made complete.” Jesus, who was always free from depravity, is our only Paragon. Now, He says that “every disciple who has been made perfect shall be as his Teacher.” When He eliminates original sin out of the heart in the glorious work of entire sanctification, in so

doing He makes us perfect, and in that respect like Himself; not that we have the perfection of His Divinity, which is absolute and peculiar to God only, but when we get rid of all sin, we have the perfection of His humanity, with the exception of our infirmities, which are the after-effects of sin, and will inhere so long as we are in these mortal tenements, but which He never had, from the simple fact that He was not a personal participant in the fall.

### **INFIRMITY AND INBRED SIN.**

*“Why do you see the mote which is in the eye of your brother, and recognize not the beam which is in your own eye? Or how are you able to say to your brother, Brother, permit me, I will cast out the mote which is in thine eye, thyself considering not the beam which is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam from thine own eye, and then thou shalt see clearly to cast out the mote which is in the eye of thy brother.”* Mote here symbolizes infirmity, which does not bring any one under condemnation, just as the mote will never seriously injure the eye, much less put it out; while the beam in the eye, if not removed, would destroy it quickly. Now the beam symbolizes inbred sin, a big thing in the heart, which will ruin you, world without end, if you don't have it taken away; while you can go right on to the end of life with infirmities, as it is the province of glorification, which you receive when soul and body part, to take that all away, and let you fly into heaven with a shout. So we find people all around criticizing little things, which are of no serious moment, and never would keep anybody out of heaven, while they themselves have evil tempers, unholy passions, and worldly greed, and perhaps other phases of inbred sin, pride, vanity, lust, envy, jealousy, prejudice, bigotry, which they must get rid of if they ever pass through the pearly portal.

### **DO NOT WASTE YOUR AMMUNITION.**

*“Give not that which is holy to the dogs, neither cast your pearls before the swine; lest they may trample them under their feet, and, turning, tear you to pieces.”*

The dog and the hog are prominent in the Bible as unclean animals, symbolic of spiritual impurity; *i.e.*, carnality. This is a profitable warning, much needed, lest in our enthusiasm we preach holiness to carnal people who are utterly incompetent to appreciate it. Therefore it only makes them mad, so they reject us with contempt, and want to do us violence. Much of the Lord's ammunition is thus wasted on dead game. As hogs can not eat gold coins and diamonds, but will only get mad because we did not give them corn, so carnal people can not receive the pure gold of holiness and the dazzling pearls of Christian perfection. Like hogs and dogs, they run over them with contempt, trampling them in the mud, get angry, blaspheme, and persecute. Then, what should we preach to the carnal, worldly Churches? Preach Sinai. They do not need sanctification, and can not receive it in their present attitude. They need conviction. They must see an open hell before they will give up their pride, fall down in the dust, and cry for mercy. So long as you preach sanctification to them, you recognize their justification, perpetuate their awful delusion, under which they are fast going down to hell. They need the terrors of the law, the doom of the lost, and the duration of eternity held up before them till they get their eyes open, see their awful condition, and cry for mercy.

## THE HOLY SPIRIT CLIMAXES ALL BLESSINGS.

*“Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. What man is there of you whom his son may ask bread, whether would he give him a stone? If he may ask a fish, whether will he give him a serpent? If then ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father, who is in the heavens, give good things to them asking Him?”* God never gives us anything useless — e.g., a stone; nor any thing injurious — e.g., a serpent. This explains the reason why so frequently our petitions are not answered. How many pray for riches, which, if granted, would prove a mill-stone round their necks, dragging them down to hell! The child cries for the razor. The father, in love, withholds it, and lets it cry on. Our Savior's illustration, contrasting us fallen beings with our evil natures, and still so delighted to give good gifts to our children, with the pure and unadulterated parental affection of our loving Heavenly Father, who is certainly infinitely more anxious to bestow on His children all things appertaining to their good in this world and that which is to come. As it is impossible for Him to be unkind, do wrong, or even make a mistake, such should be our perfect confidence in His Fatherly kindness and our unconditioned resignation to His will, that we would offer our petitions and leave the answer with Him, at His own discretion, to answer them at His own time and in His own way. We should be so lost in His will that our perfect rest will not be affected in case that He withholdeth the answer altogether, so far as we know.

## THE LAW OF RECIPROCITY.

*“Therefore all things, so many as you may wish that men may do unto you, do ye even so unto them; for this is the law and the prophets.”* Here you see that the gospel dispensation, instead of abrogating the law and the prophets, indorses, adopts, and perpetuates them, as a substratum of that universal kingdom which the apostles were commanded to preach to all nations, girdling the globe with salvation and holiness to the Lord, and thus bringing the blessings of the Old Testament Theocracy, which was restricted to the Jews, into every home, blessing every family on the earth with the hallowed truth, glorious light, and heavenly benignity which reigned in the homes of the patriarchs and prophets, thus gathering all nations into one universal fraternity, making every man beneath the skies your neighbor, brother, friend, doing away with all animosities, alienations, and conflicts obliterating the spirit of belligerence from the face of the earth, consolidating Father Adam's family in one universal brotherhood.

## THE GATE AND THE WAY.

*“Enter in through the narrow gate; because wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are going in through it. Because narrow is the gate and contracted the way which leadeth into life, and few there are finding it.”*

“Broad is the road that leads to death,  
And thousands walk together there;  
While wisdom shows a narrow path,  
With here and there a traveler.”

This gate stands at the hither terminus of the King's highway of holiness which leads up to heaven. The gate is so narrow and difficult of entrance that nothing but the immortal soul can make the ingress; all sin, the pomp, pageantry, pride, riches, emoluments, and aggrandizement of the world, must be left behind. This is the reason why so few pass through the narrow gate of regeneration. They hold to many things they can not take with them. *Tethlimmene*, which qualifies the way we must all travel to heaven, is a perfect passive participle, from *thlibo*, "to contract," "squeeze together;" hence it means having been compressed, drawn together, and rendered very narrow and difficult of passage, illustrating the utter impossibility for an encumbered traveler to pass over it. While we are here assured that very few ever find the narrow way, how sad to know that so many of those few, having found it, fail to walk in it to the end! Some are quickly deflected; others hold on a good while, and are then derailed; while not a few comparatively, having long walked in the way, are sidetracked by the enemy; while others have gone on till the bright hills of glory are actually visible, by the eye of faith, from the summits of the Delectable Mountains, and even after this grand proficiency in the Divine life, make shipwreck.

### FALSE PROPHETS.

*"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, and within are rapacious wolves. By their fruits ye shall know them. Do they gather the grape bunch from thorns or figs from brambles? So every good tree produces beautiful fruits, and the corrupt tree produces evil fruits. The good tree is not able to produce evil fruits, neither does a corrupt tree produce beautiful fruits. Every tree not producing good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Therefore by their fruits ye shall know them."* Luke: *"For out of the abundance of the heart, his mouth speaketh."* This beautiful paragraph is our Savior's exegesis of the gate and the way which lead to death. While the narrow way is but an air-line, narrow as to principle, but broad as to capacity, amply capacious for all the people in the world to walk along it abreast till they enter the pearly gate of the New Jerusalem, the broad way is wide as the world, permitting you to go any way you please except the way of holiness, conferring on you the largest liberty to take your choice among the three hundred and sixty points of the mariner's compass, and go any way you will. You observe this terrible warning to *"beware of false prophets."* Do you see the connection? It is plain and simple. The false prophet is the counterfeit preacher. How are we to know him? By the differentia which Jesus here specifies: **a.** He broadens the way; *i.e.*, gives his people large liberties, so they can commend him as a "high-toned, level-headed, broad-minded, cultured gentleman." Therefore he is popular, and they will keep him a long time. Now do not forget that this follows as a legitimate sequence that the false prophet does not preach this narrow gate and contracted way, so difficult to find and walk in, but he is liberal-minded, and preaches a broad-gauge gospel. **b.** You are to know him by his fruit. You see where the E.V. reads "good fruits," you have "beautiful fruit," the literal translation of the Savior's word. What does it mean? Why, the beauty of holiness; and as Luke says, *"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh,"* the true prophet not only exhibits the beauty of holiness, but he is full of it. Whenever he opens his mouth, it pours out.

"Having been made free from sin, we have our fruit unto sanctification, and the end everlasting life." (Romans 6:22.)

Regeneration is the flower, and sanctification the fruit. Now what is the evil fruit against which our Savior warns us? It is anything and everything except holiness.

### **AWFUL DISAPPOINTMENT.**

*“Not every one saying to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of the heavens; but the one doing the will of My Father who is in the heavens. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name cast out demons, and in Thy name done many mighty works? And I will confess unto them, That I never knew you; depart from Me, ye who work iniquity.”* This paragraph describes the false prophets above, in the judgment-day, coming up with their grand and glowing reports of demons cast out — *i.e.*, many souls converted; and many mighty works — *i.e.*, great, fine churches built, powerful sermons preached, and wonderful official triumphs. But do you not see our Savior rejects them altogether? The truth of the matter is, they have never been His preachers at all. The devil, robed as an angel of light, played off on them in the beginning, calling and sending them. So they have been preaching Satan's counterfeit gospel all their lives, counting many converts and doing many mighty works, helping the devil to delude the people and lead them to hell in solid columns. What is the remedy for these awful troubles in the end? Be sure you pass the narrow gate, so difficult of entrance that it will try your flint and steel, and test your stamina to the very bottom. Then be sure that you travel the self-denial way of *“holiness to the Lord.”*

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE TRUE FOUNDATION.

**Luke 6:47.** *“Every one coming to Me, and hearing My words, and doing them, I will show you to whom he is like. He is like unto a man building his house, who dug down, and went deep, and laid the foundation on the rock; and the storm coming, the river beat against that house, and was not able to shake it; for it had been founded upon the rock. But the one hearing and not doing is like unto a man who built his house on the ground, without foundation, against which the river dashed, and immediately it fell, and great was the ruin of that house.”* With your mind on the wooden houses all around you, this seems a little defective; as a swelling river, beating against an American house, would knock it down even if it were built on a rock. In the Holy Land all the houses are stone, cemented from top to bottom, and consolidated, so it would stand indefinitely amid floods and storms, if the foundation did not give way. In the metaphoric language of the Bible, “high” and “deep” have the same meaning, really the same word stands for both. Sanctification is a high experience, and it is equally true that it is a deep experience. Luke here says that the man “digs down;” there is justification. Then he “goes deep;” that is sanctification. The result of all his laborious excavations is, that he lays the foundation on the rock. *Petra*, “rock,” is the very word which our Savior applies to Himself. (Matthew 16:18) This word really means the great strata underlying the whole surface of the globe. Consequently the foundation can never give way, and the solid stone edifice stands indefinitely. You see the foolish man, in His contrast, did not go down to the rock bottom of the earth, but built his house on the ground. Consequently the floods and storms soon undermined it; so it fell, a hopeless ruin. Probably this man built a very nice edifice, as to external appearance, comparing well with his neighbor, who did so much work beneath the surface and out of sight. The world abounds in beautiful and showy Christian characters, which really and experimentally have no Christ. Storms are coming; death, hell, and eternity will bring awful issues, which must be met.

### AUTHORITY OF OUR SAVIOR’S TEACHING.

*“And it came to pass, when Jesus finished these discourses, the multitudes were astonished at His teaching; for He was teaching them as One having authority, and not as the scribes.”* The scribes were the pastors of the Churches and exponents of the Scripture. So decisive was the contrast between their teaching and that of Jesus that the multitudes were overwhelmed with astonishment. Why was this? From the time Jesus was filled with the Holy Ghost at the Jordan, He constantly preached *“with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven;”* while the scribes simply delivered their discourses, orthodox, nice, and eloquent; but without the Spirit and the power. Hence they had the thunder without the lightning, and consequently no efficiency attended their preaching. We have the same contrast at the present day-pulpits filled with orthodox, eloquent, popular preachers, but the lightning and earthquake of the Holy Ghost are absent, consequently no salvation accompanies their efforts. They suit the people who want to save their scalps, and are unwilling to have a preacher who would hurt anybody. One of these preachers once tried the experiment of reading to his audience a

sermon written by Dr. C.G. Finney, when, to his surprise, some of the people broke down and wept bitterly. After adjournment, he went to them personally with an apology, saying: "Please pardon me, if I wounded your feelings, for I did not aim to do so;" thus showing his utter ignorance of the Spirit's work. All gospel preachers should be sure that they are in the track of Jesus, and in that case, they must preach with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

### HEALING OF THE CENTURION'S SERVANT.

**Matthew 8:5-13**, and **Luke 7:1-10**. We see here a clear confirmation that the Mount of Beatitudes, on which the sermon was preached, is not Mt. Hattin, west of Tiberias, as many believe, but that great mountain hanging over the city of Capernaum from the north; as He is at Capernaum immediately after descending from the mountain, whereas Mt. Hattin is twenty miles distant by land and ten by sea. *"But when He finished all His words in the ears of the people, He came into Capernaum. The servant of a certain centurion, who was valuable to him, being sick, was about to die. And hearing concerning Jesus, he sent to Him the elders of the Jews to ask him that, having come, He may heal his servant. And they, coming to Jesus, continued to entreat Him, earnestly saying, That he is worthy to whom He will do this; for he loveth our race, and he hath built for us a synagogue."* We are quoting Luke. Matthew says that the centurion himself came to Jesus. You see here, Luke says that he sent the elders of the Jews. In this there is no discrepancy, as we must remember that old Roman law, adopted by the English and the Americans, *Qui facit per alium, facit per se*, "What a man does by another, he does by himself." This principle is recognized in all Biblical interpretation, and here harmonizes Matthew and Luke. From the fact that both incidents transpired in Capernaum, some have confounded this miracle with that of healing the nobleman's son (John 4). They are entirely different. In the latter case, Jesus was at Cana, and actually healed him while a day's journey distant. In the case of the centurion, Jesus is in the city. The nobleman was a Jew, a member of the Herodian family; the centurion a Gentile, an officer in the Roman army. The nobleman is an example of weak faith, increasing and triumphing in the end; while the centurion exhibits very strong faith throughout. When I was in Capernaum they pointed me out the ruin of the synagogue which this centurion built for the Jews. *"And Jesus was going along with them. And He being far from the house, the centurion sent his friends to Him, saying, Lord, be not troubled, for I am not worthy that You may come beneath my roof; therefore I did not consider myself worthy to come unto You. But speak in a word, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me, and I say to this one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. And Jesus hearing these things was astonished at him, and turning, said to the multitude following Him, I say unto you, That I have not found so great faith in Israel. And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the sick servant well."* The faith of the centurion, as you see, received the Savior's highest commendation, assuring them that He had not found so great faith in Israel, this heathen Roman officer eclipsing the brightest examples in all the Hebrew nation. His faith is beautifully illustrated in the reasons which he gives for not troubling Jesus to come to his house, though He was then on His way, *"I am a man under authority,"* etc. What is the meaning of the centurion? "Just as I command Roman soldiers, and they are forced by the rigors of military law to obey me or lose their heads, so You command diseases to evacuate the body and devils to come out of the soul, and they are bound by the laws of the universe to obey You. Therefore there is no need of Your coming to my house, as You have nothing to do but command the disease to leave my servant, and it is bound to get away; it can not help itself." **Matthew 8:2:**

*“But I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of the heavens, but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; and there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”* Thus our Lord indulges in these mournful reflections upon the awful doom of the unbelieving Jews, the children of the kingdom, who had waited four thousand years for the coming King, and then, unfortunately, rejecting Him, will make their bed in hell. *“Children of the kingdom”* does not mean that they are already members of it, but simply that they are subjects for admission into it, this being a peculiar Oriental expression. The wonderful faith of this Gentile seems to remind our Savior of the coming millions from the whole heathen world, destined so speedily, responsive to the gospel call, to hasten into the kingdom, thus filling the vacancy created by the fall of the Jews. *“And Jesus said to the centurion, Go, and as you have believed, so be it unto you. And his servant was healed in that hour.”* This declaration of the Master is a glorious climax, setting forth the great gospel law of pardon and sanctification, thus recognizing our faith as the measuring line of our experiences, commensurate with what we get from God. While repentance must put you on believing ground, and loyal obedience demonstrate your faith to the world, yet faith is the only receptive and appropriative grace in the Divine economy. Prayer shovels in the coal, but faith generates the steam.

### RAISING THE WIDOW’S SON.

**Luke 7:11-17.** *“And it came to pass consecutively, He was going into a city called Nain, and many disciples of His, and a great multitude, were accompanying Him. And when He drew near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son to his mother, and she a widow; and a great multitude of the city were along with her. And the Lord seeing her, was moved with compassion toward her, and said to her, Weep not. And having come to them, He touched the bier; and those carrying it stood still. And He said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise; and the dead sat up, and began to speak; and He gave him to his mother. And fear took hold of all, and they glorified God, saying, A great Prophet has risen among us, and God has looked in mercy on His people. And that word concerning Him went out in all Judea and all the surrounding country.”* I visited the city of Nain during my recent tour. It stands on the northwestern slope of Mt. Ramoth-Gilead. Like other cities during the desolation of the country, its magnificence has long ago evanesced, leaving it nothing now but a filthy Arabic village amid the old ruins. A Latin church stands on the spot where it is certified that Jesus performed this stupendous miracle — a suitable commemoration of this mighty work. We find that our Savior traveled all the way from Capernaum to Nain, about forty miles, on foot, returning immediately; thus giving Him a journey of eighty miles for this one benefaction, as the record shows that He made the round trip from Capernaum, and specifies this only item in His ministry meanwhile. Doubtless He preached to the multitudes by the way. How wonderful was the sympathy for that poor widow who was burying her only son, and with him all her support, hope, and happiness, so far as this world is concerned! I trow she was a godly woman, and Jesus heard her prayers and saw her tears, despite forty miles intervening. When He stops the corpse on its way to the tomb, momentous was the sensation, all hearts leaping with inquiry, “What does this mean, stopping a corpse on its way to the tomb?” Such a thing was never heard of. The people in the city are astonished to see the halt of the procession. Now that the panic-stricken pall-bearers have set down the bier in the middle of the road, all eyes centered on the Prophet of Galilee. He walks round, lifts the pall from the face of the dead, takes him by the hand, and speaks with the voice that makes the mountain tremble, *“Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.”*

All eyes are centered on the corpse, which, sure enough, rises up, sitting on the bier, sees his mother, throws his arms around her, standing in loving embrace. Now the multitudes see that there is no mistake about it, Samuel is actually alive again. O what a shout they raise, “Glory to God in the highest! He has had mercy on Israel, and raised up a Prophet in her midst who has power to speak the dead to life!” What an inexplicable surprise falls on the people of the city! Who ever heard a shout at a funeral? What, in all the world, is the matter? They see the procession all broken up, and the people running hither and thither, as if they were wild, leaping and throwing their hats into the air, and shouting uproariously. They climb to the flat roofs of their houses, and stretch their eyes to see what is the matter. Behold! by this time the whole crowd are moving back toward the city, their stentorian voices reverberating against old Mt. Gilead, and rolling back like thunder peals across the Plain of Megiddo, arousing all the community. Behold! they see the young man dressed in his grave-clothes, by the side of his mother, heading the procession.

### **DID JOHN THE BAPTIST OR HIS DISCIPLES DOUBT THE CHRISTHOOD OF JESUS?**

**Matthew 11:2-6; Luke 7:18-23.** We answer the above question unhesitatingly in the negative. Neither John nor his disciples had any doubt about the Christhood of Jesus. Already twenty months have rolled away since he had introduced Him to the people and inaugurated Him into His official Messiahship by baptizing Him at the Jordan, and he had seen the Holy Ghost descend on Him, not only indubitably demonstrating His Christhood, but gloriously qualifying Him to preach the gospel of the kingdom. As the disciples of Jesus had begun with John, and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, the steward of King Herod, lived at Machærus, where John was in prison, and coming home kept the faithful Baptist well posted in reference to the mighty works of Jesus, the fact of the matter was, that Jesus had not yet openly to the Jews proclaimed His Messiahship, as this was brought out at a later date, up at Cæsarea-Philippi, through the confession of Peter; John wanted to draw Him out into an open confession of His Christhood to the multitude, feeling that this would expedite the work.

**Luke:** *“His disciples proclaimed to John concerning all these things. And calling certain two of his disciples, John sent them to Jesus, saying, Art Thou He who is to come, or look we for another? And the men, coming to Him, said, John the Baptist sent us to you, saying, Art Thou He who is to come or do we look for another? And at that hour He was healing many of diseases, chronic ailments, and unclean spirits, and was conferring on many blind people the power to see. Jesus responding, said to them, Going, tell John those things which you have seen and heard; that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them, and blessed is he whosoever may not be offended in Me.”* So you see that Jesus just sent them back to John to tell him what they had seen, aiming this to be the answer to his question. During all these twenty months He has been performing all these mighty works, and at the same time constantly preaching the gospel of the kingdom. You see the solution of the whole problem: He desires the people to be convinced of His Christhood by His mighty works, which none but God can do, preferring that their faith may supervene as a normal result of witnessing His miracles and hearing His profound and glorious truth, rather than it should be founded on His simple affirmations. The time had not yet arrived for the open and public declaration of His Christhood. Another reason consisted in the fact that the Jews all believed that Christ was to be their King, ascending the throne of David; would break the yoke of oppression, and reign over

them; thirty years of military despotism, since the Roman proconsulate had superseded the Jewish kingdom, had galled their necks with the yoke of military despotism till they longed to throw it off and again be free. This was evidently a great reason why He did not openly declare His Messiahship; but at the same time filled the whole country with His mighty works, which none but God could do. You must remember that He did, in the beginning, declare His Christhood while preaching in Samaria, as there was no probability of their crowning Him King.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XXII.

### JOHN THE BAPTIST THE GREATEST PROPHET.

**Matthew 11:7-15, and Luke 7:24-30.** *“And the messengers of John having gone away, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?”* Well did the multitude remember the thrilling scenes two years ago, when they all left their employments and went away to hear the wonderful prophet of the wilderness; and the waving of the tall reeds growing in the rich alluvial soil on Jordan’s bank, moved by the sighing zephyrs, hither and thither, were vivid in their memories. Those reeds are there now, fifteen feet high. My comrades, a few days ago, brought away some of them as souvenirs. *“But what went ye out to see? A man clothed in soft raiments? Behold, those who are in gaudy and soft apparel are in king’s houses.”* No, they never went to see a royal dude or a leader of the bon tons. A great man of the world could never have attracted that multitude, away into the wilderness, to run a camp-meeting six solid months. He was the very opposite, dressed like a tramp, and living like a soldier who proposed to conquer or die. *“But what went ye out to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it has been written, Behold, I send My messenger before Thee, who will prepare Thy way before Thee. [Malachi 3:1] For I say unto you, That among those who have been born of women, no prophet is greater than John; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”* That John the Baptist was a transcendent intellectualist and climacterically spiritual, actually filled with the Holy Ghost from his infancy, the greatest of the prophets and peerless in his dispensation, no one can call in question; yet the smallest saint in the Pentecostal age is dispensationally greater than John, the prince of prophets, and even more than a prophet, as he was the precursor of our Lord. While the Bible is preeminently spiritual, yet it is the most intellectual Book in the world, exhibiting many specimens of the highest mental culture the ages have produced, among those who have given themselves world-wide notoriety as *hornines unius libri*, “men of one book.” Our Savior frequently indulges in terse, enigmatical statements of truth, in order to sharpen our wits, develop our intellects, and superinduce profound and exhaustive research. If John the Baptist were living now, he would be the sensation of the world, as he was in his day; yet, dispensationally, he lived and died under the Law. Hence all the sons of gospel grace stand on a plane superior and more luminous, and richer in privileges and opportunities, than the brightest and the best enjoyed under the old covenant. *“And all the people hearing, and the publicans justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John; but the Pharisees and theologians rejected the counsel of God against themselves, not having been baptized by him.”* While the rank and file of the Jewish nation, and especially the poor, were melted and convicted by the preaching of John, gladly receiving baptism at his hands, the Pharisees (*i.e.*, the influential and official members of the Church) and the lawyers — Greek, *nomikoi*, from *nomos*, “law;” *i.e.*, the law of Moses — who were the learned exponents of the Old Testament Scriptures, and not lawyers in the modern sense, but theologians (*i.e.*, the learned preachers), took gross offense at the stern rebuke of John, calling them “generation of vipers,” and demanding of them satisfactory evidence of repentance, and consequently they were not baptized by him. (Matthew 3:7.)

## THE GREATEST REVIVAL OF THE AGES.

**Matthew 11:12.** *“From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of the heavens suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force;”* i.e., strong, vigorous, muscular, nervous men and women, from Dan to Beersheba, from the great sea to the Arabian desert, are rising up, leaving their homes, dropping everything in their enthusiasm for personal salvation. Four hundred years had rolled away since an inspired prophet had preached in Israel. The ministry of John the Baptist was like an effulgent noonday, suddenly breaking the black darkness of midnight. Never had Israel seen or known such a revival as swept the country, like a cyclone, under the ministry of the eloquent Baptist. Before John’s revival was arrested by his imprisonment and martyrdom, he enjoyed the honor of administering the inaugural baptism to the Son of God, thus introducing Him into His official Messiahship, who immediately began to preach and perform the most stupendous miracles, not only healing the people by hundreds and thousands, administering infallible cures to lepers, cripples, and all sorts of invalids, well known to be hopeless by human agency, but, under the ministry of Jesus, not only was all Israel aroused from the slumber of bygone ages, and thrilled with an electric-shock which emptied their cities and depopulated their towns, to run away and see the mighty works and hear the paradoxical preaching of the Galilean Prophet, but heathen nations from all parts of the country rise up, and come in multitudes, pressing pell-mell, precipitately, shouting as they come, “Only let me into the kingdom!”

## JOHN WINDS UP THE OLD DISPENSATION.

*“For all the prophets and the law prophesied unto John. And if you wish to receive him, this is Elijah who is to come.”* [Malachi 3:1] *“Let the one having ears to hear, hear.”* Though all have physical ears, they never can hear the voice of God and the music of heaven till Jesus speaks the Ephthatha, “Be thou opened.” The above Scriptures settle all questions as to the boundaries of the dispensations, showing clearly that John the Baptist did actually wind up the Mosaic dispensation, being the last of the prophets and the greatest of all.

## SANCTIFICATION DOUBLY METAPHORIZED.

*“But to whom shall I liken this generation? It is like unto little children, sitting in the forums, and calling to their comrades, and saying, We have piped unto you, and you have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and you have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a demon. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold, a man gluttonous and a wine-drinker, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.”* The group of children last mentioned are playing funeral, and thus emblemize John the Baptist, who came in all the austerities and abstemiousness peculiar to the old prophets, and actually preached the funeral of the Mosaic dispensation; while the other group, playing wedding, which introduces the new life of the wedded twain, emblemized Jesus, the Bridegroom, who came, not only introducing the new dispensation, but wedding the gospel Church. You see that as these groups of children mutually complain of the non-reciprocation of their fellows, so the people cried out against both John and Jesus, at opposite poles of the battery, the one representing death and the other life, and the carnal Church equally displeased with both. So in the great plan of experimental salvation, we have the funeral of Adam the First and the marriage of Adam the Second, both equally

repellent to the carnal clergy and the worldly Churches. Present to them sanctification from either pole of the spiritual battery, and they reject it, turning away with proud disdain. "Wisdom is justified of her children." Wisdom here means the Holy Ghost, who was fully approved and vindicated, both by the ministry of John and Jesus, who differed widely, either from other, and yet harmonized most perfectly. We have this day an infinite variety and diversity of preachers and workers in the kingdom of God, all about equally repellent to carnal people, yet the Holy Ghost is vindicated, and God glorified, by the ministry of all His children.

## SOVEREIGN, DISCRIMINATING MERCY OF GOD.

**Matthew 11:20-30.** *"Then He began to upbraid the cities, in which most of His mighty works were wrought, because they did not repent: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! because if the mighty works which have been wrought in you were in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Moreover I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you."* Chorazin was a magnificent city, twenty miles to the northwest of the Galilean Sea, on a mountain slope, and very conspicuous. We saw it almost constantly while sailing on that sea. This prophecy has been literally and signally fulfilled in the utter ruin of that city, which remained without an inhabitant through the intervening centuries, till about twenty years ago a Jewish colony reached the old site. It is now a very flourishing city of twenty-five thousand inhabitants, one of the cheering omens of the swiftly approaching end of Israel's long desolation, and inspiringly ominous of the Lord's near coming. (Matthew 24:29,30.) Bethsaida stood on the northwestern shore of that sea, the home of Peter, Andrew, and Philip. Signally has this woe been fulfilled in its utter destruction. This day it is without an inhabitant, though rather a favorite camping-ground for travelers, as the great spring, which evidently originally determined the location, still rolls its clear, limpid waters into the sea. We spent an hour, lunched, and fed our horses, enjoying copious draughts from this spring. Of course, this city will be rebuilt in the good time coming. Tyre and Sidon are among the most ancient cities in the world, situated in Phœnicia, on the Mediterranean coast, twenty miles apart. They were the inventors of the royal purple, which ere long became the uniform of all the kings throughout the known world, thus making these cities immensely rich by their patronage, as they enjoyed a monopoly of the costly and gaudy apparel worn by the royal families in all the earth. They suffered terribly in the conquest of Nebuchadnezzar, 600 B.C. Having somewhat revived, they again suffered awfully in the conquest of Alexander, 325 B.C., in after ages being conquered by the Romans, so that in the Savior's time, though they still existed, scarcely a vestige of their former grandeur existed. These were Gentile cities. Jesus says that with the opportunities enjoyed by those Jewish cities, they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes.

*"And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted up to heaven, shall be cast down to Hades; because, if the mighty works which have been performed in thee, were among the Sodomites, they would have remained until this day. Moreover I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of the Sodomites in the day of judgment than for thee."* Why was Capernaum exalted up to heaven? Because she enjoyed the residence and the ministry of Jesus, the richest blessing in all the earth; no city on the globe ever so signally favored. How plain the preaching of Jesus! Remember, He was in that city when he pronounced this awful, withering woe, which has been literally verified in the utter destruction of the city, remaining through the ages without an inhabitant. They are now beginning

to rebuild that memorable city. When I reached the sea of Galilee, and embarked in a boat to go sailing all around, I said to them, "Take me, first of all, to Capernaum," which is about ten miles from Tiberias, whence we sailed. O how I enjoyed walking on the ground where Jesus had walked, and standing where He preached to the multitudes. The revival of this city is of very recent date; a Latin convent, claiming to occupy the site of Peter's house, which was the home of Jesus, being the principal interest. Hades means the unseen world, which we all enter when we evacuate these tenements. There are two words in the Greek, "Hades" and "Gehenna," both translated "hell" in E.V.; the latter always meaning hell, and the former simply meaning the eternal world, including both heaven and hell. Sodom and Gomorrah were Gentile cities, so awfully wicked that God rained on them fire and brimstone, thus destroying them. Here our Savior says that with the opportunities enjoyed by these Hebrew cities, they would have repented. I have met many idle and foolish talkers who even dare to impeach the Divine benignity, saying that it is unfair to give the millennial generations an earthly paradise, with no devil to tempt them, when all the premillennial ages have to pass through Satan's flint-mills, taking chances for heaven. Who art thou that repliest against God? Hath not the Almighty a perfect right to dispense His sovereign mercy pursuant to His infallible will? We know He makes no mistakes. Here, Jesus says that if these great Gentile cities, Tyre and Sidon and Sodom, had enjoyed gospel privileges, they would have repented. Let us thank God for our opportunities, and be sure that we appreciate them.

### THE WISE AND THE PRUDENT.

**Matthew 11:25.** *"At that time, Jesus responding, said, I praise Thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and the prudent, and revealed them unto babes. Yea, Father, because thus it was well pleasing in Thy sight."* Here our Savior calls His apostles and disciples babes, and very appropriately, as the whole gospel Church remained in spiritual babyhood till Pentecost. Here, Jesus says that the Father was pleased to withhold these deep, sweet, and wonderful revelations from the wise and the prudent, and has revealed them to babes. We are frequently admonished to be "wise and prudent." Good Lord, deliver me from the wisdom and prudence which would disqualify me to get down to the bottom of the valley of humiliation, from which I can look up and see the beauty of holiness!

### THE SON THE ONLY REVELATOR OF THE FATHER.

Eight hundred millions identified with the paganistic Churches, one hundred and seventy-five millions belonging to the Churches of Islam, and all the Unitarians in the Protestant world, ignore and reject the Divinity of Christ. You see their awful dilemma, claiming to worship the Father when they never can know Him, as they reject the Son, who alone can reveal Him.

### THE DOUBLE REST.

**Matthew 11:28.** *"Come unto Me, all ye who are laboring and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* These laboring people are all convicted sinners, toiling to save their own souls, and at the same time heavy laden with guilt, realizing mountains on them, crushing them down to perdition. Millions are thus toiling beneath their intolerable burdens, but all in vain, as it is utterly impossible for them, with all the good works which they can do and the preachers can do for them, to ever get

rid of their crushing load of guilt and sin, which will get heavier through time and eternity, not only dragging its victim down to hell, but sinking him to a deeper depth of damnation through the flight of eternal ages. Then, what shall the burdened soul do? Jesus here tells you, *“Come unto Me;”* not to the Church, to the preacher, to water baptism, to sacraments or duties, but *“unto Me, and I will give you rest.”* This is rest from that burden of sin, which Jesus takes from your soul, granting you a free pardon. *“Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, because I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”* So here you see plainly that our Savior invites the same people who have come to Him and been relieved of their burden of guilt, to come again and find soul-rest; *i.e.*, the sweet repose of the soul itself in Jesus. He has taken your burden, and now it is of the greatest importance that you get Him to take you. This world is not our Paradise; it is full of foes and perils. We find our heaven here in Jesus, when we lie down in His arms, like a tired child, and sink away into perfect rest. Entire consecration puts us in the position of learners in the school of Christ. He is our Infallible Exemplar. When we learn to be meek and lowly like Him, then we find this wonderful soul rest for which the weary pilgrim sighs. Here He assures us that His yoke is easy and His burden light. How blessed it is to take the yoke, because He is omnipotent! And when you put your neck under one end of the yoke, Jesus has His under the other. What is the result? He carries all the load, the yoke and you too, and you go shouting on your way, enjoying perfect soul-rest, and flying up to heaven.

**THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK,  
LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I**

**CHAPTER XXIII.**

**GRATITUDE OF THE FALLEN WOMAN WHOM JESUS HAD SAVED.**

**Luke 7:36-50.** *“A certain one of the Pharisees asked Him that He may eat with him; and coming into the house of the Pharisee, He sat down at the table. And, behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, learning that He is dining in the house of the Pharisee, breaking an alabaster box of myrrh, and standing behind by His feet, weeping, began to wash His feet with her tears; and she continued to wipe them with the hairs of her head, and to kiss His feet copiously, and anoint them with the myrrh.”* As Jesus lived in Capernaum, where this incident transpired, this poor fallen woman had heard Him preaching, and been gloriously converted. How do you know she was fallen? *Amartolos*, translated “sinner,” so indicates, and the narrative corroborates. This tender-hearted young convert, keeping close on the track of Jesus, learns that He is to dine with this Pharisee, and, I trow, slips in, with the crowd of His disciples, unobserved by the host, who would evidently have rejected her if she had come alone and thus been recognized. The dining couches in those days were so arranged that the left side was next to the table, and the feet turned away. Hence she had access to His feet while He was eating; her grateful heart, so inundated with the gushing impetuosity of heaven-born love, that when she kisses His feet, her grateful tears spontaneously pour down on them to such an extent that, feeling that they somewhat pollute them, she proceeds to purify them by wiping away the tears with her long, flowing hair, and at the same time the gushing impetuosity of first love constrains her to repeatedly and copiously kiss His feet, and anoint them with the myrrh, which doubtless she had used in her evil life, and was very valuable, as it is not indigenous in Palestine, but transported from Arabia Felix. *“And the Pharisee, who had called Him, spoke within himself, saying, If this man were a prophet, He would know who and what sort the woman is who touches Him, because she is a sinner. Jesus responding, said to him, Simon, I have something to say to thee; and he says, Master, speak. There were two debtors to a certain creditor; the one owed him five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And they, not having wherewith to pay, he forgave them both. Therefore, which one of them, tell me, will love him the more? Simon responding, said, I apprehend, the one to whom he forgave the more. And He said to him, You judged correctly. And turning to the woman, He said to Simon, Do you see this woman? I came into thy house, and thou gavest Me no water for my feet; but she washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest Me no kiss; but she, from the time I came in, did not cease copiously kissing My feet. Thou didst not anoint My head with oil; but she has anointed My feet with myrrh. Therefore, I say unto thee, That her sins, which are many, are forgiven, because she loved much; but the one to whom little is forgiven, loveth little. And He said to her, Thy sins are forgiven.”* In that summerland the most of the people go barefoot. Shoes are not now used by the natives, but sandals, which are dropped off at the door, the host meeting the guests with water to wash their feet before entering the house. The olive oil, in that country so abundant, is a substitute for butter, lard, light, and lubrication generally, and used on the hair of the head. The Oriental kiss is still common. These courtesies had been neglected on that occasion, and our Lord reminds His host that this woman has supplied them all. He now brings up a very clear illustration, explaining her incorrigible, gushing gratitude, which she had so copiously demonstrated regardless of all criticism. Does it not follow from this illustration

that great sinners will have greater love when they get saved? It certainly does, considering love in the sense of gratitude. But we must remember that there are other phases of spiritual interest besides gratitude, which is certainly the salient point in this illustration. It is doubtful whether the losses sustained in intellectual obscurity and obtundification, and the deep degradation of the moral faculties, are ever entirely regained. As finite beings are all progressive, and the time occupied in recovering lost ground might otherwise be devoted to unimpeded progress, it certainly follows as a logical sequence that there is, in the ultimatum, greater availability and grander possibilities awaiting the person who has never debased the affections in low debaucheries and gross sensualities, nor dwarfed his intellect by dragging it down to the depths of brutality, and blackened it with the hellish horrors of demoniacal passions. Besides, there is an awful risk to run on the other side. While one prodigal gets home, a hundred die at the hog-pen; and while one fallen woman is gloriously saved, as in this case, many never escape from the lasso of Satan. *“And those sitting along with him began to say among themselves, Who is this who even forgives sins? And He said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.”* Even at this date, as our Savior had not openly declared His Messiahship among the Jews, His disciples probably in the main looked upon Him as the greatest prophet God had ever sent to Israel, remembering that Elijah and Elisha had wrought many miracles, and even raised quite a number of people from the dead. The Jews were orthodox on the sin question, and always ready to certify that the forgiveness of sins was the province of God alone. Our Savior’s affirmation, setting forth the human conditions of salvation, is exceedingly clear in the unmistakable declaration, *“Thy faith hath saved thee.”* No Bible reader can deny the great, fundamental doctrine of salvation through faith alone without flatly contradicting the Savior. If anything else had been the condition of that woman’s salvation, rest assured, Jesus would have specified it. Justifying faith involves repentance as a necessary and preparatory antecedent, requisite to put the sinner on believing ground for pardon, just as faith for sanctification involves a thorough and complete consecration, an indispensable prerequisite to put you on believing ground for sanctification.

### WOMAN’S MINISTRY.

**Luke 8:1-3.** *“And it came to pass consecutively, He was going through city and village, proclaiming and preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and the Twelve were along with Him, and certain women who had been healed from evil spirits and disease; Mary, called Magdalene, out of whom seven demons had gone, and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, the steward of Herod, and Susanna, and many others, who continued to minister unto Him from those things which appertain to them.”* In this catalogue of Christian workers who accompanied our Lord, assisting Him in His vast and stupendous ministry in the interest of both soul and body, also supplying Him and His apostles, doubtless, with temporalities, were Mary, called Magdalene, from her resident city Magdala, which stands on the northwestern coast of the Galilean Sea. It is now a dirty, barbaric village, occupied by nomadic Arabs. Many have taken up the conclusion that she was this fallen woman described in the preceding chapter. Of this we have no evidence whatever, and should not indulge in gratuitous fancy. This woman was in Capernaum, about ten miles from Magdala overland. Some able writers have pronounced Mary Magdalene a common harlot. This may have been true, but we have no evidence of it. Jesus cast seven demons out of her, but we do not know what kind; but we do know that she became one of His truest disciples and brightest saints, standing at the front of the faithful sisterhood, who lingered last at the cross, and were the first to look into the empty

sepulcher, and the first to go and preach the risen Jesus, and doubtless is this day one of the brightest glorified saints. We see here that Joanna, the wife of Chuza, the steward of Herod Antipas, was also a constant minister of our Lord, keeping her king and his court well posted about the mighty works of Jesus, as ever and anon she returned home to the royal palace at Machærus, where her husband was a member of the king's cabinet. Besides these two sisters, so prominent in the ministry of our Lord, were Susanna and many others, who ministered unto Him constantly and regularly. This is the second great tour our Savior takes, peregrinating the whole country from city to city, accompanied by the twelve apostles and these ministering sisters, constituting a grand evangelistic force, so they could go into a city and literally capture it with the agencies of gospel grace.

### **THE UNPARDONABLE SIN; I.E., BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.**

**Matthew 3, 20-30; Matthew 12:22-37; and Luke 11:14-23. Mark:** *“And they come into the house; and again a multitude comes together, so that they are not able even to eat bread. And those who were along with Him came out to arrest Him; for they continued to say, That He is beside Himself.”* Their common charge against Jesus was, that He is beside Himself; i.e., gone crazy, that He has run mad, and that He has a demon. Look out! If you walk in His footprints, do not be jostled if they speak of you in a similar manner. **Matthew:** *“Then a demonized man, blind and dumb, was brought to Him, and He healed him, so that the blind and dumb spake and saw. And all the multitudes were astonished? and continued to say, Is not this the Son of David?”* **Mark:** *“The scribes, having come down from Jerusalem, were saying, He has Beelzebul, and that through the prince of the demons, He casteth out demons; and calling them to Him, He spake to them in parables, How is Satan able to cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, how is that kingdom able to stand? And if it is divided against itself, that house is not able to stand; and if Satan has risen up against himself, and is divided, he is not able to stand, but has an end.”* Beelzebub, E.V., is the name of a heathen god, but Beelzebub is simply another name for the devil, as it here occurs in the original. The scribes at Jerusalem had laid all their wits under contribution, and settled down on a theory which they thought would explain all the demoniacal ejection which Jesus was doing in Galilee; i.e., that He had entered into a collusion with the devil, who is commander-in-chief of these evil spirits, to cast them out. They thought their theory would bear criticism, as, of course, Beelzebub, the prince of devils, had power over all these demons which Jesus was casting out. Do you not see the utter imperturbability of Jesus amid these vile, false accusations? He simply proceeds to answer their argument and expose their sophistry from a logical standpoint, showing up the utter untenability of their exegesis, as in that case, Satan would be divided against himself, and would destroy and utterly break down his own kingdom. Are there not endless division, discord, and disharmony in the kingdom of Satan? Of course there is, hell itself being the very pandemonium of conflict, rage, and all conceivable dissension, animosity, perturbation, variance, and torment. But the point in all this is, that Satan's kingdom, both in earth and hell, is a single unit of evil, there being no admixture of good, but evil, with all its endless diversifications. And, pursuant to the Savior's argument, if the kingdom of Satan had a mixture of good and evil, those elements, mutually antagonizing each other, would ultimate in the annihilation of his kingdom. There is no such a mixture in this world, as here we have the two kingdoms at war with each other, and destined, in the case of every individual, the one or the other, to triumph. Hence you will find the argument of our Savior in this case perfectly tenable from the standpoint of fact and logic. **Matthew:** *“If I cast out demons through Beelzebul, through whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your*

*judges.*” We see from this Scripture that the Jews were accustomed to cast out demons. How was that? Do you not know that the Jews, from the days of Abraham, were the chosen people of God? How do we cast out demons? We do it by invoking the mercy and power of God on them to cast out the demons and save their souls; *e.g.*, when we gather around an altar of penitence. In a similar manner did the godly Hebrews cast out the demons by invoking the God of Israel. *“And if, by the Spirit of God, I cast out demons, then has the kingdom of God come nigh unto you.”* Well said; because none but God can cast out demons. The kingdom of God is the Divine government, in which His power and authority are exercised. Therefore, all of this demoniacal ejection demonstrates the presence and power of God’s kingdom, involving the logical sequence that the King is present — the very fact which they were so slow to apprehend. **Luke:** *“When the strong man armed may keep his palace, his goods are in peace; but when the one stronger than he having come, may conquer him, he taketh away his panoply in which he trusted, and spoileth his goods. He who is not with Me, is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me, scattereth abroad.”* This world is Satan’s palace, and he is the strong man. So long as he occupies his palace, his goods, which are human souls, are secure in his possession. Jesus is the Stronger Man, who is going to conquer the devil, when He comes in His glory, and take this world out of his hands; *i.e.*, “spoil” it, which does not mean to destroy it; but this is a military phrase, and means to take it as spoils are captured and appropriated by a conquering army. So our Savior, the Stronger Man, in the great wars of Armageddon, is going to conquer Satan, the strong man, and take this world out of his hands; *i.e.*, “spoil” all of his goods, leaving him bankrupt, and locked up in hell. (Revelation 20:3.) The Bible is unlike any other book in the wonderful copiousness of its meaning. While the above paragraph is thus expounded, it has another exegesis, equally true and pertinent. While Satan is the “strong man,” his palace is the human heart, and his panoply, in which he trusts, the evil habits into which he leads his miserable votaries. Jesus, the Stronger Man, conquers the devil in regeneration, taking away the evil habits of the converted soul, in which Satan trusted to hold him fast. Then Jesus goes on, sanctifies that soul, “spoiling” the devil of all his goods, as in sanctification He takes the soul completely out of the hands of the devil. We see here, in this last verse, that no one can stand neutral in this terrible conflict between the strong man and the Stronger Man, but every one is forced to take sides, either with Jesus or the devil, as neutrality in this case is downright conservatism to Satan and rebellion against God. **Matthew:** *“Therefore, I say unto you, All sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto the people, but the blasphemy of the Spirit shall not be forgiven unto the people. Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven unto him; but whosoever may speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in that which is to come.”* While there is but one God, He is manifested in Three Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, the latter being the Executive of the Trinity. While the personal Father sits upon the throne of the universe, administering the government of the boundless Celestial Empire, the Son incumbers the Mediatorial Throne at His Right Hand, administering the boundless resources of redeeming grace to all the people in this world, and even the earth itself. Both the Father and the Son send forth the Holy Ghost, the Third Person of the Trinity, into this world, to shed light on every human being, convict every sinner, convert every mourner, sanctify every believer, and glorify every disembodied saint, and thus prepare this whole world for heaven. He is the Successor of our ascended and glorified Savior in the execution of the redemptive scheme on the earth. (John 16:7.) Hence you see that the Holy Ghost is the Divine Person of the Trinity who deals with human souls, administering the love of the Father and the grace of the Son, saving and sanctifying all who will let Him. There is a great eleemosynary institution for the relief of all beggars, administered by three officers, A., B., and C. A. has his office

in London, England; B., in New York, America; and C., is present on the spot with every dying beggar, and ready to dispense the needed alms. Now you see these poor victims of decrepitude and misery must receive the benefits of this philanthropic institution at C.'s hands, as they can never reach A. at London or B. at New York. Here is the dying sinner. The Holy Ghost is with him in his dismal hovel or his gilded palace, ready to dispense to him the infinite benefactions of the loving Father and the dying Son. Suppose he unfortunately reject or grieve Him away, he is at the end of his resources, and must eternally perish. If he will receive the Holy Ghost in conviction, regeneration, and sanctification, He will administer to him all the blessings of the Father and the Son. Blasphemy means contempt. Therefore the ultimate neglect and contemptuous rejection of the Holy Ghost, consummates the sin against Him, which is unpardonable, either in the present age or in that which is to come; *i.e.*, millennial age. Though some very stoutly deny the succession of the gospel age by another, we must remember that the Word of the Lord is the end of all controversy. Not only this passage, but Hebrews 6:5, and others, speak positively of the coming age. You now see clearly in what the sin against the Holy Ghost, which is unpardonable, consists. It is clearly revealed and expounded by the Savior in this chapter. It is the imputation of the miracles wrought by the Savior, through the Holy Ghost, to Beelzebul; *i.e.*, the devil. In this way the scribes and Pharisees, and others who followed their influence, committed the sin against the Holy Ghost. A simple analysis of this problem will thoroughly elucidate it. If you impute the work of the Holy Ghost to the devil, your doom is sealed, as it is impossible to convince you. Suppose God literally inundates you with evidence, He must give it all by His Spirit, and you will turn it over to the devil as fast as it comes, and see nothing but the devil in it all. Consequently, you are unconvincible. In this way the antediluvian world was ruined, having sunk so deep in the black darkness of sin, they imputed all the efforts of the Holy Ghost to convict and save them to Satanic influence, thus crossing the deadline and rejecting God. In a similar manner the Jews, as we see here, imputed the miracles of Jesus to the devil, thus committing the unpardonable sin, rejecting the Son, and sealing their hopeless doom, to the awful destruction which soon overtook them in the Roman wars, as the antediluvians had been destroyed by the flood. In a similar manner the present age is fast rejecting the Holy Ghost, and ripening for the great tribulation, which, to illuminated minds, is already heaving in view, while the wonderful fulfillment of the latter-day prophecies draweth nigh. While the fallen Churches of the present age are fast rejecting the Holy Ghost, pronouncing His work fanaticism, and thus imputing it to the devil, whose trend is the unpardonable sin, the world, with wonderful expedition, is plunging into the same yawning abyss, down Satan's greased plank of infidelity, which is wonderfully and fearfully on the increase, both in Christendom and heathendom. God, in His mercy, waited on the antediluvians to repent till the last hope had fled. He did the same for the Jews. A similar destruction is on the track of the God-rejecting Gentile world (Romans 11:21), though, I trow, God, in His unutterable mercy, as in former dispensations, will wait till they cross the deadline, the Churches rejecting the Holy Ghost and the world espousing infidelity, and thus all putting themselves beyond the reach of redeeming mercy, and sealing their doom in hell. *"Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good; make the tree corrupt, and the fruit will be corrupt; for a tree is known by its fruits."* There is no good in this fallen world; it all comes from heaven; therefore when the Holy Ghost is rejected, nothing but corruption is left.

*"O ye generation of vipers, how are you, being evil, able to speak good things? Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."* How awfully plain this preaching, calling His intellectual auditors "generation of vipers!" Do not forget that He is especially addressing the

preachers and official members; *i.e.*, the scribes and Pharisees. Does not history repeat itself? Shall we be so blind as to leave this with a congregation 1,870 years ago? God forbid! Let us take it home, wake up, and profit by this awful truth. *“A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth evil things.”* How awful the state of the Jewish Church! The leading preachers and laymen in the hands of the devil! *“I say unto you, That every idle word which the people may speak, they shall give an account for the same in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou mayest be justified, and by thy words thou mayest be condemned.”* Language is the exponent of the heart. God has put us here on probation, trying and testing us for vast eternity. “Idle” is *argon*, from *ergon*, “work,” and is the strongest negative in the Greek language when preceding a word. Hence it means the very absence of all work. God has put us here to work in His vineyard. Hence we have no time to lose. Idle words mean idle minds and bodies, which are condemnatory in the sight of God. O the momentous issues which hang on our words, the exponents of both soul and body! When we are idle, the devil always finds an open door. We see here, in the contingent tense, it is our prerogative to so speak as to determine our justification or condemnation before the judgment-seat of Christ.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES SEEK A SIGN FROM HEAVEN.

**Matthew 12:38-45; Luke 11:16-36.** *“Then certain ones of the scribes and Pharisees responded, saying, Master, we wish to see a sign from Thee. And responding, He said to them, A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and no sign shall be given unto it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. For as Jonah was in the stomach of the whale three days and three nights, so the Son of man shall be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights.”* The scribes and Pharisees were not satisfied with His numerous and stupendous miracles of healing the sick, casting out demons, and even raising the dead, but they demanded a sign directly down to the earth, like the falling of the manna in the wilderness. Do you not see how the Infallible Teacher calls those preachers and Church leaders, *“A wicked and adulterous generation?”* Lord, save us from the same condemnation! Here He says that He will be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. This does not mean the tomb, which was not in the heart of the earth, but on the surface. Remember, the soul is the man, and not the body. When our Savior expired on the cross, His human soul, evacuating His body, went into Hades (1 Peter 3:21; Acts 2:27-31), proclaiming His victory in hell, and entering the intermediate paradise, meeting the thief (Luke 23:43), and on the third morn leading up the Old Testament saints (Ephesians 4:8-10), entering the tomb, and receiving His risen body. Some are disposed to be a little critical because the body of Jesus was not in the tomb three whole days. That is certainly very silly criticism. We speak of a ten days’ meeting when we are only in it a few hours every day, thus estimating a part for the whole. The Jews did likewise. If you do not wish to fall under the condemnation of a wicked and adulterous generation, do not hold on seeking signs, demonstrations, and evidences, but take God at his word, and raise the shout of victory, inspired by simple faith in His Infallible Truth, and you will see every Jericho the devil can ever rear up in your way fall down flat. *“The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and, behold, a greater than Jonah is here.”* A simple matter of fact, when Jonah thus appeared, miraculously, after three days, from the stomach of the whale in the bottom of the sea, and preached to the Ninevites, they repented in sackcloth and ashes. Our Lord here assures them that His resurrection from the dead will be to them the climacteric sign of His Messiahship. He knew that those critical preachers and Pharisees would not believe on Him, even after He had risen from the dead, and therefore the Ninevites would condemn them in the day of judgment. *“The queen of the south will rise in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.”* This was the Queen of Sheba, whose country was at the southern terminus of Asia, bordering on the Persian Gulf. She prosecuted this long and weary journey on a camel, back, through Arabian sands, that she might enjoy the ministry of Solomon. Hence she will be a swift witness against the unbelieving Jews in the judgment-day, and will also condemn you if you do not repent.

## AWFUL STATE OF THE BACKSLIDER.

**Matthew 12:43-45.** *“When the unclean spirit may go out from a man, he goeth through dry places seeking rest, and findeth none.”* Here we see the man is converted; this unclean spirit — licentiousness, drunkenness, or profanity, his besetting sin — having evanesced with this filthy demon, which had long polluted his soul by his slimy tread. Now that the demon is cast out, he goes tramping about, hunting a human soul to enter; meanwhile the elements around are dry, uninteresting, and affording him no sustenance, and giving him no satisfaction. “Then he says, I will return to my own house whence I came out.” Now the camp-meeting is over, and his victim has gone back home, exposed to the contaminating influence of his old companions in vice and folly; so this demon, weary and disconsolate of his tramp life around through dry and dreary places, resolves to give up his quest after others, and go back to the soul out of which he was ejected, when the Power fell on that crowded altar. “And having come, he finds it empty, having been swept and beautified.” The man has been genuinely and gloriously converted, the filthy demon cast out, and vast cart-loads of dead frogs, snakes, and immense debris swept away by the mighty bosom of pardoning love, the incoming tide of regenerating grace embellishing every chamber of his soul with the beauty and brightness of the heaven-born life. But there is no inhabitant, as the man has not yet received the second work of grace, in which the blessed Holy Spirit comes and takes up His abode in this beautiful new mansion of His own creation, simultaneously administering a deeper expurgation, eliminating out of the heart the old, sinful trend, transmitted from Adam the First, and always keeping the door ajar for every tramping demon that may chance to pass that way, not only saluting him “Welcome!” but making his quarters exceedingly comfortable. “Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and having come in, they dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first.” This ejected demon, coming back, reconnoiters the situation of his old home, and finds that it has been swept and beautified; *i.e.*, a great and wonderful change has taken place since he was driven out, all of which was much against him; yet there is one thing decisively in his favor, and that is, the house is empty. If the young convert had only pressed on into sanctification, and been filled with the Holy Ghost, this old demon, recognizing the house so wonderfully renewed, beautified, and purified, and then the Prince of Glory dwelling in it, his courage utterly failing, he would have skedaddled away, and gone in quest of an easier subject. But now that the house is empty, he is much encouraged, rendezvouses his forces, taking with him seven desperate and formidable demons. They effect an entrance; old habits are resumed; and the poor backslider not only floats on the very wave of vice, but rides the topmost billow, as his comrades now are not simply those impure demons, such as he had before he was converted, but the more formidable devils of skepticism and infidelity carry him away in a tornado, precipitating him far away into the bleak wilds of unbelief, contempt, and mockery, turning on him an avalanche of black darkness, and plunging him into hell. “So it shall be to this generation.” These wonderful deliverances of our Savior have not only a personal, but a social, collective, and ecclesiastical interpretation. The besetting sin of the Jewish Church, through all the intervening centuries, was idolatry. They got worse and worse, and seemed utterly incorrigible, till they were carried into Babylonian captivity. That terrible ordeal cast out the demon idolatry. Consequently, after the return from captivity, the Jews never again went into the idolatries of the Gentile world. But what was their history? They retrogressed into cold, dead formality and bleak, hollow hypocrisy, which were seven times worse than their old idolatry. Consequently they rejected their own Christ, and put Him to death, imputing all of His mighty works to the devil, thus grieving away the Holy Spirit, committing

the unpardonable sin, provoking the righteous indignation of the Almighty, bringing on them the Roman armies, precipitating their own swift destruction.

Do not the prophecies reveal a similar course and doom appertaining to the Gentiles? So long as the Apostolic Church held fast to the glorious experience of entire sanctification, she remained pure, despite the burning stake and the ferocious lion. After the Emperor Constantine promoted her from martyr fires and the lion's mouth to Cæsar's palace, she became worldly, plunging headlong into the idolatries of Romanism. The Lutheran Reformation cast out the demon of idolatry, so the Protestant Churches have never gone into image worship, Mariolatry, or the adoration of saints and angels; but she has drifted away into the same dead formality, cold ritualism, human ecclesiasticism, and lifeless, empty hypocrisy, which expedited the ruin of Judaism, and which is doubtless more abominable in the sight of God than papistical idolatry, thus ripening for the terrible fate of the foolish virgins.

### CONSANGUINITY OF THE HOLY GHOST.

**Matthew 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-35; and Luke 8:19,21; 11:27,28.** *“And it came to pass while He was speaking these things, a certain woman, lifting up her voice from the crowd, said to Him, Blessed is the womb having born Thee, and the breast which Thou didst suck. And He said, Truly, blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it.”* This is simply the gushing ejaculation of a woman in the crowd, so carried away with admiration of His mighty works and wonderful preaching that she is electrified with the conception of the glorious honor appertaining to the woman who enjoyed the privilege and the blessing of motherhood, thus giving the world such a Son. **Matthew:** *“And He, speaking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and brothers are standing without, seeking to speak to Him. And responding, He said to the one having spoken to Him, Who is My mother and who are My brothers? Reaching forth His hand toward His disciples [Mark says they were all sitting down around Him in a circle], said, Behold, My mother and My brothers. For whosoever may do the will of My Father who is in the heavens, the same is My brother, My sister, and My mother.”* **Luke says,** *“My mother and My brothers are those who hear the Word of God and do it.”* His reputed father, Joseph, is not mentioned here in connection with the family, neither have we a single word in reference to him since Jesus accompanied them to the temple when He was twelve years old. There is not doubt but he died during the ensuing eighteen years. We hear of Jesus having sisters living in Nazareth; doubtless married. Questions arise in reference to these brothers of Jesus — four in number, James, Judas, Simon, and Joses — the Roman Catholics, conservatively to their Mariolatry, claiming that they were the sons of Joseph by a former marriage; and the Protestants, certainly with more plausibility, that they were the uterine brothers of Jesus, and of course younger than Himself, as we have not an intimation that Joseph had a former marriage, and especially from the fact that we always find them in company with Mary, which looks much like she was their mother. Jesus then being thirty-two years old, if they were children of Joseph by a former marriage, it would put them up considerably in bachelorhood, and not seem very plausible that they would have been giving a stepmother so much attention. There is no doubt but they, thinking that He was wearing Himself out, wanted to prevail on Him to relax labor, and go home with them, and take a good rest, which was incompatible with the urgency of His important ministry. We see here, His natural relatives go into eclipse when contrasted with the spiritual. So we all find, as we become more spiritual, our physical consanguinity sinks into deeper eclipse; not that we love our natural

relatives less, but the consanguinity of the Holy Ghost is so much sweeter and richer than that of this world, that we find our affections absorbed and literally captured by the saints of God, admiring and appreciating them in proportion to their approximation to that Perfect Man, the fairest among ten thousand and altogether lovely.

### **BAPTIZO NOT ALWAYS A TOTAL SUBMERSION, BUT A PURIFICATION.**

**Luke 11:37-42.** *“But while He was speaking, a Pharisee asked Him that He may dine with him; having come in, he sat down at the table; and the Pharisee seeing, was astonished because He was not first baptized before dinner.”* It is a well-established fact that the Pharisees, pursuant to the tradition of the elders, were accustomed to wash their hands before eating, lest they had contracted pollution by contact with Gentiles, unclean animals, or some other impurity. Here, where the English says “wash,” the word is *ebaptisthe*, the passive voice and aorist tense of *baptizo*, the word constantly used in the New Testament for Christian baptism. The case here is clear and decisive that it only means for Jesus to wash His hands, the very idea of submerging His whole body under water being utterly out of the question. But you say His hands were immersed. That might be so, or it may have been done by affusion. But that is not the point of investigation. It is not said that His hands were baptized, but that Jesus Himself was baptized. Hence it follows, as an irresistible sequence, that when His hands were washed, his entire person was baptized. We simply give this as an honest exegete, expecting to meet you all at the judgment-bar; and not that I want to keep any of you out of the river. On the contrary, I exhort you to follow your convictions and satisfy your conscience. (1 Peter 3:21)

“And the Lord said to Him, Now, you Pharisees purify the outside of the cup and the plate, but the inside of you is full of extortion and wickedness. Ye fools, did not He who made the outside also make the inside? Therefore give alms of your possessions, and, behold, all things are pure to you.”

Where E.V. says “make clean,” the word is *catharizo*, which is here our Savior’s definition of *baptizo*. So you need not ransack the world to find out the meaning of baptize. It has no meaning in the Bible but to purify, *catharizo* being the word constantly used in the Bible to signify a purification. Then our Savior assures these Pharisees that if they will give alms, “all things will be pure to them,” showing up the fact that the love of God in the heart is really the baptism which he requires, superseding and climaxing all ceremonies.

### **WOES PRONOUNCED ON THE PHARISEES AND THEOLOGIANS.**

**Luke 11:42-54.** *“But woe unto you Pharisees, because you tithe mint, anise, and every herb, and you pass by judgment and the love of God; it behooveth you to do these things, and not to leave the others undone.”* Here our Savior raised no objection against the payment of tithes on everything indiscriminately, but commends it, while He utters these withering woes against them because they neglect judgment, which includes their own conviction and justification, as well as all their dealings with others, involving the whole problem of not only personal pardon, but an upright life; then the *agape* — i.e., the Divine love of God, which the Holy Ghost pours out in the heart (Romans 5:5), imparting the Divine nature, adoption. and sonship, involving a glorious regeneration — climaxed

in the perfection of that love by entire sanctification. *“Woe unto you Pharisees, because you love the front seat in the synagogues and salutations in the forums.”* While Jesus condemns the brazen effrontery of these unsaved Church officers, I hope you will take no argument from it in favor of that false modesty which so often takes a back seat. *“Woe unto you, because you are like tombs, unseen, and people walking over them do not know.”* The tombs in that country are excavations in the rocks, or chambers built of stone, cavernous within, so that people walking over them would fall down among the dead men’s bones — a very withering illustration of the traps and pitfalls superinduced by those hypocritical Church members. *“And a certain one of the theologians, responding, says to Him, Teacher, speaking these things, You indeed reproach us.”* Jesus was so personal, clear, and incisive, that He made His audience feel the force of His truth. *“And He said, Woe unto you theologians, because you bind intolerable burdens on the people, and you yourselves do not touch those burdens with one of your fingers.”* We need not go back to the Jewish Church to find this withering accusation lamentably verified. To our sorrow, we see it all around us — clergymen living like kings; home luxuries and worldly pleasures sending their families to perdition, and they laying burdens of heavy assessments on all their members, while they themselves can not even say, with the Pharisee, “I give tithes of all that I possess.” Good Lord, deliver us from the clerical oppression here specified!

*“Woe unto you, because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers slew them. Then are ye witnesses, and consent unto the works of your fathers, because they indeed slew them, and you build their tombs.”* Our Savior here turns the keen edge of His logic for the conviction of these guilty theologians and Pharisees, availing Himself of the homogeneity between the work of their fathers, who martyred the prophets, and that of themselves in building their beautiful, ornamental tombs as monuments of their love and admiration for them. History is still repeating itself. If Wesley, Knox, and Bunyan, honored as the founders of three great Protestant Churches respectively, were now on the earth, the very people who honor and eulogize them would close them out of their houses. The holiness evangelists, whose thunder and lightning the popular Churches can not stand, will all be honored by the same as soon as they die. *“Therefore the wisdom of God said, I will send you prophets and apostles, and some of them they will slay and persecute, in order that the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation, from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the house; yea, I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.”* Zechariah here was the son of Jehoiada the priest, who had led the way in the coronation of Joash when only seven years old. So long as Jehoiada lived, Joash reigned in the fear of God, and led the people in the way of righteousness. But after the death of the holy priest, the king departed from God, and even committed the awful wickedness of slaying the son of his great benefactor. Here, Jesus affirms that the blood of all the martyrs slain from Abel down to that day will be required of that generation, illustrating the fact that God holds us responsible for our volition, and our attitude toward His cause, involving the conclusion that, if the heart is not right toward God, and in harmony with His administration, pursuant to our unholy sympathies, we actually participate in the condemnation of all our predecessors.

## THE KEY OF KNOWLEDGE.

**Luke 11:52.** *“Woe unto you theologians, because you have taken away the key of knowledge.”* What is this key of knowledge? It is the light shining on Divine truth, which enables people to understand it. *“You yourselves did not enter in, and you prevented those who were entering in.”* This is a grave charge, involving immeasurable responsibility. If these theologians, high priests, scribes, and Pharisees, standing at the head of the Church in the responsible capacity of popular leaders, had received Jesus, pursuant to the preaching of John the Baptist, the rank and the of the Jewish Church would have pressed into the kingdom in solid columns, the revival wave, rolling over Judea and Galilee, sweeping the whole country like a tornado, getting the whole nation ready for the sanctifying baptism of Pentecost, after which an army of evangelists would have moved out into the Gentile world like cyclones of fire, fulfilling the Commission during that generation, and actually bringing on the millennium. The same is true this day. The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of Jesus. If the preachers and ecclesiastical leaders would all receive Him, and His blood-washed and fire-baptized workers into the Churches, the people would follow them like sheep. Momentous is the responsibility of leadership, and terrible the havoc when the blind lead the blind. *“He, going forth from thence, the scribes and Pharisees began to be exceedingly angry, and to question Him concerning many things, laying in wait to catch something from His mouth.”* He had looked them in the face, and pronounced on them these withering woes, which should have convicted and brought them to repentance.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XXV.

### LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES.

**Luke 12:1.** *“Meanwhile myriads of the multitude, having come together, so that they were treading on one another, He began to speak first to His disciples, Take heed to yourselves from the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.”* Leaven always means corruption, something superinducing fermentation, decomposition, and putrefaction. Here our Savior certifies that the leaven of the Pharisees is hypocrisy. Now, remember, the Pharisees were the most orthodox, strict, and zealous denomination of the Jewish Church. As hypocrisy means playing the part of an assumed character on the theatrical stage, hence it means playing religion; *i.e.*, externally assuming and conforming to it, while destitute of the inward reality. These Pharisees were sincere and candid, believing that the rites, ceremonies, and external obedience constituted the essence of real and true religion. O how the present age is inundated with the leaven of hypocrisy, “having the form” without the power, and some even denying the power!

### LODGERY.

**Luke 12:2.** *“There is nothing which has been covered up which shall not be revealed, and hidden which shall not be made known. Therefore so many things as ye spoke in darkness, shall be heard in the light; and whatsoever ye talked about in the ear in secret chambers, shall be revealed upon the housetops.”* The connection here follows that all the hidden things of hypocrisy mentioned in the preceding verse shall ere long be brought to light and exposed. When the Lord sanctified me, thirty-one years ago, I was a Free Mason and an Odd Fellow. All those things spontaneously evanesced when the Prince of Glory moved in. From that day my heart and life have been open to the inspection of men, angels, and God, and I have had no secrets. The incoming of the Holy Ghost expels all darkness and reveals all secrets.

### ALL SHOULD FEAR SATAN.

**Luke 12:4.** *“But I say unto you, My friends, Be not afraid of them who kill the body, and after these things have no power to do anything more; but I will show you whom you should fear: you should fear him who, after he has killed, has the power to cast into hell. I say unto you, Fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings? and one of them is not forgotten before God. But even the hairs of your head are numbered. Fear not, for you are more valuable than many sparrows.”* All the unregenerate are in Satan’s kingdom, destined, not only to perish, but to be cast into hell, as he has no other place to put them when they are forced to leave this world at the expiration of this fleeting probation. In connection with these momentous realities, we should here remember the Divine cognizance, taking notice of the smallest matters, even numbering the hairs of the head. Now what is the conclusion from all this? If you are in Satan’s kingdom, be sure you get out quickly as possible, and then be sure that you stay out, as you are liable any moment, soul and body, to be cast into hell.

## CONFESSION.

**Luke 12:8.** *“But I say unto you, That every one who may confess Me before men, the Son of man will truly confess him before the angels of God; but every one denying Me in the presence of men, shall be denied in the presence of the angels of God.”* Confess is *homologeō*, from *homos*, “like,” and *logos*, “speech.” Hence it means to speak like God. The Holy Spirit speaks to the sinner, and tells him his awful condition. He should tell it right out, and cry for mercy. Then He speaks to the broken-hearted penitent, and tells him his sins, which were many, are all forgiven; he should tell it out with a free heart. Then He speaks to the regenerated soul, revealing the remains of the carnal mind; this he should confess, going down at the altar for a clean heart. Then He reveals to him the wonderful efficacy of the cleansing blood; this he should freely proclaim to the ends of the earth. Every soul in all the world either occupies the attitude of confession or denial, with the momentous issues pending, involving the destinies of eternity.

## UNPARDONABLE BLASPHEMY OF THE SPIRIT.

**Luke 12:10.** *“Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but to the one blaspheming against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven.”* Since the Holy Ghost is the Executive of the Trinity on the earth, the Successor of the risen and glorified Savior, administering light to the blind, conviction to the wicked, regeneration to the penitent, and sanctification to the believer, if we speak against Him, or treat His office with contempt, thus grieving Him away, we seal our doom for endless woe, having thus prematurely wound up our probation, and settled our destiny in the regions of rayless night. *“When they may lead you before synagogues, tribunals, and authorities, be not solicitous how or as to what you may defend yourselves, or what you may say; for the Holy Ghost will teach you in that hour what it behooves you to speak.”* Jesus saw a wicked world and a fallen Church rising up to persecute His followers, hence the pertinency of this consolatory admonition. We should all profit by it in every case of persecution for Christ’s sake. Let the Holy Ghost manage it in His own way, patiently and joyfully accepting results.

## THE RICH FOOL.

**Luke 12:13-21.** *“And a certain one of the crowd said to Him, Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me. And He said to him, Man, who has made Me a judge or a divider over you? And He said to them, See and beware of covetousness, because his life is not in that which aboundeth to any one of the things belonging to him.”* This was a case of financial trouble between two brothers, disagreeing about the division of their patrimony. Hence our Lord turns His discourse to the exposition of avarice. *“And He spoke a parable to them, saying, The farm of a certain rich man brought forth abundantly. He reasoned within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no place where I shall store my fruits? And he said, I will do this: I will take down my barns and build greater, and I will gather there all my fruits and my goods, and will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast many good things laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry. God said to him, Thou fool, this night they shall require thy soul from thee; and to whom shall these things be which you have prepared? So is every one laying up treasure for himself, and not rich toward God.”* This parable is plain and practical, having myriads of verifications in all ages and nations. Would you see

examples? Look around you. They are numerous on all sides, people living simply for this world, with no reference to eternity. Where E.V. says, "*Thy soul shall be required of thee this night,*" the correct reading is, "*They [i.e., the demons all around you] require thy soul of thee this night.*" All wicked people are encompassed, and even occupied, by these evil demons, whose determination is to precipitate them into hell. In the providence of God, the probation of that rich fool ran out at that time; so the demons, who had pursued him all his life, took him at once to the bottomless pit.

### SOLICITUDE.

**Luke 12:22-31.** This item of our Savior's discourse is so identical with a paragraph in His Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6), that I forbear quotation, the substantial repetition of the Great Preacher sufficing to illustrate its transcendent importance, as solicitude is out of harmony with that perfect soul-rest in Jesus, which not only gives us a heavenly prelibation, but is absolutely necessary to our greatest efficiency as soul-winners, from the simple fact that a well-rested man will do much more work than one who is tired and jaded. Here our Lord also exhorts all to seek the kingdom, with the assurance that everything else shall be added.

### THE COMING KINGDOM.

**Luke 12:32-34.** "*Fear not, little flock, because your Father is pleased to give unto you the kingdom.*" The people of God in the world have never been numerous at any one time. The faithful few, scattered through all ages, from Abel down to the second coming of the Lord, have the glorious promise of the millennial kingdom as the faithful subordinates of our glorified Savior, crowned King of kings and Lord of lords. As kingdom here certainly is not restricted to the reign of grace in the heart, which all the members of the little flock already enjoy, hence it must refer to the glorious Millennial Theocracy. "*Sell your possessions and give alms; make to yourselves purses that will never get old, treasure that will not be stolen in the heavens, where the thief dost not draw nigh nor the rust corrupt. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*" Hence, if you would be a member of the little flock, enjoy a place in the bridehood of Christ, and be promoted to imperishable honors in the glorious kingdom coming, your heart must be weaned from earth, set on heavenly things, so you will lay up all your treasures in heaven, living a pilgrim and a stranger upon the earth.

### THE LORD IS COMING BACK.

**Luke 12:35-48.** "*Stand, your loins girded about, and your lamps burning.*" The girding of the loins is the preparation of the Oriental traveler for his journey. So we should be every moment ready for the journey all the way from earth to heaven. The lamp is lighted in regeneration, and the vessel filled with oil in sanctification, preparatory for this long journey. "*And be ye like unto people waiting for their Lord, when He may rise up from the marriage, in order that coming and knocking, they shall open unto Him immediately.*" The Greek *gamon*, the plural of excellence, marriages, here sets forth the fact that, as a wedding is a place of joy and festivity, it here vividly symbolizes the felicity of heaven, where, in all ages, there is a constant wedding festival. Since our Lord ascended into glory, He has been the constant participant of this heavenly wedding festival, which He is liable to leave at any moment to come back to this world. Therefore He admonishes His disciples, not only

to be ready, but on the constant outlook. Some of the Lord's people at the present day are on the incessant outlook for His return to the earth, and admonishing all others to do likewise; while others do not seem to be on this constant outlook. Will you be like the former or the latter? Jesus here tells you to be like the people who are constantly looking out for their Lord to come. I hope this is your attitude. *"Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, having come, will find watching."* Are you watching, with loins girded and lights burning? You see most unequivocally that this is the true attitude of saintship. The Lord help you to occupy it! *"Truly, I say unto you, That He will gird Himself, and have them sit down, and having come, will serve them."* O how beautiful and wonderful and transcendent the idea, that my Lord will transfigure me, take me up, and sit me down at the marriage supper of the Lamb, and He Himself wait on me! O glorious paradox! This is the last reminiscence of our Lord's humiliation in order to redeem a guilty world.

*"If at the second or the third watch He may come, and so find them, happy are they."* The second watch is nine to twelve, and the third, twelve to three, thus including the six hours of midnight, when deepest sleep falleth on men, illustrating the infinite importance of the most perfect vigilance. If we keep awake through the six hours of midnight, certainly we will not go to sleep during the other eighteen. *"Know this, that if the landlord had known at what hour the thief cometh, he would not have permitted his house to be broken into."* Do you not know that every one who is not watching will have his house broken into; *i.e.*, get into trouble? Of course, you know that Jesus Himself is the thief, coming back to this world to steal away His bride, who has found no congeniality in the groveling things of earth, and is watching and waiting for her Lord to come and take her away. O what an inspiration to constant vigilance! *"Be ye also ready, because you know not at what hour the Son of man cometh."* Downright disobedience and contempt of this commandment will certainly prove an awful risk. *"And Peter said to Him, Lord, do you speak this parable to us or to all? And the Lord said, Who then is the faithful, wise steward, whom His Lord will appoint over His household, to give unto them their food in season? Happy is that servant whom His Lord, having come, shall find so doing. Truly, I say unto you, That He will appoint him over all His possessions."* The steward here is none other than the preacher or leader of the Lord's people; while the food, which is to be given in its time, is the great and wholesome truth of entire sanctification, the only qualification to meet the Lord at His coming; and this truth, energized by constant vigilance, every moment looking out for our Lord to come; thus these grand cognate doctrines of holiness and vigilance, serving as the two oars of the boat which row us over time's stormy ocean, till we land on the bright, golden shore of eternal felicity. O what a blessing the Savior pronounces on the preacher and leader who are so faithful to His commandments as to have their people sanctified wholly, and incessantly looking out for their coming King! *"But if that servant may say in his heart, My Lord delayeth His coming, and may begin to beat His manservants and maidservants, to eat and drink and be drunken."* "Beating His servants" means oppressing them by heavy assessments, and ruling over them with rigor, which is so often done; as Peter says, "Domineer over the heritages," forgetting that they are pilgrims and strangers, having nothing, the people and Churches all belonging to the Lord. "To eat, drink, and be drunken" mean high and extravagant living, like kings in their palaces, which is the bane of ministerial homes this day, giving currency to the already trite maxim, that "preachers' children are worse than others," thus scandalizing the ministerial calling, clogging the wheels of Zion, and grieving the Holy Spirit. *"The Lord of that servant will come in a day in which he does not anticipate, and in an hour in which he does not know, and will cut him off, and appoint him his part with unbelievers."* The preacher here described is a counterfeit, living high, and

oppressing his people. Find one of that kind (and you will not have to go far, as their name is legion), and you will never hear him preaching entire sanctification and the coming of the Lord; that is one way you can know him. Of course, the coming of the Lord will oust him from his citadel, reveal his counterfeit, and put him over in the ranks of the unbelievers, where he belongs. Our Savior's preaching on this momentous subject is plain and clear, leaving all without excuse. You see clearly that the preacher who is delinquent on experimental holiness and the constant outlook for the Lord's return to the earth, is walking over enchanted ground, liable to drop him through a trap-door any moment. How can there be any controversy over the Lord's return, when His own preaching on that subject is so clear and unequivocal? Awful is the responsibility of the man who, by speech or pen, relaxes the obligations of the Lord's people to do their utmost to get everybody in the only safe attitude; *i.e.*, sanctified wholly, and constantly looking for the Lord's return. Shall we preach holiness and leave out the coming of the Lord? In that case we certainly incur the responsibility of the steward who neglected "to give them their food in season;" as that food is not only entire sanctification, but such warning and instruction as we all need to keep us truly vigilant every moment, with "loins girded and lights burning, looking out for our Lord." *"But that servant, having known the will of his Lord, and not having prepared or done according to His will, shall be beaten with many stripes."* The Bible is a plain book, and Jesus the plainest of all preachers. Are you preaching the coming of the Lord? Look well that you do not fall under this awful condemnation, and be beaten with many stripes. If I have any dogma to sustain, I am unworthy to do this writing. The ink will scarcely be dry till we all meet Jesus. I am only writing for Him. I know no controversy with any man. Look out, my brother! If we do not preach faithfully what Jesus has given us, we would better never have been born. *"And the one not having known, and having done things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few."* So here you see our responsibility is in proportion to our knowledge of God's Word. Search it diligently, as you will not be judged by what I say, but what the Lord says. *"But to every one to whom much is given, much will be required of him; and to whom they committed much, they will demand of him the more abundantly."* Awful is the responsibility of those who teach the people. Hence the transcendent folly and the crying iniquity of the man who tries to bend God's Word to suit a theory. Such a man is walking on a rotten plank over hell.

### THE FIERY BAPTISM.

**Luke 12:49-53.** *"I came to send fire on the earth, and what do I wish if it is already kindled?"* This is none other than the fiery baptism of Pentecost, which Jesus came to send on the earth, thus inaugurating a new era in the kingdom of grace. *"I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it is perfected!"* Here is an allusion to the baptism of blood which awaited Him on Calvary. *"Do you think that I came to send peace on the earth? I tell you, Nay, but division; for there shall be five in one house divided; two against three, and three against two shall be divided; the father against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against the daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law."* You see here, from the connection, that division follows, as a logical sequence, the baptism of fire. When people get sanctified wholly, they become out-and-out for God, who leads them in different ways, pursuant to His blessed will. Consequently, division will be the result. There is only one way to have harmony, and that is for all to get the fiery baptism. The grip of Satan is so tight that he is almost certain to hold some of the members of a family or a Church. In that case there will always be division, as holiness can not harmonize with carnality.

## SIGNS OF HIS COMING.

**Luke 12:54-59.** *“And He also spoke to the multitude, When you may see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say that the rain is coming, and it is so; and when you may see the south wind blowing, you say it will be warm, and it is so. Ye hypocrites, you know how to discern the face of the earth and sky, and how do you not discern this time?”* The seventy weeks of Daniel, four hundred and ninety days — *i.e.*, prophetic years, from the return of the Jews out of Babylonian captivity till the coming of Christ — had already been fulfilled; and that notable prophecy, *“The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, till Shiloh come,”* had also been fulfilled, as Herod the Great, who died while the infant Jesus was in Egypt, was their last king, Coponius, his successor, being a Roman proconsul, so the scepter had already departed from Judah. Besides, all the prophecies were being wonderfully fulfilled in Him, John the Baptist, the greatest of the prophets, having not only preached Him, but actually pointed Him out to them. Amid all of these wonderful prophetic fulfillments, corroborated by His stupendous miracles, yet they did not believe on Him. It was not the want of intelligence and learning; as we see here they very shrewdly diagnosed the signs of the material world. The trouble was spiritual. They had rejected the Holy Spirit, their only Illuminator. A similar phenomenon characterizes the present generation. While the present age is flooded with the fulfillment of the latter-day prophecies, indubitable omens of our Lord’s return manifest on all sides, yet how blind the present generation! As in that day the greatest trouble was with the leading ministers, so it is now. *“And why do you not judge a righteous judgment in reference to yourselves?”* Their verdict in reference to the material world was correct; while our Lord is grieved to see them so utterly ignorant with reference to themselves, thus working out their own hopeless ruin. *“For as you go with your adversary to the ruler, give attention on the way to be reconciled with him, lest he may deliver thee to the judge, and the judge shall turn thee over to the officer, and the officer shall cast thee into prison. I say unto thee, Thou mayest not go out from thence until thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.”* We have this same statement in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:25). Our Savior is the Opposer of every soul rushing into hell. He is also the Judge of quick and dead. Here you are admonished to be reconciled with Him quickly, while in the way — *i.e.*, when you have time and opportunity; lest your Opposer (*i.e.*, the Mediatorial Christ), in your hellward-bound way, shall turn you over to the Judicial Christ; who, of course, can do nothing but condemn you, and deliver you to the officer — *i.e.*, Satan — who will cast you into prison — *i.e.*, into hell where you must stay till you “pay the uttermost farthing.” Of course, you will never get out, as you have nothing to pay with.

## DOOM OF THE IMPENITENT.

**Luke 13:1-5.** *“And there were certain ones at that time announcing to Him concerning the Galileans, whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices. And responding, He said to them, Do you think that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans because they suffered these things? I say unto you, No; but unless you repent, you shall all perish in a similar manner.”* This incident had occurred sometime during Pilate’s proconsulship, when the Galileans were at Jerusalem offering their sacrifices, and a riot breaking out, the Roman guards, who were always convenient in the Tower Antonia near the temple, rushed forth and slew them on the spot, so that their blood actually mixed with the blood of their sacrifices. They ask Him to explain this awful tragedy. He simply turns the matter over to them, using it by way of admonition, as He saw, in the clear light of

His infallible Divinity, the rivers of blood accumulating and ready to overflow all that country in the desolating Roman wars, which, within forty-one years of that date, blotted out the Jewish nation. He saw that those very people were going to perish by the Roman arms, just as those Galileans of whom they spoke to Him. If they had repented, they would have escaped that awful slaughter, as all of the Christians, pursuant to His warning, did leave the country in time to save their lives, going away to Pella, beyond the Jordan. Hence repentance unto life was the only escape of those people from the bloody deluges which Jesus then saw accumulating, as well as from the retributions of eternity. *“Or do you think that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and slew them were sinners above all the people who were dwelling in Jerusalem? I say unto you, No; but unless you may repent, you shall all perish in a similar manner.”* During the siege at Jerusalem that tower at Siloam fell on eighteen, and crushed them. As His audience were Galileans, it is hardly probable that these unfortunate eighteen were also Galileans who had gone to the siege. You see this case is parallel with the above, and consequently explained in the same way. Some wonder that Josephus gives no account of these tragedies, but that is not astonishing, as instances of this kind were so common, and the Jewish wars so many, he passed by them as insufficient for notice.

### THE FIG-TREE.

**Luke 13:6-9.** *“And He spoke this parable: A certain man had a fig-tree, which had been planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it, and found none. And he said to the vinedresser, Behold, three years during which I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree and find none; cut it down; wherefore indeed cumbereth it the ground? And responding, he says to him, Lord, let it alone also this year, until I shall dig about it, and cast fertilization. If indeed it may bring fruit in the future; but if not, you shall cut it down.”* The vineyard here is the kingdom of grace on the earth, and the fig-tree the Jewish Church; the vinedresser the Holy Ghost, and the three years the time of our Lord’s ministry. Here we see, when the Lord says, “Cut it down, that it may no longer cumber the ground” — *i.e.*, occupy the rich soil of His vineyard, absorbing the fertility and shading the crops growing about it — the Holy Ghost pleads for it, beseeching Him to spare it another year; meanwhile, He will stir the soil about it, and throw fertility around it, giving it another chance. Then, in case that it does not bear fruit, the Holy Spirit consents to its destruction. Great regions of the world, where the gospel once flourished and Christians were counted by thousands, are now missionary ground, gone back to the heathens and Mohammedans. The awful doom which speedily overtook Judaism awaits every Church which does not bear fruit; and you know that this fruit is holiness, — no sham, but the Christlike spirit, disposition, and life, as He was meek and lowly in heart, going about doing good. Ichabod is written on the doors of every Church that grieves away the Holy Spirit.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### THE SOWER.

**Matthew 13:1-23; Mark 4:1-25; and Luke 8:4-18. Mark:** *“And again He began to teach by the sea; and a great multitude were gathered unto Him, so that, entering into a ship, He sat in the sea. The whole multitude was at the sea on the land. And He was teaching them many things in parables. And He said unto them in His teaching, Hear ye! Behold, a sower went out to sow, and it came to pass while he was sowing, some fell by the wayside, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it; and others fell among the rocks, where it had not much earth, and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth; the sun having risen, it was scorched, and because it had no root, it withered away. And other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked it out, and it brought forth no fruit; and others fell in good ground, and springing up brought forth fruit, and produced, some thirty, some sixty, and some a hundred fold. And He said unto them, Let the one having ears to hear, hear.”* **Matthew 8:10:** *“And His disciples coming said to Him, Wherefore do You speak to them in parables? And He responding, said to them, Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For whosoever has, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.”* How clearly do we see this law of spiritual thrift universally demonstrated in the kingdom of God! The great preachers are not those favored with brilliant precocity in the outset. Adam Clarke, who became the greatest linguist and theologian of his day, is said to have been proverbial for his juvenile stupidity. The brightest saints did not all receive a Pauline conversion nor a Pentecostal sanctification; but utilizing the germ of grace and spark of fire, they have moved on from the tinkling rill to the swelling river, from the potato-hill to the towering mountain. If you do not cultivate the grace given and utilize it for God, it will be taken from you, and given to others who will magnify the Donor. *“Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they see not; hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand;”* i.e., they see with their physical eyes and hear with their mortal ears, while their spiritual senses are locked tight in the death of sin. “The prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled unto them, saying, By hearing, ye shall hear, and may not understand; seeing, ye shall see, and may not perceive.” You observe here the contingent tense of these verbs revelatory of grace, which is freely administered by the Holy Spirit to all who will receive it, as He is ever present to open the blind eyes and unstop the deaf ears, soften the stony heart, and quicken the dead spirit into life, thus giving blessed spiritual availability to all who will reciprocate His merciful intervention.

“For the heart of this people has waxed gross, and they hear heavily with their ears, and they have closed their eyes, lest they may see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their heart, and turn, and I shall heal them.” (Isaiah 6:9.)

Where E.V. here says “be converted,” the reading is simply “may turn unto Me,” denoting their own spontaneous action, receptive of Divine mercy and spiritual overtures. *“Happy are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. For I say unto you, That many prophets and*

*righteous men desired to see those things which you see, and saw them not; and to hear those things which you hear, and heard them not.*” All the prophets, from the days of Abel through the lapse of four thousand years, had hoped and longed to see Jesus come on the earth, but died without the sight. So the saints of the Christian ages have lived and died, longing to see Jesus return in His glory. Shall our faith waver because He tarrieth? God forbid! **Mark 4:14:** *“The sower soweth the word. Those who are by the wayside, when the word is sown, and when they may hear it, immediately Satan comes, and takes away the word which was sown in their hearts. And likewise those who were sown upon the rocks are they who, when they may hear the word, immediately with joy receive it. And they have no root in themselves, but are temporary; then tribulation or persecution arising on account of the word, immediately they are offended. And the others, who were sown among the thorns, are they who, hearing the word, and the cares of this age and the deceitfulness of riches and desires concerning remaining things come in, choke out the word, and it becomes unfruitful. And those which were sown in good ground are they who hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth, some thirty, some sixty, and some a hundred fold.”* Here, in this notable, beautiful, and exceedingly lucid Parable of the Sower, we have four different sowings — the wayside, the stony ground, the thorny ground, and the good ground. You observe the final failure on the part of all the sowings except the good ground. The wayside sowing was all caught away by the fowls of the air, which emblemize demons. Consequently there were no results whatever in their case. O, what a large proportion of popular audiences belongs to this class! The precious truth on which they are dependent for salvation is snatched up by their guardian demons and carried away, the Word going in at one ear and out at the other, leaving them utterly empty and blank; so they get nothing, thus living and dying under the blaze of gospel day, but in practical heathenism, only hastening to a more dreadful damnation than if they had lived and died in Central Africa. The second sowing is among the rocks, where soil is scarce, and the underlying strata near the surface. It is a well-known fact in agriculture that this sort of land warms early under the vernal sun, germinating quickly, giving farmers the first grass in spring and the first vegetables; yet it is the first to wilt under the scorching summer sun, and to feel the heavy tread of an autumnal drought. What is needed to make this land all right? Blow up the rocks, break them to pieces, using the workable for edifices, fences, and roads, burning the fragments into lime to enrich the ground, thus transforming these almost worthless stony hills into fertile fields and blooming gardens. The stony ground here is the superficial convert, who, as Jesus says, “immediately receives the Word with joy;” *i.e.*, is converted easily and quickly, characteristic of the great, sweeping revivals, in which hundreds and thousands are counted, and after a year we scarcely find a corporal’s guard. The trouble is, they are not “rooted and grounded in love.” (Ephesians 3:18.) Hence, when tribulation or persecution rises, they are offended; *i.e.*, they fall away. If the work could move on steadfastly, not giving them time to backslide, till the dynamite of the Holy Ghost blows out and breaks up all the stony strata in the deep interior of the heart, thus sanctifying them wholly and transforming them into “good ground,” they would stand all right. The third sowing is in the thorny ground, which is much better and more hopeful than the stony ground. Thorns indicate rich soil, yet they are awfully obnoxious to the crop, and exceedingly difficult to get rid of, surviving every other indigenous bramble, and even making their appearance after the land has been cultivated a hundred years. We need the long, sharp mattock of entire sanctification to dig them out by the roots, then burn them into ashes, and sow it on the fields to enrich the soil, thus developing it into good ground. Jesus tells us that these thorns are the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and desires appertaining to other things; *i.e.*, things other than the kingdom of God. The thorny ground here gets a much better and deeper work of grace than the stony ground, and is apt to

get the victory over the seductive temptations to carnal pleasure and worldly amusement incident to the youth, and go on into the sterner responsibilities of middle life, to find accumulating riches, multiplication of worldly business, social and official aggrandizement, preponderant over the citadel of grace in his heart, ultimately getting the door open wide enough for Satan, with a cohort of carnal and worldly imps, to come in, quench the fire of spiritual devotion, and freeze him into a beautiful iceberg, reflecting the splendor of the polar sun, which shines six months without setting, concentrating the admiration of the whole Church, so they elect him a member of the General Conference, promoting him to honors and emoluments, making him a ruling elder; and, finally, preaching him a glorious funeral sermon, while he is with Dives in hell. The digging necessary to take out all the thorn roots is quite a painful ordeal, while the consuming fire of the Holy Ghost, in His sanctifying Pentecost, by the mere mention, brings stampede into a popular Church, filled up with these thorny-ground backsliders. The fourth sowing is on the good ground. Of course you already know what this good ground is. It is the heart which the Holy Ghost has made good, as none are good by nature. In the Divine estimation, pursuant to the great plan of salvation, the ground is not good till all the rocks and thorns are sanctified out. You see ample provisions are made in the economy of gospel grace to make all the ground good; *i.e.*, sanctify every heart. How can you make the hard, dry, wayside land good? Throw the fence of God's gracious providence around it, and keep stock from treading on it. The vernal showers will soften it, the freezes loosen it up, till it becomes alluvial. Cast fertilization on it, take out all of the rocks, and grub up all of the thorns; let the plow go down deep, and the harrow do thorough work, and before you are aware, you have good ground. You see in the progress of this parable that, out of the four sowings, only one proves a success. The wayside does not so much as receive the seed till it is devoured by the demons. The stony ground germinates quickly, but utterly withers speedily, terminating in total failure; while the thorny ground not only germinates, but grows up and produces fruit; but Luke says it does not bring it to perfection; *i.e.*, it either rots on the stalk, or after it is gathered, as unripe fruit will not keep. Hence you see that the only hope for the first three sowings is to turn all of the land into good ground — *i.e.*, get all hearts sanctified wholly — then every sowing will be a success. You here see the wonderful growth in grace peculiar to sanctified people; as in case of the good ground some produce thirty-fold — *i.e.*, at the end of life had thirty times as much religion as when they were converted; others, sixty; and others, a hundred — *i.e.*, winding up with a hundred times the quantum of regenerating grace. O what an incentive to everybody to come into the good ground — *i.e.*, to get sanctified wholly!

*“And He said to them, Whether does the light come, that it may be placed under a bushel or under a bed? is it not that it may be placed on a candlestick? for there is nothing hidden which may not be revealed; nor was there anything secret, but that it may come into the light. If any one has ears to hear, let him hear. And He said to them, See what you hear. With what measure you measure, it shall be measured unto you, and shall be added to those who hear. For whosoever may have, shall be given unto him; whosoever has not, it shall be taken from him whatsoever he hath.”* Thus our Lord winds up this beautiful, lucid, and instructive Parable of the Sower with a few pertinent practical remarks. If you would not put your light under a bushel, you must become good ground, and appreciate the wonderful possibilities of accumulation here specified, one gaining thirty, another sixty, and another a hundred fold. His trite maxim about hearing, He also subjoins. To the unspiritual it sounds insignificant, as the multitude were then hearing His voice; yet it is only the spiritually quickened ear that can hear the voice of God that wakes the dead, physical ears only hearing the voice of the man who can not save. We receive the Man Christ, while the God Christ saves us. He

also here very pertinently repeats His wonderful law of spiritual thrift. That if we faithfully utilize the gifts and graces He gives us, He will increase them indefinitely; while if we are lazy and unappreciative, He will take them away altogether, giving us a place with the “unprofitable servant.”

## THE TARES.

**Matthew 13:24-53.** *“He presented to them another parable, saying, The kingdom of the heavens is like unto a man sowing good seed in his field. While the people were asleep, his enemy came, and sowed tares in the midst of the wheat, and went away.”* Wheat is the great crop in the Holy Land; there being no American corn there, the term is applied generically to wheat and barley and all cereals. Where the Scripture says “corn and wine,” it means wheat and wine. The tare in that country is a kind of darnel, bastard wheat, which looks precisely like the wheat till the development of the grain reveals the counterfeit. *“And when the blade sprang up and produced fruit, then the tares also appeared.”* We see that during the growth of the crop, everything looked right, like the wheat in our fields; not so much as a negative suspicion till the grain was formed, and then all could recognize the tares clearly and unmistakably. The application is simple and easy; the counterfeit Church members appear all right externally, and even officially. The test in their case hinges on the fruit problem.

“Therefore being made free from sin, we have our fruit unto sanctification, and the end everlasting life.” (Romans 6:22.)

You see that the fruit is holiness, and here comes the test. If they are not all right on experimental and practical holiness, the fruit is all a failure. A holiness revival in a Church, as a rule, will show up the tares very conspicuously. *“The servants of the landlord, having come, said to him, Lord, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? Whence then hath it tares? And he said to them, An inimical man did this. And the servant said to him, Then do you wish, having gone, that we may gather them? And he said, No; lest gathering the tares, you may, along with them, root out the wheat.”* This does not mean that we are not to excommunicate wicked, immoral people. Remember, these tares look just like the wheat, except the grain. So they are not disorderly people, but hypocrites, loyal to the Church, zealous for God, and all right every way, except they lack Holy Ghost religion. Even this they claim; but prove spurious in the spiritual harvest, evincing to the spiritually minded their interior emptiness, especially manifested in a general Holy Ghost and fire revival. *“Let them both grow together till the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather my wheat into my barn.”* As we see further on, the harvest is the end of the present age, when the great tribulation will gather all the tares, the destruction beginning on the earth, and continuing forever in the regions of woe, followed by the glorious millennium, heaven’s harvest, during which the kingdom of glory will be populated with the millions of earth, the comparatively few, having been saved during the Satanic ages, being the “first-fruits.”

## THE PROGRESSIVE GRACE IN THE HEART.

**Mark 4:26-34.** *“And He said, Thus is the kingdom of God as if a man may cast seed upon the ground, and he may sleep, and it springs up, night and day, and the seed germinates and grows,*

*while he did not know it. For the earth spontaneously brings forth fruit, first the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear, and when the fruit may develop, immediately he sendeth forth his sickle, because the harvest is at hand.*” While the Divine economy, like the vegetable world, beginning with germination, grows on to maturity, yet, as we here see, periods and epochs are recognizable in the progressive development. The appearance of the blade marks germination — *i.e.*, regeneration; the formation of the wheat-head, sanctification, which is the fruit, as above revealed; finally, the full corn in the ear — *i.e.*, the ripening of the wheat-heads — symbolizes glorification, the consummating work of the Holy Ghost, preparatory for the heavenly harvest, when the saints are gathered into the glorified presence of God.

### THE GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED.

**Matthew 13:31,32**, and **Mark 4:30-32**. *“And He said, To what must we liken the kingdom of God? or in what parable may we expound it? It is like a grain of mustard, which, when it may be sown upon the earth, is the smallest of seeds which are upon the earth, and when it may be sown and becomes greater than all the herbs, and produces great branches, so that the fowls of the air are able to lodge under its shadow.”* **Mark** says, *“And when it may grow up, it is the greatest of herbs, and becomes a tree, so that the fowls of the air come and lodge in its branches.”* Our Savior was speaking on the bank of the Galilean Sea, near Capernaum, where the mustard plant grows spontaneously, very numerous, and quite large, high as a man’s head, with spreading branches, so as to shade the birds, as Mark says, or even bear some of them on its branches. As it is designated an herb, it is highly probable that was the mustard to which our Savior made the allusion. The dragomen who escorted us in that country gave it as their opinion that the herb was really the mustard here used to symbolize the kingdom. It is also a matter of fact that there is a tree in Palestine called “mustard,” from the pungency of the seed, imparting a burning sensation when taken into the mouth, and thus resembling the mustard plant. This tree grows up about thirty feet high, spreading out its branches very copiously, and thus fulfilling the description with reference to the lodging of the aerial tribes. You will find specimens of this tree at the Fountain Engedi, at the southern terminus of the Dead Sea. (Ezekiel 47:12.) In the Parable of the Sower, which is a part of this same sermon, you see the fowls gathering up the seed sown by the wayside emblemized devils. We see no reason why we should change the application in this parable. While the kingdom of grace, originating in a community from the smallest beginning, will gradually spread throughout the whole country. Fifteen hundred years ago, St. Patrick was carried by kidnapers into Ireland, and sold into slavery, quite in his boyhood. This godly youth preached the gospel, which spread over the entire island. You know how corrupt, superstitious, and priest-ridden Romanism has blighted that country a thousand years. Can you not see how the filthy, destructive fowls of the air — *i.e.*, the demons from the bottomless pit — came and took possession of the gospel-tree, lodging in its branches and devouring the fruit? The gospel is rapidly spreading throughout the whole earth. Yet if you will follow in its track, you will see the air darkened by the black wing of the ravens, devouring the fruit, and polluting the tree by their contaminating touch. The great Churches of the Old World, which numerically throw Protestant America into eclipse, have long ceased to show up a trace of spirituality, having apparently degenerated to the level of mere politico-ecclesiastical institutions.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### THE LEAVEN.

**Matthew 13:33.** *“He spake another parable to them: The kingdom of the heavens is like unto leaven, which a woman having taken, hid in three measures of meal, until all were leavened.”*

Leaven is *zume*, which has no meaning but fermentation, corruption. . . . We have no right to depart from the lexical meaning and the uniform Biblical signification of a word. The point of illustration is its progressive and general dissemination throughout the entire lump in which it is deposited. You must not think that the parables all symbolize the kingdom in all its phases. This is not true. Hence the number of them, some illustrating one phase, and some another. Of course our fallen Mother Eve is the woman here alluded to, in her common maternity of the whole human race. You must remember humanity took on three distinct varieties in the house of Noah — Shem, the red man, who inherited and populated Asia; Ham, the black man, who received Africa in the distribution of Father Noah’s universal patrimony; and Japheth, the white man, Europe, which has spread out and taken in America. How do you know that the tri-color distinction there originated? Shem is a Hebrew word, which means red; Ham, black; and Japheth, white. You see how the leaven — *i.e.*, depravity — by the mother of humanity, was deposited in these three measures of antediluvian meal, which, in Noah’s ark, survived the flood, and O, how it has spread to the ends of the earth! The gospel kingdom is like this leaven in the sense in which God is like the “unjust judge” (Luke 18), where the similitude is simply at the point of independency; this leaven of heavenly grace, being more contagious than small-pox, going to the ends of the earth, beautifying the elect and revealing the non-elect, and thus preparing the world for the coming of the Lord. *“Jesus spoke all of these things to the multitudes in parables, and without a parable He was not accustomed to speak to them; in order that the word, having been spoken by the prophet, may be fulfilled, I will open my mouth in parables; I will reveal things which have been hidden from the foundation of the world.”* (Psalm 78:2.) The Old Testament is the gospel in symbolism — *i.e.*, blackboard exercises, spread out extensively and elucidated minutely, accommodatory to an uncultured, semibarbaric people, such as Israel, degraded by two hundred and fifteen years in Egyptian slavery. The Gospels of our Lord are in parables, occupying a much higher grade than the Mosaic typology, an intermediate between the rudimentary teaching of the Old Testament and the clear, straight, positive, and unequivocal, doctrinal, experimental, and practical deliverances of the Holy Ghost in the Acts, Epistles, and Revelation.

*“Then leaving the multitudes, Jesus came into the house.”* It is highly probable this was Peter’s house in Capernaum, headquarters of the Great Prophet and his apostles. *“His disciples came unto Him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. Responding, He said to them, The one sowing the good seed is the Son of man, and the field is the world, and these children of the kingdom are the good seed.”* *“He is the True Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.”* (John 1:9.) The omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient Excarnate Christ has been in this world from the beginning, sowing the good seed of the kingdom; His children, the elect, always having been here from the days of Abel. *“The tares are the sons of the wicked one; the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are the angels.”*

*Therefore, as the tares are gathered and burned with fire, so it shall be in the end of this age. The Son of man will send forth His angels, and he will gather out from His kingdom all things which offend and cause iniquity, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous shall shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*” Here you see that these tares — *i.e.*, the hypocrites — are the devil’s sort of Christians. They are everywhere in the Churches. We are just to let them alone till the end of the age, when the great tribulation will come upon the world, God hackling out of all nations the unsavable material (Daniel 7:9), when the world will be divested of hypocrites, and infidels, and all others who have grieved away the Holy Spirit and sealed their doom in endless woe. On the resurrection morn, O how brightly will the risen and transfigured saints shine in the kingdom of God! When Satan shall be bound and cast into the bottomless pit (Revelation 20), and the reprobates all taken out of the world, thus Satan and his armies retreating before the King of kings and Lord of lords, descending in His glory, accompanied by the mighty host of His bridehood, to girdle the globe with the splendors of the Millennial Theocracy.

### **THE HIDDEN TREASURE.**

*“Again, the kingdom of the heavens is like unto a treasure which has been hidden in the field, which a man, having found, concealed, and from his joy goes and sells all things, so many as he has, and purchases that field.”* The field here is the Church, which God has made the depository of redeeming grace. I was a member of the visible Church before I was converted, and during my regenerated life an enthusiastic amateur of it. It is the province of the Church to get souls converted to God. The man in this parable is a Church member, perhaps born and reared in it, ignorant of experimental salvation. Somehow he gets an inkling that there is something wonderful and glorious in the Church. Then he turns over all of his resources, soul, mind, body, and estate, and buys this field; *i.e.*, he takes the Church for his portion, becoming truly devoted and exceedingly zealous. Very soon he is enabled to appreciate this treasure, which had been hidden in the field until he recently found out that it was there. O how grateful to the Church, and how enthusiastic and enterprising in her behalf!

### **THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE.**

*“Again, the kingdom of the heavens is like unto a mercantile man, seeking goodly pearls, who, having found one pearl of great price, having gone, sold all things which he had, and purchased it.”* Here is another selling out and new embarkation in mercantile enterprise. You must remember that these two are mercantile parables, the salient facts consisting in buying and selling. In the former parable the man had no treasure — *i.e.*, he was destitute of a heavenly investment of any kind; so he sold out his carnal chattels and bought the field — *i.e.*, the Church — for the sake of the treasure hidden in it, only discernible by spiritually-illuminated eyes. Hence they could live and die all around it, and walk over it, and not know it was there. Now we see the man is a merchant — *i.e.*, a Christian — in the phraseology of the parables. By some means he ascertains that there is on hand a pearl of great price — *i.e.*, of infinite value — its beauty and brilliancy eclipsing all others. Now he goes and sells out all he has; and you must remember that now he has an infinitely better stock in trade than he had before he bought the field, and found in it the first blessing; but he makes a complete invoice of all, not only his earthly possessions, but the Church, the membership, the choir, the big pipe-

organ, the Official Board, the pastor, presiding elder, bishop, and all the Conferences; the Creed, rites, and ceremonies, — putting all on the altar, without any reservation, for time and eternity:

“Here I give my all to Thee —  
Friends, and time, and earthly store;  
Soul and body, Thine to be;  
Wholly Thine, for evermore.”

The final issue is, that he purchases the pearl of great price, entire sanctification, which a man does not get through the normal administration of the Church, but, forsaking all, must go to God alone, and sink away into Him.

### THE DRAG-NET.

*“Again, the kingdom of the heavens is like unto the net, having been cast into the sea, and gathering from every kind.”* This illustrates the kingdom after the similitude of the visible Church. *“Which, when it may be filled, drawing it up on the shore, and sitting down, they gathered the good into baskets, but threw the bad away.”* We are on the constant outlook for our Lord to appear, and take His saints with Him to glory, and turning over to Satan his due, and leaving them for the great tribulation, exposed to the doom of the ungodly. *“So it will be in the end of the age;”* i.e., the end of the gospel age, in which we live. *“The angels will come forth and separate the wicked from the midst of the righteous; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”* The gathering of the good into baskets is the rapture. (Matthew 24:31.) Now we see the angels, girdling the globe with the splendor of their pinions.

“A fiery stream issued, and came from before Him; thousands and thousands ministered to Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him.” (Daniel 7:10.)

This is the pre-millennial judgment by the Ancient of Days, dethroning all the kings of the earth, preparatory to the glorious coronation of His Son, King of kings and Lord of lords. Here you see the Ancient of Days is attended by this innumerable host of angels, who are evidently His subordinates in the administration of the retributive judgments against the wicked, thus hackling them out of the world preparatory to the glorious millennial reign.

### DISCIPLESHIP.

*“Jesus says to them, Do you understand all these things? They say to Him, Yea, Lord. And He said to them, Therefore, every scribe, having been disciplined into the kingdom of the heavens, is like unto a man who is a landlord, who bringeth out of his treasure things new and old.”* “Instructed into the kingdom,” E.V., is not a literal translation of *matheteutheis*, which is the passive aorist participle from *mathetes*, “a disciple.” Hence it simply means “being disciplined;” i.e., being made a disciple. The Commission reads, “Go, disciple all nations.” Hence the only way to become a member of the kingdom of heaven, or kingdom of God, which are precisely synonymous, is to become a disciple of Christ, which requires a genuine regeneration, wrought by the Holy Spirit, leading on to entire sanctification, which is indispensable to the successful perpetuity of that discipleship. This is true

of the scribe — *i.e.*, the preacher — and every other human being. Now what is the characteristic of every one who has become a member of the Lord's kingdom? He has a treasure in his heart which a world of gold can not purchase. "Out of his treasure he bringeth forth things both new and old." Now what of the new? Do you not know that the work of the Holy Ghost is always new? Instead of getting old, stale, and dingy, a genuine experience "shines brighter and brighter unto the perfect day." So his experience, regeneration and sanctification, is always new. What is old? Why the blessed truth of God. While a spiritual experience is always new, kept bright and sweet by the indwelling Holy Spirit, the doctrine of the Bible is always old, every new doctrine being false. Hence Solomon said, "There is nothing new under the sun." "And it came to pass, when Jesus finished these parables, He departed thence;" *i.e.*, He went away out of Capernaum to embark on the sea.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### JESUS HOMELESS.

**Matthew 8:1-22, and Luke 9:57-62.** *“And it came to pass, they journeying on the way, a certain one said to Him, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou mayest go, Lord; and Jesus said to him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where He may lay His head.”* With the exception of the great Mediterranean plain, the plain of the Jordan, and many beautiful plains in the highlands, of which Esdrælon, between Mt. Gilead and the mountains of Gilboa, containing twelve thousand acres, is the largest, all Palestine consists of rich mountains, abounding in caves, dens, and holes. Hence it is a great place for wild animals, and especially the fox — *i.e.*, the jackal — a larger species than the American. I saw a number of them in my travels. Hence the familiarity of the illustration. When our Lord was rejected at Nazareth, His native city, He migrated to Capernaum, on the northern coast of the Galilean Sea, and, as it is believed, made Peter’s house His home, as He says here, having none of his own. This was quite a bluff to the enthusiastic disciple, calculated to do him good by testing his faith. *“And he said to another, Follow Me. And he said, Lord, permit me first, having gone away, to bury my father.”* This is an Oriental expression, not altogether unheard of in this country; not signifying that the father was already dead, but was probably old, and this man felt it his duty to stay with him till he died. *“And Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead; but having come away, preach the kingdom of God.”* The Bible abounds in enigmatical statements in order to quicken our intellects and inspire investigation, much to our profit. The simple meaning of this statement is, “Let the spiritually dead bury the physically dead, and you come along and preach.” The sinners are always ready to bury the dead, and do it as well as we can, while they are utterly incompetent to the great and infinitely important work of preaching the gospel. *“And another said, I will follow Thee, Lord; but first let me go and bid my home-folks adieu. And Jesus said to him, No one, putting his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”* The plows in that country have but one handle. Consequently it is utterly impossible to run one of them in the right place and look back. We should all profit by this response. We have no time to waste in the useless ceremonies of paying a valedictory visit to the homefolks. One hundred thousand people die every day, as we fear most of them unprepared. O what a havoc is hell making on this poor lost world! So we have no time to wait, tinkering round home, bidding kindred and friends farewell. Write them a postal card that you are gone to Africa, and embark on the first ship.

### STORM ON THE GALILEAN SEA.

**Matthew 13:18-27; Mark 4:35-41; and Luke 8:22-25; 9:57-62.** **Mark:** *“And He says to them on that day, it being evening, Let us cross over to the other side. And leaving the multitude, they receive Him, as he was in the ship; and there were many other ships along with Him. And there is a great storm of wind, and the waves poured into the ship, so that it was already sinking.”* Matthew says it was covered with the waves, and Luke says they were being filled up and were in danger. The Sea of Galilee, seven hundred feet below the Mediterranean, as a natural consequence of this deep

depression, is surrounded by mountains on all sides, except the deep valley through which the Jordan flows from the north and out toward the south. Consequently it is very liable to sudden tornadoes; the atmosphere, pouring down in all directions from the highlands, gets turned about, and develops whirlwinds, which are very dangerous, as it is sixteen and one-half miles long and seven and one-half miles wide, with a coast of seventy-five miles. We were warned by the guidebooks to beware of storms. This we heeded, lighting on the good fortune to get a very valuable boat, which was built last year, in Beyroot, for the especial accommodation of the German emperor. We found it splendid, and, sailing over the sea two days, encountered no storm. *“He was lying in the stern, sleeping on a pillow; they arouse Him up, and say to Him, Master, is there no care to Thee that we perish?”* **Matthew:** *“And He says to them, Why are ye cowardly, O ye of little faith?”* This was a just rebuke; because they might have known that they were in no danger with Him on board. This is the secret of perfect love, which always takes Jesus aboard, casting out fear. **Mark** *“And rising, He rebuked the wind and said to the sea, Be quiet! be calm! And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And He said to them, Why are ye afraid? How have you not faith? And they feared with great fear, and continued to say to one another, Who then is this, because the wind and the sea obey Him?”* This was a most incontestable miracle, commanding the elements of nature, illustrating to all that He had made the sea and the storms, and had nothing to do but speak, and they promptly obey. We sailed over the same route last November, meanwhile we read the account of this storm and the miraculous calm.

### THE DEMONIZED GADARENE.

**Matthew 8:28-34; 9:1; Mark 5:1-21; and 58:26-40.** We visited this country of the Gadarenes, which comes down to the northeast coast of this sea; Gergesa, their capital, situated on a beautiful, rich plain, enjoying a handsome view of this beautiful water, as well as the majestic mountains and fertile valleys of the surrounding countries. Matthew says they came to Gergesa, Mark and Luke say they came to the country of Gadara. This is in perfect harmony, as Gergesa was the city and Gadara the country. You must remember that when our Savior bade the temple adieu, the day before He was arrested, He said, “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.” Within forty years from the utterance the Roman armies signally verified it. Hence the desolation has been on that country ever since. However, Gadara was a Gentile country; but it was the subject of a terrible Divine retribution, as we will see in this narrative, for rejecting the ministry of Jesus. *“And they came to the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes, and a man with an unclean spirit, from the tombs, met Him immediately having come out of the ship, who had his habitation among the tombs; and no one was able to bind him with chains, because frequently he had been bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been slipped off by him and the fetters torn to pieces, and no one was able to subdue him.”* Matthew says there were two demoniacs, exceedingly fierce, so no one could pass that way. Mark and Luke speak of but one. Luke says that he wore no clothing. It is a notable fact that raging maniacs have an aversion to wearing clothing, and if possible will tear it off. **Mark:** *“And he was all the time, night and day, among the tombs and in the mountains; was crying, and cutting himself with stones. Seeing Jesus a great way off, he ran and fell down before Him, and crying, with a great voice, said, What is there to me and to Thee, O Jesus, the Son of the Most High God? I adjure Thee, in the name of God, that you torment me not; for He said to him, Unclean spirit, come out from the man.”* **Luke** says: *“For a long time he had possessed him, and he was kept bound with fetters and chains; and smashing his fetters, he was driven by the demon into the wilderness. And Jesus asked*

*him, saying, What is thy name? and he said, Legion, because many demons had entered into him. And he continued to exhort Him that He may not command them to depart into the abyss;” i.e., the bottomless pit.*

God never created the devil, a sinner, nor a snake. The snake originated from the transformation of the Nahash, an intelligent biped, one of the intermediate links between man and the lower animals, and unfortunately used by Satan in the abduction of humanity. Satan is a fallen archangel:

“How thou art fallen, O Lucifer, the morning star!” (Isaiah 14:12.)

The term “devil” is the ordinary cognomen of Satan, demon being the regular epithet applied to those innumerable evil spirits, swarming up out of the bottomless pit and thronging the atmosphere, their highest aspiration being a habitation in some human spirit, as in the case of this Gadarene, into whom a whole legion — *i.e.*, ten thousand — had crowded together. Nothing is so terrible to these demons as the gloomy dungeons of the bottomless pit. Consequently they importuned Jesus not to send them thither. Originally the intelligences inhabiting the innumerable worlds, constituting the celestial empire, were presumptively all on probation. In the fatal revolt of Lucifer, an immense host, perhaps one-third (Revelation 12), followed the apostate archangel. As this apostasy, in all probability, infected many celestial worlds, we find innumerable hosts of fallen demons roaming round this world, hunting a habitation in some human heart. (Ephesians 6) We have no right to conclude that this Gadarene is the only legionaire in all the earth. It is pertinent to remember how all the demons, with whom Jesus comes in contact, recognize Him. We have no record at what epoch in bygone eternity the angels were created; evidently long before Divinity spoke this world into existence. As Jesus is co-eternal with God Himself, identical with the uncreated Jehovah, the recognition of these demons is doubtless a vivid reminiscence of the bright celestial ages which glided away before the dark period of rebellion and ruin supervened. It is here specified that the legionaire tore his clothing from his person, smashing all the fetters and escaping from all the chains with which they could bind him. The muscular power of these Oriental red men is vastly superior to that of Europeans and Americans. In all probability, he was a natural giant, as were most of the aborigines in that country in the days of Joshua; for you must remember he was not a Hebrew, but a Gentile. It is generally believed that physical strength is located in the muscles. This is a mistake. The muscles are the mere instruments used by the nerves, which are the custodians of physical power. A crowbar is a most potent instrument in the hands of a stalwart man; but left alone, utterly impotent. I thought the muscles were the custodians of physical strength till, in 1884, a stroke of partial paralysis demonstrated the utter impotency of the muscles without nervous stimuli. From a human standpoint, the exegesis of Samson’s paradoxical strength was the induement of the Holy Ghost, who operated through his nerves, thus imparting miraculous physical dynamics. Now remember, this Gadarene had ten thousand demons, ready in a moment to electrify his nerves, thus imparting an incredible muscular power. I have seen epileptics whom it took a half-dozen strong men to manage. You have all witnessed the extraordinary feats of strength and activity performed by maniacs, lunatics, and epileptics. This man was doubtless a combination of them all, so many demons, ready at any moment to turn loose the very galvanic batteries of the pandemonium on their poor victim, thus making them instrumental in the most paradoxical feats of agility and power. Why did he dwell among the tombs? Satan is king of death and hell. He sways his leaden scepter over

every graveyard, holding fast every human body in the dark sepulcher, as their souls in the regions of woe. Hence these demons found congeniality among the tombs.

**Mark 11.** *“And there was at the mountain a great herd of swine, feeding. And all the demons entreated him saying, Send us into the swine, that we may go into them. And Jesus immediately permitted them. And the unclean spirits, having come out, went into the swine, and the herd rushed down a steep place into the sea, and there were about two thousand, and they perished in the sea.”* These heathen Gentiles set great store on the hog, a notoriously unclean animal, which God’s people were forbidden to raise, heavy interdictions being laid on the eating of the same. When I visited that country last November, our dragoman showed us the mountain traditionally recognized as the pasture of the swine, and the cliff down which the whole herd stampeded into the sea; thus transmitting to us a most monitory lesson against demoniacal possession, which is so common in all ages, the present day being no exception to the rule. Here we see these hogs unhesitatingly choosing suicide rather than demoniacal possession. This verdict of the swine should put millions to the blush this day, who go over the earth, full of demons, and claiming a place among the bon tons of society. *“And those herding them fled, and proclaimed in the city and in the country; and they came out to see what is that which has been done. And they come to Jesus, and see the demonized man sitting down, clothed, and in his right mind, him who was called Legion; and they were afraid. And those seeing, explained to them how it occurred to the demonized man, and concerning the swine. And they began to entreat Him to depart from their coasts.”* **Luke 8:36:** *“And those seeing, explained to them how the demonized man was saved; and the whole multitude of the surrounding country of the Gadarenes entreated Him to depart from them, because they were possessed with great fear.”* Here we have the united testimony of Matthew, Mark, and Luke to the unanimous and importunate verdict of all the Gadarenes, requesting Jesus to leave their country. That this awful and hopeless demoniac had been wonderfully saved, all admitted. But there was another phase to the matter — they had lost their swine. Now a pertinent question looks them all in the face. Will they have Jesus or bacon? If they keep Jesus, they can have all of the sick healed, all the devils cast out, all the people saved, soul and body, and turn their country into a little heaven, so they can live on angels’ food instead of “hog and hominy.” The popular verdict comes quickly, and without a dissenting voice: they all decide to let Jesus go, and save their bacon to eat and sell for the money.

### DOOM OF GADARA.

*“And embarking into the ship, He returned;”* i.e., went back to Capernaum, the center of His evangelistic work in the North, thus throwing a dark shadow over all of that country of the Gadarenes, which has wrapped it in gloom and withered it with desolation these eighteen hundred years. When I visited that country, with its beautiful, fertile plains, bordering on the sea; majestic, rich mountains, with innumerable valleys and coves — all, at the time of our Savior’s visit, flourishing as the gardens of the Lord, cultivated by a thriving and enterprising people, whose temporal needs a gracious Providence had most abundantly supplied. So they needed nothing but the Savior, whom, in loving, Fatherly affection, He so kindly sent them. O what a grand introductory He made among them in saving the worst man they had! How all hell rallied to hold their grip tight on Gadara! Jesus comes to all people, even uninvited, thus pitying their blindness and ignorance, and giving all a chance for salvation. But when He turns the light on them, if, instead of rejoicing in it, they prefer darkness, and, like these besotted Gadarenes, even have the impudence to ask Him to

leave, He always goes, leaving them to their choice, with the devil and hell, world without end. Jesus saves none against their will; neither does He stay where He is not wanted. When I stood upon the old walls of Gergesa, the capital of Gadara, to which Jesus went, and looked around upon the ruins of the city, without an inhabitant except the wandering Arabs, then on the spot, grazing their herds and flocks, and saw their country, which has lain desolate eighteen hundred years, I saw in panorama, as I look out over the sea, Jesus embarking on the ship, which sails away, appearing smaller and smaller, till she passes out of sight, thus leaving poor Gadara doomed and ruined. How signally has this been verified in the dismal fate of that country! The Gadarenes have literally faded from the face of the earth, not one to be found; their capital desolate, their cities and villages depopulated and destroyed; their country in the hands of the nomadic Bedouins, the wild sons of Ishmael, in reference to whom God said, *“His hand shall be against every man’s hand, and every man’s hand against him.”* They are born robbers. If you would visit the land of Gadara this day, you would need an armed escort to save you from robbery and murder. What a warning to the people who request Jesus to depart from them!

### THE LEGIONAIRE TURNS PREACHER.

*“And the man out of whom the demons had gone, besought Him that he should be with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, Return to your own home, and explain how many things God hast done for you. And he went away, preaching throughout the whole city how many things Jesus did for him.”* **Mark 5:20.** *“And he went away, and began to preach in Decapolis how many things Jesus did for him, and all continued to be astonished.”* This is quite contrastive with the uniform habit of Jesus, telling them not to publish His mighty works; as here, instead of making such a prohibition, He orders the man to go and tell everybody the wonderful miracle Jesus wrought in his deliverance from the demon. The solution of this contrast hinges on the fact that the Gadarenes were Gentiles, and did not want a Jew for their king. Jesus always, when among the Gentiles, told them to go and tell His mighty works; the prohibition among the Jews arising from the popular enthusiasm, everywhere rampant, to rally the multitude and crown Him King, which would have precipitated His death before He had time to finish His work. It is said that the legionaire went to Decapolis. Now, remember, “Decapolis” is not the name of a city, but of ten cities (as the word means), throughout that whole country, whose terror he had been ever since the demons had entered into him. I do not wonder that Jesus sent him to preach, as he was the very man to reach the people who had long trembled at the mention of his name. **Luke 8:40:** *“And it came to pass that Jesus, returned, the multitude received Him; for they were all expecting Him.”* This multitude were at Capernaum, His resident city, on the north coast, whence He had sailed to Gadara. As they were on the lookout for Him, such should be our constant attitude of momentary expectancy for our Lord to appear.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### MATTHEW'S FEAST.

**Matthew 10:1-17; Mark 2:15-22; Luke 5:29-39.** Luke *“And Levi made a great feast for Him in his own house; and there was a great multitude of publicans and others who were sitting with them. And the scribes and Pharisees were murmuring to His disciples, saying, Why do you eat and drink with publicans and sinners? And Jesus, responding, said to them, They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”*

Levi is a name of Matthew, the author of the first Gospel. He was a rich Jew, holding the office of publican — *i.e.*, collector of the Roman revenue — living at Capernaum. Jesus passed by one day, spoke to him, and said, “Follow Me.” Unhesitatingly leaving all, he becomes a disciple of our Lord, and was afterward promoted to the apostleship. The publicans, as a rule, were proverbial for wickedness, dishonesty, and popular odium, as the Jews loathed the Roman Government, whose financial officers they were. We see how dearly Matthew loved his unsaved companions. Consequently he makes a great feast, and compliments them with an invitation, at the same time inviting Jesus and His disciples, hoping by this costly festival to bring them under the influence of the sinner’s Savior; thus giving us all an example we would do well to appreciate, also answering the hackneyed question, “How shall we reach the masses?” Give them a kind invitation, like Matthew, to come to a feast especially prepared for them in your own house, meanwhile you do your utmost, by prayer and timely conversation, to win them for God and heaven. We observe the same phenomenon this day which confronted Jesus and His disciples, thus intimately associated with the publicans and sinners at Matthew’s feast; *i.e.*, the scribes (*i.e.*, the pastors) and Pharisees (*i.e.*, the influential and official members of the popular Churches) rejecting, contemptuously, drunkards, harlots, and other notorious reprobates, especially if they have no money. Matthew says: *“Going, learn what this is, I wish mercy and not sacrifice. For I came, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”* What does our Lord mean by mercy and not sacrifice? When you are utterly destitute, bankrupt, and broken-hearted, there is a wide, open door for Jesus to come in. With this He is delighted. So long as you realize your own possessions, you bank on them, and expect to win Divine favor by your contributions. In this way million’s plunge into hell. God is not poor. He does not need your money, nor anything else you have. He wants you, and not your possessions. Jesus wants immortal intelligence to glorify Him through all eternity.

### THE DISCIPLES OF JOHN AND JESUS.

**Mark 2:18.** *“And the disciples of John and Jesus were fasting. And they come and say to Him, Wherefore do the disciples of John and the Pharisees, and Thy disciples do not fast?”* Fasting, in both dispensations, is not only a concomitant, but an auxiliary of prevailing prayer. Elijah, Moses, and Jesus all fasted forty days, Divinely kept in a spiritual rapture, the physical organism abiding in *status quo*. The disciples of Jesus, during His personal appearance, were an exception to this general rule, because of its disharmony with the power, the glory, and the infinite and extraordinary privilege peculiar to the immediate companions of the Omnipotent Savior; as fasting has a melancholy and

lugubrious influence upon its votaries somewhat incompatible with that paradisiacal felicity characteristic of the Divine presence.

### THE BRIDESMEN.

*“And Jesus said to them, Whether are the sons of the bride’s chamber able to fast as long as the bridegroom is with them? So long a time as they have the bridegroom with them they are not able to fast.”* The sons of the bride’s chamber here mentioned as the men who have charge and are commissioned to the work of preparing the chamber in the house of the bridegroom for him to bring the bride into his own home; *i.e.*, the great work of getting the bride ready and the bride chamber in order for the coming of the Bridegroom when He will take the bride to His heavenly home. We are betrothed to Christ in regeneration, and married to Him in sanctification. Jesus makes the application to His own disciples, and especially the twelve apostles, who were then laboring in the evangelistic field, destined soon to broaden out and encompass the whole world; thus calling out the bride from every nation under heaven, getting her sanctified, robed, and ready to meet the Bridegroom. Hence, God’s holy people, preaching the gospel of full salvation to the ends of the earth, “are the sons of the bride chamber,” faithfully laboring to get the bride ready for the coming of the Bridegroom. Our Lord here fully settles the problem in reference to the expediency of fasting in our dispensation, when He states *“And the days will come when the Bridegroom must be taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day.”* Hence you see from this Scripture the pertinence of fasting ever since our Lord ascended into heaven. In His presence there was too much sunshine and glory for His disciples to fast. Since His departure, the widowed Church has not ceased to fast and pray for the return of our Lord.

### THE NEW GARMENT, NEW BOTTLE, AND NEW WINE.

**Luke 5:36.** *“And He spoke a parable to them, That no one putteth a piece of new garment on an old garment; as in that case the new tears it, and the piece which was from the new does not harmonize with the old. No one puts new wine into old bottles; as in that case the new wine will burst the bottles, and it will be poured out, and the bottles will perish; but the new wine is to be put into new bottles, and both will be preserved.”* Every conceivable entity has both an exterior and an interior, which are equally indispensable to its existence. In the lucid and diversified symbolism of the gracious economy we have the most beautiful and perfect elucidation of both of these hemispheres, constituting the grand globe of full salvation. The new patch sewed on the old, thread-bare garment is too heavy and strong. It tears out all the fabric with which it is connected, making the hole several times its former size, and if repeated would actually tear the old garment all to pieces. What are we to do in this case? Let the old garment wear out, and never patch it. Oh! so our Lord has something better for us than the old tagged garment, and wants to take us out of the patching business altogether. He has for us the “best robe,” snowy white, washed in the blood of the Lamb, which will never get old and never wear out. Counterfeit religions are always patching up an old experience. Be sure you get this royal robe, which the King of glory furnishes His faithful bride without money and without price, which will never get old, nor wear out, nor need patching, but will shine with ever-brightening splendor through the flight of eternal ages. The garment represents the exterior of a Christian character, while the wine and the bottle typify the interior. You must keep your mind off the glass bottles of modern times, and contemplate the leather bottles, the only kind

in use in the days of our Savior. It is wonderful how the Orientals never change, but perpetuate the customs and institutions of the Bible times. On the streets of Jerusalem, Hebron, Joppa, and all Palestinian cities, we constantly see the water-carriers bending under a whole goat-skin, full of water, thus carrying it from the fountain to supply the various demands. The fermentation of new wine, increasing its bulk will break the old leather bottle, which is not strong enough thus to endure the pressure. While, of course, these strong metaphors illustrate the fact that Christianity is not simply a patch on Judaism, or some new wine poured into the old Mosaic bottles, but a *de novo* institution, such an interpretation merely reaches the surface, leaving the grand interior unexplored. The bottle is the heart. In a genuine conversion, God gives you a new heart. (Ezekiel 36:26) God's work, like Himself, never gets old. Hence the bottle He gives you is always new. Wine symbolizes the Holy Ghost, whom you receive as an indwelling Comforter in sanctification; of course, He can never get old. Therefore you see, with a true regeneration, you get the new bottle, which will never get old; while in the genuine sanctification, you receive the new wine of the kingdom, which will never ferment nor get old. Hence, you should have nothing to do with the old bottles of a backslidden experience, nor the old wine of a counterfeit sanctification. The reason why the dead, worldly Churches are so timorous of sanctification preached in their pulpits, is because they are afraid the new wine will burst up their old bottles. But that is just what ought to be done. The bottle which the new wine will burst is of no account. The Lord's genuine new bottles are elastic enough to hold a hundred-fold without detriment. The very thing we need in the fallen Churches is a glorious, Holy Ghost revival, whose first work is the bursting up of all those old bottles, and tearing up their old garments, thus showing them their need of the new. Then what a glorious time for all of us, when they all get new robes, bright and beautiful; new bottles, and all filled with the delicious, sweet, new wine, bright as ever sparkled from the grapes of Eshcol!

*“And no one drinking the old immediately wishes the new; for He says, The old is better.”* How is this? We find it universally illustrated. The heathens constantly meet our missionaries with the response, “Your religion suits you; but ours is ‘better’ for us.” Roman Catholic hears a Pentecostal sermon, but turning away, says his dead formality and priestcraft are “better.” As Luke says, he does not “immediately desire the new, but says the old is better.” Go into a dead, formal Church anywhere, and preach the living power of full salvation, and the people at first get angry, become sullen, and say their old religion “is better.” Go ahead, wait on the Lord, till these people get pungently convicted, and they will change their mind and want the “new.” Now remember, Jesus does not say “the old is better,” but that dead professor says it, and he is mistaken; for he soon changes his mind, when conviction strikes him like lightning, and takes it all back, turns round, seeks and finds the new bottle — *i.e.*, the new heart — and never stops till he gets it filled with the new wine (*i.e.*, the Holy Ghost), in the rich and glorious experience of entire sanctification.

## THE BLOODY HEMORRHAGE.

**Matthew 9:20-22; Mark 5:25-36; Luke 8:43-50.** Mark: *“A certain woman, being with a hemorrhage of blood twelve years, and having suffered much from many physicians, and spending all things in her possession, and being profited as to nothing, but rather having come to the worst, hearing concerning Jesus, coming behind in the crowd, touched His garment. For she said, If I may touch His garments, I shall be saved. And immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she knew that she was healed from her disease.”* The presumption is that this woman did not have

lung hemorrhage, as they are not apt to survive so long. We have no intimation as to the character of the hemorrhage. It must have been very serious, as she had availed herself of all possible medical aid, even submitting to financial bankruptcy. We have the significant statement, *polla pathousa hupo pollon iatron*, “having suffered much from many physicians,” involving the conclusion that these physicians, instead of relieving the ailment, had greatly augmented her suffering. Doubtless this is a very significant truth; in the majority of cases, the medical treatment only adds to the suffering of the patient, without curing the disease. This poor victim of a twelve years’ hemorrhage had not only suffered much gratuitously, without receiving any benefit, but had expended all of her living and come down to poverty. Now that she has nothing, the physicians will not medicate her; therefore, in her hopeless desperation, she is in good fix to turn over the work to Jesus. You see, from this illustration, that there is no real conflict between Divine healing and medical treatment, as they seldom come in competition; the people, like this woman, going to the *ultimata thula* with physicians before they really turn over the case to Jesus, and trust Him alone to heal them. *“And immediately, Jesus knowing in Himself that the power had gone out from Him, turning in the crowd, He said, Who touched My clothes? And His disciples said to Him, You see the crowd treading upon You, and You say, Who touched Me? And He was looking around to see the one having done this. And the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had been done unto her, came and fell before Him, and told Him the whole truth. And He said to her, Daughter, thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace, and be thou whole from thy disease.”* Here we see an indisputable confirmation of bodily healing through faith, precisely as the soul is healed through faith. We do not get what we ask for, but what we believe for, our faith being the measuring line of our reception from God. The human side of Divine healing is simple faith in Jesus for that very thing, as He is no respecter of persons. The great law, “As your faith is, so be it unto you,” is applicable to the body as to the soul. We do not say you must discard your physician, but we do say that you must have faith in Jesus alone to heal you. Perhaps if Jesus had come along at an earlier day, when she was paying out her money and looking to those physicians to heal her, her faith in them would have vitiated her faith in Jesus, and thus defeated her healing. Your physician may help you, like your nurse; but you make a great mistake when you look to them for healing. In this I do not depreciate the medical profession, as the most competent physicians I have met in my extensive travels have confessed to me their utter incompetency to heal the sick, but only to assist nature, it being the province of God alone to give health and life.

## RESURRECTION OF JAIRUS’S DAUGHTER.

**Matthew 9:18-26; Mark 5:23-43; and Luke 8:41-56.** Mark: *“And, behold, one of the chief rulers of the synagogue, by name Jairus, comes; and seeing Him, falls at His feet, and entreats Him much, saying, My little daughter is now at the point of death; having come, lay Your hands on her, in order that she may be saved, and shall live. And He went away with him, and a great multitude follows Him, even treading on Him.”* . . . *“And He, still speaking, they come from the chief ruler of the synagogue, saying, Thy daughter is dead; why do you still trouble the Teacher? And Jesus, immediately hearing the word spoken, says to the chief ruler of the synagogue, Fear not; only believe. And He comes to the house of the chief ruler, and did not admit any one to follow Him, except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James, and He sees the uproar, the people weeping and wailing much. And coming in, He says to them, Why do you mourn and weep? The little child is not dead, but sleepeth. And they hooted at Him. And putting all out, He takes the father and*

*mother of the little child, and those who are with Him, and goes in where the little child was lying. And taking the hand of the little child, says to her, Talitha cumi, which is interpreted, Little girl, I say unto thee, Arise. And immediately the little girl stood up, and began to walk round; for she was twelve years old. And they were delighted with great delight. And He commanded them much that no one should know it; and He said that something should be given to her to eat.”* There at Capernaum, His resident city, the home of Peter, Andrew, James, John, and Matthew, and the scene of more miracles than any other city in the world — thither the multitudes from all nations have come, bringing their sick, and laying them down at His feet, unutterably delighted to see the blind receive their sight; the deaf gloriously healed; the poor cripples, throwing away their crutches, and leaping exultantly; the paralyzed, lunatics, maniacs, demoniacs, and all sorts of epileptics, wonderfully and triumphantly healed, causing the surrounding mountains to echo and reverberate their stentorian shouts. Now He adds to the voluminous catalogue of these stupendous miracles the climax of all; *i.e.*, the resurrection of the dead. Luke says that she was his only daughter, a lovely damsel of twelve years. We see He takes none with Him into the presence of the corpse except the father and mother, and Peter, James, and John. These three apostles, enjoying a deeper insight into spiritual things than the other nine, are not only thus honored on this notable occasion, but we find them His only concomitants on the Mount of Transfiguration, and also receiving His especial attention and confidence amid the agonies of Gethsemane. The Jews were accustomed to mourn for the dead seven days. In this mourning they blew on the pipe, producing a loud, shrill, solemn sound, which commingled with the bitter wailings of the mourners. The people in that country this day practice that same excessive weeping and mourning over the dead. E.V., “Laughed Him to scorn,” is not a good translation, as there was no laughing there. The idea is, they “hooted at Him,” thus ridiculing His assertion, “She is not dead, but sleepeth.” You will find the New Testament discarding that grievous word “death,” and substituting the mild and hygienical term “sleep.” This is in harmony with the great plan of salvation, which includes the body and mind, as well as the soul, contemplating complete and glorious restitution, recognizing the body immortal as the soul, which is certainly true, if we take in the resurrection.

### THE BLIND MEN HEALED.

**Matthew 9:27-31.** *“And two blind men followed Him coming out from thence [i.e., from Jairus’s house], saying, Have mercy on us, O Son of David! And the two blind men came to Him, having come into the house [i.e., doubtless Peter’s house, which was His home], and Jesus says to them, Do you believe that I am able to do this? They say to Him, Yea, Lord. Then He touched their eyes, saying, Be it done unto you according to your faith. And their eyes were opened. And Jesus charged them saying, See that no one know it. And they having gone out, published Him in all that country.”* They evidently did wrong. However, the miracle was so great and stupendous, those men, who had lived long and weary years groping their way in rayless midnight, now flooded with the effulgent glory of perennial noonday, meeting their old friends, panic-stricken and electrified on all sides to find them seeing clearly, walking over precipices, up and down craggy steeps, and over housetops, and performing all sorts of gymnastic legerdemain, illustrating to the world the perfection of their sight, — O how hard it was for them to keep the secret as to the Authorship of the paradoxical miracle! Here, again, you see clearly the great law of the redemptive scheme, appertaining both to soul and body, “Be it done unto you according to your faith.” This miracle Jesus wrought in the city of Capernaum, the center of His evangelistic work in the North, and whither all Galilee, and myriads

from Judea, and all surrounding heathendom, constantly poured in, listening spellbound to His wonderful preaching, and so electrified by His miracles that the Jews were incessantly on tiptoe to crown Him King, having endured the galling yoke of Roman despotism thirty-two years, and looking to the Messiah to come, break that yoke, and set them free, Himself, their coronated King, sitting down on the throne of David and Solomon. The momentary probability of an effort on the part of the Jews to crown Him King was the reason why, when among the Jews, He charged them not to publish His mighty works, lest a popular revolution should expedite His death before He had finished His work.

### **THE DEMONIZED DUMMY HEALED.**

**Matthew 9:32-34.** *“And they, going out [i.e., out of the house where He had healed the two blind men], behold, they brought to Him a dumb man, who had a demon. And the demon having been cast out the dummy spake. And the multitudes were astonished, saying, Never did it so appear in Israel. And the Pharisees continued to say, He casteth out the demons through the ruler of the demons.”* This was a most decisive case, as the demon had managed so to paralyze the man’s vocal organs as utterly to disqualify him to articulate his voice. The moment Jesus ejected the demon, the man’s speech returned to him all right, and he spoke with volubility and ready utterance. O how the dumb Churches of the present day need a visit from the Prophet of Galilee, that He may cast out all of the dumb demons, and untie the tongue of the members, that they may testify to His glory! That demon certainly has legions of coadjutors in the popular Churches of the present day, whose predominant and distressing plague is dumbness, thus turning the Church into a graveyard, whereas it ought to be a battle-field, reverberating the thunders of heaven’s artillery, commingled with the moans of the wounded and the shrieks of the dying. However, the gospel Church is certainly like a graveyard on the resurrection morn, when millions are leaping into life, with tremendous shouts of victory, while hell is howling under signal and eternal defeat. These croaking, bigoted Pharisees troop after Him like hell-hounds, barking at all His miracles, bleating out to the multitudes, “He casts out the demons through the ruler of the demons,” thus having the diabolical audacity to fabricate that silly and senseless exegesis of His stupendous miracles that He has secured the cooperation of Beelzebul — *i.e.*, the devil, who has command of all these demons, and makes them skedaddle at the rebuke of Jesus; thus plunging headlong into the irretrievable maelstrom of the unpardonable sin.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XXX.

### JESUS AGAIN REJECTED AT NAZARETH.

**Matthew 13:54-58**, and **Mark 6:1-6**. *“He went out from thence, and came into His own country [i.e., He went from Capernaum to Nazareth]; and His disciples follow Him; and it being the Sabbath, He began to teach in the synagogue; and many, hearing, were astonished, saying, Whence are these things to Him? and what wisdom is given to Him? Such miracles are performed by His hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary? Is He not the brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? Are not His sisters here with us? And they became offended in Him. And Jesus said to them, A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his relatives, and in his own house. And He was not able to do any miracle there, except, laying His hands on a few sick people, He healed them. And He was astonished on account of their unbelief.”* **Matthew** says, *“He did not many miracles there on account of their unbelief.”* You remember, early in our Lord’s ministry, when He first returned to Nazareth, after receiving the Holy Ghost at the Jordan, and the celestial fire flashing from His eyes, radiating from His countenance, and flaming along His words, interpenetrated the deep-seated carnality in the subterranean chambers of their fallen spirits, burning them intolerably; so they not only reject the truth, but determine to kill the Preacher, superinducing the necessity on His part to turn over humanity to the Divinity or become a martyr at that early day. Now that eighteen months have rolled away, and His mighty works and stupendous revelations have not only filled all Galilee and Judea, but aroused the heathen world from the slumber of four thousand years, turning on Him all eyes; again, actuated by the deep and unutterable love of His native land where He spent nine-tenths of His earthly life, — He comes back, and gives them another chance, only to meet such a rebuff and rejection that He never more came back, but left them to settle the matter at the judgment-bar. While they long listened to the wonderful wisdom which flows spontaneously from His mouth, and remember His mighty works at Capernaum, only forty miles distant, and the resurrection of the widow’s son at Nain, only five miles from their own city; while they were astonished, electrified, and even delighted, they can not survive the remembrance, “This is no one but that young carpenter, reared in our midst; the son of a poor mechanic, without education or any extraordinary opportunities; the brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon, whom we know so well; and His sisters are living here with us this day.” What was the consequence? They could not brook these facts. And so “they were offended in Him;” i.e., they went back on Him, and could not acquiesce in the conclusion that He is a mighty prophet, sent down from heaven. N.B. He said He “could not do any miracle at Nazareth on account of their unbelief,” involving the legitimate conclusion that human faith is a necessary condition of God’s mighty work, both in the healing of the body and the salvation of the soul. If He had wrought miracles at Nazareth, doubtless His old acquaintances would have believed on Him; and so it is throughout this wicked world, going at race-horse speed to the bottomless pit, but we can not reverse the Divine order. We must believe in order to receive the mighty works of the Omnipotent Christ in behalf of both soul and body. We should not forget our Savior’s maxim, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own country.” For this reason we have “go” in the Commission, as well as “preach.” We dare not change the Commission, and stay

at home. Myriads of holy men and women, called of God to preach the gospel and save souls, paralyze their energies and bury their talents by staying at home.

### THIRD EVANGELISTIC TOUR.

**Matthew 9:35-36; Mark 6:6.** Matthew *“And Jesus was a going round all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every ailment among the people.”* Our Savior, now the third time, accompanied by the twelve apostles whom He had chosen, and the holy women who cooperated with their ministry, and not a few voluntary disciples, radiates out from Capernaum, traversing the whole country of Galilee, which included the tribes of Dan, Naphtali, Zebulun, and Issachar, preaching the gospel of the kingdom in all their villages and cities. Hence we see that Jesus was an evangelist of the most aggressive character, not only peregrinating the whole country, and preaching the gospel of spiritual salvation full and free, but indiscriminately healing the sick. *“And seeing the multitudes, He was moved with compassion in their behalf, because they were fleeced and abandoned, as sheep having no shepherd.”* N.B. These people were all members of the Jewish Church, gathering Sabbatically in their synagogues, which everywhere abounded, and enjoying the ministry of the scribes, their pastors, and the expositions of their cultured theologians (called “lawyers,” because they expounded the laws of Moses and the prophets). Now why does Jesus thus speak of those people, describing them as poor sheep having been sheared closely, and turned out of the fold to weather the storm and take chances with the wild beasts and robbers? The case is very plain. The word here, which I translate “fleeced,” is *eskulmenoi*, which also means “harassed, vexed, abused,” signifying the treatment which those people received at the hands of the ministry who had charge of them. And the other, *errimmenoi*, means “forsaken, abandoned, cast away.” Now, of course, these strong affirmations of our Lord have a spiritual signification, revealing the sad fact that these people were utterly destitute of competent spiritual guides. Now do not forget that these were Jews, holding regular membership in the Church which God established, and enjoying all the privileges of the synagogue worship, with the living ministry faithfully serving them. What was the matter? Those preachers, with all their learning, were spiritually dead, — “the blind leading the blind,” laying heavy financial burdens on the people, and neglecting their souls, thus practically abandoning them for the devil. O how history repeats itself! We do not have to go back to the Judaic ages in order to find the Lord’s sheep “fleeced” and abandoned for the wolves to devour.

### HE SENDS OUT THE TWELVE.

**Matthew 9:37-38.** *“Then He says to His disciples, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest, in order that He may send out the laborers into His harvest.”* Our Lord, seeing the awful state of the Jewish Church, destitute of competent spiritual guides, going miserably into eternal ruin, and consequently calls on all of His disciples to unite in a prayer to God to send out more laborers into the harvest. This prayer ascends up to Heaven, and receives a speedy answer, so that, instead of a single evangelistic force, He determines to multiply seven-fold, sending out the twelve apostles, two by two, to scour the whole country of Galilee and Judea, moving with all possible expedition, and preaching the gospel in every city and village. O how inconceivably urgent a similar policy this day! N.B. The time has not yet arrived to unfurl the

gospel banner to the Gentile world. Hence, all of this evangelistic movement was confined to the Jews; *i.e.*, in the Churches, preaching in the synagogues, as well as to the multitudes in the open air.

**Matthew 10:1-42; Mark 6:7-13; and Luke 9:1-6.** **Matthew:** *“And calling His twelve disciples, He gave them power over unclean spirits, so as to cast them out, and heal every disease and every malady. Luke says, “He sent them forth to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.”* The kingdom of God, or kingdom of heaven, is the Divine government, which prevails among the angels and redeemed spirits throughout all celestial worlds; hell having none of it, and earth a mixture — some, citizens of God’s kingdom; others, the denizens of Satan’s pandemonium. **Matthew** *“Jesus sent forth these twelve, commanding them, saying, Go not into way of the heathens nor enter ye into a city of the Samaritans; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”* As the Jews were the organized Church of God, and the custodian’s of the Divine Oracles, God’s plan was first to give them the gospel, so they might turn evangelists, and carry it to the ends of the earth. For a similar reason, we should now begin with the Churches, and get all of them saved who will receive the living Word, and then go to the world. You see our Savior repeatedly mentions “the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” Do you not know that this included the rank and file of the ministry and membership? There were a few honorable exceptions, like Simeon, Anna, Zacharias, Elizabeth, and the apostles. The Divine economy originally contemplated the Jewish Church en masse receiving Christ, and enjoying the immortal honor of heralding Him to the world. This they missed, both preachers and people, except the elect few. In a similar manner, it is the glorious privilege of the whole Church to receive Christ at His second coming; but amid the sad apostasy of the latter days (2 Thessalonians 2), we see that only the elect few will enjoy this transcendent glory. “Going, preach, saying, That the kingdom of the heavens draweth nigh.” This was significantly true, because they were the heralds of the kingdom, enjoying citizenship in the same, and commending it to all others. “Heal the sick, raise the dead.” We have a number of instances, in the ministries of Paul and Peter, of healing the sick; and at Joppa, Peter actually raised Dorcas from the dead. Her tomb was pointed out to me when I was there a few days ago. “Cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.” Paul at Philippi ejected the fortune-telling demon from a damsel. The genuine, regular work of the Holy Ghost in the gospel dispensation, saving and sanctifying souls, is constantly accompanied by demoniacal ejection and bodily healing. *“Possess neither gold nor silver, nor copper in your girdles;” i.e.*, do not wait and prodigalize God’s precious time and opportunity in order to get money of any kind, as God can feed and clothe you as well out in the evangelistic field as at home. Have faith in Him to feed you like the birds and clothe you like the lilies. *“Nor valise, nor two coats, nor sandals, nor staff; for the laborer is worthy of his food.”* Hence, you see, we are to wait for nothing, but go as we are, taking what we have, and trusting God for everything.

*“Into whatsoever city or village you enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and abide there until you may depart.”* This is not an interdiction of house-to-house preaching; but their time was short, and the work too great to admit of it. Hence they are commanded to find some place with God’s elect, and thence radiate out everywhere, preaching the Word, till they traverse the field. “And going into a house, salute it. And if the house may be worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it may be unworthy, let your peace return unto you.” Salvation is optionary, and never goes begging. God is infinitely rich, and can get along without any of us. *“Whosoever may not receive you, nor hear your words, going out from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. Truly, I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that*

*city.*” When we go to a people and offer them the gospel, we have done our part, and will be rewarded in eternity as if they had received it. When they reject our message, they relieve us, and assume the responsibility of their own damnation. Sodom and Gomorrah were Gentile cities, in the beautiful, rich, and productive Vale of Sidim, which were destroyed for their wickedness, the very site they occupied being now covered by the Dead Sea. These heathen cities never had the opportunities of the Jews and the Christians. Consequently the latter, who reject the gospel, will sustain a more grievous responsibility in the judgment-day, and sink to a more terrible doom in the world of woe, than the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, with all their dark vices.

*“Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.”* The serpent is the symbol of Satan, who has a wonderful intelligence, shrewdness, and cunning; while the dove is the symbol of the Holy Ghost, full of innocent, sweet, regenerating, and sanctifying love, and ready to pour it out into every penitent, believing heart. “Harmless” is *akeraioi*, from *akeranumi*, from a, “not,” *keranumi*, “to mix.” Hence the word means unmixed, the strongest statement of entire sanctification. Sinners are full of unmixed evil; holy, sanctified saints are full of unmixed good; while unsanctified Christians have a mixed experience, the pure love of God in a heart which is not free from depravity, but needs the second work of grace to eliminate it all away, leaving nothing but the pure love of God to fill the sanctified heart. We see from this commandment that, while we are to be innocent, holy, and faithful, trusting God for everything necessary to soul and body, we are still to carry with us the good, common sense with which we are born, and to utilize all the intelligence God gives us, “watching” lest we enter into temptation. Ministerial failures are constantly being made, simply because people do not use their common sense. *“Beware of men; for they will deliver you up unto the Sanhedrins, and scourge you in their synagogues.”* You see how they arrested, beat, and imprisoned Paul and Silas. “And you shall be led before governors and kings, for My name’s sake, for a testimony to them and the Gentiles.” Whereas the former clause specifies Jewish punishments and persecutions, this gives those they will encounter among the Gentiles; e.g., Paul, at Paphos, on the Isle of Cyprus, testified, when arraigned before Sergius Paulus, and won him; but when, in a similar manner, at the tribunal of Felix, another Roman proconsul, at Cæsarea, he testified; but Felix rejected.

*“But when they may deliver you up, do not be solicitous, how or what you may speak, for it will be given to you in that hour what you shall say; for it is not you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father who is speaking in you.”* Wonderful has been the testimony and preaching of the martyrs, in all ages, when brought face to face with the burning fagot or the blood-thirsty lion. This Scripture has been most wonderfully verified, the heathen historian’s of the first three centuries certifying that the testimony of the dying martyrs often won their own murderers, so that they embrace the Christian religion, likewise sealing their faith with their blood. *“Brother will deliver up brother to death, and father the child; and the children will rise up against the parents, and put them to death.”* It has been estimated that two hundred millions of martyrs, during the Pagan and Papal ages, have died for Jesus. You can readily see how families would all be divided during those times of peril and bloodshed, the persecutors requiring them to testify against each other, and even participate in their martyrdom, as the only way of escape from a similar fate. *“You shall be hated by all men for My name’s sake; but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.”* Those apostles, to whom He gave this commission and appended these stringent liabilities, all proved true to the end, except poor Judas. Matthew suffering martyrdom in Ethiopia; Mark, in Egypt; Luke, in Greece; James the Elder,

the first of all, beheaded by Herod in Jerusalem; and James the Less, at a later date, hurled from a pinnacle of the temple; Matthias, the successor of Judas, suffered martyrdom in Abyssinia; Thomas, in India; Jude, in Tartary; Andrew, in Armenia; Bartholomew, in Phrygia; Philip, at Heliopous, in Syria; Paul and Peter, at Rome; and John, miraculously delivered from martyrdom in the caldron of boiling oil at Rome, and, as we believe, finally translated into heaven without seeing death.

*“And when they may persecute you in this city, fly into another.”* Thus you see, the people of God who bear this message of love and grace are not to use carnal weapons in self-defense, but run away, trusting the Lord for another open door. *“For truly, I say unto you, That you may not complete the cities of Israel, till the Son of man may come.”* You must remember, the immediate commission of these apostles, under which they are now going out, is restricted to the Jews, that restriction being removed when our Lord ascended, and the Holy Ghost fell on them, qualifying them for the conquest of the world. They are only gone out about three months in these duets, traversing the territory of Israel, till they return to the Lord, and accompanied Him the ensuing year of His ministry. N.B. The Mount of Transfiguration was really a prelude of the Lord’s second and glorious coming. This they actually witnessed in a few months from that date, thus verifying this mysterious declaration, as they had not yet gone over all the cities of Israel till the Son of man did actually come in adumbration on the Mount of Transfiguration, thus preliminarily revealing to them His second and glorious coming.

*“The disciple is not above his teacher nor the servant above his lord.”* Where we have “Master” so frequently in E.V., the word *didaskalos*, the noun, from *didasko*, to teach, hence it literally means a teacher. Jesus is the world’s Great Teacher, without whom the black darkness of the pandemonium would envelop it. “It is sufficient for the disciple that he may be as his teacher, and the servant as his lord. If they called the landlord Beelzebub, how much more the inmates of his house?” Our Savior here reveals to all who would be His witnesses, and herald His truth to a dying world, that we must be ready for any fate and disappointed at nothing.

“My rest is in heaven,  
My home is not here;  
Then why should I murmur at trials severe?  
Come trouble, come sorrow;  
The worst that can come,  
Will shorten my journey, and hasten me home.”

Our Teacher and Lord, our great Exemplar, was homeless, destitute, and the world combined against Him, not even permitting Him to live on the earth which He had created. If we can riot accept the situation, and walk in His footprints, we can not be His disciples.

*“Therefore be not afraid of them. For nothing has been hidden which shall not be revealed, and secret which shall not be known.”* This follows as a logical sequence from the preceding affirmation in reference to the grave, criminal, and even diabolical affirmations which have invariably been adduced against the people of God. The Roman historians, Seutonius, Pliny, and Sallust, have all chronicled the gravest sins and darkest crimes against the Christians during the Martyr Ages of the heathen empire, thus apologizing for the bloody persecutionary edicts issued against them by the emperors. Of course, these historians only recorded hearsay, not claiming ocular testimony in the

case. They said of Jesus, constantly, “He hath a demon,” “He is gone mad,” and “He is beside Himself.” They finally killed Him in the most disgraceful method, even hanging Him up between two criminals, notorious for robbery and murder. Similar accusations have been arrayed against the martyrs of all ages, thus signally verifying these prophecies of our Savior. Millions of people have been put to death, under gravest accusations, who, in the judgment-day, will shine like angels, while their accusers and persecutors, who stood at the head of the Church, will be calling for rocks and mountains to fall on them, and hide them from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne. While, of course, the primary application of our Lord’s affirmation as to the revealment of all secrets is the ultimate and eternal vindication of His saints, it certainly follows that we should, in this life, become perfectly lucid and transparent to all illuminated eyes, so they can actually look through us, and read the hieroglyphics the Spirit has written on the tablets of our hearts, thus sweeping away the oath-bound secrecy of lodgery in all its forms and phases. *“What I say to you in the darkness, speak ye in the light; and what ye hear in the ear, proclaim ye upon the house-tops.”* This is a confirmation of the preceding, showing up the thorough transparency of God’s true saints. When filled with the Holy Ghost, secrecy evanesces.

*“Be not afraid of those who kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”* The sainted mother, by her godly teaching, baptized with loving tears and fired with the prayer of heavenly inspiration, should put the hell-scare on her infant so thorough that the tomfoolery and superficialism of the popular religion, which brings a polar iceberg into the Church to melt in hell-fire, can never be able to obliterate; but an early conversion will only add expedition to the race-horse speed with which you are running from an open hell and an unchained devil, and sanctification give you eagle-wings to expedite the velocity of your precipitate flight from the awful, deep-toned thunders of that quenchless damnation which awaits all who, by the intrigues of men and devils, shall fall below the Bible standard of “holiness to the Lord.” (Hebrews 12:14.) *“Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father; indeed, all the hairs of your head are numbered.”* The infinite minutiae of the Divine cognizance, absolutely passing by nothing, but taking in everything indiscriminately, are here mentioned as a constant and potent inspiration to us all, peremptorily to settle matters for judgment and eternity by actually getting rid of the devil and everything belonging to him, in the glorious experience of entire sanctification and the constant indwelling of the Holy Spirit, as nothing short of this can actually settle that awful problem, whose solution is the “destruction of soul and body in hell.” “Therefore be not afraid; for you are of more value than many sparrows.” “Perfect love casts out fear.” Consequently the poorest and weakest saint, if true to God, can shout perennial victory from the mouth of hell to the gate of glory.

*“Therefore, every one who shall confess Me before the people, I will confess him in the presence of My Father who is in heaven; but whosoever may deny Me in the presence of the people, I will also deny him in the presence of My Father who is in the heavens.”* O what a potent inspiration to Christian testimony, *semper et ubique*, “always and everywhere!” The awful delinquency in this duty and depreciation of this glorious privilege, thus turning the Churches into graveyards instead of battle-fields, is the “Ichabod” superscribed on the walls of modern Churchism. In the face of these glorious promises on the one side, and terrific denunciations on the other, voiceless pews are an incontestable proclamation of dead Churches. “Do not consider that I came to send peace on the earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword.” The Bible abounds in riddles and enigmas,

inexplicable to the carnal mind. Jesus is called the Prince of Peace, and at the same time described as a mounted military General, leading His embattled host into deadly conflict, deluging the world with blood, and heaping it with mountains of the slain. Both of these characteristics are literally true. The peace which He gives only follows a bloody war with sin and the devil, fought under the black flag, which means victory or death. The sword in this passage is the formidable weapon wielded by the Holy Ghost in the extermination of sin and the decapitation of Adam the First.

*“For I came to divide a man against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and the enemies of a man shall be the inmates of his own house.”* All this is the normal effect accompanying a true work of salvation; Satan’s grip on the people being so tight that he is certain to hold enough to represent him in every family, unless literal miracles of grace flood the home with heavenly conquest and stampede the devils down to hell. Bogus, popular religion makes no disturbance in families and communities, from the simple fact that the devil is not fool enough to waste his ammunition on dead game, as there are plenty of live people to shoot at. Whenever the holiness movement gets so it does not arouse the devil in dead Churches and stir up hell in debauched communities, you may go and write “Ichabod” on its banner, and prepare its winding sheet as quickly as possible, to bury it speedily, before the stench of a putrifying carcass disseminates pestilential malaria far and wide. *“He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me; and whosoever does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.”* Here we see illustrated the absolute *sine qua non* confronting every aspirant to discipleship and heaven; *i.e.*, the utter subordination of consanguinity, affinity, home, friends, and earthly possessions to the great Captain of our salvation. This is the fatal maelstrom into which many a bark has foundered.

*“The one having found his soul, shall loose it; the one having lost his soul for My sake, shall find it.”* The E.V. here has “life,” instead of soul. The word used by our Savior is not *zoe*, “life,” but *psyche*, the regular word for soul. In every instance in the New Testament, where the E.V. has “soul,” the Greek is *psyche*. Hence I give it just as Jesus said it. While King James’s translators were scholarly theologians, they were not eminent for spirituality, but much on par with the English clergy. I do not think they saw down into the profound depths of our Savior’s meaning in this passage. There never was but one creation of the human race. We were all created in Adam seminally. Hence, in the fall, we all fell with Adam, forfeiting the Divine and receiving the Satanic or carnal mind. James speaks of the “double-soul man.” (James 1:4, and 4:8.) The sinner has but one mind, and that is bad. The wholly sanctified has but one mind, and that is good; while the unsanctified Christian is James’s double-minded man, having the carnal mind in subjugated state, and the mind of Christ, received in regeneration, ruling in his heart and life, but must have the carnal mind sanctified away before he can go to heaven. *Psyche*, “soul,” is the word used by James. The reason why so few get saved is because they are not willing to travel the death route to heaven. Millions, intimidated by the grim monster, lifting up the battle-ax to decapitate Adam the First, turn away, and travel some other road, which does not require so much self-denial. We are born into the world with an evil soul, which must die, or hell is our doom. Hence this awful test: Unless you are

brave enough to die, and take chances for life beyond the black river, your heavenly hope is Satan's *ignis fatuus*,

“Whose delusive ray  
Glow's but to betray.”

“**He that receiveth you receiveth Me; he that receiveth Me, receiveth Him that sent Me.**” Christ bridges the chasm between God and man. Hence the wonderful feasibility of the redemptive scheme. He sends out His saved people to save others. The lost millions of earth have nothing to do but receive us, with our messages of truth and holiness, and in so doing they receive Christ; *i.e.*, the loving, sympathizing Brother, Jesus. But He is not only man, but God. Therefore when the condescending, tender-hearted Nazarene takes you by the hand, behold! the hand of the Omnipotent grips you, lifting you from the lowest hell to the highest heaven. *“He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward.”* O what a thrilling incentive to wide-open door and generous hospitality, ever ready, with joyful enthusiasm, to receive the saints and prophets, whom Jesus sends forth into this dark world to rescue the perishing and save the lost! The reward of God's prophets and righteous people — what is it? None other than a crown of life and a home in heaven. The departure of hospitality from the Church is the death-knell now ringing from ocean to ocean, pealing out the mournful funeral of the great Protestant denominations.

*“Whosoever may only give one of these little ones a cup of cold water to drink in the name of the disciple, truly, I say unto you, Can not lose his reward.”* We must remember that God sets great store on little things, appreciating the giver rather than the gift. How these promises should inspire us all to lend a helping hand in the expedition of every gospel pilgrim on his way, publishing salvation to the ends of the earth! *“And it came to pass when Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples, He departed thence to teach and to preach in all the cities.”* The preceding discourse, delivered by our Savior to His twelve apostles, when He sent them out, two by two, to traverse all Israel with the uttermost expedition, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, should receive the especial and diligent study of all who read these pages. O that He may so pour on you the Holy Ghost, meanwhile, that you may hear His interior voice calling you into the evangelistic field! I assure you, this is the grand incentive inspiring the humble writer of the Commentaries, praying incessantly that all the readers may catch the heavenly flame, respond to the loving call, and enter the gospel-field unhesitatingly.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### THE MINISTRY OF THE TWELVE.

**Mark 6:12,13.** “*And having gone out, they continued to preach that they must repent; they continued to cast out many demons; they continued to anoint many sick people with oil, and heal them.*” **Luke 9:6:** “*And going forth, they continued to go throughout the villages, everywhere preaching the gospel and healing*” (the sick). This is all we have on record appertaining to the ministry of the Twelve, while separate from Jesus, pursuant to the above commission; and this, you observe, is given by Mark and Luke, who were not apostles at that time. We hear nothing of Mark till Paul’s first evangelistic tour, about nine years subsequently to this transaction, when he went out as a helper of Paul and Barnabas, doubtless quite young and inexperienced, as his heart failed him in Pamphylia, so that, much to the disgust of Paul and doubtless the grief of his uncle Barnabas, he left the work and returned to Jerusalem; Barnabas, loath to give up his nephew, endeavoring to restore him to the evangelistic work and take him out on their second tour; but Paul positively refusing, they separated, thus organizing two evangelistic forces, Barnabas taking Mark, and Paul taking Silas, Luke, and Timothy. If Mark was present at the time of this commission, he was quite a youth, not coming into history till about nine years later. As Luke was a citizen of Antioch, when we first hear of him as a convert under the ministry of Paul and Barnabas, about ten years subsequently, it is hardly probable that he was present; yet he might have been, as the Jews were coming from all Gentile countries, magnetized by the preaching and miracles of Jesus. Why do not Matthew and John give us an account of this ministry? In their histories they are simply writing up the life and ministry of Jesus. They were both members of the apostleship at that time, and went out under this commission to preach the gospel to the Jews. From the chronological data we can pick up, the presumption is that they were gone about three months. Six parties of them, moving with great expedition over a region of country about the size of New England, would make great progress in a dozen weeks.

Here is a vacuum in the history of our Lord’s life and ministry. Matthew and John were absent; Luke and Mark had not yet become disciples, so far as our knowledge extends; the latter yet in his home in Jerusalem, and the former, off in Antioch, studying medicine. Luke, about A.D. 42, became the evangelistic helper and *amanuensis* of Paul, writing for him to the end of his life. Though the Gospel of Luke was dictated by Paul, we must remember that he never came to Palestine during the ministry of Jesus; having been educated at Jerusalem, but returned to Tarsus before the ministry of John the Baptist. It is believed that Mark wrote his Gospel at Rome, about thirty years after the ascension of our Lord, as dictated by Peter, who speaks of him very kindly, calling him his son. (1 Peter 5:13.) We find from the above Scriptures that the Twelve, during their absence from Jesus, were true and faithful, giving the trumpet no uncertain sound, but laying a constant, burning emphasis on repentance, which is fundamental in the gracious economy, not only laying the bottom rock of the experimental edifice, but gilding the topmost pinnacle; as *metanoia*, “repentance,” is from *meta*, “change,” and *nous*, “the mind.” Hence it means a change of minds; *i.e.*, get rid of the carnal mind, and receive the whole mind of Christ, which really comprehends the entire plan of

salvation. The trouble with dead Churches is the absence of evangelical repentance. We find these Twelve were constantly casting out demons — *i.e.*, getting people converted — and healing the sick, not forgetting the anointing with olive-oil, which everywhere abounds in that country, and is a constant symbol of the Holy Ghost.

## MARTYRDOM OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

**Matthew 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-29; and Luke 9:7-9.** While the biography of Jesus is intimated by these inspired historians during the period of their absence, we find three of them favoring us with the record of the melancholy and apparently premature death of John the Baptist. As the Jews had poured out in multitudes, and hung spell-bound upon his eloquent lips, the six months of his brilliant and wonderful ministry, his name was everywhere a household word. Hence his cruel and untimely martyrdom fell on the nation with the shock of an earthquake. **Mark:** *“And King Herod said, John the Baptist is risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works are wrought through him. Others said, That he is Elijah. And others said, That he is one of the prophets. But Herod, hearing, said, This is John, whom I beheaded; he is risen from the dead. It being a high day when Herod, on his birthday, made a feast for his magnates, chiliarchs, and the first men of Galilee, and the daughter of Herodias having come in, and danced and pleased Herod, and those sitting along with him at the table, the king said to the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever you may wish, and I will give it to you. And he swore unto her, Whatsoever you may ask me, I will give you, even unto the half of my kingdom. And she, having gone out, said to her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. And having come in unto the king with haste, unhesitatingly she asked him, saying, I wish that you may give me here the head of John the Baptist in a charger. The king being much grieved, on account of his oaths and those who were sitting at the table with him, did not receive his consent to reject her. The king immediately sending forth an executioner, commanded that his head should be brought. He having departed, beheaded him in prison; and he brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel; and the damsel gave it to her mother. His disciples, hearing, came and took his body and buried it in a tomb.”*

a. This was Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great, the last king of the Jews, who was on the throne when our Savior was born, and died at Jericho while He was in Egypt, a fugitive from the infantile slaughter at Bethlehem. He had married the daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia, whom he discarded in order to take Herodias, his niece, the wife of his half-brother Philip (not Philip the tetrarch, of Iturea and Trachonitis — Luke 3:1), having employed a bondman in the home of his brother to seduce her away from her husband, and get her thus unlawfully to become his wife. His enraged father-in-law eventually invaded his country with an army, to avenge the maltreatment of his daughter. I saw the battle-field, off the southeast coast of the Galilean Sea, where Aretas met Herod, and signally defeated him, thus beginning his fatal downfall, which culminated in his ruin, the Roman emperor not only dethroning him, taking his kingdom from him and giving it to Herod Agrippa, but actually banishing him and Herodias to Lugdunum (Lyons), in the wilds of Gaul, and afterward exiling them in Spain, where they died in dreary solitude and misery, their temporal misfortunes the ominous prelude of the awful fate awaiting them.

b. We have in John the Baptist a beautiful and brilliant example of that stern and uncompromising ministerial fidelity which alone will qualify the Lord's heralds for the judgment fires. John knew no

fear. Bold as an archangel, he looked the king and queen in the face, and publicly exposed their sins, making the queen so awfully mad, as it was wholesale murder to her pride, that she would have slain him quickly through a hired assassin, if her husband had not defeated her purposes by shutting him up in prison. The implacable woman never relented, but studied every conceivable device to take his life. Eighteen months have whiled away since this greatest of prophets has become the inmate of a gloomy, subterranean dungeon in the Tower of Machærus, east of the Dead Sea, in the Land of Moab. During all this time, Herod frequently heard him preach, being powerfully wrought upon and deeply convicted, so that he actually obeyed the preacher in many respects. *“For Herod feared John, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man; and he continued to hold him in prison, and hearing him, he continued to do many things, and hear him delightfully.”* (Mark 6:20.) Herod was a member of the Jewish Church, loved to go to meeting, and as John was the best preacher he had ever heard, was delighted with him, making great reformation under his ministry, still retaining him in prison, to keep his enraged wife from killing him. Little did he anticipate his awful, impending fate. Now conceive the situation.

c. Pursuant to the custom of Oriental monarchs, he makes a great feast, to which he invites his official subordinates, and the rich and mighty men from all parts of his kingdom, to participate his bounty and contemplate his royal magnificence. In the midst of the festivities and jollifications, while all are merry with wine, pretty, little Salome comes in, and dances a pantomime for their edification, her wonderful agility literally capturing the princely audience thronging the royal palace. Amid a thousand compliments by the magnates, the king, now drunk enough to act the fool, obligates himself, by a solemn oath, in the presence of the royalty and nobility, to grant her petition, even though she ask the queenship of half his dominions a custom from time immemorial peculiar to Oriental monarchs.

d. The little girl darts away, and counsels her mother, whose constant study the last two years has been the destruction of that impudent preacher, who had the audacity, in his public preaching, to assault her character and ruin her reputation. O how she seizes the auspicious moment, and sends the girl back, with the bloody petition dropping in livid horror from her lips, “Give me here in this charger the head of John the Baptist!”

e. The king expected her to ask some great present, perhaps a kingdom, that she might rule over it when she arrived at womanhood. Her demand strikes him like a thunderbolt from a cloudless sky. He is flooded with grief, and would give a world to rescind the whole matter. But what can he do? If he goes back on his oath, he will so unman himself in the estimation of the royalty and the nobility that they will rebel against him on the spot, take the crown from his head, and either take his head off, or banish him from his kingdom. Satan helps him. He rallies his courage; dispatches the bloody executioner at once to the prison, with the charger sent in by blood-thirsty Herodias to receive the gory head of the greatest prophet the world has seen.

f. The sad fate of King Herod should be a profitable warning to all the people who have not settled the problem of personal salvation by entire sanctification; lest, like poor Herod, in an evil hour, the enemy slip in like a weasel and suck away your life-blood, blighting your hope, and sealing your doom in the gloom of rayless night.

g. In the present age of conjugal infidelity, illegal marriages, and all sorts of domestic entanglements, withering and blighting the beautiful flowers wont to bloom amid the gardens of holy wedlock, and disseminating social pestilence, like the withering sirocco that sweeps its pestilential gales over Lybia's burning sands, thus turning home into a pandemonium, O how we need the lightning, steel, fire, thunder, and earthquake type of preaching which characterized the fearless prophet of the wilderness, when he publicly scandalized the king and queen in their own presence, heroically preaching the truth, though it cost him imprisonment and martyrdom!

h. Should not that great preacher have been more cautious, and thus perpetuated his liberties, and prolonged his life many years to preach the gospel? I trow not. God makes no mistakes. Though John's active ministry in the open air lasted but about six months, till overtaken by the dark eclipse of imprisonment and death, doubtless he did more good than if he had preached a compromised gospel six hundred years.

### THE TWELVE RETURN.

**Mark 6:30-44.** *“And the apostles come together to Jesus, and proclaim to Him all things, even so many things as they did, and so many things as they taught. He said to them, Come ye aside into an uninhabited place, and rest a little while. For there were many going and coming, and they had not even opportunity to eat.”* **Luke 9:10:** *“And the apostles, returning, related to Him so many things as they did.”* Our Savior at this time is at Capernaum, His home, on the northern coast of the Galilean Sea. These six evangelistic bands have traveled with wonderful expedition, pressing the work with indefatigable perseverance throughout Galilee and Judea. It seems that the whole country have been wonderfully disturbed by this extraordinary activity. Of course, as it is here specified, Jesus had been preaching incessantly all this time, thus making seven distinct centers of evangelization. Such has been the effect on the masses of population that, when the apostles all return from these six evangelistic fields, thronging multitudes tread on their heels; so eager to hear the Word, get saved and healed, that they actually deprive them of all leisure, so they have not even time to eat. Now we see Jesus suggests to them to leave the cities and villages, and seek a lonely retreat in the wilderness, where they can take a rest, recuperating their exhausted nervous energies, voices, brains, and reviving their entire physical organism, preparatory for still more efficient work. This we should all diligently heed. Many valuable Christian workers break down prematurely because they do not heed this admonition of the Great Teacher.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### FEEDING THE MULTITUDES.

**Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:32-44; Luke 9:10-17; and John 6:1-14. Mark:** *“And they departed, into an uninhabited place apart, in a ship. And the multitudes saw them going, and many recognized Him; and they continued to run on foot from all the cities, and come before them, and come together to Him.”* They sailed from the city of Capernaum, on the northern coast of the Galilean Sea, and, as Luke says, they went into an uninhabited region of the city of Bethsaida; *i.e.*, into a portion of country belonging to that city. Bethsaida is on the northwest coast, and Tiberias on the west coast. This uninhabited region — *i.e.*, a natural parkway off the coast, and perhaps about midway between these two cities. N.B. The Galilean Sea at that time was literally fenced in with cities, dotting the coast seventy-five miles in compass. Now, when He proceeds with the Twelve to embark for a rest in that desert place, the people in the cities round on the coast have a full view of them, and seeing the direction they are running, multitudes run around overland, actually arriving in the park before they do, while others come on in thronging multitudes. I saw all of this situation, and actually sailed over the route here specified, visiting all of the cities here mentioned. So you see how the eager multitudes defeated the plan of taking a rest, giving them an audience of about ten thousand instead of the solitude amid trees and rocks.

**John 6:3:** *“And Jesus came into the mountain, and was sitting there with His disciples.”* The sea of Galilee, being depressed before the oceanic level seven hundred feet, as a natural consequence is surrounded on all sides by highlands, some of them (*e.g.*, Mt. Hattin, on which Saladin, the Moslem general, defeated the Crusaders, thus putting an end to Christian rule in Galilee, A.D. 1187; and the Mount of Beatitudes, north of Capernaum) rising to great eminence. I saw the region off the coast on the mountain slope between Bethsaida and Tiberias, where this immense gathering took place. *“And the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was nigh.”* N.B. Our Lord began His ministry at the Passover by purifying the temple, driving out all of the buyers and sellers. Having preached two or three weeks in Judea, He then came to Galilee, passing through and preaching in Samaria. Remaining in Galilee to the close of the year, He again attends the Passover at Jerusalem, immediately after which He returns to Galilee, where He remains, making, in all, three circuits throughout the country, and finally sending out His twelve apostles, heading six evangelistic bands. Now we see another year of our Lord’s ministry has gone by, and this great multitude, generally estimated at five thousand, but in all probability at least twice that number, as Matthew says there were five thousand, besides women and children, who, as a rule, constitute the larger half of an audience. The Jews were accustomed to go up to Jerusalem to their great solemnities by whole families, on foot, with a few donkeys and camels along to carry luggage, feeble old people, and babies, and frequently driving along sacrificial animals; thus going in great crowds for company and security against robbers and marauders. As we see here they were right on the eve of the Passover, doubtless this multitude had assembled in view of going on to Jerusalem, and attending their greatest national festival, which commemorated the birth of their nation.

**Mark 6:34:** *“And Jesus, going out, looked on the vast multitude, and was moved with compassion in their behalf, because they were as sheep having no shepherd; and He began to teach them many things.”* We again find this frequently repeated affirmation of our Lord, *“Sheep having no shepherd.”* N.B. These were not heathens, nor outsiders, but the *bona fide* members of the Jewish Church, with their regular pastors, officers, and Church services. Still you see that in the Divine estimation they had no shepherds; *i.e.*, no competent spiritual guides. How exceedingly pertinent does that alarming statement apply to the fallen Churches and worldly clergy of the present day! *“And it already being a late hour, His disciples, coming to Him, say, That this is a desert place, and already the hour is late; send them away, that having gone into the surrounding country and villages, they may purchase for themselves bread; for they have nothing which they may eat. And responding, He said to them, You give them to eat. And they say to Him, Having gone away, must we buy two hundred pennies’ worth of bread and give them to eat?”* Evidently having only two hundred pennies in the apostolical treasury. *“And He says to them, How much bread have you? Go and see. And having ascertained, they say, Five loaves and two fishes. He commanded them all to sit down by companies on the green grass. And they sat by hundreds and fifties. Taking the five loaves and the two fishes, looking up to heaven, He blessed them, and broke the loaves, and gave them to His disciples that they may distribute to them; and He divided out the two fishes to all.”*

**John 6:12:** *“And when they were filled, He says to His disciples, Gather ye up the remaining fragments, in order that nothing may be lost. Then they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments from the five barley loaves which remained to those who had eaten.”*

**Matthew 14:21:** *“And those eating were about five thousand men, besides women and children.”* Evidently, as you see, at least ten thousand people, fed bountifully with the five barley loaves and two fishes, about enough for five persons, as the loaves in that country are generally small. That country is notorious for baskets, and generally very large, holding several bushels. A common sight at Jerusalem is a woman coming in, sitting on her little donkey, with one of these great baskets on either side filled with market stuff — *i.e.*, vegetables and fruits — and a baby in her arms, and no bridle on the animal; sitting astride, apparently very comfortable, and frequently singing, as I supposed, for the entertainment of the baby. Hence, one basket would hold, in all probability, ten times the original amount of the whole supply with which they began to eat. Now ten thousand have eaten, and twelve baskets full of fragments were taken up. What a wonderful flood of spiritual truth pours in from this transcendent miracle! You go into an utterly destitute place like this to hold a revival-meeting. You can hardly rake and scrape fire enough on the old smoldering chunks to kindle into a flame. When once you get it started, it rolls a deluge over the neighborhood, running the devil out, and bringing heaven down. A hundred red-hot evangelists rise up from that meeting, and carry away fire enough to start a hundred new revivals. Spiritualities are the very opposite of materialities, as God’s ways are different from man’s. In temporal things, the more we use, the less we have. In spiritual, precisely the reverse is true: the more we use and give away, the more we have. You may hardly have religion enough to keep Satan from taking you, and go out and get some poor fellow gloriously converted, and, to your surprise, you will find that you have at least ten times as much as you had before you began this good work.

**John 6:14:** *“Therefore the people, seeing the miracle which Jesus performed, continued to say, That this is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world;”* *i.e.*, the Christ, the Messiah of God, the Redeemer of Israel, the Shiloh, the Savior for whom Israel has waited four thousand years; thus

arousing and electrifying the multitude with the most thrilling enthusiasm, as the Jews have been listening to His preaching and diagnosing His miracles these two whole years, wondering if He is really the Messiah of prophecy, and at the same time ready to rally and crown Him King, as they all distinctly understand that the Christ is to be their King, break the Roman yoke, set them free, and even transcend the glory of David and Solomon, and reign over them forever; thus infelicitously mixing up the prophecies appertaining to His first and second coming, and running into a bewilderment, which, maneuvered by Satan, conducted awfully to blind their eyes and defeat their diagnosis of Messiahship in Jesus.

## JESUS WALKS UPON THE WATER.

**Matthew 14:22-36; Mark 6:45-56; and John 6:15-21 Mark:** *“And immediately He constrained His disciples to go into the ship, and to proceed before Him to the other side, toward Bethsaida, until He can send away the multitude.”* This statement is calculated to puzzle the reader, because Luke 9:10, says that they were already in an uninhabited place of the city called Bethsaida. If you are only once on the spot, this apparent contradiction between Mark and Luke would suddenly vanish. The solution of the matter is, there were two towns called Bethsaida on the sea of Galilee — the one in whose vicinity these multitudes were fed is on the northwest coast; and the other, toward which they sailed after adjournment, is on the left bank of the inflowing Jordan, and near the northeast coast. The latter is known as Bethsaida Julias; the latter cognomen being added to distinguish it from the other Bethsaida, and also in honor of Julia, the Roman empress.

*“And having sent them away, He departed into the mountain to pray.”* **John 6:15:** *“Therefore, Jesus, knowing that they are about to come and seize Him, that they may make Him King, departed again alone into the mountain to pray.”* Here, you see, John tells the secret; they have assembled in vast numbers to go up to Jerusalem to the Passover. This stupendous miracle so convinces them of His Christhood that they resolve to take Him into hand, and carry Him along with them to Jerusalem, and there have Him crowned King of the Jews. This is the reason why He had to force His own disciples to go away. They, with the multitude, were determined to crown Him King. As the people looked upon them as leaders in that momentously interesting transaction, when they saw them embark in a ship to leave, the natural effect was to weaken the enterprise in the estimation of the multitude, and postpone His coronation. So now, His disciples, having gone to their ship, are sailing away in a northeasterly direction. Having dismissed the multitude, doubtless eluding their vision, He goes away alone into the mountain to pray.

*“And when it was evening, His disciples embarked upon the sea, and having come into the ship, they were going across the sea to Capernaum.”* Bethsaida Julias, toward which Mark says they were going, is in the same direction, but several miles beyond Capernaum. Hence there is harmony among the writers. *“And it was already dark, and Jesus had not come to them; and the sea wrought, a great wind blowing.”* The sea of Galilee, depressed seven hundred feet below the Mediterranean, and consequently surrounded by mountains and highlands, is quite subject to sudden squalls, often very violent, and dangerous to the small vessels they used in that day. When I was there last fall, it was my good fortune to sail round and over that beautiful sea in a most excellent boat, quite secure amid the storms, having been built for the especial accommodation of the German emperor, who visited that country the preceding year. *“Therefore, having come about twenty-five or thirty furlongs [i.e.,*

three or four miles], *they see Jesus walking about on the sea, and being near the ship, and they were afraid.*” **Mark** says, *“Thought it was a specter”* — i.e., a ghost — not distinctly recognizing, perhaps, even human personality. There-fore they were all alarmed and cried out with affright. **Matthew 14:27:** *“Immediately He spoke to them, saying, Be of good cheer; I am here; fear not.”*

### **PETER WALKING ON THE WATER AND SINKING.**

*“And Peter, responding to Him, said, Lord, if Thou art here, command me to come to Thee on the waters. And He said, Come. And Peter having come down from the ship, was walking about on the waters to come to Jesus. And seeing the wind strong, became alarmed; and beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, Lord, save me! And immediately Jesus, reaching forth His hand, took him, and says to him, O ye of little faith, why did you doubt? And they, coming into the ship, the wind ceased. And those in the ship, coming, worshipped Him, saying, Truly, Thou art the Son of God.”* These last mentioned as falling down, worshipping, and confessing His Christhood, were evidently the sailors in charge of the ship. We have here, in the example of Peter, a most notable illustration confirming the omnipotence of faith, as illustrated here by Peter looking at Jesus. So long as he kept his eye on Him, with perfect security he could run all around over the stormy sea. You who have never been in a storm at sea will hardly duly estimate the trepidation inspired by the rolling waves, thundering seas, and raging billows. Now, you must remember, the sea was not smooth and calm when Peter walked over it, but racked with storms and plowed with tempests, vividly illustrating the stormy ocean of probationary life. Just as Peter could walk over the stormy sea with perfect security, so long as he kept his eye on Jesus, so can you tread with safety the tempest-racked billows of life’s stormy ocean, swept by cyclones from the bottomless pit, so long as you keep your eye of faith on Jesus, and pay no attention to the roaring billows, nor the barking of the hell-hounds. The moment you take your eye from Jesus, and look at your adverse circumstances, and begin to estimate the power of your temptations, you will begin to sink; and if you do not, like Peter, cry out, “Lord, save, I perish,” you will sink forever, as hell has no bottom.

**John 6:21:** *“Then they wished to take Him in the ship, and immediately the ship was at the land to which they were going.”* That land was Genesareth, and the city of Capernaum. Several hours had elapsed in their vain attempt to make headway against a strong northeast wind. When they took Jesus aboard, responsive to His bidding, the tempest lulls, and the sea calms. Therefore, with energetic rowing, they soon disembark at Capernaum, their destination.

**Mark 6:51:** *“He came up to them into the ship; and the wind ceased, and they were exceedingly astonished among themselves, and marveled. For they did not understand concerning the loaves; for their heart was hardened.”* This stupendous miracle of feeding the multitudes the preceding afternoon, should have so thoroughly convinced them of His Christhood as to prepare them to recognize the lulling of the storm and calming the sea as the normal prerogative of Omnipotence, and consequently produce no surprise. Man is a trinity, consisting of spirit, heart, or soul, mind, and body. Hence the heart or spirit, and not the intellect, is the diagnoser of Divine phenomena.

“With the heart we believe unto righteousness” (Romans 10:10),

and under the illumination of the Holy Spirit, our spirit interpenetrates and comprehends the deep things of God. Hence, if you would understand the Bible, and diagnose Divine phenomena, and become truly wise in the deep things of God, get all the rocks of depravity eliminated from your heart, leaving it soft, tender, and filled with perfect love. Then you can go down into the profound mysteries of revealed truth, flooded with new spiritual illuminations, and progressively edified by fresh revealments of the Divine attributes in glory, though you never saw a college nor inherited Solomonic genius. These apostles all needed the sanctifying fire of Pentecost to melt their hearts so thoroughly and illuminate them so perfectly, that they would never again stagger at the *ipse dixit* of the Almighty. *“And having crossed over, they came to the Genesareth land, and disembarked; and they, coming out from the ship, immediately those recognizing Him having run throughout all that surrounding country, began to carry in the sick on beds, when they heard that He was there. And when He went into the villages or cities or countries, they were continuously placing the sick in the forums, and entreating Him that they may touch the hem of His garment; and so many as touched Him were saved.”* The stupendous and extraordinary miracle of feeding the ten thousand shook the whole country with the tread of an earthquake, thrilling the people with an incorrigible enthusiasm, to scour the whole country round about, far and wide, and bring in all the invalids, maniacs, demoniacs, and epileptics, while they had an opportunity to come in contact with the wonderful Healer.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### PUZZLE OF THE MULTITUDE.

**John 6:22-71.** *“On the following day the multitude, standing beyond the sea, saw that there was no other ship except one, and that Jesus did not go along with His disciples into the ship, but that His disciples departed alone. Other ships came from Tiberias, near the place where they ate the bread, our Lord giving thanks.”* Tiberias is on the west coast, Bethsaida on the northwest, and Capernaum due north. The mountain park where He fed the multitudes is off the coast, in full view of the sea, and about equidistant from Bethsaida and Tiberias. Hence our ships soon set out from Tiberias to Capernaum, carrying many of the multitudes on the track of the disciples, as this was the best they could do, because Jesus having disappeared the preceding evening after sending away His disciples and dismissing the multitude, they knew not His whereabouts. *“And when the multitude saw that Jesus is not there, nor His disciples, they embarked in ships, and came to Capernaum, seeking Jesus. And finding Him beyond the sea, they said to Him, Master, when did You come hither? Jesus responded to them, and said, Truly, truly, I say unto you, You seek Me, not because you saw the miracles, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.”* The multitudes did not know that Jesus, after spending a few hours in prayer alone in the mountain, had walked out on the stormy sea in the midnight darkness, and joined His tempest-tossed disciples, saving them and the ship from a watery sepulcher, consequently they were seriously puzzled when they find Him beyond the sea. You observe here He makes no answer to the question propounded by idle curiosity — a profitable example for us all. His time was precious, and so is ours. Good Lord, help us to economize it! But He proceeds at once to preach to them the solid gospel truth they so much needed, reading the superficial and carnal motives which actuated them by thousands to follow Him for the loaves and fishes, as we see this day verified on all sides; *e.g.*, immigrants into a city or village depositing their membership in the Church which presents the most capacious opening for the patronage of their business, thus going for the loaves and fishes instead of the Living Bread. *“Labor not for the food that perisheth, but the food that endureth unto eternal life, which the Son of man doth give to you; for this the Father, God, hath sealed.”* The reason why our bodies are mortal is because they receive their constituency from mortal food, consisting of many different elements, segregated by vital affinity, the chemical forces incessantly counteracting till they predominate over the vital, when death and disintegration ensue, this mortal returning to the dust whence it came; meanwhile, the human spirit, being a unit, is unsusceptible of this disintegration, as leaving no component parts, it is impregnable by the laws of chemical affinity. Therefore it is immortal, and can never die. This immortality, having been conferred by the Almighty, is forever perpetuated by our identity with Him.

### THE WORKS NECESSARY TO SALVATION.

*“What must we do that we may work the works of God?”* *i.e.*, do the works which God requires in order to our salvation. To this important question, propounded by the multitude, our Savior’s answer is clear, explicit, and unequivocal *“Jesus responded and said unto them, This is the work of God, that you may believe on Him whom He has sent.”* This answer dumbfounds all the ritualists

and legalists of all ages and nations, illustrating the utter falsity of the great dogma of salvation by works, which enslaves Pagans, Moslems, Papists, and Protestants, deluding them with the silly infatuation that God needs something which we can give or do, oblivious to the grandeur, sublimity, and glory of His omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence, possessing millions of worlds, and ready to speak into existence millions more.

### HEAVENLY MANNA.

*“And they said unto Him, Then what miracle do You perform that we may see and believe? Do what You may do? Our fathers ate manna in the desert; as has been written, He gave unto them bread from heaven to eat.”* (Psalm 78:24.) The Jews always look back to the manna, which they ate forty years in the desert of Arabia, as the greatest miracle in their history. Now that Jesus is performing stupendous miracles, the recent multiplication of the loaves and fishes actually reminding them of the copious quantities of bread which so long fell nightly from heaven, sufficient to feed three millions of people, they now cut the matter short by asking Him to feed them incessantly, as Moses, His great predecessor, had done. *“Then Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say unto you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father giveth to you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He that cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world. Then they said to Him, Lord, always give unto us this bread. Then Jesus said to them, I am the Bread of Life; he that cometh unto Me may never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.”* The manna, with which God kept them from starving to death forty years, while following the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night through the vast burning deserts of Arabia, is the magnitudinous type of Christ, who, by His omnipotent grace, momentarily administered by the Holy Spirit, perpetuates our spiritual life, while we roam through this desert-waste of sin and sorrow, verifying our probation till duly tested and tried, when the Master will say, *“Come up higher.”* Hence we have here the significant affirmation, *“I am the Bread of Life.”*

### ELECTION.

*“But I said unto you, That you have seen and you do not believe;”* i.e., they had seen the wonderful miracle of feeding the multitudes, so vividly illustrating the mysterious sustenance of the human spirit by the Holy Spirit. *“Every one which the Father giveth unto Me, shall come unto Me; and him that cometh unto Me, I will in nowise cast out, because I have come down from heaven; not that I may do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. But this is the will of Him that sent Me, that everything which the Father hath given unto Me, I shall lose nothing of the same, but I will raise it up in the last day. For this is the will of My Father, that every one seeing the Son and believeth on Him, may have eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day.”* Here our Savior goes down into the deep and incomprehensible truth of election, so prominently revealed in many Scriptures. There are really two sides to the atonement. While Christ died for all objectively — i.e., evolving the gracious possibility of universal salvation; subjectively, the atonement only reaches the elect, whom the Father has given Him, and whom He draws to Him by His Spirit. There is no confliction between this election and human free agency, though finite minds may not be able to reconcile these two distinct cardinal truths of Revelation.

“Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? Will Saul come down as Thy servant hath heard? O Lord God of Israel, I beseech Thee, tell Thy servant. And the Lord said, He will come down. Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the Lord said, They will deliver thee up.” (1 Samuel 23:11,12.)

This notable item in the history of David’s flight from Saul throws light on the apparent irreconcilability of the Divine sovereignty and human agency. David, with his six hundred braves, takes refuge in the city of Keilah, the men receiving him with fulsome flattery, and promising to stand by him under every emergency. David enjoyed that gift so important to us all, “discernment of spies” (1 Corinthians 12:10), which enabled him to read men like books. Suspicious of their fidelity, he falls on his knees, and talks to the Lord about the matter, as you see in the above Scripture. Do you not observe the answer God gives him in reference to the coming of Saul and the perfidy of the Keilites — *“He will come down;” “They will deliver thee up.”* David understood the Word of the Lord, and knew that, while no conditions were expressed, they were implied. So he, that moment, blows his bugle, rallies his men, and gives marching orders for a “double quick,” assuring them that they are among traitors, and the enemy is close on their track. Consequently, Saul, constantly posted as to the movements of David, hearing that he had left Keilah, never came, but took a shorter route on his track; while, of course, the Keilites did not deliver him up, as he was not there, and Saul did not come to receive him. Thus we see that even the Divine decrees are not incompatible with human agency. The thing for us to do is to heed the warning, *“Make your calling and election sure.”* We can all enjoy the blessed consolation of identity with God’s elect, and that is certainly enough for us. Let us do our utmost to prevail on all of the non-elect to become candidates for life, salvation, sanctification, and heaven, assuring them that God will, in mercy, elect them. This deep and mysterious truth, evolved by our Lord in that memorable sermon in the synagogue of Capernaum, not only puzzled and appalled the multitude, but, with other profound and immutable realities, deep-seated in the Divine economy, actually deflected many of His disciples. *“Therefore the Jews continued to murmur concerning Him, because He said, I am the Bread having come down from heaven; and they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How now does He say, That I have come down from heaven?”* You see, the great difficulty on the part of the people was to comprehend the Divine hemisphere of His Christhood, prone, in their carnal cogitations, to turn incessantly to the human. “Jesus responded and said to them, Do not murmur with one another. No one is able to come unto Me unless the Father who sent Me may draw him, and I will raise him up in the last day.” The Holy Spirit has been in the world from the beginning, drawing to the Son all whom the Father has given Him; so that, in a mysterious way, the elect of all nations, heathen, Mohammedan, Greek, Latin, and Anglican, will all get there, and stand on the right hand of the Judge, acquitted in that great day. God forbid that we should stumble over the deep truths of His kingdom! Like little children at the feet of Jesus, taught by the Holy Ghost, let us receive them by simple faith, having time and eternity in which to explore and comprehend them.

*“It has been written in the prophets, They shall all be taught of God; every one hearing from the Father, and learning, cometh unto Me.”* Millions who have never heard the gospel, taught by the Holy Ghost, will, in some mysterious way, reach the kingdom. We must not depreciate human agency, nor lay too much emphasis on it. *“Not that any one has seen the Father, but Him who is with*

*God, the same hath seen God.*” The present tense here reveals the fact that Jesus was with God while on earth. We must not lean unduly to the human side of the Messiahship, thus obscuring the grand fact of His omnipresence, simultaneously in heaven, earth, and all other worlds. *“Truly, truly, I say unto you, That he that believeth hath eternal life.”* Wonderful simplicity of the redemptive scheme, faith being the isolated and only condition of receiving eternal life! N.B. This saving faith is neither intellectual nor creedistic, but spiritual. (Romans 10:10.) *“I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate manna in the wilderness, and are dead; He is the bread who cometh down from heaven, in order that whosoever may eat of Him, indeed, may not die.”* Here He is leading their minds away from the temporal side of salvation, illustrated by the manna, which their ancestors had eaten and died, to the spiritual, involving the grand, fundamental truth of soul-life, maintained and perpetuated by the Omnipotent Creator and Mediator. *“I am the living bread, having come down from heaven; if any one may eat of Me, the bread, he shall never die; but the bread which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.”* Beginning with the exceedingly familiar history of the manna, which they, in their carnal diagnosis, apprehended in a simple material sense, but which was really the greatest type of Christ in Old Testament symbolism, He now endeavors to lead them on from the type to the Antitype. Here they stumble, and many of His disciples fall.

### **EATING HIS FLESH AND DRINKING HIS BLOOD.**

*“Therefore the Jews continued to contend with one another, saying, How is this Man able to give unto us His flesh to eat? Then Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say unto you, Unless you may eat the flesh of the Son of man, and may drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day. For My flesh is the true nutriment, and My blood the true drink. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live through the Father, truly, he that feedeth on Me shall also live through Me. He is the bread who came down from heaven; not as the fathers ate, and are dead; he that eateth this bread shall live forever. He spoke these things, teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.”* Our Savior is just now winding up the second year of His ministry, which has been a sweeping revival from the beginning, starting out from that greatest revival the world had seen, under the preaching of John the Baptist, but soon far transcending it, not only shaking all Israel with the tread of a spiritual earthquake, but with the meager news facilities of that day, so far as the heathen nations heard the paradoxical and joyful news, they actually came from the ends of the earth, to see His mighty works, and hear His inimitable preaching. As a rule, in a great, spreading revival, the majority evanesce, and only the faithful minority hold on. The time has come in our Lord’s ministry when bottom-rock truth must be preached, though it will sift His following like the hurricane, weeding out of the forest every dead and fragile tree, and only leaving the tough and thrifty, to receive new impetus in their enlarged capacity, and grow into gianthood. They now hear from His lips this profoundest truth that has ever rung in their ears; *i.e.*, eating His flesh and drinking His blood. Now, what is meant by drinking His blood? N.B. Faith is the spiritual organ receiving everything from God. We read that the blood redeems, cleanses, and sanctifies. Therefore we conclude that drinking His blood is spiritually, through faith, involving entire consecration, so apprehending and appropriating the infallible promises of God, to thoroughly and radically expurgate our spirits by the cleansing blood, as to sanctify us wholly, keep us under the blood, clean, pure, and spotless, amid all the contaminations of this dark, wicked, God-forgetting world, robed and ready to meet our Heavenly Bridegroom when He shall descend and call His saints.

What do we understand by eating His flesh? In a similar manner, spiritually, through faith, we are so to receive the great truths of God's Word, appertaining to the glorification of our Lord's body, when He flew away to heaven, that we not only have faith for entire sanctification in the blood, but for the glorification of our bodies similitudinously to the glorious body of our ascended Lord, culminating in our translation, when He comes for His saints, or our felicitous participation of the first resurrection. (Revelation 10:6.) And thus our transformation, soul and body, into the blessed similitude of the risen and glorified Jesus, our only Paragon, Exemplar, and glorious Prototype. Thus, by faith, we are to live momentarily in the spiritual and faithful diagnosis, apprehension, and appropriation of these transcendent realities, whose normal effect is to make us unselfish, unworldly, angelic, and Christ-like in our meditations, conversation, and deportment, always abounding in the work of the Lord, daily and hourly watching and waiting for His return.

### THE GREAT APOSTASY.

*“Therefore many of His disciples, having heard, said, This is a hard speech; who is able to hear it? And Jesus, knowing in Himself that His disciples are murmuring concerning this, said to them, Does this offend you? Therefore, if you may see the Son of man ascending up where He was formerly — [Here is an ellipsis: “What would you do?”] It is the Spirit that createth life; the flesh profiteth nothing. The words which I have spoken unto you are spirit and life.”* Popular religion is pre-eminently materialistic, and to that extent utterly worthless, illusory, and fatal to its deluded votaries, who look at fine houses, eloquent preachers, robed clergy, pipe-organs, fantastical choirs, pompous ceremonies, and all sorts of Church machinery, and thus lose sight of the meek and lowly Jesus, who had not a place to lay His head, but went about doing good. Here you see, from the plain words of Jesus, the pure spirituality of His religion. He positively affirms that it is the Spirit who creates in us spiritual life, and that “the flesh profiteth nothing,” thus utterly abnegating the essentially of water baptism, Eucharist, Church ordinances, edifices, and everything else appertaining to the body, and constituting ecclesiastical rights, ceremonies, and machinery. Do not understand us to depreciate any of these temporal institutions. They are all right in their place, a miniature survival of the symbolic dispensation, having their place in the educational department of the gospel. They are like clothes on the man, which are no essential part of the human organism. When these temporalities monopolize our affections, and become substitutes for saving grace, Satan always transforms them into idols, and turns them into greased planks, on which he slides their poor deluded followers into hell. The deliverances of the Savior at this point are so decisive and explicit as forever to sweep all controversy from the field. The Jewish Church at that time, ministry and membership, were spiritually dead, and utterly bewildered in the fogs of ritualism, locked tight in dead formality and hollow hypocrisy, with a noble exception here and there. Consequently this deep, spiritual teaching threw bombshells in all directions.

*“But there are certain ones of you who do not believe.”* For Jesus, from the beginning, knew that *“there are some who do not believe, and there is one who is about to betray Him.”* This is the first insinuation against Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve. *“And He said, On this account, I have said to you, That no one is able to come unto Me unless it had been given unto him from the Father.”* We see from this statement that there was no bogus about Judas. God, who is no respecter of persons, had given unto him the grace to come to Jesus, and we see that he was one of those who “had been given of the Father.” N.B. This date of our Lord's ministry is at the expiration of two years, during

which the enemy had been pulling on Judas, through the office of apostolical treasurer, to corrupt the simplicity of his heart with the love of money. The visitation of the Spirit to Judas, his call to the discipleship, and even to the apostleship, did not vitiate his spiritual freedom, nor discontinue his probation. "Therefore from that, many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him." The revelation at this point favors the conclusion that the apostasy was really enormous, actually bringing the problem face to face with the inspired Twelve. You see the reason why this great apostasy took place, cutting down the ranks of discipleship to the faithful few. It was because our Lord evolved those deep and magnitudinous truths of entire sanctification and coming glorification, at the same time elucidating the pure spirituality of His kingdom. A modern critic, in a parallel case — *i.e.*, a preacher offending and alienating the majority of his members by proclaiming, expounding, elucidating, and enforcing the great doctrine and precious experience of entire sanctification — would say, "He made a great mistake." If so, he is in good company, as, you see, Jesus made the same, alienating the multitude of His disciples, so they "*went back, and walked no more with Him.*" Thus you see this was a finality with those disciples. John, our inspired author, lived to be a hundred and one years old, thus surviving nearly all of those apostatizing disciples. He, with the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, tells us that this was a finale with them, and "*they walked no more with Him.*" Let this incident be duplicated in any of our Churches, and tempests of censure will be poured on the preacher from pulpits and pews, and, in all probability, ecclesiastical decapitation supervene. Yet the man is faithfully walking in the footprints of Jesus. I would have been run away from almost every Church to which I ever went to preach, if God had not vindicated His truth with earthquakes and volcanoes of convicting power, thus, in the majority of cases, revealing hell and the devil so awfully to the people that, affrighted and appalled, they fell and cried for mercy, even the magnates of the Church piling down at the mourners-bench. I am happy to say that this obtained in the majority of cases in my ministry of forty-six years; the minority, running me off, and in one instance actually hauling me out of my circuit for a crazy man. This is a notable, exemplary case, which every preacher would do well to consider. The Preacher of all preachers actually upset the multitude of His members by preaching the deep truths of entire sanctification, so "*they turned back, and walked no more with Him.*" The man who does the same at the present day is denounced for making an awful mistake. Who will dare say that Jesus made a mistake? Not one. He knew all about those people. They had followed Him two years in a superficial, slipshod way. He told them nothing but the truth, which they all had to see and experience if they ever got to heaven. He had waited on them two years to get ready for this profound and telling sermon on entire sanctification. He knew they would never get to heaven on that shallow-water religion. When we were in the harbor at Athens, Greece, and getting ready to land, my comrade exclaimed, "Brother Godbey, they are going away as fast as they can." It was a Russian ship on which we had sailed from Asia in our homeward bound voyage, and we could not speak their language. So we were in quite a dilemma till a man, in broken English, notified us that a storm was coming, and they were making for deep water, and would land us after the storm passed by. As in time of storm all ships go for deep water, so should the Christian voyager on time's stormy ocean make for deep water all the time, forever avoiding shoals and quicksands. Jesus knew that those people would never reach the kingdom, and it was not worth while to carry them any longer as dead weights on the gospel-wheel, so He went down to bottom-rock truth, and alienated a host of them. Do you not know that the very same results would follow the same preaching throughout Christendom today? Yet you know it is the very thing that ought to be done, as the people who will not receive these deep, spiritual truths are sure to make shipwreck this side the pearly gate.

*“Then Jesus said to the twelve, Do you also wish to go back? Simon Peter said to Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have believed, and we know that Thou art the Holy One of God.”* Peter was a great, big, club-fisted, Herculean rustic, illiterate, having been brought up amid the rough-and-tumble life of those hardy fishermen, who, like a hippopotamus, could live in water or on land, and hardly know the difference, never having gone to school a day in his life, and utterly destitute of what the world calls culture and refinement; but he had a great, big head, full of good, natural, common sense. Therefore he was a suitable speaker for the apostolical cohort. When a dying infidel, surrounded by the cultured members of the club, was exhorted to “hold on,” he replied, “Why, I have nothing to hold to!” How significantly true! If infidelity is true, we need not bother ourselves about it, because we are just as safe as those who spend their lives in the study and advocacy of their skeptical dogmatism. The same we may say of Universalism. A Universalist preacher met his appointment in a strange community, showing up (in his own estimation) no hell for any and heaven for all; winding up, asked his audience if he should make another appointment. After a moment of profound silence, an old man, rising, said, “If you have preached the truth, we do not need any more of it; if lies, we do not want any more of them.” So, in either case, his work was done. Peter abundantly vindicates his own good, solid, common sense when he answers, *“Lord, to whom shall we go?” “There is none to whom we can go, if we give You up, except hell and the devil, and we do not want them; so we will stay with You, and abide our destiny.”* O that all the preachers and members of the present generation would emulate the practical intelligence of the fisherman! What a stampede this deep, spiritual preaching now makes in the Churches, the people literally stullifying themselves, and becoming laughing-stocks for devils! If they can’t stand Scriptural holiness on earth, what will they do in heaven? If they can not stand a heart-searching holiness preacher, how will they stand before the Judge of quick and dead?

*“Jesus said to them, Have I not chosen you twelve? And one of you is devilish. And He was speaking of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon; for he was about to betray Him, being one of the twelve.”* We see here what Jesus had chosen Judas as well as all the balance, and (verse 65) He had actually been given to Him by the Father. This is a delicate and controverted point, on which we merely give you the revealed Word as we have it, and forbear an elaborate exegesis. N.B. Two years of our Lord’s ministry have rolled away before we hear a solitary word impeaching the Christian character of Judas. Jesus had actually sent him out, with his apostolical comrades, to preach the gospel of the kingdom throughout all Israel. He had been honored of God in casting out devils and healing of the sick. *Diabolos*, which reads “devil,” E.V., is primarily an adjective, meaning “devilish,” as I here translate it. We have no date of his apostasy, which culminated in betrayal and suicide. The presumption is that Jesus exposed his guilt very soon after his lapse. It is certain that at this date — *i.e.*, the end of two years’ ministry — Satan has so pulled on him that he is leaning off in that way, and has become “devilish.” This warning should have convicted and restored him; but unfortunately for him, he continued to lean more and more to worldliness, and especially the love of money, during the ensuing year of our Lord’s ministry, till he finally so yielded, at the Last Supper, that “Satan entered into him,” precipitating him away to perpetrate the dark crimes of betrayal and murder.

We have now followed our Lord through two years of His ministry; which normally began at the Passover, April 14, A.D. 30; after which, returning to Galilee, His native land, He preached till the next Passover, which He visited, soon afterward coming back to Galilee. Now, as we have already

seen, the multitude, being determined to take Him with them to Jerusalem, and there crown Him King, He evaded them, going alone into the mountain at nightfall, and walking over the sea, joining His disciples in the ship at midnight. So this Passover He declines to attend, spending the time in the North; this being the third Passover of His ministry, having begun at one; returned to Jerusalem, and attended the second; and now intermits the third, remaining in Galilee; finally at the fourth, winding up His ministry on the cross. So we now start out at the beginning of the third and last year of our Savior's ministry.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### BAPTIZO NOT ALWAYS A TOTAL SUBMERSION.

**Matthew 15:1-2; Mark 7:1-6.** *“And the Pharisees and certain ones, the scribes, having come from Jerusalem, are assembled before Him. And seeing certain ones of His disciples eating bread with defiled, that is, unwashed hands; for the Pharisees and all the Jews, unless they may wash their hands diligently, do not eat; holding the tradition of the elders; and from the forum, if they may not be baptized, they do not eat; there are many other things which they receive to hold, such as the baptism of pots and cups and brazen vessels and couches.”* Here we have the regular Greek word *baptizo*, constantly used in the Christian ordinance in this case, setting forth the washing of their hands when they came from the forum before they ate. How do you know but they totally immersed their hands? Perhaps they did, and for aught we know they did not but that hypothesis is utterly irrelevant to the question at issue, as it says “they” are baptized — *i.e.*, the whole person — whereas it is a well-known fact that those Pharisaic traditions only required the washing of hands, and that was all they did. But in that case it is said that they were baptized. In a similar manner and from the same reason — *i.e.*, the Pharisaic traditions — they baptize “pots, cups, brazen vessels, and couches.” Of course, they did not immerse the beds on which they slept and the couches on which they ate; as they would have to do it every time they came from the forum, where they were likely to transact business with Gentiles, come in contact with unclean animals, and in various ways contract ceremonial defilement. We have no controversy on water baptism or anything else. We only want the truth, which will stand the white light of the Judgment. We advise all to satisfy your consciences on this subject and every other. These Scriptures certainly reveal the fact that *baptizo*, the constant Greek word for baptize, does not always mean a total submersion.

### PHARISAICAL HYPOCRISY.

*“Then the Pharisees and scribes interrogated Him, Wherefore do not Thy disciples walk according to the traditions of the elders? But they eat bread with unwashed bands.”* The Word of the Lord is alone authoritative. The Churches of the present day are burdened to death with human institutions, unheard of in the Bible, wearing out the people, bankrupting them financially and spiritually, consuming their time, which ought to be spent in saving souls, in which case the Lord would turn on them showers of blessings, making life a heaven instead of a tread-mill drudgery. *“And responding, He said to them, Well did Isaiah prophesy concerning you hypocrites, as has been written, This people honoreth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. In vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. For leaving the mandate of God, you hold the traditions of men, the baptisms of cups and pots, and you do many other such things.”* Here we see that our Savior denounces all of these empty Church rites and ceremonies, with which the clergy have burdened the people. God wants His people to be free as angels, unincumbered, to labor in His vineyard with the greatest possible efficiency, and fight the devil, not like soldiers, but heroes. Hypocrite means an actor on the theatrical stage, playing an assumed part. This was the awful trouble of the Jewish Church: they had run into hollow hypocrisy and dead formality, clinging to their

Church institutions with the pertinacity of a drowning man, and at the same time spiritually dead, blinded by Satan, and led captive at his will. The Oriental Churches seemed to have lost sight of everything but their own traditional institutions, while the Americans are on their track at locomotive speed. We need all the holiness people in the world — *i.e.*, those who take the Holy Bible as their only guide — to go on eagles' wings to the ends of the earth, and preach the everlasting gospel, before the people are all caught fast in the meshes of ecclesiastical tradition, tied up in human institutions, and totally blinded to the simple, sweet Word of God; thus led away into playing religion, instead of getting it deep down in their hearts, till it goes through them like a cyclone of fire, revealing all the contents of their interior spirit, committing to the flames all the chaff of dead formality, which constitutes the essence of practical hypocrisy, so abominable in the sight of God, and so utterly withered by the preaching of Jesus.

### TRUE RELIGION — INTERNAL AND SPIRITUAL.

Matthew 15:10-20; Mark 7:14-23. Matthew: *“Calling the multitude to Him, He said to them, Hear and understand. Not that which cometh into the mouth defileth a man; but that which goeth out of a man, that defileth a man. Then His disciples, coming, said to Him, Do you know that the Pharisees, hearing the word, were offended? and He, responding, said, Every plant which My Heavenly Father did not plant, shall be rooted up.”* The subject here is the Pharisaic traditions, and an infinite diversity of burdensome human rites, ceremonies, and institutions which had been foisted on the Jewish Church, covering up and literally hiding the heavenly superstructure, till the people, seeing nothing but humanism, were following the shadow, ignorant of the substance, led by the blind clergy in the way of death. All that was smashed up by the Roman armies, a few years subsequently to this awful prophecy, sweeping their institutions from the face of the earth, and annihilating the Jewish polity. A similar doom awaits the Pharisaical institutions of the Gentile Church, when the bloody revolutions of the Armageddon shall roll their desolating billows over the world, eliminating from the Church all her human inventions, and reducing her down to primitive simplicity and apostolic purity, unfurling the New Testament standard to all nations, and thus verifying the prophecy of Jesus, *“Every plant which My Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.”* We would better all take warning, and come up at once to the simplicity of Jesus and His apostles revealed in the New Testament. *“Let them alone; they are blind leaders of the blind; and if the blind may lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.”* We have no right to shove this back and leave it with the fallen Church, apostate membership, and godless clergy, of our Savior's time. It is written for us. The unspiritual leaders all around us, stickleristic for their human institutions, and ignorant of God's grand spiritual truth, are leading the multitudes to ruin. Jesus makes no mistake. Leaders and followers shall altogether fall into the ditch of irretrievable woe.

**Mark:** *“And when He came from the multitudes into the house, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable.”* As he was at Capernaum, His home after His expulsion from Nazareth — and, having no house of His own, it is believed that Peter's house was His home — it is more than likely that this in the house into which He entered. *“And He says to them, Are you truly yet without understanding? Do you not know that everything without, entering into the man, is not able to defile him? Because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach; and goes out into the excrement, purifying all edibles;”* *i.e.*, in the gospel dispensation we have large liberties on the question of eating and drinking, as these edibles and potables do not go into the heart, but into the alimentary

canal, portions being eliminated for the nutriment of the physical being, and the residue becoming soil, and perfectly purified by the chemical agencies brought into activity by earth, air, and water, so there is actually no ultimately surviving impurity. On this problem we are to walk in the light which God gives us, sedulously observing the laws of hygiene with reference to eating and drinking, as to time, quality, and quantity. We should all beware of side issues, calculated to absorb undue attention, and deflect us from the grand trunk-line of holiness to the Lord. In that department, fanaticism is prone to bivouac. *“And He said, That which cometh out of the man defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of the people, proceed evil reasonings, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, hypocrisy, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, folly. All these evils come out from within, and defile the man.”* O what an appalling and horrific den of rattlesnakes, here catalogued by the Infallible, constituting the black cohort of inbred sin, occupying the heart of poor, fallen humanity, till extirpated, eradicated, washed away by the cleansing blood, consumed and annihilated by the refining fire of the Holy Ghost, poured down from heaven in Pentecostal floods and sanctifying baptism!

“Evil reasonings” are most adroitly manipulated by demons, who will crowd around you and argue you down, answering all of your objections to something, painted fair as Eden flowers, but black as the pit.

“Adulteries and fornications,” so nearly synonymous that Jesus, in view of their awful power over their wretched victims, here almost indulges in tautology by way of emphasizing this vice, which is, probably more than any other, productive of human ruin in time and in eternity.

“Wickedness” is a generic term, in the plural number, comprehending every vice conceivable, whether included in this catalogue or not.

“Deceitfulness” lies deep down in the subterranean jungles of the fallen spirit, cropping out in all phases of guile, craft, stratagem, trickery, chicanery, and hypocrisy, so utterly irreconcilable with that unsophisticated simplicity, innocence, and guilelessness characteristic of angels and redeemed spirits, and yet, by many pseudo-preachers and saints, winked at and apologized for as shrewdness in trade and business sagacity.

“Murders.” Do not forget, *“He that hateth his brother is a murderer.”* *“Man looketh on the outside, but God looketh on the heart.”* The spirit is the essence in the Divine estimation, God seeing the anger, wrath, malice, envy, jealousy, revenge, which are the spirit of murder, deep down in your heart, and consequently condemning you, as if you had imbued your hands in the blood of your neighbor.

“Thefts.” If you cheat a person out of a dollar, you are as really a thief in the sight of God as if you had gone at midnight and stolen a horse. The reason why Churches are dead is because they are so frequently ruled by criminals, who grieve the Holy Spirit away, the man who can steal most by cheating promoted to the highest office.

“Covetousness.” This is the fatal and magnitudinous sin of the day. It sent an apostle to hell, and almost ruined Jacob. It is the crying sin of the Church today, alone disqualifying her to girdle the world with missionaries, and envelop the nations with sunbursts of light and glory.

“Impurity.” O how black and how impudent this monster, intruding into homes, withering and blighting the fairest domestic flowers, blasting the dearest social bliss, turning communities into battle-fields and homes into hells!

“Pride.” John Wesley pronounced pride the great mother-sin, generating whole groups of vices and follies, which prove rattlesnakes in the bosom, and develop perdition in the home, superinducing ruined health, dissipated fortunes, and alienated friends.

“Folly.” This is a very comprehensive term, as it is the opposite of wisdom, which, in the Bible, means the grace of God that saves soul and body. As a rule, pride and folly are more prevalent with women, sending millions of the fairer sex to be brutalized by demons in the bottomless pit; while the dark, vulgar vices — e. g., murder, theft, robbery, and blasphemy roll their pestilential billows over men and boys, precipitating them into hell by millions before their time.

“Blasphemy.” This vice, to all human appearances, is the most unapologizable, as Satan bates his hook when he goes fishing for the participants of all other sins, while in case of blasphemy he just drops down the naked hook, and, to the surprise of angels, disgust of good men, and the ridicule of devils, the poor dupe opens his mouth in blasphemy against the God who gives him breath, for which he couldn't give an excuse nor a reason to save his life. N.B. All repetitions of God's name are blasphemy, unless taken in prayer, supplication, adoration, praise, with due reverence and solemnity.

### THE SYROPHENICIAN WOMAN.

**Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30.** *“And rising up, He departed thence into the regions of Tyre and Sidon. And having come into a house, he wished no one to know it; and He was not able to be hidden. For a woman, hearing concerning Him, whose little daughter had an unclean spirit, coming out, fell down at His feet. And the woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by race, and asked Him that He may cast the demon out of her daughter. But Jesus said to her, Let the children first be fed; for it is not good to take the bread of the children and cast it to little dogs. But she responded and says to Him, Yea, Lord, for even the little dogs under the table do eat the children's crumbs. And He said to her, On account of this word, go; the demon has already gone out of thy daughter. And having come into her house, she found that the demon had gone out, and the daughter was lying on a bed;”* a confirmation of the demon's departure, as hitherto her vexation and misery had been such that she could not rest, day or night, but incessantly leaped, struggled, gnashed, foamed, and wallowed, a raving maniac. We have many such now, comparatively unknown, because secreted away in mad-houses and lunatic asylums; there being no such institutions in that day, every family having to care for their own maniacs, lunatics, and epileptics the best they could; consequently giving great notoriety to all such characters, generally denominated demoniacs, because all these abnormal conditions are in some way imputable to Satanic influence.

**Matthew 15:22:** *“My daughter is awfully demonized. And Jesus did not respond a word to her; and His disciples, coming, asked Him, saying, Send her away, because she crieth after us. And He responding, said, I am not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”* These lost sheep were the rank and the of the Jewish Church, both membership and clergy, who are actually lost in the fogs of dead formality and empty hypocrisy, to which they were vainly clinging for salvation, with the exception of a saint here and there. **Matthew 15:28:** *“Then Jesus, responding, said to her, O woman, great is thy faith; be it done unto thee as thou dost believe. And her daughter was healed from that hour.”*

Why did Jesus, with His apostles, suddenly leave Capernaum, and go away into Phenicia, a heathen land? It was not to preach the gospel, as the time of the Gentiles had not yet arrived. It was to take much needed rest for their weary bodies. The Twelve had labored so assiduously in their double-quick evangelistic peregrinations throughout all Israel, that when they all returned to Him at Capernaum a few days previously, seeing them worn, jaded, hoarse, foot-sore, and leg-weary, He advised them to go aside into an “uninhabited region and rest a little while.” When they undertook it, the people in the cities dotting the bank of the Galilean Sea, observing them going away in a ship, some following in boats, and many running overland around the sea, anticipate their disembarkation, so that by the time they have reached the mountain park off the coast to the northwest, between Bethsaida and Tiberias, they find many people on the spot, the crowd increasing, as they pour in from all directions, till, by the middle of the afternoon, when our Lord, moved with compassion for the hungry, miraculously feeds them on five loaves and two fishes, they find a swelling throng of ten thousand. Though, sending away His disciples, dismissing the multitude, and going under the darkness of the ensuing night into the mountain to pray; walking out on the stormy sea at midnight, to the relief of His tempest-tossed disciples, embarking with them and returning home to Capernaum; the multitudes, embarking on several ships at Tiberias, follow on across the sea, where they find Him, and give audience to that wonderful sermon on entire sanctification (John 6), which upset so many of His disciples that they “turn back, and walk no more with Him,” — now He resorts to a second attempt to secure that physical rest which He had already admonished them to take; as He knew that they had to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth and preach to all the Gentiles; hence the importance of hygienical prudence. Consequently they now leave the land of Israel, and go off among the heathens, to whom as yet they had no commission to preach. Though they propose to go into retirement and remain a little while in voluntary exile, in some way this woman finds them out. Syria and Phenicia join by a mere air-line, and consequently there was much miscegenation between them, this woman being a mixed-blood of these two celebrated ancient Shemitic races. Such is her importunity, crying after them incessantly, that the disciples get utterly worn out with her annoyance; so they implead their Master to send her away. Consequently He dismisses her, by a positive notification that He is not sent to the Gentiles, but to the children of Abraham. Such is her importunity that the Master is constrained to deal very plainly with her, informing her as to the impropriety of taking the children’s bread and casting it to contemptible little dogs. The woman unhesitatingly accepts the situation, oblivious of the opprobrium, responding, *“Yea, Lord, for even the little dogs do eat the crumbs which fall from their master’s table.”* At that moment, Jesus responds, *“Great is thy faith, O woman Let it be done unto thee as thou dost wish.”* From that moment the demon evacuated her daughter, so that she could lie down and rest sweetly on the bed like a tired child. O what a happy respite from raging mania! What is the solution of this wonderful problem? Why did Jesus call her “dog?” Of course, He knew all about her, even before He went

thither; and traveled all the way from Capernaum, not only to give the Twelve and His own weary body. the much-needed rest, but to meet this wonderful woman, whose heart, amid all the superstitions of idolatry, the Holy Ghost had prepared for the mighty work of demoniacal ejection, destined to bring a heavenly sunburst into her home. While we see here that this miracle was wrought commensurately with the faith of the mother, yet Mark, whose message Peter, an eye-witness, dictated, says nothing about her faith, but only indirectly emphasizes her humility, which is the granite pedestal on which alone the majestic column of faith can rise and penetrate the skies. Now you see that after Jesus has notified her that she is excluded by the impassable wall separating Jews and Gentiles, having discarded her under the opprobrious epithet of a contemptible little dog (as the Jews called all the Gentiles dogs, thus stigmatizing their impurity, as the dog is the unclean animal interdicted by the Mosaic law), when she unhesitatingly, without the slightest repugnance of the insult, accepts the situation, shouting, *“Yea, Lord, even the little dogs do eat the crumbs which fall from their master’s table:”* “All right; I accept the situation, and take the dog’s place under the table of my Lord and Master, infinitely delighted to be the Lord’s dog rather than the devil’s queen.” That sweeps every objection from the field, and leaves Jesus her humble Servant. Consequently He says, outright, “O woman, great is thy faith! Let it be done unto thee as thou dost wish;” *i.e.*, “If you are humble enough to take a dog’s place and be satisfied with dog-fare in the house of God, rather than a queenly crown in this wicked world, all right! You can have anything you want! All heaven is open to such humility! Come right along, and take it!” This kind of humility and faith leaps a million of miles above the partition wall for ages standing between Jews and Gentiles; while the pearly gates spontaneously fly wide open, and angelic platoons sweep out from the golden city, making the heavenly arches ring, “Welcome home, Syrophenician woman and demonized daughter!”

### DEAF AND DUMB HEALED.

**Matthew 15:29-31; Mark 7:31-37.** *“And again having gone out from the coast of Tyre and Sidon, He came to the Sea of Galilee, in the midst of the coasts of Decapolis;”* this word is from *deka*, “ten,” and *polis*, “city.” There is no city by the name of Decapolis, as the word literally means “ten cities,” and is the name of a region southeast of the Galilean Sea, in which there were ten prominent cities. I saw it in my recent visit. When our Savior left His retirement up in Phenicia, He journeyed southward, leaving the Sea of Galilee on His left, preaching along through Galilee, and entering Decapolis. *“They bring Him a dummy, stammering a little, and entreat Him that He may put His hand on him. And taking him from the crowd into privacy, He put His fingers into his ears, and spitting, touched his tongue, and looking up to heaven, groaned, and says to him, Ephphatha, which is, Be thou opened. And immediately his ears were opened, and the bridle of his tongue was loosed, and he continued to speak correctly. And He commanded them that they must tell no one; but the more He charged them, the more abundantly they proclaimed it abroad. And they are astonished exceedingly, saying, Truly, He hath done all things well; He both maketh the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak.”* **Matthew:** *“Many multitudes came to Him, having with them the lame, the blind, the dumb, the maimed, and many others, and threw them down at the feet of Jesus, and He healed them, so that the multitudes were astonished, seeing the dumb speaking, the maimed whole, the lame walking round, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel.”* When the news of His presence flies on the wings of the wind to the ten prominent cities representing that great east country, known in history as Perea, constituting a part of King Herod’s dominion, the multitudes come pouring from every point of the compass, bringing with them the lame, that their feet and limbs

might be restored; the maimed — *i.e.*, the people whose hands and arms were crippled, so they could not use them; the deaf, the dumb, the blind. O what sensations sweep the multitude, like cyclones, as they see the clubfooted, withered-limbed, reel-footed, broken-legged, all running foot-races, leaping, and jumping, their old crutches all stacked up in a pile, as I saw in Brother Simpson's Berachah Home in New York; the people who hadn't been able to use their hands and arms in a score of years, piling rocks, climbing trees, and performing a diversity of gymnastic, dumb-bell exercises, demonstrating to the multitude the perfect restoration of their hands and arms; the dumb singing the good old songs of Zion, shouting the praises of God, and testifying like apostles; and the deaf so delighted with the musical voices ringing in their ears on all sides! In vain does Jesus charge them not to publish His mighty works, lest they arouse the multitude to come and crown Him King, as they were about to do but a month ago, when he fed the hungry multitudes in Galilee. The news is too good to keep. These hundreds and thousands of beneficiaries are bound to tell His wonderful benefactions, miraculously healing them, to the unutterable surprise of all their friends, who now rejoice with them, making many homes vocal with the praises of Israel's God, who has sent among them a Mighty Prophet, having power over all physical ailments and spiritual derangements, everywhere healing diseases and ejecting demons.

This Hebrew word *ephphatha*, which means "be thou opened," has a beautiful application throughout the gracious economy. You will never hear the Word of the Lord to spiritual edification unless Jesus touches the ear of your soul and says, *Ephphatha*. It is equally true that you will never see the deep things of God, and the Bible, and the beauty of holiness in His kingdom, unless He touch your spiritual eye, and say, *Ephphatha*.

### FEEDING THE MULTITUDES AGAIN.

**Matthew 15, 32-38; Mark 8:1-9.** *"During these days [i.e., His sojourn in Decapolis], the multitude being very great, and not having what they may eat, Jesus, calling to Him His disciples, says to them, I sympathize with the multitude, because already three days transpire to Me, and they have nothing which they may eat. If I shall send them away to their home fasting, they will faint by the way; for some of them have come from afar. And His disciples responded to Him, Whence will any one be able to feed so many with bread, here, in a destitute place? And He asked them, How many loaves have you? And they said, Seven. And He proclaimed to the multitude to sit down upon the ground; and taking the seven loaves, giving thanks, He broke them, and gave them to His disciples, that they may distribute them; and they dispensed them to the multitude. They also had a few small fishes; blessing, He commanded that they should also distribute these." **Matthew 15:37:** *"And they all ate and were filled; and they took up the remainder of the fragments, seven baskets full. And those eating were four thousand men, besides women and children."* The Jews especially, as well as the Orientals generally, in that day and at the present, are in the habit of going, by whole families, on foot, taking a few donkeys or camels to carry burdens. We hear much said about feeding the five thousand and the four thousand, only giving the estimate at about one-half, as Matthew certifies that, in the one instance, there were *"five thousand men, besides women and children;"* and in the other, *"four thousand men, besides women and children;"* thus giving the estimate at ten thousand in one case, and eight thousand in the other, at the minimum; as in all probability the women and children far outnumbered the men, which is the case in our camp-meetings and other religious gatherings, and would be even more so in Israel, where, from time immemorial, it was*

customary for whole families to go to their great religious convocations, leaving the home without a keeper, as God had assured them that He would protect their domestic interests during their absence to attend the periodical national solemnities. On this occasion, from the seven loaves and a few small fishes, after feeding the eight thousand, they gathered up seven baskets full of fragments, evidently those great baskets, in which they now carry merchantable produce to market, holding several bushels; *i.e.*, the fragments amounting to about one hundred times the original quantity. So, if you would be a millionaire in the kingdom of God, start now, run with all of your might, and do your best to give away all you have, resting assured God will multiply you a hundred-fold. If you can only rake up a few loaves and fishes, and pitch a holiness camp-meeting, you will have plenty to feed the thronging multitudes, and fragments enough, if gathered up and utilized, to inaugurate at least ten new camps next year.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### SIGNS OF HIS COMING.

**Matthew 15:39.** *“Having sent away the multitudes, He entered into a ship, and came to the coasts of Magdala.”* **Mark 8:10:** *“Immediately embarking on a ship, with His disciples, He came into the parts of Dalmanutha.”* In these records, chronicling the peregrinations and defining the whereabouts of our Savior, Matthew and Mark precisely agree, both certifying His embarkation, crossing the sea, and His landing — the latter in Dalmanutha, which is the name of the country; and the former, in Magdala, which is the name of the city into which He came on landing. This is the nativity of Mary Magdalene, the latter cognomen being taken from her city, Magdala. Though evidently saved out of the slums, by the ejection of seven demons, she became one of the brightest saints and truest disciples on whom the sun ever looked down, being last at the cross, first at the sepulcher, and first to receive the full-orbed gospel commission, *“Run and preach the risen Christ.”* Among the mighty works of Jesus, only a small fraction do we have on record. We have no account of Mary Magdalene’s conversion; but a mere reference to the ejection of the seven demons, and her subsequent incessant concomitancy of our Lord to the end of His earthly ministry. I trow, she was converted during the present or some other visit of Jesus to her city, Magdala. I feel it pertinent thus to write about her, as she stood at the head of the female department of our Savior’s ministry.

**Matthew 16:1-4:** *“The Pharisees and Sadducees, coming to Him, tempting, asked Him to show them a sign from heaven. He, responding, said to them, It being evening, you say, It will be fair, for the sky is red; in the morning, It will be stormy today, for the sky is red, lowering. O ye hypocrites, you truly know how to discern the face of the sky, and are you not able to discern the signs of the times? A wicked and adulterous nation seeketh after a sign; and no sign shall be given unto it, except the sign of the prophet Jonah.”* He had fed the multitudes this second time over in Decapolis, not very far out in the country, off the southeast coast of the Galilean Sea; after which, coming with His disciples and embarking on a ship, He crosses the sea from southeast to northwest, landing at Magdala, which is on the coast between Bethsaida and Tiberias, but nearer the former. I was in it, and as I sailed all around the sea, landing at many places, I saw all of these localities, and this as well as other routes pursued by our Lord and on record for our edification.

*“Jesus now preaches to the multitudes assembled at Magdala, in the land of Dalmanutha.”* Here we have, by Matthew and Mark, the subtle attack made on Him by the Pharisees and Sadducees. These, and the Essenes, were the great denominations of the Jewish Church. The Pharisees were the orthodox, with plenty of good and true doctrine, but spiritually dead; the Sadducees were rich and worldly, skeptical in doctrine, regarded as the heterodox wing of the popular Church; while the Essenes, very poor and generally living in the desert, were the holiness people of that day. As in all ages and countries there has been an exterminating war between orthodoxy and heterodoxy, so it was in that age. The Pharisees and Sadducees, however, bury the hatchet, and unite their forces against Jesus, as we see on this occasion, and may see all over this country, if you will open your eyes. Let a holiness evangelist come to a wicked town, and pour out the lightning — truth of full salvation,

and the warring sects will all make peace, like Pilate and Herod, and unite their forces, to criticize, oppose, and if possible defeat the revival. Though Jesus had flooded the whole country with His stupendous miracles, always exercising His power for the relief of suffering humanity, doing good to soul or body; dissatisfied with these wonderful benefactions, which they could neither criticize nor call in question, they allege that these works are all confined to this world, and as Moses, the great leader, lawgiver, and mediator of Israel, whose disciples they boastingly claim to be, had fed them with manna from heaven, incessantly, forty years in the wilderness, therefore they demanded of Him a similar miracle, coming down from heaven. He now, responsively to their impudent and arrogant demands, called them hypocrites; not by way of insult, but because it behooved the Author of all truth to call everything by its right name; and if these preachers had enjoyed the true light of God, instead of antagonizing Jesus, they would have been His faithful and loving disciples. Hence, the reason why, with all their meteorological sagacity, which enabled them to prognosticate the weather, and still they could not discern the spiritual signs of the time, was demonstrative proof that they were not the true ministers of God as they claimed to be, as in that case, the light of the Holy Ghost on the prophecies would enable them so to decipher the signs of the times as to know that He was truly the Christ. That it was not the want of natural intelligence was abundantly evinced by their accurate discriminations of the weather. But it was simply the want of spiritual illumination, which the Holy Ghost sheds on the Word, clear and unmistakable to the spiritually-minded. Hence, the very fact that those preachers were utterly blind to the signs of the times was demonstrative proof that they were hypocrites. What were those signs of His coming? The seventy weeks of Daniel — *i.e.*, four hundred and ninety prophetic years — were just about expired. The scepter, which was not to depart from Judah till Shiloh (Christ) came, had actually departed about the time of His birth, as, on the death of Herod, Augustus Cæsar, the Roman emperor, instead of transmitting to Archelaus, took it away altogether, turning Judea into a Roman province, and sending Coponius to serve as proconsul. Besides, all the prophets had just poured out torrents of Messianic predictions, which were wonderfully fulfilled on all sides; John the Baptist, the last of all, and the greatest of the prophets, not only having preached Him with all His might, but actually introduced Him publicly to all the people, assuring them of His Messiahship. If these preachers had not been bigoted and blinded hypocrites, they would most assuredly have seen in Jesus the Christ of prophecy.

Let us beware lest we plunge into the same awful dilemma. The present age is flooded with prophetic signs of the Lord's near coming, as we are now in the last century of the demiurgic week; the six thousand years, according to some chronologies, already out; while all of them expire the period in the present century. The Gentile times, according to Daniel and John, are actually running out on us, the lunar chronology having them already expired, the Calendar due in twenty-four years, and the solar in seventy, all conspiring to illustrate the obvious fact that we are living in the time of the end of the Gentile age. Besides, the prophetic fulfillments among the Mohammedans, Romanists, heathens, and Protestants, and especially the Jews, literally girdle the globe with signs of His near coming; *e.g.*, the rapid gathering of the Jews to Palestine, the revival of the old cities in that country, the great and rapid apostasy of the Church in the home lands, and the wonderful and unprecedented progress of missions among all heathen nations, are all literal fulfillments of the latter-day prophecies, ominous of the Lord's near coming. And yet preachers by thousands see nothing of it, but comfort their carnal members by ridiculing the awful and momentous truths which God's awakened people are preaching in all the earth, arousing the spiritually-minded to wash, and dress, and be ready for their coming King. We should not be surprised at the blindness of the pulpit

and pew with reference to our Lord's second coming, when we see how literally this state of things was verified in His first advent; as intellectual and educational culture has no power to open spiritual eyes, and reveal the electric light of God's truth, so we may expect to find humanity uniform in all ages, and the same paradoxical blindness on Israel this day which, in the visitation of her Lord, disqualified her learned preachers to see Him.

### PHARISAIC LEAVEN.

**Matthew 16:4-12; Mark 8:13-21.** *“Leaving them, embarking again in a ship, He departed to the other side.”* This voyage was from Magdala, on the northwest coast, over to the region of Bethsaida Julias, on the northeast coast. *“And they forgot to take bread, and had but one loaf with them in the ship. And He admonished them, saying, See, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.”* **Matthew 16:6.** *“And Jesus said to them, See and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. And they were reasoning among themselves, saying, It is because, we did not take bread. Jesus, knowing, said to them, Why are ye reasoning among yourselves? O ye of little faith, because you did not take bread? Do you not yet understand? Do you not remember the five loaves and the five thousand, and how many baskets you took up? Nor the seven loaves and the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? How do you not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread, To beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Then they understood that He did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”* Leaven here and elsewhere, so frequently mentioned in the Bible, Old and New, is always true to its lexical meaning, *zurne*, “fermentation, corruption,” . . . making everything sour, having wonderful power of interpenetration, so that it literally permeates every atom of the mass into which it is introduced; in that respect pertinently illustrating the kingdom of heaven, as our Savior gives us a parable, setting forth the secret and incessant work of the Holy Ghost in the heart and the spread of the gospel throughout the whole world, using the simile of “leaven,” as He represents the omnipotence and independency of God by the “unjust judge, who neither feared God nor regarded man.” The leaven here, as you see, means the false, corrupt, dead religion of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the debauched politics of the Herodians, in harmony with its lexical meaning and constant Scriptural use, as Paul calls Christ the “Unleaven Bread of sincerity and truth” (1 Corinthians 5:7), exhorting us to become like Him, by getting rid of all leaven — *i.e.*, all corruption, and everything that would make our religion sour; as we are warned by Wesley against sour godliness, which is Satan's counterfeit sanctification. In this discourse, which our Savior preached to His disciples in the ship, we see that He warns them against the leaven of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians. O how pertinent this admonitory exhortation comes this day to all Christendom! Now what is the leaven of the Pharisees? You are well apprised that they, as Paul tells us, were the “straightest sect” *i.e.*, the orthodox denomination of the Jewish Church — so rigidly contending for every tenet of the Mosaic and prophetic doctrines, and so very punctilious in their pursuit of every ramification of not only Biblical, but even traditionary, teaching; conspicuously punctilious in keeping all of the commandments. Now this was not the leaven; for leaven means corruption, and this was right. Well what was their leaven? Our Savior defines it *didache*, from *didasko*, “to teach;” hence it means teaching. Well, what was their teaching? Why, they taught the people that salvation was obtained by keeping the commandments and conforming to the law.

Hence, you see, Jesus warns us against the dead orthodoxy of the Pharisees. You may be straight as a crowbar, and still as dead and cold as a crowbar. You may be as orthodox as Wesley, Knox, and Bunyan, and still dead as a hammer and cold as an iceberg, only waiting to warm in hell. What was the leaven of the Sadducees? They did not believe all the Scriptures, and were not orthodox like the Pharisees, yet, you see, Jesus puts them in the same black catalogue, having the same trouble; *i.e.*, they were spiritually dead, and neither of them had salvation. Now, what is the leaven of the Herodians? The Herodian family had long been the rulers of that country, through Roman patronage, the old king, who was on the throne of Judea when Jesus was born, having reigned thirty-eight years, and died while the infant Christ was in Egypt, being the last king of the Jews, according to prophecy; was an especial favorite of Cæsar's, who honored him with the title of king. Subsequently to his death, his sons had been kings and proconsuls of Judea, Galilee, Perea, Iturea, and Trachonitis, all being invested with their offices by the Roman emperor. Hence, the Herodians were a political party, in favor of Roman rule in that country. Though the Pharisees and Sadducees were in open hostility to all the sympathizers with Roman rule, and longing to regain their independence, yet in their malignant opposition to Jesus, they actually unite with the Herodians. Now how does this warning to beware of the Herodian leaven apply to us? The Roman Government was an awful military despotism, full of political intrigue and corruption. O how pertinent for the people of God at the present day to beware of the corrupt politics which inundate the country with intrigue, speculation, perjury, and an overflowing sea of vice and fraud, actually threatening the very stability of the Republic!

Now I think we understand our Savior's salutary admonition to His disciples, aboard the ship crossing the sea of Galilee. Shall not all of us, who are sailing over time's stormy sea on the good old Ship of Zion, heed this warning of our Prophet? Now what is it? Hear, and govern yourselves accordingly. Beware of dead orthodoxy, whether in Methodism, Baptistism, Presbyterianism, or Quakerism. Orthodoxy can never keep you out of hell. You must, with all your orthodoxy, have matter of fact, experimental, personal regeneration and sanctification; *i.e.*, spiritual life and holiness. Beware of dead heterodoxy, like the Sadducees; and beware of politics — do not talk them, but talk about Jesus. Do not read political papers, but read your Bible and holiness literature. Go quietly to the polls, and vote on the Lord's side of every question, knowing no politics, but "seeing Jesus only."

### HEALING THE BLIND MAN.

Mark 8:22-26. *"And He comes into Bethsaida [i.e., it is Bethsaida Julias, as He did not sail toward the other Bethsaida, the birthplace of Peter, Andrew, and Philip]; and they bring to Him a blind man, and entreat Him that He may touch him. Taking the blind man by the hand, He led him off out of the village; spitting in his eyes, putting His hands on him, He asked him if he sees anything. And looking up, he continued to say, I see men like trees walking around. Then again He placed His hands on his eyes, and made him look up; and he was restored, and saw all men distinctly. And He sent him to his house, saying, Go not into the village, nor tell any one."* I find the inspired writers call this Bethsaida a "village," and the other a city. There evidently is some unrevealed reason why Jesus led this blind man off out of the village in order to heal him, and admonished him not to go back into it. The latent idea of Divine retribution seems to linger in the narrative, our Lord doubtless having some unrevealed reason for not permitting them to witness His mighty work. The spittle used here, and the clay in Jerusalem in another case, were evidently to attract the attention of the blind men to

the afflicted organism, at that moment receiving the Omnific touch. Here we have an irrefutable argument in favor of the two distinct works of grace, wrought in the restoration of spiritual eyesight. The sinner walks in Satan's rayless midnight, like this man, without a solitary gleam of the day. In regeneration, the day dawns, and, to our infinite rapture, glows and broadens all around. O what a wonderful blessing is regeneration! Out of darkness into light which we never saw before! While the transition is unutterably glorious, causing us to leap for joy, yet it is a significant fact, amid this glorious world of life into which this new birth brings us, that cloudy streaks and segments hang about and belt around, and we are soon cognizant to the fact that we do not see all things distinctly. Fifty years ago I passed out of darkness into light; but nineteen years rolled away before I received distinct vision, and walked beneath a cloudless sky, with no shadows hanging round. During this interval, I saw men like trees walking. In my early boyhood becoming a preacher and a circuit rider, my presiding elder and bishop, the collegiate president, the doctor, the colonel, and even the captain, and especially the rich people, were great, tall trees, bending over me, ready to fall on me, and crush me into smithereens. When the Lord gloriously sanctified me, thirty-one years ago, I immediately saw that they were not trees at all, but only men, fallible like myself, my friends and sympathizers, ready to help me rather than brain me with the club of ridicule and criticism. O it is blessed and ineffably glorious to see all things distinctly! If you are not there, fly to Jesus at once, and receive the second touch.

### CÆSAREA-PHILIPPI.

**Matthew 16:13-16; Mark 8:27-29; Luke 9:18-20.** This is the northern terminus of our Savior's ministry, two days' journey on horseback from the Sea of Galilee up the Jordan Valley to the foot of Mt. Hermon, where a great spring is one of the principal sources of the Jordan. This city is just over the border of Galilee in Iturea, at the time of our Savior under the tetrarchy of Philip. **Matthew:** *"And Jesus having come into the parts of Cæsarea Philippi, asked His disciples, saying, Whom do the people say that I, the Son of man, am? And they said, Some say, John the Baptist; others, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or One of the prophets. He says to them, But whom do you say that I am? And Simon Peter, responding, said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus responding, said to him, Blessed art thou, Simon, the son of Jonah; because flesh and blood did not reveal it to thee, but My Father who is in the heavens."* About twenty-eight months have rolled away since our Lord entered upon His ministry, meanwhile He has flooded Galilee with His miracles; visited, in person or by the Twelve, nearly all the cities and villages in Israel. Despite all efforts, John the Baptist sending his disciples, with the avowed purpose of bringing Him out into an unequivocal proclamation of His Christhood, — He simply sent them back, to tell John about the mighty works which they had seen.

a. Doubtless our Lord felt that it was better for His works to proclaim His Christhood than that He should publicly avow it. Here was the trouble: the prophets had wrought miracles, especially Elijah and Elisha, even raising quite a number from the dead. Consequently some, and among them King Herod, thought He was John the Baptist risen from the dead. As Elijah had wrought such stupendous miracles, bringing fire from heaven and raising the dead, on the very ground traversed by Jesus, many thought that He was some one of the old prophets who had risen from the dead. During these twenty-eight months, while the whole country has been flooded with miracles so stupendous as at once to beggar all cavil, the people have had an opportunity, by the irresistible fact

of His mighty works, corroborated by His inimitable preaching, to settle down in the conclusion of His Christhood without an open proclamation.

*b.* The simple fact is that the Jews, having endured the galling yoke of a foreign despotism thirty-two years, and all settled in the prophetic revelation that the Christ is to be King of the Jews, are eager to crown Him the very moment that matter is settled, while the Roman soldiers were holding the gates of every city, ready to kill any man who would claim to be king, without having received the crown from the hands of Cæsar. This was the very accusation written over His bead on His cross when He was crucified) *“This is the King of the Jews.”* Hence the necessity of postponing the open avowal of His Messiahship to the latest practical date.

*c.* I trow, this was the reason for His going away off to Cæsarea-Philippi, out of the circle of His old audiences, and away from the multitude, who had crowded after Him, professing discipleship. When I visited Cæsarea-Philippi, I went up on one of the peaks of Mt. Hermon, hanging over the city, where there is a great military citadel, about two thousand feet long and three hundred wide, built of solid masonry, though in ruins, the walls mainly yet intact, which had been occupied during the ages of Roman, Saracen, Crusade, and French rule, within which there is an old temple, said to have been built by Herod the Great. Tradition says that in this temple, when Jesus preached to the people, He proclaimed His Christhood, propounding the above questions to Peter, the apostolic senior, and in this, as well as other cases, the representative and speaker of the Twelve.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### THE CHURCH.

**Matthew 16:18,19; Mark 8:30; Luke 9:21. Matthew:** *“And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of the heavens; and whatsoever thou mayest bind on earth, shall be bound in the heavens; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in the heavens. Then He commanded His disciples that they must tell no one that He is the Christ.”* It is really indispensable at this date of our Lord’s ministry, that His leading disciples, and especially the apostles, should have clear and positive information as to His Messiahship, only eight months of His earthly ministry still to transpire, with the exception of the forty days intervening between His resurrection and ascension. Now that He is gone away off, out of the circle of His ministry, into this temporary retirement in Sryia, He has an opportune privilege with His disciples alone. As to the multitudes, still let them solve the problem in contemplation of His mighty works, which were certainly calculated to settle the conviction of all the unprejudiced that He was truly the Christ. As He moves on in His ministry, the public proclamation of His Messiahship comes more and more to the front, the matter being in such a shape with the Jews and Romans that such an avowal would cost Him, or any one else, His life. We now reach a grand, salient epoch in our Savior’s ministry, when the gospel Church is conspicuously revealed to the apostles as destined to supersede the politico-ecclesiasticism of the former dispensation. N.B. Peter is a Greek word, and means “rock.” Jesus gave it to Simon, indicative of his firmness. The world, however, never saw the rock in Peter’s character till after the fires of Pentecost had burned out all the trash of depravity, revealing to all the world the solid rock, which caused him to live a hero and die a martyr. When our Savior says to Simon, “Thou art Peter” — *i.e.*, “Thou art rock,” He used the word *Petros*, which means a broken rock, such as we use in a building — immediately He says, “Upon this rock,” using the word *Petra*, which means the great unbroken strata, underlying the continents and oceans, and constituting the foundation of the earth. This word He applies to Himself. All Christian character, in this life, is more or less fragmentary, Jesus being the only Integer, whom we all imitate, and to whose perfection and glory we aspire, living in the hope of that coming glorification which shall make us like Him. Now what about the Church? Our Savior’s word is *Ekklesia*, from *Ek*, “out,” and *kaleo*, “to call.” Hence it means the “called out” — no hereditary hierarchy, nor ecclesiasticism, like Judaism; but the individual souls, in every nation, who hear the call of the Holy Ghost (and He calls all), and come out of the world, forsaking all, and identifying themselves with God for time and eternity. These, and only these, constitute the Church of God. Now He said, *“On this Rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her.”* We must go down through all the sand, mud, soapstone, and slate, till we strike the solid rock, and there build our superstructure, if we want it to stand. The calling out by the Holy Ghost is regeneration; and the building on Christ, sanctification. Hence the instability and vacillation peculiar to unsanctified Christians; while the genuine and thorough sanctification gives you a stability which will not cower in the presence of roaring lions and martyr fires. “Here,” He says, “I will build,” *i.e.*, edify you indefinitely. While the negative side of sanctification, going down to the deep foundation of the earth, and consciously reaching the solid

rock, is definite and complete. The erection of the superstructure — *i.e.*, the building of Christian character — will not only continue through this life, beautifully progressive, but through all eternity, towering into loftier heights, and broadening into grander dimensions, thus accumulating the Divine similitude and glory, the wonder of redeemed humanity, and the admiration of the unfallen intelligences of the celestial universe through the flight of eternal ages. Comparatively few have any correct conception as to what the Church is. They think the carnal, worldly people, constituting the congregations in the different denominations, are the Church; whereas none but the truly regenerated ever have been or can be members of God's Church; regeneration bringing you in, and sanctification establishing you, qualifying you for official responsibilities, such as the pastorate, the diaconate, eldership, evangelism, and teaching.

## HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION.

**Matthew 36:21-23; Mark 8:31-33; Luke 9:22. Matthew:** *“From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that it behooved Him to depart to Jerusalem, and to suffer many things from the elders, the chief priests, and scribes, and to be put to death, and to rise the third day. And Peter, taking Him to him, began to rebuke Him, saying, Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be to Thee. And turning, He said to Peter, Get behind Me, adversary; thou art My stumblingblock, because thou dost not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men.”* Our Lord is still up at Cæsarea-Philippi, with His disciples, teaching and revealing the deeper things of His kingdom, not only to their edification, but their astonishment. It was the misfortune of the Jews so to mix up the prophecies appertaining to the first and second coming of Christ, that they ran into much bewilderment for the want of the necessary discrimination and division of God's Word; while Isaiah and others had vividly revealed His humiliation, as a *“Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;”* as a *“Root out of dry ground, without form or comeliness, and none desiring Him;”* *“Led as a lamb to the slaughter, as a sheep dumb before His shearers, opened not His mouth;”* *“In His humiliation, His judgment was taken away”* — *i.e.*, He had no fair trial, but was mobbed, contrary to both Jewish and Roman law. These gloomy prophecies, descriptive of His humiliation in His first advent, were by no means enjoyable themes with the Jews, who leaned the more to those grand and glorious cognomens portraying Him as *“the Prince of peace,”* *“the government on His shoulders;”* and Daniel 7:14, not only describing Him as a triumphant and glorious King, but certifying positively that *“to His kingdom there shall be no end, but He shall reign King of kings and Lord of lords forever.”* Now, for the first time, He comes out and positively reveals to His disciples His coming arrest, condemnation, crucifixion, and resurrection. Peter, robust, stout, and naturally brave as a lion, immediately conceiving the view that His enemies are going to combine against Him, take Him, and kill Him, leaps to the conclusion, That is a game at which two can play. We will fight in His defense till we die, and the thousands and myriads who have been blessed with bodily healing, demoniacal ejections, and the multitudes endeared to Him on account of their friends thus wonderfully saved, soul and body, will rally and help us, and will make it hot for them. Consequently, both Peter takes Him by the arm, or His vesture, and pulls Him up to Him; looking Him in the face, says, “They can't do that; we will be on hand, rally Your multitude of friends, and protect You to the last moment.” “Satan,” in the E.V., is too strong, the word not appearing here as a proper name, when it is applied to the devil, but simply in its original meaning, “adversary” or “opposer,” as Peter was innocently antagonizing the Divine economy relative to His death and resurrection, which he did not understand; and Jesus said, “Thou art My stumbling-block;” *i.e.*, “You are throwing yourself in the

way of the very work I came to do” — *i.e.*, to suffer, die, and redeem the world from sin, death, and hell. “Thou dost not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men;” *i.e.*, “You are not thinking on the Divine side of this great transaction, you have not yet received light and entered into it understandingly, but you are considering My Messiahship from a human standpoint.”

## DISCIPLESHIP.

**Matthew 16:24-26; Mark 8:34-37; Luke 9:23-25. Mark:** “*Calling to Him the multitude, along with His disciples, He said to them, Whosoever wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me.*” We have no mention of the multitude, since He has been at Cæsarea-Philippi, till now, when it is said that Jesus called them to Him, that they might hear, along with His disciples. Hitherto He has been expounding the straight, practical facts relative to Himself, expository of His Christhood and atonement, which it is very important for His disciples to know with certainty at this late date of His ministry. Now that He proposes to elucidate the conditions of discipleship, the whole multitude are concerned; therefore we see that, desisting from these interviews with His disciples, He invites the multitude to enjoy His preaching. The conditions of discipleship are plain, positive, explicit, and unmistakable, beginning with total and unequivocal self-abnegation, and culminating in crucifixion. The sinner’s way crosses, antagonizes, and disharmonizes with God’s way. All this must be primarily and eternally abandoned. This is the great work of repentance, fundamental in salvation. Then he must follow this total self-abnegation by taking up his cross, and walking in the track of Jesus; this is justifying faith, which invariably involves the whole problem of practical Christianity, loving obedience to every commandment, and faithful discharge of every duty, however arduous and repellent to the flesh. N.B. The first hemisphere of this great transaction is total, unequivocal, and eternal self-abnegation, taking up the cross and following Jesus, through tempest and sunshine, prosperity and adversity, whether flowers bloom or fagots flame, birds sing or lions roar; *i.e.*, forsaking all sin we do our whole duty, let it be ever so repellent to the flesh. Now, remember, there is another distinct hemisphere fitting on to the preceding, and constituting the beautiful celestial sphere of Christian discipleship Jesus carried His cross to die on it. Though He broke down on the way, a stout African disciple relieved Him. So if you break down under the cross of heavy and intolerable duty — e. g., family prayer, public prayer, testimony, appeal, house-to-house visiting, slum work, street preaching — God will send an angel to carry the cross for you, whether incarnate or excarnate.

Discipleship means following Jesus. The utility of His cross was to die on it. So, remember, you are not only to suffer while bearing the cross, but actually you are to be crucified on it, thus putting an end to all suffering, and radically reversing the former environments, putting you upon the cross; so that you no longer bear the cross, but the cross bears you. There is a woeful misapprehension appertaining to Christian discipleship, even among holiness people. It is generally taken for granted that the faithful cross-bearer is sanctified. This conclusion is utterly out of harmony with our Savior’s exposition of discipleship. The masses of Church members simply refuse to bear the cross, thereby forfeiting all claims to discipleship, and putting themselves on a par with open sinners. A true conversion makes you a *bona fide* cross-bearer; while sanctification, crucifying Adam the First, and thus eliminating all repellency to Christian duty, puts you on top of the cross, so that henceforth it carries you; *i.e.*, every duty to God which is heavy and irksome to the unsanctified, undergoes a mysterious and inexplicable metamorphosis, so that, instead of being repellent and heavy, it is

magnetic, charming, and delightful; so that, instead of chilling your enthusiasm and retarding your progress, it thrills you with new inspiration, giving you a fresh impetus on your heavenly way. To this there is no exception, even bloody martyrdom is disrobed of his terrors; so the pilgrim goes shouting to the burning stake. Hence you see that all who refuse to bear the cross of Christ are sinners. Those who bear it faithfully are justified; while the crucifixion which we receive on the cross, sanctifying us wholly, gives us the complete victory over all crosses, so that we carry them no more, but they carry us, every cross having eagle wings, mounting skywardly, and soaring away to glory, while we ride them triumphantly, with song and shouts of victory, till, welcomed by angelic millions, we sweep through the gates of glory.

**Mark 8:35:** *“For whosoever may wish to save his soul, shall lose it; and whosoever may lose his soul, for My sake and that of the gospel, he shall save it. For what shall it profit a man if he may gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”* In this paragraph our Savior gives *psyche*, the regular and constant word for soul, four times. The E.V. translates it “life” in two instances, “and “soul” in two more. I must confess, I see no reason for this change. If our Savior had meant “life” in verse thirty-five, He certainly would have said *zoe*.

The very fact that He says *psyche* all the time, is sufficient reason why we should do likewise. Methinks the translators simply failed to apprehend the deep spiritual meaning of our Lord in this beautiful passage, given literally by Mark and Luke. James 1:4, and 4:8, speaking of the “double-minded man,” uses this same word, *dipsychos* — *i.e.*, double-souled — applying it to the unsanctified Christian; setting forth the fact that the unregenerate have one evil soul, the sanctified one good soul, and the unsanctified Christian the double soul; *i.e.*, the good soul created by the Holy Ghost in regeneration, and the bad soul inherited from Adam the First, subjugated in conversion, and kept subordinated by grace, but still surviving, and an antagonistical element in the deep interior of the heart, causing much hindrance to duty and many a defeat in spiritual conflict, and a perpetual impediment to our efficiency for God, till eradicated and removed in the second work of grace, in which case you are no longer “double-minded,” unstable in all your ways, but free as a bird of Paradise, and happy as a lark, soaring into the sky; unincumbered by a solitary impediment, you fight, conquer, sing, and shout your way to heaven. You see from our Savior’s deliverances, that all religion is self-denial. The sinner refuses to deny himself of carnal pleasures, and sells out his soul to the devil for a “mess of pottage.” The unsanctified Christian finds self-denial hard and repellent to the flesh. There is where he flickers, lets go his hold on Jesus, and goes down to hell; while a sanctified man finds all self-denial no longer hard, but easy, and even delightful, so that he enjoys it, and runs after it, finding that every self-denial gives him an elastic bound for glory.

Here our Savior simply assures us that all who save their souls, shall lose them; and those who lose their souls for His sake, shall find them. We come into the world with a bad soul, which we must not only antagonize, but get rid of it altogether, coming to Jesus for a new soul, created in His own image and likeness. Hence the unpopularity of the true religion in all ages, and the paucity of its votaries. It is because the heavenly road is beset with crosses, which Adam the First can not pass, because they were put there to crucify him. Consequently, the carnal clergy, with the devil to help them, have in all ages led the people some other way. Satan has laid earth and hell under contribution, the last six thousand years, to render the way of death pleasant and charming to travelers. He has cut down the mountains, filled up the valleys, macadamized the road, paved it with

gold, strewn it with flowers, and enchanted it with the most charming music, thus intermitting neither labor nor expenditure to make the road satisfactory to all, Church members and outsiders. No theology, Churchism, nor priestcraft can ever change the law of discipleship here propounded by the Prince of glory. If you would be a disciple, you must actually lose that evil soul you have had all your life, and take chances to get another; *i.e.*, the man of sin must consent to lie down and die, taking the risk about living again.

The people of this world hold to the maxim, “A bird in the hand is worth more than two in the bush.” Consequently they hold on to the soul which they have had since their earliest recollection, willing to take all the religion which they can have compatibly with that soul; *i.e.*, they will join the Church, take water baptism, weekly sacraments, work faithfully in the Church machinery, do some very nice parrot talk in the social meetings, pay their dues, attend church, receive official honors, represent the Church in the Conferences, and, with a collegiate education, actually preach the gospel — in their way. But to have heavy hands laid on them, nailing them to the cross, to bleed and die like Jesus, taking chances on the resurrection life, is utterly out of the question, and to be rejected contemptuously as the vain hallucination of the holiness cranks, who ought to be run out of the country. Good Lord, shine through us, and enable us to take Thy plain and simple Word, and be Thy true disciples!

## THE SECOND COMING.

**Matthew 16:27,28.** *“For the Son of man is about to come in the glory of His Father, with His angels, and will then give to each one according to his work. Truly, I say unto you, There are certain ones of those standing here who may not taste of death, until they may see the Son of man coming in His kingdom.”* **Mark 8:38, & 9:1:** *“For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and wicked generation, truly, the Son of man shall be ashamed of him, when He may come in the glory of His Father, with His holy angels. And He said to them, Truly, I say unto you, That there are certain ones of those standing here who may not taste of death until they may see the kingdom of God having come in power.”* **Luke 9:26,27:** *“For whosoever may be ashamed of Me and My words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He shall come in His glory, and that of the Father, and that of the holy angels. And, truly, I say unto you, There are certain ones of those standing here who may not taste of death until they may see the kingdom of God.”* Very pertinently does our Savior here follow that terribly rigid and close sermon on discipleship, by one of the grandest of all possible inspirations, to settle the problem of discipleship, at any and every conceivable cost, making sure of heaven if we lose everything else, which is certainly the normal verdict of sound intelligence.

*a.* As this passage, recorded by Mark and Luke, reads in E.V., it has been the puzzle of millions. I know not why they give us the future tense, indicative mode, when the Greek has the present subjunctive. Within about one week from the time of this utterance, Peter, James, and John actually witnessed a prelude of His second coming on the Mount of Transfiguration.

“For not having followed cunningly devised fables, having made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but having been eye-witnesses of His

majesty. . . . And we heard this voice borne from heaven, being along with Him in the holy mount.” (2 Peter 1:16-18.)

Here you see, Peter certifies that they witnessed His power and coming, while they were with Him in the holy mount. Now what was that holy mount? Why the Mount of Transfiguration, which they actually visited in a few days from that time, it being the preliminary coming of the Lord in His glory; *i.e.*, an actual adumbration of His second coming. As Peter, James, and John were all present in His audience, and actually witnessed this prelude of His second and glorious coming, we, on the Mount of Transfiguration, have a preliminary fulfillment of this prophecy.

*b.* Within forty years of that date, while many of those people were still living, the Lord actually came, in His awful retributive judgments on the unbelieving Jews, executing righteous retribution for the rejection of His Son, destroying Jerusalem, and desolating the land with the awful scourge of the Roman armies, putting an end to the Jewish State and nationality, and annihilating the Jewish polity. Some able critics here find the fulfillment of this prophecy.

*c.* On the day of Pentecost the kingdom did certainly, as Mark says, “come in power,” having been on earth during the ministry of our Savior; but in the fiery baptisms and rushing tempest on the day of Pentecost it certainly did come in the signal manifestation of unprecedented power.

*d.* I see no reason why we may not take the whole passage as it is, and apply it to the existing generation, as it simply affirms a gracious possibility; *i.e.*, there are some of those who are standing here, who may not taste of death until they may see the Son of man coming in His kingdom. Hence you see it simply affirms a gracious possibility on the part of that generation to see the Son of man coming in His glory, with the glory of the Father and the holy angels, before they pass away.

You must remember that man has always been a failure. He failed in Eden; failed in antediluvian times; failed after the flood, landing in Egyptian slavery; failed in Judaism, rejecting and murdering their own Savior; and, according to the prophecies, will fail in the Gentile age, bringing on the tribulation, and forfeiting the millennium. Is not this very discouraging? O no! While man is a failure under all circumstances, God is an invariable and glorious success. Hence, all of these human failures should only inspire us to give up humanity, and fly to God, sinking away, lost in Him, to spend an eternity of bliss. The generation contemporary with Jesus was no exception. There was a gracious possibility for that generation to have preached the gospel to every nation, and so evangelize the world as to meet the condition of our Lord’s return (Matthew 24:14); as in that case He would have returned in His glory before the death of that generation. Here our Savior assures us, *“Whosoever may be ashamed of Me and My words, in this wicked and adulterous world, the Son of man shall be ashamed of him, when He may come in the glory of His Father, with His holy angels.”* Remember, this is the peroration of that awful sermon on discipleship, which nowadays is dodged, perverted, and misconstrued by clergy and laity, laying under contribution all their wits, to devise an easy way to heaven, washing, dressing, and educating old Adam, and taking him along with them.

N.B. In a similar manner we find so many tender footed on the coming of the Lord, which our Savior here gives in immediate connection with His exposition of discipleship. The true, blood-washed, fire-baptized, and Spirit-filled disciple is not troubled when we preach the coming of the

Lord, but elated with heaven-born enthusiasm, causing him to leap, shout, and run to meet Him. Jesus here calls the people who are ashamed of Him and His words, “a wicked and adulterous generation.” Far from shame or embarrassment at the coming of the Lord, we should be watching and waiting, and ready with shouts, to meet Him. *“And now, little children, abide in Him, in order that if He may appear, we may have boldness, and not shrink with embarrassment from Him at His coming.”* E.V. says we *“may not be ashamed.”* This is the same word which our Lord uses with reference to His words and His presence when He comes in His glory. Hence we should all be so saved and sanctified as to put us in perfect harmony with the words of Jesus; so we do not want to turn and twist them about, nor evade their force in any way, but want them to remain just as Jesus gave them. And as to Himself, *“He is the fairest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely.”* Since His ascension, the widowed Church has mourned the absence of her Heavenly Spouse, and longed for His return, even now watching and waiting, ready to run to meet Him with shouts of triumph. So be sure that you are not ashamed nor embarrassed, when you read His Word, and contemplate His personal coming in a cloud this day.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### TRANSFIGURATION.

**Matthew 17:1-13; Mark 9:2-13; Luke 9:28-36. Mark:** *“And after six days, Jesus takes Peter, James, and John, and carries them up into an exceedingly high mountain, privately, alone; and He was transfigured before them, and His garments became shining, exceedingly white as snow, such as no fuller on earth is able to whiten. And there appeared unto them Elijah, with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus.”* **Luke 9:30:** *“Behold, two men were talking with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, who, being seen in glory, were speaking of His departure, which He was about to fulfill in Jerusalem. And Peter, and those who were along with Him, had been burdened with sleep. But keeping awake through the night, they saw His glory, and the two men who were standing with Him.”* The transfiguration is the most unearthly scene mortal eyes were ever permitted to behold. Here, again, we see the signal honor conferred by our Lord on Peter, James, and John, who certainly did enjoy a deeper insight into Divine things than the other nine.

a. What was the character of that wonderful scene? It was a prelibation of heaven, come down to earth — *i.e.*, a peep into the glory world; Jesus, for the time, putting on His glory in the presence of Peter, James, and John, that these notable apostles might be prepared to edify us all as eye-witnesses. Their descriptions are very graphic; Mark, Peter’s amanuensis, certifying that His raiment was whiter than any fuller on earth could possibly make it, His countenance and entire person shining with a brightness infinitely eclipsing the noonday sun in his meridian splendor. The scene transpired in the night, perhaps after several hours spent in prayer, in which their weary bodies became sleepy; the transcendent glory, when bursting on them, utterly expelling all drowsiness, so they had no trouble to keep wide awake all the balance of the night, so thrilled with the unearthly glory that they felt like remaining there forever; hence suggested “to build tabernacles.” Amid the scene, Moses and Elijah both appear. How did the apostles know them? Either by their statues or Divine intuition, and more probably the latter. They appear in their glory, as both of their bodies had been long ago glorified. When Elijah mounted the fiery chariot, he lost all mortality, materiality, and every ounce of his weight, still retaining his identity, which had passed into celestial glory. If Moses was not translated from Pisgah’s pinnacle, he was raised from the dead, thus, in either case, escaping from Satan’s material prison, in consequence of which he gave the archangel Michael an awful battle (Jude 9), only to encounter signal defeat, while Moses, with the archangel, sweeps up the shining way, and joins the enraptured host in the city of God. We have in the glorified manifestation of Moses and Elijah a clear confirmation of the glorious destination of all God’s saints; those living on the earth at the Lord’s appearing being translated into the glorified state suddenly (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18), like Elijah, when he mounted the chariot of fire; and all the buried saints resurrected, like Moses, when Michael came after him, and took him to heaven; thus Moses and Elijah, representing all the saints of all ages, and thus appearing in their glory, are an incontestable earnest of the glorification awaiting all the saints, some through transition, and others through the resurrection. Moses and Elijah, representing the two great departments of the old dispensation — *i.e.*, the Law and the Prophets, the former being the lawgiver, and the latter, the greatest of the prophets; hence Moses and

Elijah here appear in glory, not only confirming the glorification of all the saints, some by translation and others by the resurrection, but as the representatives of the Law and the Prophets, they here appear in the presence of Jesus, to whom they resign their delegated and expiring power, thus recognizing the supercession of the Law and the Prophets by the Kingdom of Heaven. They depart away before the scene is over, signifying the retreat of the old dispensation and the incoming of the new. **Luke 9:33:** *“And it came to pass, while they were departing from Him [i.e., Moses and Elijah], Peter said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three tabernacles, one for Thee, one for Moses, and one for Elijah; not knowing what he says.”* No wonder Peter felt like staying there forever, as he had really witnessed a prelude of heavenly glory, practically spending those wonderful hours in heaven. Yet he did not understand what he was talking about, as Moses and Elijah had already finished their errand, and were moving back to heaven. Jesus must soon go, and Peter, James, and John, with the other nine, must go to the ends of the earth, preaching the gospel; hence, permanently abiding there was utterly out of the question. Amid Pentecostal meetings, especially holiness camps, we frequently are permitted to tarry a little while on the Mount of Transfiguration, reluctant to come down; yet we must come down, and finish our work, fighting sin and Satan in the dark valleys of a lost world. *“And He speaking these things, and there was a cloud, and it overshadowed them; and they were afraid while they were entering into the cloud. And there was a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is My Beloved Son: hear ye Him; and while the voice was sounding, Jesus was found alone, and they kept silent, and told no one, in those days, any of those things which they had seen.”*

b. A world of investigation and controversy has labored through all bygone ages to locate the Mount of Transfiguration. When I was on Mount Tabor, which is a long way from Cæsarea-Philippi, far out southwest, near Nazareth and the Mediterranean Sea, I saw three magnificent stone temples, somewhat in ruins, the Latin monk, in charge of the convent constantly occupied on that summit, pointing them out to me as these three tabernacles which Peter suggested to build — one for Jesus, one for Moses, and another for Elijah. The convent on that mountain perpetuates the memory of the transfiguration. Origen, who was born A.D. 185 — a great preacher and a martyr in his day; his father being a preacher and a martyr; also his grandfather; the latter, of course, having seen the apostles, and having been converted through their ministry — certified, and has left it in his writings, that Tabor was the Mount of Transfiguration. Saint Jerome, who spent thirty years in Palestine in the fourth century, and other Christian fathers, add their testimony, so that, through the ages past, Tabor has been visited by thousands of Christian pilgrims, believing, without a doubt, that while walking over its summit and worshipping in its three tabernacles, they were on the veritable spot of this wonderful heavenly scene, where our Lord brought a prelude of celestial glory down, and permitted mortal eyes to contemplate the unearthly splendors of the bright upper world. It seems almost a pity to mar the sanctity and glory of this illustrious mountain by even insinuating that the adoring myriads who have lived and died, believing without a doubt that they had actually trodden upon that hallowed spot, and lingered in the tabernacles built responsive to Peter’s suggestion, and with their mortal feet trodden the summit where Jesus, Moses, and Elijah once stood, invested with celestial glory. But facts are stubborn things, and I must say that they are unfavorable to the identity of Tabor with the Mount of Transfiguration.

c. Others have labored assiduously to identify it with the Mount of Beatitudes, on which our Lord’s celebrated sermon was delivered, lying a few miles back from Capernaum, and

overshadowing it, as this mountain is quite lofty; and Capernaum is the first place mentioned after the transfiguration, and the events which transpired at the base of the mountain; presuming that the six days mentioned as transpiring before the transfiguration were, in all probability, spent traveling, giving them ample time to come from Cæsarea-Philippi down to the Sea of Galilee.

d. As to the six days immediately preceding the transfiguration, in which we have not an intimation, much less a record, of anything said or done, it seems quite plausible that they have a symbolic signification, typifying the days of Jehovah.

“Let not this escape your memories, beloved, that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” (2 Peter 3:8.)

The adverb “as” is *hos*, and means “about,” vindicating the indefiniteness of the period, simply a long time, about a thousand years, so that we must not emphasize human chronology too rigidly, as God is His own Timekeeper.

“For, not following cunningly devised fables, have we made known to you the power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, but being made eyewitnesses of His majesty. For receiving from God the Father the honor and glory of such a voice, having been borne to Him from the excellent glory, This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. We heard this voice, borne from heaven, being with Him in the holy mount.” (1 Peter 1:16-18.)

You see from this Scripture that Peter refers to it as a preliminary coming of the Lord, and a confirmation of His sure and certain second and glorious advent, which was thus adumbrated while on this mount, which was made holy by the heavenly scene which there transpired. Now these six days preceding the transfiguration here mentioned, symbolize the six Divine days, aggregating six thousand years, preceding the glorious coming of the Lord.

e. *“And having come out from thence, they traveled through Galilee.” (Mark 9:30.)* This statement certainly sweeps away the theories in favor of Tabor, Beatitudes, and all other places, except that region in which they have spent several days in addition to the six here mentioned. Hence the facts certainly favor the conclusion that it was one of the mountains in the vicinity of Cæsarea-Philippi. Strenuous efforts have been made to locate the transfiguration on the highest peak of Hermon. This is hardly probable, as it is about eighty miles from there to the loftiest summit, and directly away from Galilee, due north, whereas we have not an intimation that Jesus ever traveled north of Cæsarea-Philippi in His earthly ministry. If He had gone so far, we certainly would have some specification of it. Hermon is the highest peak of the great Anti-Lebanon Range, which runs from Northern Syria south to the vicinity of the Galilean Sea, Cæsarea-Philippi being in the Jordan Valley, down at the foot of this great range, and many lofty summits round about, well suited to verify the description here given of this celebrated holy mountain. I climbed a lofty mountain, belonging to the Hermon Range, overshadowing Cæsarea-Philippi, visiting the ruins of a large temple built by Herod the Great, where tradition says Jesus preached. I see no reason why that mountain, or some other one overhanging the Jordan Valley, through which they traveled back to Capernaum, might not have been the veritable Mount of Transfiguration

f. Amid the multiplicity of claimants, through ages of superstition, we must conclude that no one knows that veritable mountain. There are so many summits about Cæarea-Philippi, and rising along the Anti-Lebanon Range, hanging over the Jordan Valley, any one of which would satisfy the description, that we must leave the matter undecided, simply concluding that the preponderant argument favors some one of those mountains in the vicinity of Cæsarea-Philippi, which are convenient to their journey down the Jordan, bearing in mind the affirmation (**Mark 9:30**), *“Having come out from thence, they traveled through Galilee.”* Now bear in mind, Galilee runs up almost to Cæsarea-Philippi, favoring the conclusion that the Mount of Transfiguration must have been in that vicinity. Some have suggested that, as it took place in the night, they would have been uncomfortably cold on the summit of Hermon, ten thousand feet high. While I do not believe they went to that summit, as it was too far north, the question of cold is relieved with reference to that mountain, or any other, by the fact that it was midsummer. As Capernaum is the first place mentioned, where they halted in their journey through Galilee, the facts certainly corroborate the conclusion that the mountain was up there near Cæsarea-Philippi, as they would travel through Galilee all the way to Capernaum. As our Lord knew what floods of superstition and actual idolatry would accumulate on that memorable spot — which has actually taken place on Tabor — I do not wonder that He dropped the veil over it, withholding its name. Peter, writing about it, gives us no clew to its identity, simply calling it the “holy mountain.” Consequently its identity is all at sea, and must so remain, till Peter, James, and John in glory return.

**Matthew 17:9.** *“And they, coming down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell no one the vision until the Son of man may be risen from the dead. His disciples asked Him, saying, Why then do the scribes say that it behooves Elijah first to come? And Jesus, responding, said to them, Indeed, Elijah cometh first, and will restore all things.”* As Elijah here means John the Baptist, how did he restore, verify, complete, all things? John was the greatest of the prophets, and actually wound up the prophetic dispensation, which focalized in Christ, by not only preaching Him, but pointing Him out, and publicly introducing Him to the world. *“But I say unto you, That Elijah has already come, and they did not know him, but did unto him all things which they wished; the Son of man is thus about to suffer by them. Then His disciples understood that He spoke to them concerning John the Baptist.”* This transfiguration, taking place about eight months before the crucifixion, was the solemn installation of our Lord into that momentous series of events destined to culminate in His arrest, arraignment, condemnation, execution, resurrection, and ascension, thus unveiling to mortal eyes the heavenly side of His Messiahship. O that you and I may so sink away into God, and lose sight of this world, yea, climb so high up the Mount of Transfiguration, that we shall reach an experience in which we have a constant panorama of these thrilling realities, revelatory of the heavenly state, which is so nigh, and only separated by an intervening veil, liable to drop at any moment, thus revealing to us the unutterable glories of celestial worlds, of which, in the transfiguration, we have a vivid adumbration!

### DEMONIACAL EJECTMENT.

**Matthew 17:14-21; Mark 9:14-29; Luke 9:37-43.** **Mark:** *“And having come to His disciples, He saw a great crowd round them, and the scribes arguing with them.”* He and the three disciples had been absent from the nine and the multitude during that memorable night of the transfiguration. In the morning, when they come down from the mount, they find an oral debate going on between

the nine apostles and the scribes; *i.e.*, the pastors of the Churches, who had gathered with the multitude. The subject of the debate was the failure of the nine to cast out an awfully stubborn and formidable deaf and dumb demon, which had occupied an only son from his infancy. *“And immediately all the multitude, seeing Him, became aroused, and running to Him, seized Him;”* *i.e.*, gathered about Him, and took Him into a special diagnosis. *“He asked the scribes, Why are you disputing with them?”* The salient point in the debate was, that as the nine had failed in all their efforts to cast out the demon, at the same time alleging that if their Master were there, He could cast him out; the scribes stoutly disputed their word, and argued with them that if He were there, He would fail just as they had done. *“And one of the multitude, responding, said, Teacher, I brought my son to Thee, having a dumb spirit, and when he may seize him, he convulses him; he froths, gnashes his teeth, and pines away.”* **Matthew** says: *“He is a lunatic, and suffers exceedingly, and frequently he falls in the fire, and often in the water.”* **Luke:** *“And, behold, the spirit takes him, and immediately he cries out, and he convulses him with foam, and scarcely departs from him, contorting him.”*

We see from these descriptions that the child was an epileptic, of the very worst form, his convulsions being so frequent and violent as not only to take away the faculty of hearing and speech, but to render him at times insane, raving like a maniac. When these awful convulsions came on him, he screamed and roared at the very top of his voice, falling, rolling, in indescribable agony, gnashing his teeth, foaming at the mouth, and finally pining away, gasping for breath, and apparently ceasing to breathe, looking pale as a corpse, perspiration evanescing, becoming dry, ashy, cold, and to all appearances lifeless. *“And I said to Thy disciples that they may cast him out, and they were not able. Responding, He says to them, O faithless generation, how long shall I bear with you?”* We see here how grievous their unbelief and consequent failure were to Jesus. Lord, save us from grieving Thee in a similar manner! *“Bring him hither to Me; and seeing Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him; and falling on the ground, he continued to wallow, foaming.”* Here you see, the demon knew Jesus, having long ago been a pure spirit in the celestial universe, gazing upon the glory of the Son, before he had the misfortune to deflect with the great apostasy, following in the track of fallen Lucifer. See how awfully stubborn and malignant he is! Seeing Jesus, and knowing that his time is short, he seizes the moment left him to execute his wrath on his poor victim, seizing him instantly, convulsing him with horrific spasms, so that, falling on the ground, he wallows, foaming as if he were dying. *“And He asked his father, How much time there is since this happened to him? And he said, From his infancy; and frequently he throws him into the fire, and into the water, that he may destroy him; but if You are able to do anything, help us, being moved with compassion in our behalf. And Jesus said to him, If you are able to believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And immediately the father of the little child, crying out with tears, continued to say, Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.”* Here we see a glorious illustration of the omnipotence of faith.

O what an inspiration this wonderful Scripture flashes out on a desponding Church and a sinking world!

Millions on all sides are sweeping into hopeless ruin; whereas all that is needed that we may be saved to the uttermost, and our friends and loved ones rescued from Satan to go to heaven with us, is faith in Jesus. It costs nothing but your sins and your doubts, which were Satan's millstones around your neck, dragging you to perdition. Your family are unsaved, your loved ones hanging over

hell by the brittle thread of life. Soon it will be eternally too late. Will you not fly to the mercy-seat in their behalf? I trow, no demon more obstinate, potent, and incorrigible than this one possesses any of them. Though awful devils have them by the throat, Jesus is more than a match for them all. Will you not give Him a chance before demons people hell with the inmates of your home and community? You see here that true faith is accompanied by tenderhearted humility, illustrated by the fact that this man is so intensely exercised for the salvation of his son, that his tears gush out copiously, and flow in rivulets over his face. So get down before God till you, in spite of doubts and devils, with heart-gushing tears, can say, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief."

*"And Jesus, seeing that the multitude are running together, rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to him, Dumb and deaf spirit, I command thee, Come out from it and enter no more into him. Crying out, and convulsing him much, he came out. He became like a corpse, so that many said, He is dead."* When Jesus was talking to the man, the multitude, observing that something was going to be done, and all eager to see, immediately began to crowd in from all directions to witness the sight. As this would produce a great confusion, Jesus instantly commands the obstinate demon, who had resisted all the efforts of the nine, to come out. The demon avails himself of the last moment to execute vile retribution against the poor epileptic. So, in the very act of evacuating him, he convulses him so awfully that he pines away, pallid and ghastly as a corpse, and the people all around say, "He is dead." I have witnessed many scenes of this kind in my revival-meetings, people falling amid frightful convulsions, foaming at the mouth, pining away, gasping for breath, and the unspiritual people around saying, "He is dead," "She is dead." I could give you the positive history of many such cases, which I have seen with mine own eyes. Frequently have they been hauled away from my meetings like dead people, but they always came to life.

The physical phase of this case is abundantly illustrated in all of our lunatic asylums, without which our communities would be terrorized this day by raving maniacs. I now have in mind a good, true, and efficient, sanctified Methodist preacher, who, like this boy, had epilepsy, in its worst form, till one and twenty, when a sanctified sister, finding her way to his father's house, told him about Jesus, and prevailed on him to commit to Him soul and body. Though three times, amid these awful convulsions, he had been laid out and pronounced dead, when he got his eye of faith on Jesus, though all physicians had abandoned him to die, the Blessed Healer, in a moment, cast out the stubborn demon, completely healing soul and body, so that he has never since had a trace of epilepsy; but, responsive to the call he received when Jesus healed and sanctified him, from that day he has been preaching holiness to the Lord.

**Matthew 17:19:** *"Then the disciples, coming to Jesus, privately said, Why were we not able to cast him out? Jesus said to them, For truly, I say unto you, If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, Be thou moved hence, and it will be moved, and nothing shall be impossible to you. But this kind goeth not out except through prayer."* E. V. says, "Through prayer and fasting," some good man evidently adding "fasting," feeling that it would strengthen the statement, as it does not here appear in the original. We must remember that the disciples did not fast till after the Lord had left the world, as this would have been out of harmony with the glorious sunshine of His perpetual and omnipotent presence. He said that they would fast after He had gone away. Hence it is all right and pertinent for us to fast, as the Spirit leads, till He returns in glory. We must remember that our Savior is talking about spiritual things, referring to the little mustard seed

and the great mountain to illustrate the omnipotence of faith. God appreciates quality rather than quantity. Hence, though your faith may be small, if it is free from doubt, the tiny mustard seed will make the great mountain of sin leap away, and sink out of sight into the sea of forgetfulness.

In these two notable transaction — *i.e.*, the transfiguration glory on the mountain summit, and the casting out of this awfully cruel, stubborn, obstinate demon down at the base, we have a vivid illustration of heaven and hell in close proximity. So terrible is the conflict between the powers of darkness in this world, that we often find the bright summit, the transfiguration glory, and the dark valley, pervaded by infuriated demons, in close proximity. Where God works, Satan works too, *et vice versa*. Hence the Christian soldier should never be discouraged at the rage of hell and the howl of devils; but on the contrary, in that case, should always take courage, as Satan is not fool enough to waste his ammunition. When the powers of darkness rendezvous and the formidable difficulties intervene, always look out for bright victories.

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### DEATH AND RESURRECTION.

**Matthew 17:22-23; Mark 9:30-32; Luke 9:43-45.** **Mark:** *“And having gone out from thence, they continued to journey through Galilee.”* As Galilee extends up to the very suburbs of Cæsarea-Philippi, this passage is a clinching argument for the location of the transfiguration in that vicinity. **Luke:** *“Place these words in your ears; for the Son of man is about to be delivered into the hands of sinners.”* **Matthew and Mark say:** *“They will kill Him; and having been killed, on the third day He will arise.” “And they did not know this word, and it was hidden from them, in order that they may not understand it; and they feared to ask Him concerning this word.”* This took place in His conversation with His disciples while journeying down the Jordan, from Cæsarea-Philippi, back to the sea of Galilee. You observe that this is the second time that He has positively told them about His coming arrest, execution, and resurrection. As you here see, “it was hidden from them,” so they did not understand it. Do you know that this dark veil wrapped the important item in our Lord’s biography till He had actually risen from the dead, though He had distinctly and positively spoken it out to them three times? Why was this revealed to them, and still withheld from them? It was really indispensable that it should be revealed, in order to the completion of the prophetic curriculum, destined, as in all bygone ages, to constitute the basis of faith for all future generations; hence the necessity of its revealment is clear and demonstrative. Then why was it withheld from them, so they never did receive it till after He had risen from the dead? This is equally obvious. If His disciples had understood it, they would have rallied His friends and fought for Him, thus precipitating on the country a bloody revolution, which Jesus did not want. Consequently, the blessed Holy Spirit just took it away from them, so they never caught the idea till after He had risen from the dead.

### PAYING TRIBUTE.

**Matthew 17:24-27.** *“And they, having come into Capernaum, those receiving the half-shekel came to Peter, and said, Does not your Teacher also pay the half-shekel? He says, Yes. And when he came into the house [doubtless Peter’s house, the home of Jesus], Jesus anticipated him, saying, What seems to you, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth receive taxes or poll-tax? from their own sons, or from strangers? Peter says to Him, From the strangers. Jesus said to him, Then the sons are free. But in order that we may not offend them, going to the sea, cast in a hook, and lift up the first fish that bites; and opening its mouth, you will find a stater; taking it, give to them for Me and you.”* As Capernaum is right on the bank of the sea which this day abounds in splendid fish, it was very convenient for Peter to just walk down there, stand on the beach, cast in the hook, and catch the fish. The half-shekel was thirty cents, and the stater just twice the amount, and precisely enough to pay for both of them. So Peter goes, catcheth a fish, returns, and pays the tribute for them both. It is a little strange that there has uniformly been a popular misapprehension of this transaction, explaining it as paying tribute to Cæsar for the support of the Roman Government. Such a solution is utterly out of harmony with the whole transaction, as it would make Jesus and Peter the sons of

the heathen Roman emperor. Now it is a well-known fact that the half-shekel was the voluntary annual contribution of the faithful Jew to the support of the temple. Since the temple was dedicated to God, and He was the King and Custodian of it, and the Recipient of the contributions cast into the holy treasury, and as Jesus, Peter, and all the saints are members of the Royal Family, of course they are free from taxation, as Peter truly responded in reference to similar transactions in earthly governments, the children of the king being exempt, while aliens paid the tribute. While Jesus and Peter were under no obligation to make the contribution, yet you see they do it for the sake of peace and harmony. We would do well to emulate their example. *“The earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof.”* All the money belongs to God. When we can promote peace and harmony by a gratuitous contribution, let us follow the example of our Leader in this transaction.

### APOSTOLICAL AMBITION.

**Matthew 18:1; Mark 9:33-35; Luke 9:46-47. Mark:** *“And being in the house, He asked them, What were you disputing about with one another on the road? And they were silent; for on the road they had been disputing with one another which one should be greater. And He, sitting down, called the Twelve, and says to them, If any one wishes to be first, he shall be last of all, and the servant of all.”* We see here the outcropping of ambition among the apostles, each one wanting the pre-eminence in the gospel kingdom; thus most unequivocally illustrating their need of the fiery baptism, to consume all their ambition, and humiliate them, meek and lowly, at the feet of Jesus, in utter and eternal abandonment to God, to be taught by the Holy Ghost. This is demonstrative proof of the second work of grace in the Divine economy, as no one would dare to call in question the conversion of the apostles. They had already, pursuant to our Savior’s commission, gone all over that country, preaching the gospel, casting out demons, and healing the sick. Jesus never sent out sinners to preach. He does not yoke up the devil’s cattle to pull the salvation wagon, but always uses His own. Jesus very pertinently notifies them that, in His kingdom, the one highest in office is least of all — *i.e.*, deepest down in the valley of humiliation — and servant of all, as his official administrations include all, actually making him the benefactor of all his subordinates. While this is not always true in ecclesiastical officers, it is invariably the matter of fact in the kingdom of God; as in the Divine estimation, going down is coming up, and the enlargement of our field of labor simply magnifies our servitude to all included in these augmented dominions.

### THE INFANT THE PARAGON.

**Matthew 18:2-5; Mark 9:36-37; Luke 9:48. Mark:** *“Jesus, calling to Him a little child, placed it in their midst, and said, Truly, I say unto you, Except ye may be converted, and become as little children, you may not enter into the kingdom of the heavens. Therefore whosoever may humble himself as this little child, the same is the greater in the kingdom of the heavens; and whosoever may receive one such little child in My name, receiveth Me.”* **Mark:** *“Taking a little child, He placed it in their midst, and taking it up in His arms, He said to them.”* . . . There is no mistake as to the conclusion that these are literal, natural infants, small enough for Jesus to lift up in His arms, exhibiting them illustratively. This is beautifully illustrative of the glorious, universal redemption in Christ, reaching every human being, even in the prenatal state, so soon as soul and body, united, constitute personality. Now as these infants, by the redemption of Christ, had been born in the kingdom, and could only get out by sinning out, which they could not do till they reached

responsibility, it was demonstrative proof that they are all members of the heavenly kingdom; whereas, in the case of adults, the matter is at least problematical, so that we can not know for any one but ourselves the status before God. So here we have an irrefutable illustration of the consolatory fact that all infants are members of God's kingdom, and here held up as paragons, because there can be no defalcation in their case, as they can only get out by actual sin, of which they are incapable till they reach responsibility. Hence, in their case, there can be no doubt, which can not be said of any adult, because no one but God knows the heart. It is a patent fact that infancy is the very period of an humble, loving disposition; humility and love constituting the preeminent graces of the kingdom. We may pertinently here observe that these infants are not sanctified, but possessed of depravity, manifested in evil tempers cropping out from the cradle; but, as Jesus says, they are normal citizens of the kingdom, standing where a genuine conversion brings every adult, and needing sanctification, like every justified Christian, such as those apostles, who there permitted ministerial ambition to show its cloven foot to their just reprehension.

### **BIGOTRY OF THE APOSTLE JOHN.**

**Luke 9:49, 50; Mark 9:38-41.** *“And John responded to Him, saying, Teacher we saw a certain one casting out devils in Thy name who does not follow us, and we forbade him, because he does not follow us. And Jesus said, Prevent him not. For there is no one who shall work a miracle in My name who will be able quickly to speak evil of Me [as he will have to backslide first]. For whosoever is not against us, is on our side. And whosoever may give you a cup of water in the name of Christ, because you are His, truly, I say unto you, He shall not lose his reward.”* There is no doubt but John was the first disciple of our Lord, and during His entire ministry honored, with Peter and James, on the Mount of Transfiguration, the resurrection of Jairus's daughter, and in Gethsemane. Besides, he was even epitheted the “loving disciple,” habitually sitting close by His side, and even leaning on His bosom. That he was characteristic of pre-eminent spirituality from the beginning, growing on him through his long and useful life, till his writings are swelling rivers of love, sweeping down from heaven, the source of his inspiration, can not be doubted. Though he is the speaker on this occasion, making his own confession, you see he includes his comrades, authenticating the conclusion that those apostles actually did forbid that man to cast out demons in the name of Jesus, because he did not follow them. That man deserved their prayers and their encouragement, as well as their cooperation. He was no bogus worker, but was actually casting out the demons. Now, what is the conclusion? They most imperatively needed the fiery baptism of Pentecost, to burn up their bigotry and sectarian prejudice. Read John's Gospel, Epistles, and Apocalypse, all of which are swelling rivers of love, and you can not find a solitary vestige of sectarian bigotry or ecclesiastical ostracism.

### **RESPONSIBILITY OF OFFENDING THE LITTLE ONES.**

**Matthew 18:6-8; Mark 9:42-44.** *“Whosoever may offend one of these little ones who believe in Me, it is better for him rather if a millstone is hung round his neck, and he has been plunged into the sea. If thy hand may offend thee, cut it off; it is good for thee to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands to go away into hell, into the fire that can not be quenched, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”* **Matthew 18:7:** *“Woe unto the world because of offenses! It is necessary that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh!”* So long as we are on probation, temptation, which is but another name for offense, supervenes as a logical

sequence. Our Lord is here speaking primarily of natural infants, but also including the spiritual; *i.e.*, young converts. You see the awful and momentous responsibility devolving on all the people who offend these infants, natural and spiritual. What does this mean? It simply means leading them into sin, by precept or example, *nolens, volens*. There is a deep sleep on all the world appertaining to this awful responsibility. By the wonderful redeeming grace of Christ, every human being is born in the kingdom of God, and only gets out by sinning out. O what an awful wreckage is everywhere going on! Parents and Churches are blind to these stupendous facts. How long infantile justification is retained depends upon the light shining in the home, and the opportunities available. With some, the age of responsibility is reached much earlier than in case of others. Which should be the grand enterprise of all parents, to so bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, so culture and fortify, as to retain them indefinitely in the kingdom. I trow, this will be the normal economy during the millennium, when the generations will look back on their predecessors with horror and astonishment, because they permitted their children to sin away their infantile justification, become backsliders, and take chances between reclamation and damnation. Doubtless the majority who go from earth to populate heaven during these probationary ages, die in their infancy, thus including one-half of the whole human race, in reference to whom there is no defalcation. Awful responsibilities in eternity and judgment await the people who have been instrumental in leading infants to commit sin. How frequently the parents, brothers, and sisters thus inadvertently crimson their hands in the blood of the little ones, actually leading them across the line, out of infantile justification, into the kingdom of Satan! God sets great store on these infants, both natural and spiritual, because His Son left heaven and suffered and died for them. He wants them to glorify Him on earth, people heaven, and do His will through all eternity. Hence the awful responsibility devolving on the audacious person who may prove instrumental in their abduction out of the kingdom. O how reckless, thoughtless, and foolhardy people are in their treatment of the little ones! "Offend" here is *scandalizo*, from *scandalon*, and means a stumblingblock. Therefore anything said or done, causing an infant or a young convert to waver or stumble in the rectilinear way of truth, innocence, and righteousness, is the offense here so rigidly stigmatized and terrifically anathematized. We know that infants have evil tempers, which nothing but entire sanctification can remove. The mere existence of this hereditary evil does not vitiate their justification, as they received it by irresponsible heredity; while its arousal would lead to voluntary acts of sin, calculated to forfeit their justification, and occasion stumbling and falling. Paul says: "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath;" *i.e.*, do nothing to make them angry. The responsibility of parents, permitting their children to associate with evil companions, is simply immeasurable, amounting to the awful reality of giving them a ticket over the Black Valley route to hell.

### DOOM OF THE WICKED.

**Matthew 18:8,9; Mark 9:45-48.** *"And if thy foot may offend thee, cut it off; it is good for thee to go into life lame, rather than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire which can not be quenched, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."* This awful deliverance of our Savior, relative to the doom of the wicked, follows as a normal sequence from the innumerable and egregious sins committed in giving offense to spiritual and natural infants. Consequently He goes out into a clear, straight, and unequivocal affirmation, relative to the endless punishment of the wicked, which is simply irrefutable by all the sophistry of Universalism, all the chicanery of infidelity, and all the diabolical effrontery of the Pandemonium. Here, Jesus says that the wicked "*go*

*into the fire which can not be quenched, where the worm [i.e., the conscious living] dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*" The word for "die" is *teleutao*, from *telos*, the "end;" consequently, it means never have an end, the strongest and most ineluctable word in the Greek language. These words and phrases, uttered by the Savior, can never be modified, evaded, weakened, or explained away. The sophistry that would have the audacity to tinker with these plain and unmistakable words of Jesus, could upset every truth in the Bible, completely take God's Book of Truth out of our hands, leaving us groping in the utter bewilderment of rayless night. O that the preachers would preach like Jesus! If they do not, they have no right to preach at all. You have no right to deliver a message for another, unless you deliver it as he gave it to you. The reason why so many preachers have lost their power, is because Jesus does not send them. The reason why He does not send them, is because they have failed to deliver His message as He gave it to them. If you were to send a man with a most important message, and he should materially change it, either by additions or subtractions, or both, you would never again trust your business in his hands. Preachers stand in the pulpit, empty as the shell of a dead oyster, because of the delinquency in the faithful deliverance of the Lord's message. The wicked are going to hell by millions. The most successful method of stopping them is faithfully, persistently, importunately, fearlessly, and tearfully telling them precisely what they are doing, without mollification or modification, but persistently warning them night and day. One of the saddest concomitants of the awful apostasy in the Churches is the elimination of endless punishment out of the pulpit. Just as heaven should be the constant theme preached to the Christian pilgrim for glory bound, so hell should be the incessant theme roaring from every pulpit in the ears of all the hellward bound. If this is not faithfully adhered to, conviction will not only go out of a Church, but evanesce from a community, leaving all the gospel timber — gum logs, which will neither rive nor split.

### SALTED WITH FIRE.

**Mark 9:49,50.** *"For every one shall be salted with fire."* The E.V. adds the clause, *"and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt,"* which does not appear in the original, evidently having been interpolated by some one, who thought the salt had a physical signification, which is entirely incorrect; the meaning of it being purely spiritual, natural salt augmenting the force of spiritual truth by the powerful symbolism, appertaining to its economy in the conservation of natural life in the material world; as the salt in the ocean alone prevents putrefaction and stagnation; whereas the watery world is the conservator of atmospheric purity, by which animal life is perpetuated; the sea-breezes carrying out the pure air from the ocean for the inhalation of animals, and carrying back the malarious atmosphere from the continents, to be purified by resting on the salt water. If there were no salt in the ocean, his stagnant and putrefied waters would so contaminate the ærial world as to fill the continents with poisonous malaria, which would quickly kill all the people and all air-breathing animals. Hence the transcendent force of the affirmation, *"Every soul shall be salted with fire."* Salted means saved. Hence the only possible evasion of the hell-fire, here revealed by the warning voice of Jesus, is to get well salted; *i.e.*, thoroughly sanctified with heavenly fire. If you have not the humility, courage, and perseverance to seek the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire in this life, you are bound to take hell-fire, as here described, through all eternity.

*"Salt is good; but if the salt may lose its savor, with what will you salt it?"* As our Savior well says, in His memorable Sermon on the Mount, *"It is henceforth good for nothing, but to be thrown*

*out, and trodden under feet by the people.*” You do not want this dead salt in the washes nor the ditches, as it obliterates all hope of restoring their fertility, turning the space of its occupancy into a perpetual desert. As Jesus says, it is fit for nothing but to make walks. The salt here means the Holy Ghost, who is the life of religion. Hence, when your religion is forsaken by the Holy Ghost, Spiritless, lifeless, and dead, it is like the salt which has lost its savor, and fit for nothing but to make walks. In a similar manner, all unspiritual religion is fit for nothing but to pave the road to hell, making it comfortable for travelers, soothing their guilty consciences, blinding their eyes, and even filling them with the false peace and joy of heavenly anticipation, till they plunge headlong into endless woe.

*“Have salt in yourselves, and live in peace with one another.”* When a community is well salted with the fire of the Holy Ghost, burning up all envy, jealousy, revenge, retaliation, enmity, animosity, strife, bigotry, hatred, rivalry, pride, vanity, folly, and all sorts or Satanic foolery,

“Heaven will come down, all souls to greet,  
And glory crown the mercy-seat.”

# THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### GUARDIAN ANGELS.

**Matthew 18:10.** *“See that you do not look with contempt on one of these little ones; for I say unto you, Their angels, in the heavens, do always behold the face of My Father who is in the heavens.”* Here our Lord warns us against our prevailing predilection to undervalue infancy, both natural and spiritual. All the children born in the membership of an organized Church are so neglected spiritually, and encompassed with temptation, that they, at least clandestinely and inadvertently, become sinners before we are aware, thus incurring an awful responsibility; meanwhile, spiritual infants are left in a cold, worldly Church, speedily to freeze to death. A babe may be born in an icehouse, but it will soon imbibe cold enough to put it in its coffin. Our Savior here seeks to augment our appreciation of infants, both natural and spiritual, by reminding us of the honor conferred on their guardian angels in heaven, being permitted to occupy a place so prominent and near the throne as always to behold the face of the Father. This affirmation clearly recognizes the existence and utility of the guardian angels.

Here we have heaven in the plural number, including innumerable celestial worlds. There is no doubt but the angels are infinitely more numerous than the entire human race; while we are assured that they take a great interest in humanity, having been present, and doubtless cooperative, in creation; deeply sympathetic in the fall, so as to make heaven resound with weeping; infinitely joyous in the redemptive scheme, keeping the firmament bright with the splendor of their wings, as they fly from heaven to earth, *et vice versa*, on missions of love and mercy; constantly cooperative with Moses and the prophets, the saints and martyrs, of all bygone ages; sweeping down from heaven, and singing their triumphant anthems over the shepherds tented on the fields of Bethlehem, unutterably delighted to proclaim to the world the Incarnate Savior. Doubtless we all have our guardian angels, who comfort us amid earth's woes, and shield us from a thousand perils. As you look back, I trow, you can see hairbreadth escapes from death, and perhaps spiritual calamities worse than death. I assure you, I can witness to instances not a few where I could pertinently say with David, “There is but one step between me and death.” During a storm on the Mediterranean Sea, last December, perhaps injudiciously endeavoring to walk the deck, I was thrown among the machinery, striking my eyebrow on an iron, bringing gushing blood; an eighth of an inch farther would evidently have broken the skull. Do you realize your own guardian angels about you? I do. Methinks the ancient philosopher, walking in the light of nature and the Holy Ghost, having never seen the Bible, which is a constant heavenly sunburst on you and me, certainly did realize the presence of the guardian angels when he said, “I am least lonesome when alone, and busiest when unemployed.”

### THE STRAY SHEEP.

**Matthew 12:14.** *“What seems to you? If there may be to any man a hundred sheep, and one of them may stray away, does he not, leaving the ninety and nine, going into the mountains, seek the lost one? And if it may be that he find it, truly, I say unto you, That he rejoiceth over it more than*

*over the ninety and nine which went not astray. So it is not the will, in the presence of your Father who is in heaven, that one of these little ones may be lost.*” Throughout this memorable discourse, delivered by our Savior at Capernaum — and really, so far as the record goes, His valedictory sermon, before He left home for the last time, bidding adieu to Galilee, where He spent about two and a half years of His ministry, preaching, healing, casting out demons, and establishing His disciples in the doctrines of the kingdom, before He goes away to Jerusalem, Judea, and Perea, to preach the remaining six months of His earthly ministry, and lay down His life for a guilty world — He still keeps those infants, both natural and spiritual, prominent before His audience. One of the popes said, “Give me the first seven years, and I will give you all the balance,” feeling assured that, in that short time, he could so write the dogmata of the Catholic Church on the mind of the child, they could never be obliterated. Such is the wonderful redemption of Christ that He actually saves all in their infancy, committing to us, along with the guardian angels, the noble and stupendous work of keeping them saved. O how the universal Church needs awakening on this momentous interest! You see from the illustration that by prayer, instruction, discipline, and vigilance, we are to keep a standing army of saints and angels around the little ones all the time. Then, in case that one out of a hundred should wander away, we are to go through storms and tempests, thorns and briars, deserts and forests, plain and mountain, craggy steeps, frightful precipices, and yawning chasms, till we rescue the lost.

### CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

**Matthew 18:15-20.** *“If thy brother may sin, go, convict him, between thee and him alone.”* Many a time you can win him by thus going privately and quietly, with the loving overtures of a friend and the sympathies of a brother. This is invaluable direction. Be sure that you heed it. It is awfully grievous to the Savior to go recklessly into Church discipline, widen the breach, and ruin the brother, world without end; whereas, if you had gone alone, not so much as intimating the matter to a human being, in the great majority of cases you would succeed. The great mistake is in speaking of it, and thus giving it publicity.

*“But if he may not hearken, take with thee yet one or two, in order than in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.”* If your kind and loving visit in the capacity of a sympathizing brother, no publicity having been given even to the Church, much less the world, has signally failed, after all you could do by prayer and entreaty to soften his heart and win him back for Jesus, — now the omens look really gloomy, rigid discipline, in all probability, becoming your imperative duty, in order to remove the unholy leaven out of the lump.

*“And if he may not hear them, tell it to the Church; but if he may not hear the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican. Truly, I say unto you, So many things as you may bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and so many things as you may loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.”* Church here is *ekklesia*, from *ek*, “out,” and *kaleo*, “to call.” Hence it means the company of individuals called out of this wicked world by the Holy Ghost, and organized with a bishop — *i.e.*, the pastor or leader of the band, having in charge the spiritual interest; a deacon — *i.e.*, the holy man or woman having charge of the temporal interest; and the eldership, composed of the people enjoying spiritual seniority, being intrusted with the general interest. Our Lord here provides abundantly for the government of the Church, in this simple and unmistakable formula; *i.e.*, first go to the offending

party, alone with him, on your knees, with your tears of sympathy and words of kindness. If you fail, then take one or two brothers or sisters, filled with the Holy Ghost, and wait on him, invoking the blessing and help of God. If then you fail, bring the case before the whole Church. In case of final failure, let him be to you as a heathen or a publican. Now you observe that our Lord says that, pursuing this course, if faithful and true, your final verdict is ratified in heaven, standing valid, and preparing all parties to meet at the judgment bar. Thus our Savior has made perfect provision for the perpetuated purity of the Church, which is absolutely indispensable; as Paul says, "A little leaven will leaven the whole lump" — *i.e.*, one corrupt member is likely to contaminate the whole Church, as one rotten potato will rot a barrel. O how the wicked, worldly Churches of the present day need the enforcement of this law! "Brother Godbey, it would tear our Churches all to pieces, and break up our organizations." All right; Jesus makes no mistakes. Awful will be our responsibility. If we do not enforce discipline, and remove the rotten apples out of the pile, they will soon all go to destruction. Such is the apostasy of the Churches of the present age that discipline has become a matter of bygone history. If not revived and enforced, according to the very words of Jesus in this paragraph, which is plain, simple, practical, leaving excuse for none, we never can have a genuine revival of the Churches. Holiness people, beware! and enforce discipline as here enjoined by our blessed and glorious Lord, or we go the way of our ecclesiastical predecessors, in the track of fallen Judaism, Romanism, and the dead Protestant Churches. Good Lord, deliver us!

### EFFICIENCY OF PRAYER.

**Matthew 18:19,20.** *"Again I say unto you, If two of you shall agree on earth concerning anything which you may ask, it shall be done unto you by My Father who is in the heavens. For where two or three are assembled in My name, there I am in the midst of them."* This is really a wonderful promise to the saints of all ages, assuring us of His personal presence in an assembly of two or three, and positive answer to prayer in case of unity on the part of those two or three. This promise guarantees the miraculous availability of the social prayer league in every home. Christians are not aware of the paradoxical availability of family prayer, actually securing the presence of Jesus in the home, the little prayer-meeting, and the Sabbath gatherings. You see here the necessity of union in order to availability. Though the number may be small, only amounting to two or three, if they are really united, they have the promise.

When a circuit-rider, thirty years ago, I went to an old church out in the country to begin a protracted meeting, when the snow was knee-deep, and all the waters frozen into ice. I met but four people, though it was Sunday. We availed ourselves of this promise. Within forty-eight hours, the house ran over, the altar was piled with seekers, and such a revival as the people had not seen in a generation swept down from heaven, ninety souls being gloriously converted and added to the Church within two weeks. If two or three will meet and unite at a Throne of Grace, it is their glorious privilege to be master of the situation. I never found a place in my life where I could not have a glorious revival. When in the pastorate, I made it a rule to have a big revival in every community in my territorial bailiwick. In countless instances I have gone to a place where I had not a solitary member; prevailed on two or three, or perhaps a half dozen, to unite with me in prayer, having no congregation to begin with. We never staid long on our knees, gripping the mercy seat in an inflexible prayer-league, till the people came trooping and booming from all directions, crowding us out of all room, and apparently under conviction from the moment of their arrival, and ready to

crowd the altar and seek salvation. What was the solution? We had actually prayed them under conviction before we ever saw them. This is the Lord's infallible receipt for a revival. Will you take it? You need not send off after a big preacher, who may come, and he may not. Get two or three to help you, and send for Jesus. He is sure to come. When He comes, the people will come too. And they will come crying, and they will go away shouting.

### FORGIVING ONE ANOTHER.

**Matthew 18:21-35.** *“Then Peter, coming to Him, said, Lord, how frequently shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? until seven times? Jesus says to him, I do not say unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven.”* You see from this response of our Lord that our forgiveness is to be utterly illimitable. The rabbis had taught that three times were often enough. Here you see the verdict is plain and definite we are to forgive on infinitesimally.

*“Therefore the kingdom of the heavens is like unto a kingly man, who wished to make a reckoning with his servants. And he, beginning to reckon, one was brought to him owing him ten thousand talents.”* What an enormous indebtedness! One talent is four hundred dollars. The Greek word here is *muria* — *i.e.*, “myriad,” ten thousand — but it is in the plural number; hence, tens of thousands. Now, since myriad is in the plural, though the sum is indefinitely large, its minimum is twenty thousand talents; *i.e.*, eight millions. But as the sum is indefinitely great, we have no right to settle on the minimum. Therefore, with the convenience of round numbers, we may conclude that he owed him ten millions of dollars, whereas it might have been infinitely greater. *“And he, not being able to pay, the lord commanded him, his wife, and children, and all things so much as he had, to be sold, and payment to be made. Then that servant, falling down, continued to worship him, saying, Be patient with me, and I will pay thee all things. The lord of that servant, being moved with sympathy, sent him away, and forgave him the debt. And that servant, having gone out, found one of his fellow-servants, who owed him a hundred denaria [i.e., fifteen dollars; as the denarion is fifteen cents]; and seizing, throttled him, saying, Pay me what you owe me. Then his fellow-servant, falling down, continued to entreat him, saying, Be patient with me, and I will pay thee. And he was not willing; but going away, cast him into prison until he may pay the debt. Therefore his fellow-servants, seeing the things which were done, were grieved exceedingly, and having come, they explained to their lord all the things which had been done.”* The fellow servants here are the saints, who are always grieved when they see an unforgiving spirit among them, and immediately go and tell the Lord about it; *i.e.*, get to praying over it in good earnest. When that is the case, something is sure to happen. *“Then his lord, calling him to him, says to him, Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, since thou didst entreat me; did it not behoove thee to have mercy on thy fellow-servant, as I also had mercy on thee? And his lord, being angry, delivered him to the tormentors until he may pay all that was due him. Thy My Heavenly Father will do unto you, if you do not each one forgive his brother from your hearts.”* You are not only to forgive, but to do it cheerfully and spontaneously, with brotherly love gushing up from the deep interior of the heart; as God forgives you, lovingly, freely, and fully, for Christ's sake. We are not to conclude that God gets angry in the human sense, as He has no malevolent affections nor evil passions, like fallen men and demons.

The language here is an accommodation to our human apprehension, the anger of God being His righteous and holy indignation. I hope you hear, see, and understand this allegorical exegesis, which

our Savior gives, in order to elucidate the infinite magnitude of God's forgiving mercy, and the insignificance of ours, even though we do cheerfully, freely, and fully forgive all who have ever done us an injury.

Now, remember the case: The one servant was forgiven ten millions of dollars; and the other only owed him fifteen dollars, only one six-thousandth part of his indebtedness, yet seizing and throttling him, and demanding the payment of the fifteen dollars, and even casting him into prison because he couldn't pay it. Now I hope you see the beautiful and forcible meaning of the allegory. Let the people treat us as badly as they can, our Heavenly Father has actually forgiven us six thousand times as much as all we ever can forgive them — all our innumerable sins, in thought, word, and deed, actually amounting to ten millions, contrasted with the fifteen dollars which some one owes us. Now, if we are too vile, selfish, and diabolical to forgive our comrades what little they may owe us, how can we expect God to forgive us the ten millions which we owe Him? Now you see, in the finale of this affair, that the ungrateful servant, who had been forgiven so much, and then refused to pardon his fellow-servant, was actually arrested, and delivered to the tormentors till he paid it all. This is the great trouble with Churches — having fallen out with one another, they refuse to forgive and make friends. Consequently they all fall under condemnation, backslide, as you see in this illustrative case, get back where they were before they were forgiven, forfeiting all the progress they had made in the Divine life, and, if they so persist, finally making their bed in hell. We find whole Churches stranded, befooled, wrecked, and captured by the devil in this way.

### COMMISSION OF THE SEVENTY EVANGELISTS.

**Luke 10:1-16.** Two and a half years of our Lord's ministry have flown away, nearly all spent in Galilee, having made short journeys to Jerusalem, attending two of the Passovers out of the three which had transpired. Only six months more of the ministry remain. The work has crowded on Him so immensely that He now calls and sends out seventy evangelists. *“And after these things [i.e., after the miracles and the preaching above mentioned], the Lord also called seventy others, and sent them out by twos before His face into every city and place whither He was about to go.”* These thirty-five evangelistic bands, headed by two evangelists called and sent by our Lord, were calculated to make a wonderful stir in the whole country. *“And He said to them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that He may send forth laborers into His harvest.”* O how pertinent that prayer this day! In many important and densely-populated heathen fields, we now only have one missionary to the million. O how the Church of God ought to rally, and obey the Savior in sending up this very prayer night and day! Even in the home lands, efficient laborers are so very scarce. You can be an efficient worker if you will let the Lord have His way with you.

*“Go; behold, I send you forth as lambs in the midst of wolves.”* Unless you have a heart like the meek, lowly, and loving Lamb of Calvary, you are unfit to go. Fallen humanity has the heart of the blood-thirsty wolf, ready to devour you; so beware! *“Take neither purse, nor valise, nor sandals; salute no one by the way.”* Here our Lord forbids their waiting to get money, pack a valise, or procure sandals, or anything, as the King's business requires haste. In order to make all possible headway, He forbids them to salute people by the way, as this would consume time. There is nothing so important as preaching the gospel. Consequently, everything else is to be secondary.

*“In whatsoever house you may enter, first say, Peace be unto this house!”* Thirty years ago, while holding a protracted meeting with a Baptist preacher, going round visiting, when he came to a house, responsive to this commandment of our Lord, he invariably said, “Peace be unto this house!” I have never forgotten it since. Literal obedience is very important. *“And if the Son of peace may be there, your peace shall rest upon it; but if not, it shall return unto you.”* If the Spirit of Jesus is not with the inmates of that house, they will contemptuously reject your peace.

*“Abide in the same house, eating and drinking those things which are with them; for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.”* This is not conflictious with house-to-house visitation and preaching, which was practiced by the apostles in their lifelong ministry; but it was out of the power of these seventy, because of the very brief period in which they must make their peregrinations, as they were going preparatory to the ministry of Jesus, which was to close in six months. You see here that they were commanded to give the people no trouble about eating, but just eat and drink what they gave them without hesitation. *“And into whatsoever city you may enter and they receive you, eat those things which are set before you.”* Whenever we call attention to small and insignificant matters, like eating, we grieve the Holy Spirit, as our mission is to feed the immortal soul, leaving the evanescent body to take chances and abide its destiny.

*“And heal the sick which are in it, and say to them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.”* We should always give prompt attention to the sick, praying for them, and commending them to the Omnipotent Healer. In this way we will always augment our efficiency as soul-savers, the spiritual and bodily interest going together and mutually helping each other. I have ever found it so. These seventy were commanded to preach the near approach of the kingdom wherever they went, as Jesus, the King, was on hand, having the kingdom with Him, and all who received Him entering into it.

*“Into whatsoever city you may enter, and they may not receive you, going out into the streets of the same, say, We shake off against you the dust from your city clinging to our feet; moreover, know this, That the kingdom of God is come nigh.”* They represented Jesus, the King, who was on the earth and very nigh. *“I say unto you, That it will be more tolerable for Sodom in the day of judgment than for that city.”* Sodom, along with Gomorrah, was the greatest city in the beautiful, fertile, and prosperous Vale of Siddim, lying between the mountains of Moab and the wilderness of Judea, and destroyed by inundations of fire and brimstone, because of their wickedness, their site now being covered by the Dead Sea. As these heathen cities never heard the gospel, even with all their wickedness, it will be more tolerable for them in the day of judgment than the cities of Israel, which, with all the light of the patriarchs and prophets, Jesus and His apostles, still rejected the gospel.

*“Woe unto thee, Chorazin!”* This venerable city stood on a mountain slope, very conspicuous from the sea of Galilee. Pursuant to this withering woe, it utterly perished, and through rolling centuries had not a house nor an inhabitant, till about twenty years ago, under Jewish enterprise, it began to revive, having now a population of twenty-five thousand — with many other similar places, an ominous fulfillment of the latter-day prophecies, relative to the return of the Jews and the revival of that country, anticipatory of our Lord’s second and glorious coming. *“Woe unto thee, Bethsaida!”* This city, the nativity of Peter, Andrew, and Philip, stood on the northeast coast, and in full view of Capernaum, the residence of Jesus, from which He sent out the Seventy. This woe fell heavily on that city, because they did not repent. Hence it went into utter ruin, and is there yet, the revival, by

the returning Jews, having struck so many places, but not yet reached this. *“Because if the mighty works wrought in you, had been in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting down in sackcloth and ashes.”* Tyre and Sidon, in Phenicia, on the Mediterranean Sea, were great, wealthy, and magnificent cities, among the first founded by the sons of Noah after the flood; but distinguished for their wickedness, especially idolatry and pride. They had suffered terribly in the conquests of Nebuchadnezzar, B.C. 600; and again in the wars of Alexander, B.C. 325; and, B.C. 70, by the Romans, till at that time scarcely a vestige of their former grandeur survived. Though they were awfully anathematized by the old prophets for their wickedness, yet Jesus here assures us that it will be more tolerable for them in the judgment than the cities of Israel, who heard the gospel and rejected the light, because Tyre and Sidon, in their heathen darkness, never saw the light of gospel-day.

*“And thou, Capernaum, art not thou exalted up to heaven? Thou shalt be cast down to Hades.”* Capernaum was exalted up to heaven, because honored and blessed with the residence of the Lord. Signally has the awful prediction of her doom been verified, as she long ago went into utter ruin, and remained through many centuries without an inhabitant, the revival striking her only about five years ago.

*“He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that rejecteth you, rejecteth Me.”* Here is the mystical chain which binds every faithful soul to the Throne of God; and in the case of the wicked, drops down, turning into a dismal log-chain around the neck, platoons of devils at the other end, and dragging their hopeless victim into the regions of endless woe. What a wonderful world we are living in, diametrically opposite destinies on all sides being wrought every fugitive moment! Momentous responsibility and transcendent promotion of the most humble gospel herald, so invested with the authority of heaven that every one receiving you as an ambassador of life, receives Jesus who sent you, and God who sent Him!

## FINAL DEPARTURE FROM GALILEE.

**John 7:2-10.** *“And the feast of the Jews, called Tabernacles, was nigh.”* (Leviticus 23:34.) This great annual solemnity was held in September, commemorative of their sojourn in the wilderness forty years, dwelling in tents. Therefore all Israel, beginning on the Sabbath and closing on the following Sabbath, dwelt in tents eight days, in the enjoyment of what we would now call a holiness camp-meeting. As the Temple Campus contains thirty-five acres, there all of their great national feasts were held.

*“Then His brothers said to Him, Depart thence, and go into Judea, in order that Thy disciples shall see the works which Thou art doing; for no one doeth anything in secret and himself seeketh to be public.”* *“If You do these things, manifest Yourself to the world;”* for His brothers did not yet believe on Him. *“Jesus says to them, My time is not yet, but your time is always ready. The world is not able to hate you; but it hateth Me, because I testify concerning it that its works are evil. You go up to the feast; I do not go up to this feast. Speaking these things, He remained in Galilee; but when His brothers went up to the feast, then He also went up; not publicly, but in secret.”* Six months previously He had declined to go to the Passover, having attended the two preceding, at the first of which He began His ministry; evidently because He saw they were determined to crown Him.

King. Though He goes to this Feast of Tabernacles, after it gets under headway, He declined to go at the first with the crowd, as they were intent on His royal coronation. He says, "I do not go to this feast;" not saying He did not intend to go at a later date. Here we see that even at this late period of His ministry, two and one-half years having rolled away, His brothers — *i.e.*, James, Judas, Joses, and Simon — did not believe on Him. They believed that He was a mighty prophet, and in all probability entertained vague hopes that He might prove to be the Christ who was to redeem Israel. As He had hitherto spent nearly all of the time of His ministry in the comparatively obscure regions of Galilee, they were anxious to get Him off to Jerusalem, where He would meet the vast multitudes at the feast, and come in contact with the thronging population of South Palestine, that they might witness His mighty works. His brothers thought He needed pushing out, and were trying to do it. None of His four younger brothers were among the original Twelve; James and Judas (called Jude in E.V.) falling in about the time of His resurrection — the latter becoming the apostle of Tartary; and the former, the pastor of the Apostolic Church at Jerusalem, a signal compliment paid him because of his brotherhood to the Lord.

### RETALIATORY SPIRIT OF JAMES AND JOHN.

**Luke 9:51-56.** *"And it came to pass, while the days of His taking up [i.e., His crucifixion] were being fulfilled, and He turned His face to go to Jerusalem. And He sent messengers before His face, and they, going, entered into a village of the Samaritans, so as to prepare for Him. And they did not receive Him, because His face was going toward Jerusalem. And His disciples, James and John, seeing, said, Lord, do you wish that we may command fire to descend from heaven and consume them, as Elijah did? And turning, He rebuked them, and said, Do you not know of what spirit you are? for the Son of man came not to destroy the lives of men, but to save them; and they went on into another village."* He is now journeying to Jerusalem, accompanied by His apostles, having declined to go in time for the opening of the festival, when the road would be thronged with multitudes. Samaria, the old kingdom of Israel under Jeroboam, stretches across Canaan in the middle, from the Jordan on the east, to the Mediterranean Sea on the west, so that the direct route from Galilee to Jerusalem led through Samaria. As He goes along, preaching on His way, and sends out some of His disciples to notify the people, so they might be on hand to hear the Living Word, and profit by the opportunity, entering a Samaritan village and notifying them about Jesus coming, they refuse to receive Him, because He was going to Jerusalem; as there was long an inveterate prejudice on the part of the Samaritans toward the Jews, as they, after Nehemiah rejected Sanballat from a participation in building the temple, had rallied all their forces, and built a magnificent rival temple on Mt. Gerizim, thus becoming the uncompromising rivals of the Jews for the holy mount, the Christhood, and all the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant; as they were not pure-blooded Jews, but a mixture of the Jews with the heathens, who had been transported thither from the Babylonian Empire by Esarhaddon, the king of Babylon. If His face had not been toward Jerusalem, doubtless they would have received Him, as they were looking for Christ, but wanted Him to be a Samaritan. In all probability, they were near the spot where Elijah had called down fire from heaven, as that was in Samaria, and on the convenient route to Jerusalem. I passed over it, making the same journey. Thus, in all probability, being reminded of that notable event, they thought it an auspicious time to exercise their power. Jesus rebukes them, "Do you not know of what spirit you are?" As the apostles of Christ, they properly belong to the spirit of love, kindness, mercy, sympathy, and forgiveness; whereas Elijah lived under the law dispensation and the theocracy, when Divine retribution was the

normal economy. This, however, incontestably illustrates their imperative need of a second work of grace, as James and John were among the most spiritual of the apostles, and still actuated by this retaliatory spirit. If our Savior's apostles needed the sanctifying fire to burn out of them unholy tempers, we certainly all need it too.

**THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK,  
LUKE, AND JOHN, HARMONIZED, PART I**

**APOLOGUE.**

We have thus followed our Saviour through two and a half years of His wonderful ministry, thus completing Volume VI, having the six months, concluding His earthly labors of love and redemption, for Volume VII, which (D.V.) will speedily follow, completing the New Testament series.